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The Blank Slate

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Steven Pinker is the Johnstone Family Professor in the Department of Psychology at Harvard University. For his book, The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature, the Society for General Psychology awarded Dr. Pinker the William James Book Award for 2003. The following essay, based on his invited address at the 2005 APA convention, draws on material in the book.

Human nature is a topic of perennial interest, because everyone has a theory of human nature. All of us have to anticipate how people will react to their surroundings, and that means that we all need theories, implicit or explicit, about what makes people tick.

So much depends on our theory of human nature. In our private lives we use it to win friends and influence people, to manage our relationships, to bring up our children, to control our own behavior. Its assumptions about learning guide our policies in education; its assumptions about motivation guide our policies in law and politics. And because the theory of human nature delineates what we can achieve easily, what we can achieve only with effort and sacrifice, and what we cannot achieve at all, it's tied to our values: what we think we can reasonably strive for as individuals and as a society.

Because of this tie to values, it should come as no surprise that for millennia, the main theory of human nature in our intellectual tradition was tied to religion. Indeed, the Judeo-Christian religious tradition has a theory of human nature encompassing many of the phenomena that today we allocate to the subject matter of psychology and biology.

For example, the theory of the mind in the Judeo-Christian tradition is a modular theory, positing that the mind consists of a number of separate faculties, such as a capacity for love, a moral sense, and a capability for choice, or free will. Though our free will is not the effect of any prior cause, it has an innate tendency towards sin. There's also a theory of perception and cognition in the Bible, namely, that our faculties keep us in touch with reality because God is no deceiver, and he designed them to give us an accurate picture of the world. There's even a theory of mental health: that psychological well-being comes from accepting God's purpose, loving God, loving our fellow humans for the sake of God.

The Judeo-Christian theory was based on an interpretation of particular events narrated in the Bible. For example, the doctrine of free will is grounded in the story in which Adam and Eve were punished for eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, implying that they could have chosen otherwise; therefore, free will exists.

Today, no scientifically literate person can believe that the events narrated in the book of Genesis actually took place. That means that there has been a need for a new theory of human nature, one not tied to fundamentalist interpretations of the Bible. In my book *The Blank Slate*, and in my talk today, I suggest that the standard secular theory of human



Steven Pinker

nature that's taken its place is based on three doctrines, each of which can be associated for mnemonic purposes with a dead white European male.

The first doctrine is the one that gave the book its title—*The Blank Slate*—conventionally associated with the English philosopher John Locke. He didn't actually use the metaphor of a blank slate in his writings, but he did invoke a similar metaphor. He wrote:

Let's suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper void of all characters, without any ideas. How comes it to be furnished? ... To this I answer in one word, from EXPERIENCE.

That is the doctrine of the blank slate.

The blank slate was not just an empirical hypothesis, but it had a moral and political import in Locke's time, as it does today. It implied that dogmas, such as the divine right of kings, could not be treated as self-evident truths that just grew out of the structure of the brain, but had to be *justified*, by experiences that people share, and hence can debate. It undermined the hereditary royalty and aristocracy, who could claim no innate wisdom or virtue if their minds started out as blank as everyone else's. And by the same token, it undermined the institution of slavery, by holding that slaves could not be considered innately inferior or subservient. These ideas are summed up in a *New Yorker* cartoon of about 11 years ago in which one king says to the other, "I don't know anything about the bell curve, but I say heredity is everything."

The blank slate is not ancient history, but continues to be influential. Through most of the 20th century, my own field, psychology, tried to explain all of human behavior by appealing to a couple of simple mechanisms of association and conditioning. The social sciences have tried to explain the human condition by invoking culture as an autonomous force that can't be identified with anything inside the heads of any particular individuals. Here's a typical example from a prominent 20th century social scientist.

With the exception of the instinctoid reactions of infants to sudden withdrawals of support, to sudden loud noises, the human being is entirely instinctless. Man is man because he has no instincts, because everything he is and has become, he has learned, acquired, from his culture, from the man-made part of the environment, from other human beings.

That is a quote from the anthropologist and well-known public intellectual, Ashley Montagu. And just to show how far this doctrine has spread, I'll give you another example from a well-known public figure, invoking a similar metaphor:

When kids go to school at the age of 6, there's an empty bucket there. Someone, by the time they're 18, will fill that bucket. Is it going to be a parent? Is it going to be a good educator? Or is it going to be some other scum out there?

That's a quote from the governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The second doctrine that has become part of the conventional wisdom of human nature gets its convenient name from a poem by John Dryden, *The Conquest of Granada*:

I am as free as nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

But the doctrine of the noble savage is more commonly associated with the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who wrote:

So many authors have hastily concluded that man is naturally cruel, and requires a regular system of police to be reclaimed, whereas nothing can be more gentle than him in his primitive state.... The example of the savages... seems to confirm that mankind was formed ever to remain in... this condition... and that all ulterior improvements have been so many steps... towards the decrepitness of the species.

Now, you can only really understand someone writing in a previous century if you know who he was arguing against. Rousseau alluded to "so many authors," but there was one in particular he had in mind. This gentleman painted a rather different picture of life in a state of nature. He wrote:

Hereby it is manifest that during the time when men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war, and such a war is of every man against every man.... In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently... no arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, a continual fear and danger of violent death, and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.

This, of course, is the famous quote from Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*.

Much depends on which of these armchair anthropologists is right. The noble savage certainly is the more appealing doctrine. It implies that there's no need for a domineering Leviathan (an armed police force and government) to keep us from each other's throats. If we're nasty, then we have to accept conflict as a permanent part of our condition, whereas if we're noble, we can work toward a utopian society of the future. Children are born savages, so if our inner savage is nasty, it implies that bringing up children will be a matter of discipline and conflict, whereas if our inner savage is noble, it means that child-rearing is a matter of providing them with opportunities to develop their potential.

The noble savage, like the blank slate, continues to be an influential doctrine. It's behind the widespread respect for everything natural and a distrust of anything manmade—natural foods, natural medicines, natural childbirth, and so on. It's behind the unfashionability of authoritarian styles of child-rearing, which were common in this country until just a couple of generations ago. And it's behind the near-universal understanding of our social problems as repairable defects in our institutions, rather than a traditional view that would ascribe them to the inherent tragedy of the human condition.

The third doctrine, which sometimes accompanies the blank slate and noble savage, is associated with another French-speaking philosopher, René Descartes, who wrote:

When I consider the mind... I cannot distinguish in myself any parts, but apprehend myself to be clearly one and entire.... But it is quite otherwise with corporeal or extended objects, for there is not one of them imaginable by me which my mind cannot easily divide into parts.... This [is] sufficient to teach me that the mind or soul of man is entirely different from the body....

This idea which was later ridiculed as "the doctrine of the ghost in the machine" by the English philosopher Gilbert Ryle. It was only much later that it was adopted as the title of an album by the rock group The Police.

The ghost in the machine also has considerable appeal. People don't like to think of themselves as heaps of glorified clockwork. Machines, we like to think, are insensate and have some

workaday purpose, like grinding corn or sharpening pencils. Humans, in contrast, are sentient, and have some higher purpose, such as love, worship, and the pursuit of knowledge and beauty. Machines follow the ineluctable laws of physics, whereas behavior is freely chosen. With choice comes optimism about possibilities for the future, and with choice comes responsibility, the power to hold others accountable for their actions. Finally, if, as Descartes said, the mind is entirely separate from the body, that holds out the hope that the mind can survive the death of the body, an idea whose appeal is all too obvious.

The ghost in the machine continues to have an impact. It's behind the widespread perception that freedom, dignity, and responsibility are incompatible with a biological understanding of the mind, which is often denounced as "reductionist" or "determinist." We see it in the stem cell debate, where some of the theologians who've weighed in on this issue have framed it in terms of when ensoulment takes place in embryonic development, which means that perhaps the most promising medical technology of the 21st century is being debated in terms of when the ghost first enters the machine. And we see it in everyday thinking and speech; it's hard to get away from. We talk about *John's body* or *John's brain*, which presupposes some entity, John, that's separate from the brain that it somehow owns. And journalists speculate about "brain transplants," which they really should call "body transplants," because as Dan Dennett once pointed out, this is the one transplant operation where you really want to be the donor rather than the recipient.

It should come as no surprise that I think that there's a huge problem with all of this, beginning with the Blank Slate. The main problem is that blank slates don't do anything. It's not that any sane person can deny the central importance of learning, culture, and socialization in all aspects of human experience.

The question is, how do they work? When Locke implied that "there's nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses," the appropriate reply came from Leibniz, who said, "Except for the intellect itself."

Today the sciences of human nature have threatened the Blank Slate by trying to delineate what has to be present in the mind in order for learning to occur in the first place. My own field, cognitive science, has tried to explicate the innate mechanisms that have to be in place in order to do the learning that

obviously gets done. They include: the basic concept of an enduring object and lawful causation, which can be seen even in young infants; a number sense that allows us to grasp quantity of number; a number of spatial representations that allow us to negotiate the world and recognize objects and faces; a "theory of mind" or intuitive psychology with which we understand the mental states of other people; a language instinct that allows us to communicate our own thoughts and feelings via words; and the executive systems of the frontal lobes of the brain, which receive information from the rest of the brain and execute decision rules that determine how the person as a whole behaves.

Evolutionary psychology has challenged the blank slate in at least two ways. One is by documenting that beneath the undeniable fact of cross-cultural variation there is a bedrock of human universals: ways of thinking and feeling and behaving that can be seen in all of the cultures documented by ethnography. The anthropologist Donald Brown a few years ago compiled a list of them, and they number some 300, everything from

Aesthetics, Affection, and Anthropomorphization, all the way to Vowel contrasts, Weapons, attempts to control the Weather, and a word for the color White.

Evolutionary psychology has challenged the blank slate in another way: by showing that many human drives can't really be understood as ways people maximize their well-being in their own lifetimes, but can only be interpreted as adaptations to survival and reproduction in an ancestral environment, namely the foraging lifestyle that characterized our species through 99% of its evolutionary history, until the very recent invention of agriculture and then industrialization. An obvious example, very much in the news, is our taste for sugar and fat, which drives many people to an early grave from a diet too rich in junk food. The obvious explanation is that we evolved in a world in which these nutrient-packed substances were in short supply, and we could never consume too many of them. Very recently, we developed the technology to crank out mass quantities of this stuff. Our tastes haven't changed, and so we eat more of them than is good for us.

Another example is the thirst for revenge, which is the source of much human misery in the form of vendettas and blood feuds and cycles of violence, but which had a rationale in a world in which you couldn't dial 911 to get Leviathan to show up to settle your scores for you, but in which a reputation for toughness and a resolve to retaliate was one's only defense against becoming a permanent punching bag.

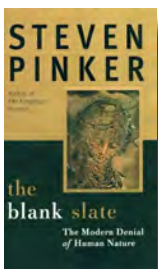
Less obviously, our desire for attractive mates needs an explanation. The humorist Fran Lebowitz once made a profound observation when a journalist asked her why she'd never gotten married and she said:

People who marry someone that they're attracted to are making a terrible mistake. You really should marry your best friend. You like your best friend more than you're apt to like anyone that you happen to find attractive. You don't pick your best friend because they have a cute nose. That's all you're doing when you're getting married. You're saying, "I'm going to spend the rest of my life with you because of your lower lip."

This observation poses a profound puzzle for psychology. I think the answer comes from recent research in evolutionary psychology showing that the physical cues to beauty are indicators of underlying health, fertility, and fitness, and that by being attracted to people with those physical characteristics, we're maximizing the chances that our genes will combine with the fittest genes available in the population when we have children.

Neuroscience has challenged the blank slate by showing that there's a complex genetic patterning to the brain, an example being the well-known wiring diagram of the primate visual system comprising some 50 distinct areas interconnected in precise ways, largely laid out in the course of prenatal development.

And it's not just the overall box-and-arrow diagram of the brain that shows a genetic influence, but some of its fine structure as well. The neuroscientist Paul Thompson studied a sample of people using MRI and measured the amount of gray matter across the surface of the brain. He then calculated correlation coefficients among pairs of people to see if the distribution of gray matter would be correlated across pairs of people. Of course, when you pair people at random, by definition the correlations are going to be zero. But when you compare people who



share half their DNA, namely fraternal twins, most of the brain shows some degree of significant correlation. And when you pair people who share all of their DNA, namely, monozygotic or identical twins, far more areas of the brain show correlations, and to a much greater degree.

Now, you might ask whether these are just meaningless differences in anatomy, like the precise shape of the whorls in your outer ear. But there is evidence that they have functional consequences. My favorite summary comes from another *New Yorker* cartoon, this time from Charles Addams, which shows two nerdy-looking guys with identical contraptions in their lap in the waiting room of a patent attorney, and the caption reads: "Separated at birth, the Mallifert twins meet accidentally." The cartoon is only a slight exaggeration of the empirical state of affairs. Studies of identical twins who were separated at birth and then tracked down and tested in adulthood show that they have often astonishing similarities. My favorite example is the pair of twins, one of whom was brought up as a Catholic in a Nazi family in Germany, the other of whom was brought up by a Jewish father in Trinidad. Nonetheless, when they met each other in the lab in their 40s, both walked in wearing identical navy blue shirts with epaulets. Both of them kept rubber bands around their wrist. Both of them, it turned out on questioning, liked to dip buttered toast in coffee, to flush the toilet before using it as well as after, and to pretend to sneeze in crowded elevators to watch the other people jump.

Now, some of these are bound to be coincidences, what you would find if you compared *any* two people's autobiographies in enough detail. But they are rarely, if ever, found in fraternal twins who were separated at birth, and they've been corroborated by numerous studies using quantitative psychological tests, which show that identical twins separated at birth are highly correlated in measures of intelligence and personality, and also in quantifiable behavior such as the likelihood of getting divorced, the likelihood of being addicted to tobacco, the number of hours of television watched, their political attitudes, and many other traits. This leads to what behavioral geneticists call the First Law of Behavioral Genetics: that all behavioral traits are partially heritable.

The Noble Savage has also been threatened by findings in the sciences of mind, brain, genes, and evolution. Behavioral genetics has shown that among the heritable traits are having an antagonistic personality, a tendency toward violent crime, and a lack of conscience, or psychopathy. Neuroscience has identified brain mechanisms associated with aggression. And evolutionary psychology and anthropology have underscored the ubiquity of conflict in human affairs, as one would expect from the outcome of a Darwinian process.

I'll give you a couple of examples. The archaeologist Lawrence Keeley has calculated the percentage of male deaths due to warfare in a number of societies—that is, if you're a man, what are the chances that you will die at the hands of another man, as opposed to passing away of natural causes in your sleep? Among pre-state societies, such as hunter-gatherer and hunter-horticultural societies in the New Guinea highlands and the Amazon rainforest, the figures range from a low of about a 15% chance that a man will die at the hands of another man, to almost a 60% chance. These figures dwarf the corresponding statistics for the United States and Europe in the 20th century, even if you include all of the casualties from both world wars. Not to put too fine a point on it, but when it comes to life in a state of nature, Hobbes was right; Rousseau was wrong.

What about our society? How did we get to enjoy this state of peace and harmony? Is it because all violent impulses have somehow been socialized out of us? Probably not. A number of social psychologists have asked people the following question: Do you ever fantasize about killing someone you don't like? They typically find that about 15% of women, and a third of men, frequently think about killing people they don't like, especially romantic rivals, step-parents, and people who've humiliated them in public. And more than 60% of women and about three-quarters of men at least *occasionally* think about killing people they don't like. And the rest of them are lying.

But it's the ghost in the machine that has been subject to the most withering threats from modern science. Cognitive science has shown that the formerly mysterious power called "intelligence" can be explained in mechanistic terms, by thinking of beliefs as a kind of information, thinking as a kind of computation (not the kind of computation your PC does, of course, but presumably some kind of parallel, analog, fuzzy computation, but a form of information processing nonetheless), and that emotions and motives and goals can be understood in cybernetic terms: as mechanisms of feedback and control. Artificial intelligence has carried this program further by *building* intelligent machines, most famously the computer program Deep Blue, which defeated the world chess champion Gary Kasparov in 1997.

And neuroscience has challenged the ghost in the machine through what the late Francis Crick called "the astonishing hypothesis": that all of our experiences, thoughts, feelings, yearnings, and emotions consist of physiological activity in the tissues of the brain. Though the hypothesis is astonishing, there's increasing evidence that it's right. We know that the mind runs on electrical impulses, as can be seen by our increasing ability to record the electrophysiological signatures of thought and emotion, and by the fact that if you stimulate the exposed brain during neurosurgery, the person will have a vivid experience indistinguishable from reality. We know that the brain is also a chemical organ, as can be seen by the effects on personality of psychoactive drugs, both recreational and therapeutic. We know that brain surgery can alter a person, most famously in the case of the split-brain operation, where as a treatment for epilepsy a neurosurgeon severs the corpus callosum joining the two cerebral hemispheres, resulting in two largely independent consciousnesses co-residing in the same skull, as if the soul could be bisected with a knife. We know that damage to the brain can eliminate a part of the person and leave someone incapable of recognizing a face, for example, or making a moral choice. We know that the brain has a staggering complexity—a hundred billion neurons interconnected by a hundred trillion synapses—which is fully commensurate with the staggering complexity of thought and behavior. And we have every reason to believe that when the physiological activity of the brain stops, the person goes out of existence. Despite concerted attempts by respectable 19th century scientists, no one has yet found a way to communicate with the dead.

Now, although this is the subject of 21st century neuroscience, it was glimpsed in the 19th century, most vividly in *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which Dmitri Karamazov, having been visited by a local medical researcher, now recounts to his brother what he has learned:

Imagine, inside, in the nerves, in the head ... there are sort of little tails.... I look at something with my eyes, and when they begin quivering, those little tails, an image appears, ...

that is, an object or an action, damn it! That's why I see and then think, because of those tails, and not at all because I've got a soul, and that I am some sort of image and likeness.... Rakitin explained it all to me yesterday, Brother, and it simply bowled me over. It's magnificent, Alyosha, this science! A new man's arising—That I understand.... And yet I am sorry to lose God.

Many people are sorry to “lose God” when they hear of these findings, or at least sorry to lose the values that have traditionally been associated with God. There has been a widespread fear and loathing of human nature, both from the left and from the right, for some reasons that are distinct and some that are overlapping.

From the academic left, there was a vehement, and sometimes violent, reaction to the people who first publicized these ideas in the 1970s, such as E. O. Wilson. An example is the manifesto called *Against Sociobiology*, written by Stephen Jay Gould and Richard Lewontin and published in the *New York Review of Books*, which said:

The reason for the survival of these recurrent determinist theories is that they consistently tend to provide a genetic justification of the status quo, and of existing privileges for certain groups according to class, race, or sex. These theories provided an important basis for the enactment of sterilization laws, and also for the eugenics policies which led to the establishment of gas chambers in Nazi Germany.

Because of such accusations, Wilson, was often picketed and assaulted when he spoke about these ideas in the 1970s and 1980s. One campus poster read, “Come and hear Edward O. Wilson, sociobiologist and the prophet of right-wing patriarchy. Bring noisemakers.”

For all this, the right-wing patriarchy wasn't so thrilled with these ideas either. There were also denunciations from the religious and cultural right, such as an essay by Andrew Ferguson in the *Weekly Standard* which said that “biological theories of the mind are sure to give you the creeps, because whether a behavior is moral, whether it signifies virtue, is a judgment that the new science, and materialism in general, cannot make.” He contrasted it with the Judeo-Christian view, according to which “human beings are persons from the start, endowed with a soul, created by God, and infinitely precious. And this is the common understanding the new science means to undo.” (This, I think, is the real motivation behind the movement to discredit Darwinism in the schools by teaching “Intelligent Design” as an alternative, rather than a concern to provide students with the best theory of where earthworms and mushrooms and oak trees came from.) Another example is Tom DeLay's theory of the cause of the Columbine High School shootings, who said that such outbursts are inevitable “because our school systems teach children that they are nothing but glorified apes, evolutionized out of some primordial soup of mud.” And the US House Judiciary Committee heard the following testimony about the dangers of Darwinism from a representative of the Discovery Institute (the main force behind the revival of creationism). They were told about the pernicious effects of biological thinking in popular culture such as the lyrics to a rock song:

You and me, baby
Ain't nothing but mammals,
So let's do it like they do it
On The Discovery Channel.

Though these reactions seem extreme, they raise serious moral and political issues. Indeed, the brouhaha at my own institution (Harvard) last January shows that they are by no means a thing of the past. I think it's essential to look at the connection between the politics and the science with some care, and to ask why are there such emotional reactions, and how are they best addressed.

Four issues are at stake here: the fear of inequality, the fear of imperfectability, the fear of determinism and the fear of nihilism. In the rest of this essay, I will argue that all four are non sequiturs: they don't logically follow from recent discoveries or theories, but arose because they are so novel, and people haven't had a chance to digest their implications. And I'll go farther and say that, even if there are dangers in embracing too strong a doctrine of human nature, there are also dangers in *denying* human nature. For that reason we should study human beings objectively without trying to put a political or moral thumb on either side of the scale.

Let me begin with the fear of inequality. The idea is that if we're blank slates, we must be equal. That follows from the mathematical truism that zero equals zero equals zero. But if the mind has any innate organization, according to this fear, then different races, sexes, or individuals could be biologically different, and that would condone discrimination and oppression.

I think it's easy to see the non sequitur here. It confuses the value of *fairness* with the claim of *sameness*. When the Declaration of Independence said, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” it surely did not mean “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are clones.” Rather, a commitment to political equality means two things. First, it rests on a theory of universal human nature, in particular, universal human interests, as when the Declaration continues by saying that “people are endowed ... with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” It's also a commitment to prohibit public discrimination against individuals based on the average of certain groups they belong to, such as their race, ethnicity, or sex. And as long as we have that policy, it doesn't matter what the average statistics of different groups turns out to be.

I mentioned that there are downsides of believing in the blank slate. In the case of individual differences, the downside to denying that they exist is the tendency to treat more successful people as larcenous. That is, if you really believe that everyone starts out identical, and you look around and you see that some people have more stuff than others, the temptation is to think that they must have stolen more than their fair share. Many of the worst instances of 20th century persecution have been aimed at ethnic and social groups in cultural conditions that allowed their more talented members to prosper, with the result that they were viewed as parasites or bloodsuckers and subjected to expulsions, persecutions, and sometimes genocide. Famous examples include the overseas Chinese in Indonesia and Malaysia, the Indians in East Africa, the Ibos in Nigeria, and the Jews in Europe.

The second fear is the fear of imperfectability: the dashing of the ancient dream of the perfectibility of humankind. It runs more or less as follows. If ignoble traits are innate, such as selfishness, violence, prejudice, or rape, that would make them unchangeable, so attempts at social reform and human improvement would be a waste of time. Why try to make the

world a better place if people are rotten to the core and will just foul it up no matter what you do?

But this, too, is unsound. Even if people do harbor ignoble motives, they don't automatically lead to ignoble behavior, as we saw from the ubiquity of homicidal fantasies, which needless to say rarely result in homicidal behavior. That disconnect is possible precisely because the human mind is a complex system of many parts, some of which can counteract others, such as a moral sense, cognitive faculties that allow us to learn lessons from history, and the executive system of the frontal lobes of the brain that can apply knowledge about consequences and moral values to inhibit behaviors.

Indeed, the undeniable social progress that *has* taken place in the last few centuries did not occur because human nature was reprogrammed from scratch, but because one part of human nature was mobilized against other parts. The argument comes from the philosopher Peter Singer in his book *The Expanding Circle*. Singer argued that one can find in all cultures the glimmerings of an emotion of empathy, an ability to treat other people's interests and perspective on a par with one's own. The problem is that the default setting for the empathy circle is to extend it only to the members of one's own clan or village, while those outside the circle are treated as subhuman and can be exploited with impunity. But over the course of history, one can see signs of the circle expanding to embrace other villages, other clans within the tribe, other tribes, other nations, other races, and most recently, as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all members of *Homo sapiens*. This change in sensibility didn't come from re-engineering human nature *de novo*, but rather from taking a knob or slider that adjusts the size of the circle that embraces the entities whose interests we treat as comparable to our own.

I have emphasized that there are downsides to the Blank Slate. The belief in perfectibility, despite its rosy and uplifting connotation, has a number of dark sides. One of them is the invitation to totalitarian social engineering. Dictators are apt to think: "If people are blank slates, then we damn well better control what gets written on those slates, instead of leaving it up to chance." Some of the worst autocrats of 20th century explicitly avowed a belief in the Blank Slate. Mao Tse-tung, for example, had a famous saying, "It is on a blank page that the most beautiful poems are written." The Khmer Rouge had a slogan, "Only the newborn baby is spotless."

And far less horrifically, one can see this sentiment in urban planners such as Le Corbusier, who wrote that city planners should begin with "a clean tablecloth. We must build places where mankind will be reborn." An example of what he had in mind was his sketch of what Paris would look like if he had been granted his wish to bulldoze it and start over from a clean tablecloth: a vista of concrete high-rises separated by empty plazas and interconnected by superhighways. It was part of a movement ironically called Authoritarian High Modernism: the conceit that society should be planned from the top down based on "scientific principles" coming from a theory of human needs.

The problem was that their theory of human needs was the Blank Slate. They figured that everyone needs so many cubic feet of air per minute to breathe, so many gallons of water for bathing and drinking, a place to eat, so many square feet to sleep, a way to commute to work, and that was pretty much it. And the most efficient way to satisfy those needs is to stack people up

in concrete towers. What they left out of the calculation was the rest of human nature—the need for intimate social interaction in public cafes and squares, the effect of green space on psychological well-being, the effect of natural light on mood, the need for visual aesthetics and hence ornamentation and design in architecture, the feeling of safety that comes from an environment built on a human scale, and so on. Though Le Corbusier did not get his wish to flatten Paris and start over, his disciples did design the notorious wastelands of Brasilia and Chandigarh, and were responsible for the so-called "urban renewal movement" that did bulldoze many vibrant neighborhoods in the United States and England and replaced them with barren concrete.

A complementary downside of the belief in perfectibility is a lack of appreciation for democracy. Historians tell us that many of the horrific dictatorships of the 20th century were based on a romantic view of human nature. They were led by idealistic, charismatic leaders, who based their authority on a claim of moral superiority to their predecessors, and who promised that their repressive measures were temporary and would gradually wither away, leaving people to cooperate in a state of utopian, Rousseauan anarchism. And it resulted in some of the most murderous dictatorships in history.

In contrast, democracy, which I think we would agree has had a more benevolent outcome, is based on a *jaundiced* view of human nature, perhaps best captured in the famous quotation of James Madison. "If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary." It's this jaundiced view that led to the idea of permanent need of "a government of laws and not men," and for the checks and balances built into democracies, which were explicitly designed to counteract human ambition and self-deception, thought to be a permanent part of human nature.

The final downside of a belief in perfectibility has been a distortion of human relationships, most notably parenting, since it's parents, above all, who are thought to write on a blank slate. Here is a quote from an article from *The Boston Globe* with the sarcastic title "How to Raise a Perfect Child." A frazzled mother told the reporter:

I'm overwhelmed with parenting advice. I'm supposed to do lots of physical activity with my kids so I can instill in them a physical fitness habit so they'll grow up to be healthy adults. And I'm supposed to do all kinds of intellectual play so they'll grow up smart. And there are all kinds of play, play for finger dexterity, word games for reading success, large motor play, small motor play. I feel like I could devote my life to figuring out what to play with my kids.

Anyone who knows a young parent can sympathize with this overadvised mom.

But here are some sobering facts about what we know about the effects of parenting, many of them brought to light by the psychologist Judith Rich Harris in her book *The Nurture Assumption*. First of all, most studies of the effects of parenting on which the experts base their advice are useless. They're useless because they are based on the Blank Slate, and hence don't control for heritability. They measure some correlation between what parents do and how their kids turn out, they assume that correlation implies causation, attributing the outcome to the parents. For example, parents who talk a lot to their children



have children with better language scores; parents who spank their children have children who grow up to be violent; parents who are neither too firm nor too lax have children who are better adjusted. What these studies don't take into account is that parents provide their children with genes as well as an environment. The studies may be saying nothing more than that talkative people have talkative kids, violent people have violent kids, and sensible people have sensible kids.

When you redo the studies with the proper genetic controls, by studying twins or adoptees, the results are rather bracing. First of all, the genetically controlled studies, by and large, find that in measures of adult intelligence and personality, siblings separated at birth end up as similar as siblings reared together. Now, remember the Mallifert twins from the Addams cartoon. Separated at birth, they bump into each other in the patent office with those identical contraptions. Now, one may ask, "What would have happened if the Mallifert twins had not been separated but had been brought up together—in the same neighborhood, in the same house, by the same parents, with the same siblings, and so on? Well, one might predict that they should be even *more* similar. But the studies show that they are not more similar. By adulthood, the correlations among twins (and other kinds of siblings) are the same whether they are raised together or apart.

Twins separated at birth are cases in which siblings share their genes but don't share an environment. The flipside of this consists of adoptive siblings: they share an environment, but don't share their genes. And the repeated findings of those studies is that adopted siblings are not similar in personality or intelligence at all. That is, by the time they're adults, two adoptive siblings growing up in the same home are no more similar than two people plucked from the population at random.

What all this suggests is that children are shaped not by their parents, but in part—but only in part—by their genes; in part by their culture, both the culture of the surrounding society and the children's own culture, which we condescendingly call their peer group; and in large part by sheer chance—chance events in the development of the brain in utero, such as whether some neurons zigged or zagged at a particular day in brain development, and perhaps chance events in life, such as whether at some point you were chased by a dog, or inhaled a virus, or were dropped on your head, or got the top bunk bed as opposed to the bottom bunk bed.

When many people hear these results, their first reaction is to say, "Oh, so you mean it doesn't matter how I treat my kids?" Of course it matters! It matters for many reasons. One is that it's never all right to abuse or neglect or belittle a child, because those are horrible things for a big strong person to do to a small helpless one that is their responsibility. Parenting is, above all, a moral obligation.

Also, let's say I were to tell you that you don't have the power to shape the personality of your spouse. Now, only a newlywed believes that you can change the personality of your spouse. Nonetheless, on hearing this truism, you're unlikely to say, "Oh, so you're saying it doesn't matter how I treat my spouse?" It matters how you treat your spouse to the quality of your marriage, and so it matters how you treat your child to the quality of your relationship to your child, both the quality of family life when the children are in the home, and later when the children grow up and reflect back on how they were treated.

I think it's testimony to the ubiquity of the Blank Slate that people can forget these simple truths, and think of parenting

as the shaping of children like putty. When told that they may not have that power, they can't think of a single other reason why they should be nice to their kids! An appreciation of human nature can help restore human relationships to a more natural state.

Let me discuss the remaining two fears more briefly. The third fear of human nature is the fear of determinism: if behavior is caused by a person's biology, he can't be held responsible for it. It's not an idle fear; about ten years ago the *Wall Street Journal* ran the headline: "Man's Genes Made Him Kill, His Lawyers Claim." Exchange your favorite lawyer joke at this point.

What is the suitable response to the fear of determinism? First we have to think about what we mean when we say we "hold someone responsible." Ultimately what it means is that we impose *contingencies* on their behavior—reward, punishment, credit, blame. For example: "If you rob the liquor store, we'll put you in jail." These contingencies are *themselves* causes of behavior—environmental causes, to be sure, but causes nonetheless—and we impose them because we think that they will change behavior in the future. For example, they will lead to fewer people robbing liquor stores. This logic does not appeal to an immaterial soul or a capricious ghost or some strange entity called free will, but rather to parts of the brain that can anticipate the consequences of behavior and inhibit it accordingly. We can keep this influence on the brain systems for inhibition even as we come to understand the brain systems for temptation.

Second, most of the bogus defenses for bad behavior that have been concocted by ingenious defense lawyers are more likely to be *environmental* than biological in the first place. Examples are the "abuse excuse" that was offered during the Menendez trial, when the brothers' lawyer claimed that they killed their parents because they had suffered a history of emotional abuse in childhood; the so-called Black Rage Syndrome that was offered to defend the Long Island Railroad gunman, who supposedly exploded one day under the pressure of living in a racist society and started to shoot white passengers in the train at random; the "patriarchy-made-me-do-it" defense offered by some defenders of rape victims, who supposedly were inflamed by misogynistic images from pornography and advertising.

Finally, there's the fear of nihilism: the fear that biology strips life of meaning and purpose. It says that love, beauty, morality, and all that we hold precious, are just figments of a brain pursuing selfish evolutionary strategies. For most people who ask the question "Why am I here," the answer "To pass on your genes" is less than comforting.

To address this discomfort, one first has to distinguish between religious and secular versions of the fear of nihilism. The religious version is that people need to believe in a soul, which seeks to fulfill God's purpose, and is rewarded or punished in an afterlife. According to this fear, the day that people stop believing in a soul, we will have, in Nietzsche's words, "the total eclipse of all values."

The answer to the religious fear is that a belief in a life to come is not such an uplifting idea, because it necessarily devalues life on Earth. Think about why you sometimes mutter the cliché "Life is short." That realization is an impetus to extend a gesture of affection to a loved one, to bury the hatchet in some pointless dispute, to vow to use your time productively instead of squandering it. I would argue that nothing makes life more meaningful than a realization that every moment of consciousness is a precious gift.

Also, there is a problem in appealing to God's purpose. Have you ever noticed that in practice, God's purpose is always conveyed by *other human beings*? This opens the door to a certain amount of mischief or worse. Many of you are familiar with the satirical newspaper called *The Onion*. Four years ago, they ran the following notorious headline: "Hijackers Surprised to Find Selves in Hell. 'We Expected Eternal Paradise for This,' say Suicide Bombers." Admittedly, it's in dubious taste, but makes an important point. Even if there are might be some people who can't be deterred from mass murder by anything short of the threat of spending eternity in hell, we know that there are people who are attracted to mass murder by the promise of spending eternity in heaven.

What about the secular fear of human nature? It's not just people who believe in an afterlife who are troubled by the idea that we're just products of evolution. My favorite response to the secular fear of human nature comes from the opening scene of the Woody Allen movie *Annie Hall*, in which the five-year-old Woody Allen character is taken to the family doctor by his mother because he's depressed, leading to the following dialogue:

Doctor: Why are you depressed, Alvy?

Mother: It's something he read.

Doctor: Something he read, huh?

Alvy: The universe is expanding.

Doctor: The universe is expanding?

Alvy: Well, the universe is everything, and if it's expanding, someday it will break apart and that will be the end of everything!

Mother: What's that your business? [To the doctor:] He's stopped doing his homework.

Alvy: What's the point?

The appropriate response came from Alvy's mother: "What has the universe got to do with it? You're here in Brooklyn. *Brooklyn is not expanding.*"

We laugh at Alvy because he has confused two different time scales. He's confused the scale of human time—what is meaningful to us, how we want to live our lives today with the brains we have—and evolutionary time, which is the process that determines how and why our brain causes us those have those thoughts in the first place. Another way of putting it is that even if in some metaphorical sense our genes are selfish, and evolution is amoral and without purpose, that doesn't mean that the products of evolution, namely ourselves, are selfish, or that we are amoral and without purpose. You all know the cliché in politics that people who appreciate legislation and sausages shouldn't watch them being made. The same might be true of human moral sentiments.

One more point before concluding. Even if our moral sense is a product of evolution, it does not imply that morality is somehow a figment of our imagination or a human construction. One could argue that morality, even without a God, has an inherent logic that the human moral sense implements. The simplest explanation of this principles requires a look at the late lamented strip *Calvin and Hobbes*. One day, Calvin announces to his tiger companion Hobbes, "I don't believe in ethics any more. As far as I'm concerned, the ends justify the means. Get what you can while the getting's good, that's what I say. Might makes right. The winners write the history books. It's a dog-eat-dog world, so I'll do whatever I have to and let others argue about whether it's 'right' or not." Whereupon Hobbes pushes him into the mud, and he exclaims, "Hey! Why'd you do that?!" Hobbes explains, "You were in my way. Now you're not. The ends

justify the means." Calvin says, "I didn't mean for everyone, you dolt. *Just me.*"

This shows the logical untenability of a morality based on the ethic of "just me." As soon as your fate depends on the behavior of other people and you engage them in any kind of dialogue, you can't maintain that your interests are privileged simply because you're the one who has them and expect them to take you seriously, any more than you can say that the point that you happen to be standing on is a privileged spot in the universe because you happened to be standing on it at that very moment. It's this core idea of the interchangeability of perspectives, or the recognition of other people's interests, that's the true basis of morality, as we see in numerous moral precepts and moral codes—the Golden Rule, Singer's expanding circle, Kant's categorical imperative, and Rawls' veil of ignorance.

To sum up: I've suggested that the dominant theory of human nature in modern intellectual life is based on the Blank Slate, the Noble Savage, and the Ghost in the Machine, and that these doctrines have been challenged by the sciences of mind, brain, genes, and evolution. The challenges have also been seen to threaten sacred moral values. But, in fact, that doesn't follow. On the contrary, I think a better understanding of what makes us tick, and of our place in nature, can *clarify* those values. This understanding shows that political equality does not require sameness, but rather policies that treat people as individuals with rights; that moral progress does not require that the mind is free of selfish motives, only that it has other motives to counteract them; that responsibility does not require that behavior is uncaused, only that it responds to contingencies of credit and blame; and that meaning in life does not require that the process that shaped the brain have a purpose, only that the brain itself have a purpose.

Finally, I've argued that grounding values in a blank slate is a mistake. It's a mistake because it makes our values hostages to fortune, implying that some day, discoveries from the field or lab could make them obsolete. And it's a mistake because it conceals the downsides of denying human nature, including persecution of the successful, totalitarian social engineering, an exaggeration of the effects of the environment (such as in parenting and the criminal justice system), a mystification of the rationale behind responsibility, democracy, and morality, and the devaluing of human life on Earth.



The Most Bipolar Ape

by Frans de Waal, Emory University

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Temperamentally, bonobos and chimps are poles apart. They're also our closest kin, and we are a rich mix of both.

There is no greater contrast between humankind's two closest relatives, than how they behave when tempted by good food. When forest chimpanzees are given a pile of bananas, they will fight over it. The males become violent and the females have no choice other than to back off. Male bonobos are also the first to approach a tasty meal. But instead of being aggressive, they hurry and look over their shoulders as they collect as much food as they can. The "weaker sex" then drives them off, before the group has lots of sex and happily shares the food.

Bonobos are genetically as close to us as chimpanzees. Hence both ape species shed light on the ancestor we all share. But the question as to whether we most resemble the violent chimpanzee or the sexy bonobo is a bit like asking whether a surface is best measured by its length or width. We obviously have something of both. Worse is to consider one pole at the expense of the other when making statements about human nature. Nevertheless, this is what Western culture has been doing for centuries by depicting our competitive side as somehow more authentic than our social one. But if people are as selfish as is assumed, how do they form societies? The traditional view is that of a contract among our ancestors, who decided to live together "by covenant only, which is artificial," as Thomas Hobbes put it. We are seen as loners: smart enough to pool resources, yet lacking any true attraction to each other.

The old Roman proverb *Homo homini lupus*—"man is wolf to man"—captures this asocial vision, which continues to inspire law, economics and political science. The problem isn't just that this misrepresents us, but it also insults one of the most gregarious and loyal co-operators in the animal kingdom—so loyal, in fact, that our ancestors wisely domesticated them. Wolves survive by bringing down prey larger than themselves through teamwork. The hunters then regurgitate meat for the nursing mothers, young and sometimes the sick and old who stayed behind. A wolf who would let narrow individual interests prevail would soon find himself alone chasing mice.

Apes know the same solidarity, and even chimpanzees are not always violent. In Ivory Coast, wild chimps have been seen taking care of group members wounded by leopards, licking away blood and preventing flies from coming near the wounds. If injured companions can't keep up, the others slow down for them. All of this makes perfect sense given that chimpanzees—like wolves and people—live in groups for a reason. We would not be where we are today had our ancestors been socially aloof.

An American woman with Asperger's syndrome demonstrates how fundamental bonding is to primates. She found inner peace while taking care of gorillas in a zoo—or perhaps it was the apes who took care of her. In *Songs of the Gorilla Nation*, Dawn Prince-Hughes tells how people would unnerve her with their direct stares and direct questions to which they wanted immediate answers. The gorillas, on the other hand, gave her space and conveyed a comforting calm. Most of all, they were patient. Gorillas are "oblique" characters in that they rarely engage in face-to-face contact. They also lack the white sclera around the iris that makes the human gaze such an unsettling signal. Moreover, apes rarely stare the way we do: they glance. They have incredible peripheral vision and follow much around them from the corners of their eyes.

The way the gorillas empathised with Prince-Hughes by "looking without looking, and understanding without speaking," as she put it, took place via postures and body mimicry—the ancient language of connection. Congo, the colony's mighty silverback, was the most sensitive and comforting. The male gorilla, despite his ferocious "King Kong" reputation, is a born protector.

That it takes an autistic person—someone considered deficient in interpersonal skills—to pick up on the primacy of ape bonding, and the kinship we sense with bodies more hairy than but similar to ours, is remarkable. That Prince-Hughes was pulled out of her solitude by gorillas, rather than chimpanzees or bonobos, makes sense in view of gorilla temperament. These apes are not nearly as extroverted as their cousins. Consider what happened at a Swiss zoo. One night, its chimps managed to remove the skylight of their housing and escape to the rooftops, some of them travelling throughout the city, jumping from house to house. It took days to round them all up.

The episode gave a local animal rights group the brilliant idea of "liberating" gorillas in the same zoo. Without giving much thought to what might be best for the animals, they climbed onto the ape house and removed a skylight above the gorilla quarters. But even though the apes had many hours in which to escape, they didn't. The following morning, the caretakers found the apes staring with amazement into the air, fascinated by the gaping hole above them. None of them was curious enough to climb out. This, in a nutshell, is the temperamental difference between chimps and gorillas.

By stressing primate bonding, my message is not that we lack competitive and aggressive tendencies. We have those in abundance. But in nature, everything is balanced around an optimum. In the same way that warm-blooded animals had to be equipped with ways to cool off, such as out-sized ears, every social tendency is offset by another that runs



Photo by Catherine Marin

Frans de Waal

de Waal: The Most Bipolar Ape

counter to it. Our societies are never completely peaceful, never completely competitive, never ruled by sheer selfishness and never perfectly moral. We're full of contradictions. We know competition as well as co-operation, selfishness as well as sociability, strife as well as harmony. Human nature is inherently multidimensional. Being both more systematically brutal than chimps and more loving and empathic than bonobos, we are by far the most bipolar ape.

On top of this inherent duality comes the role of intelligence. We habitually weigh the pros and cons of our actions before carrying them out. This may sound too obvious to mention, but it is radically different from how biologists used to present things. In the 1960s, every noticeable tendency of the human species was labelled an "instinct." This downplayed the role of learning and experience, as if we are programmed to act this way or that. One might think that we have become more careful, but the same sort of thinking is still with us today. Evolutionary psychologists compare the human brain to a Swiss Army knife to which evolution has one-by-one added "modules" for everything from face recognition and tool use to childcare and friendship. Unfortunately, no one knows exactly what a brain module is, and evidence for their existence is no more tangible than that for instincts.

We undeniably have inborn predispositions, yet I don't see us as blind actors following nature's genetic script. The same holds for our fellow primates. Let me explain this with the example of Yeroen, a male chimpanzee at Arnhem Zoo, in the Netherlands, who injured his hand in a fight. Yeroen was building a coalition with the up-and-coming Nikkie, but in the scuffles leading to their political partnership, Nikkie had bitten him. It wasn't a deep wound. Nevertheless, Yeroen limped heavily. After a couple of days, however, we got the impression that he limped mainly if Nikkie was around. I found this hard to believe, so we conducted systematic observations. Each time we saw Yeroen walk with a limp, we recorded Nikkie's whereabouts. It emerged that the younger chimp's field of vision was crucial. Yeroen would walk past Nikkie from a point in front of him to a point behind him. While he was in Nikkie's view he would hobble pitifully. But once out of sight, he would walk perfectly normally again.

Yeroen seemed to be faking a limp so that his partner would go easy on him. Hurting one's buddy is never a smart move, and Yeroen seemed to be pointing this out to Nikkie by exaggerating his pain. Putting on a front is something humans do all the time—the couple trying to look happy in public to hide a strained marriage, the people laughing at their boss's unfunny jokes. Keeping up appearances is something we share with the apes.

Photo © Frans de Waal



Chimps often reconcile with a kiss.

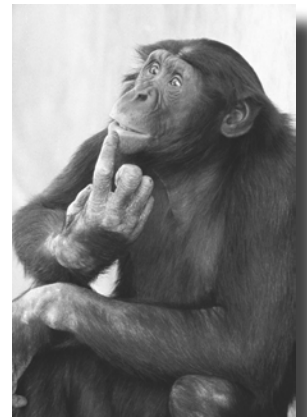
This is one reason I have trouble with the theory of animals as blind actors. They ponder many options in front of them and decide what to do dependent on the circumstances. In the laboratory, apes are usually tested on abstract problems such as finding rewards pointed out by experimenters. If they fail, as they

sometimes do, the conclusion is that we're smarter than they are. But in the social domain, in which apes deal with those they've known all their lives, they seem about as intelligent as we are.

A crude way to test this would be to put a human in a chimp colony to see how he or she fared. This is obviously unrealistic as an adult chimp's strength far outstrips any human's. But imagine we could find someone strong enough to stand up to an adult ape. Since one's standing in the community is decided by social cliques and mutual support, the challenge for the human would be to win over friends without being too assertive or submissive. Otherwise, one would end up at the bottom of the pecking order, or worse. There would be absolutely no point trying to hide fear or hostility, because human body language is an open book to chimps. My prediction is that an ape colony would prove no easier to negotiate than an average collection of people at work.

Comparisons among humans, chimps and bonobos thus go well beyond shared "instincts" or "modules," however defined. All three species face similar social dilemmas and need to overcome similar contradictions in trying to achieve status or in finding mates and resources. They need to compete without upsetting the group dynamic on which survival depends. In doing so, they apply their full brain power and their full range of emotions to find solutions. Sometimes they limp when they want to. At other times they fight and then reconcile with a kiss as if they can't decide between hostility and tenderness. True, our species looks farther ahead and weighs more options than the apes, but this hardly seems a fundamental difference.

Even if we wield the better chess computer, we're still all playing chess.



Pensive bonobo



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Worldviews, Families, and Grand Theories: Strategies for Unification in Psychology

by Mark E. Koltko-Rivera, Professional Services Group



Mark Koltko-Rivera

Mark Koltko-Rivera is the research director at Professional Services Group Inc., in Winter Park, FL. The address on which this article was based was delivered by Dr. Koltko-Rivera upon receiving the 2005 George A. Miller Award for his article, "The Psychology of Worldviews," which appeared in the *Division One journal, Review of General Psychology*, in 2004.

I am very honored to accept the Miller Award, and to have this opportunity to address you in this capacity. This occasion represents some "firsts" in my life. To begin with, I have never before received a check made out for a certain amount, "plus or minus two dollars," which of course is entirely appropriate in an award named for George Miller (1956). In addition, and by far more important, I have never before had the public opportunity to thank my mentors and sources of strength. These include, at Regis: Sal Spizzirri and Walter Kaestner; at Haverford College: Sid Perloe, Doug Heath, Doug Davis, and the late Richard Luman; at Fordham University: Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill and Jim Hennessey; at New York University: Mary Sue Richardson, Sam Juni, Sharon Weinberg, Ron Esposito, and Dick Ellis; at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn: Giuseppe Costantino, Mark Rand, Carmen Rivera, and Bill Bracero; at the Society for General Psychology, two editors of the *Review*, Peter Salovey and Doug Candland; and, always and everywhere: my wife, Kathleen Schmid Koltko-Rivera, and my mother, Sophie Koltko. Without the guidance or support given by each of these individuals, the article for which I am being honored would not have been written.

I am receiving this award for the article, "The Psychology of Worldviews" (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). Today, I will do four things. First, I will briefly summarize the main points of that article, to describe what worldviews are. Second, I will share my thoughts about why the worldview construct has been ignored by disciplinary psychology, and about why this situation must change. Third, I will describe two ways in which focusing attention on the worldview construct can help to further the cause of unification in psychology. Fourth, in considering some of my work in progress, I will describe a final, and somewhat controversial, way in which we might further unification in psychology. My take-home message is that the worldview construct should form a part of the research, practice, and theory agenda of every psychologist within this building [i.e., the Washington, DC Convention Center]; the construct is an important one for scientific and professional psychology, and, as further benefits, its use can advance the causes, not only of unification in psychology, but even world peace.

On Worldviews

[Note: Because "The Psychology of Worldviews" was sent to all members of the Society of General Psychology in the *Review of General Psychology*, I have truncated my summary thereof here.] The writer Anaïs Nin might have been summarizing my article when she said, "we don't see things as they are, we see them as we are." To put it more prosaically, human cognition and behavior are powerfully influenced by sets of beliefs and assumptions about life and reality, or, as we may put it, by worldviews.

A worldview is a way of describing the universe and life within it, both in terms of what is and what ought to be. A given worldview is a set of beliefs that includes limiting statements and assumptions regarding what exists and what does not, what objects or experiences are good or bad. An individual's worldview defines for that person what that person can know or do in the world, and how it can be known or done. A worldview defines not only what goals are possible to pursue in life, but also what goals *should* be pursued. Worldviews include assumptions that are unproven, even unprovable, but these assumptions are superordinate, in that they provide the epistemic and ontological foundations for other beliefs within a belief system.

In an attempt to provide a coherent picture of the worldview construct, in the article I proposed a collated model of worldview dimensions, calling upon a large body of literature. In addition, I proposed an integrated theory of worldview function in individual psychology, positioning worldview in the streams leading from stimulus to perception, and from impulse to behavior. In proposing this theory, I related worldview to such other constructs as motivation, agency, personality, cognition, and acculturation. Finally, I proposed extensive research agenda regarding worldview in social and personality psychology, including special considerations of positive psychology and peace psychology. In the dissertation on which this article was partially based, in which I reported the development of the Worldview Assessment Instrument (Koltko-Rivera, 2000), I further outlined extensive research agenda for monocultural/multicultural counseling and clinical psychology, as well as abnormal, cross-cultural, health, developmental, and educational psychology, and the psychology of religion and transpersonal psychology.

Why Disciplinary Psychology Has Largely Ignored Worldview

As I outlined in the article, there is at least highly suggestive evidence for the proposition that worldviews affect personal and social behavior. However, I also think that, at some level, we all know this already. Do we not already know that people's assumptions affect their behavior? That such assumptions are behind a lot of interpersonal and even political disputes? Of course we do. But if we do, then why has worldview been ignored by most of disciplinary psychology, at least aside from the multicultural counseling literature? We have plenty of theories of personality and cognition; why is it that this article in the *Review* seems to give what is perhaps the first comprehensive theory of the function of worldview in human behavior? Why is there no entry for "worldview" in the *Encyclopedia of Psychology* (Kazdin, 2000)?

I think I have a glimmer of an answer to these questions. This answer, in turn, has some important implications to address as we move to considering matters of unification in psychology. To consider this issue, we must first consider another somewhat problematic construct: reality.

Reality is inherently ambiguous, confusing, even threatening. Whether on the subatomic or the hyper-macroscopic levels, or anywhere in between, reality transcends human logic. Light is paradoxically both a particle and a wave, which makes no sense in human logical terms. Humans are surrounded by vast and

often hostile environments that seem to care nothing for our needs, a situation that might induce a deer-in-the-headlights paralysis, were we to focus on this. The social universe, with its competing pushes and pulls and obligations and emotions, is a touch confusing at times. The very mechanisms of life itself are composed of a mind-numbing complexity.

However, a state of Not Knowing, an overwhelming sense of ambiguity and confusion, has no survival value at all. Deer in the headlights frequently perish. Survival seems to require some stance, what writers call a backstory. We need a distinct version of reality, right or wrong, in order to approach life at all. So it is that we need worldviews. If human minds are pre-wired rather than blank slates (Pinker, 2002), then perhaps we are each pre-wired to develop a worldview that defines how the world works—not a *specific* worldview, mind you, but *some* worldview.

I say, “*some* worldview,” because human environments are spectacularly diverse. With a diversity in human environments comes a need for diversity in worldviews. To oversimplify: Does this human organism or culture reside in a resource-poor environment, where opportunities are few, and an individual’s efforts are likely to have only a limited payoff? Then perhaps a fatalistic, External Locus of Control-type of worldview has survival value. Alternatively, does this human or culture live in a resource-rich environment, where opportunities are plentiful, and an individual’s efforts are likely to yield a rich payoff? Then perhaps a more Horatio Alger-esque, Internal Locus of Control-type of worldview has greater survival value. Different environments seem to call for different worldviews, at least to some extent.

However, for much of human history, an *individual* human life was *not* exposed to a lot of diversity. You were born in the jungle, the desert, the old-forest village, and you lived and died in that jungle, that desert, that village. Thus, for any given individual, the holding of a single worldview was usually adequate. The very stability of an individual’s worldview had survival value, whatever that worldview was.

This way of looking at worldviews—something of an evolutionary psychology perspective—has at least two important implications. First, it is in the nature of worldviews that they *appear* not to be arbitrary, not the accidents of history and geography and culture that worldviews really are, at least to some extent. Rather, it is in the nature of a given worldview that it *appears* to be The Truth, ‘the real deal,’ firm as the Rock of Gibraltar. Consequently, on an unconscious level, everyone—including psychologists—may be somewhat predisposed to ignore the arbitrary nature, the multiplicity, even the very existence of worldviews. Like the Wizard of Oz, the worldview construct says to us, “Ignore the man behind the curtain.” As Kahneman and Tversky showed us long ago, under conditions of uncertainty, biases in judgment come to the fore (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974); even psychologists are subject to these. Similarly, in an existentially uncertain world, even psychologists may be predisposed to hold fast to their own worldviews, and to ignore their somewhat arbitrary foundations. (Such may be the best interpretation of the terror management research.) I think that this is why psychology has generally ignored the worldview construct.

However, the second implication of these reflections suggests an urgent reason why this state of affairs must change. At the risk of stating the obvious: We no longer live in the environments of earlier humans, enveloped for life within very specific environments and insular communities, bridged only by the occasional trader. We travel at close to the speed of sound between vastly differing environments and cultures. We communicate at close to the speed of light with individuals from vastly differing environments and cultures. Humans from vastly differing environments and cultures now migrate to each others’ physical environments, by the million.

My very existence is a testament to this fact, as George Albee noted in his kind introduction to this talk, wherein he charitably referred to my “hybrid vigor.” My two sets of grandparents came from environments in Poland and Puerto Rico, which are separated by a large, inconveniently placed ocean; even just my European ancestors, in Russia and Spain, were separated by over 1500 miles of terrain, different languages, and different religions. In most human communities, throughout most of history, someone like me simply would never have come to be. My point is that patterns of social contact have changed radically, and strategies of human survival must change radically as well.

In today’s world, it is no longer adaptive to pretend that other ways of looking at the world either do not exist or are simply wrong-headed. Now, more than at any previous time in history, it is not only adaptive, but crucially important, that we find productive ways to approach other people who have vastly differing ways of looking at the world, with an objective other than their extermination. The Crusaders’ approach to cultural differences did not work in the 11th Century, and it will not work in the 21st Century, either. Even worse, now we encounter one another not with pike and sword, but with nuclear and biological weaponry. In short, we must pay attention to worldviews, rather than ignore them; we must cope with worldview differences, rather than try to exterminate them; and, we must do this, not only for the survival of the individual and the community, but for the survival of the very species. Researchers in social and personality psychology, particularly in the psychology of peace and conflict, would do well to consider these matters, as might we all.

Worldview and Unification in Psychology

I now shall turn to the matter of unification in psychology. There are two ways in which a focus on worldview may help to promote unification. In order to consider the first of these ways, I would like to bring to mind an image: the image of one’s extended family, gathered for the holiday.

A Focus on Worldview as a Unifying Force in Psychology

Perhaps it is different for you, but not everyone in my family agrees with one another. However, when we get together, what you can count on is discussion of some common topics. The fact that as many people get up alive from the dinner table as earlier sat down demonstrates that, in my family, we usually find a way to negotiate a civil discussion about those common topics. Without these common topics, we would not have conversations; we would not have multiple people in dialogue; rather, we would have just a succession of monologues, which would not create much of a family.

A scientific discipline and its specialties are much like a family and its members. Not everyone agrees with everyone else. Not everyone even *likes* everyone else. But a strong discipline needs a set of common topics to work from, topics that are addressed from everyone’s differing perspectives. To the extent that a discipline is incapable of sustaining a multifaceted discussion of common topics, it is in danger of whirling apart into separate “descendant” disciplines.

I propose the worldview construct as a particularly good candidate for a common topic, something that can be approached usefully from many different perspectives, subdisciplines, and specialties within psychology. Worldviews exercise a pervasive influence on many different kinds of behavior, throughout many levels of social abstraction, from the individual and the dyad to the collective and the society. This effect is no doubt moderated by familiar constructs such as intellect, personality, motivation, and culture. In addition, we would expect that the effects of worldviews—and all those moderating variables—are expressed neurologically. Thus, there is something for everyone here: when it comes to worldview, any number of psychological subdisciplines can play, and everyone can win. In addition, as I have indicated earlier, when it comes to understanding worldviews

and their differences, the stakes in this particular reality show are very high. It is my hope that the study of the worldview construct from multiple perspectives and sub-disciplines will help to promote cross-specialty communication, and ultimately unification, within psychology. But this is not the only way in which I think worldview research might promote these important goals.

The "Globally Multivariate" Approach to Behavioral Research

For much of psychology's history, a great deal of research was framed as the effect of variable *x* on variable *y*, perhaps as mediated or moderated by variable *z*. There are many advantages to this approach, including conceptual clarity. However, there are also many disadvantages to this approach. Not the least of these is the fact that, in the real world, we rarely or never have a situation where variable *x* acts in isolation on variable *y* in isolation. Rather, we have quite a number of input variables, acting on quite a number of output variables, mediated or moderated by quite a number of intervening variables, with everything interacting simultaneously. Once upon a time, we could not deal practically with such a situation. We did not have ways to deal with multiple variables, nor did we have access to the large numbers of research participants necessary to assess their interactions.

However, here again, we live in different times. Today, multivariate statistics are much more commonly taught than in earlier days. In addition, the Internet provides ways to join researchers from far-flung locations into virtual or distributed research laboratories. Basically, we can do now that which was impractical before.

I propose, therefore, a very different approach to research than what most of us were taught in graduate school. Let us begin to design more research projects to investigate, not the impact of worldview or motivation or intellect on some behavior, but

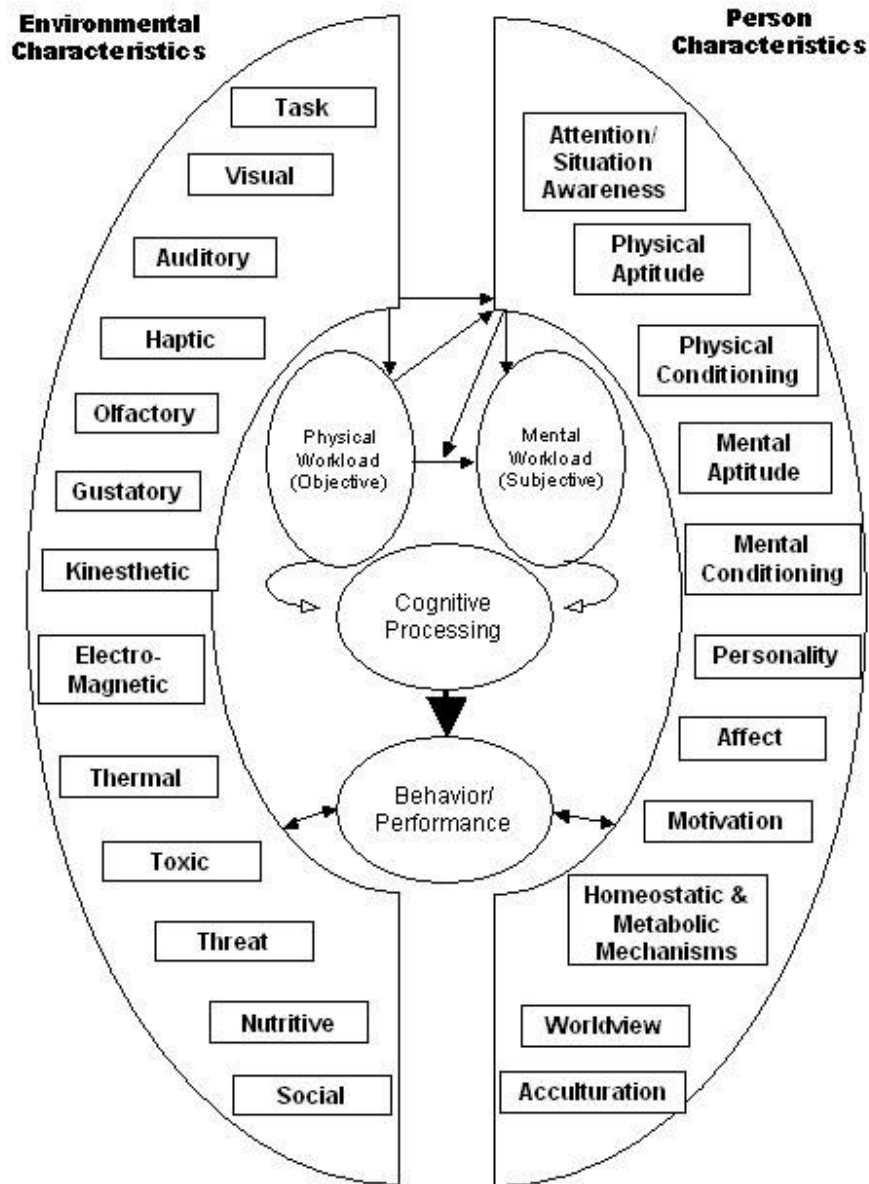


Figure 1. The Global Multivariate approach to behavioral research.

rather, the impact of worldview and motivation and intellect, and a host of other variables, on behavior. Specifically, I propose what I call the Globally Multivariate approach to research (Fig. 1). (Note: This is a static model. A more process-oriented approach is given in Koltko-Rivera, 2004, pp.36-41.)

On one side of this overall research model, we have a host of person variables, everything from physical and mental conditioning to motivation, personality, worldview, and acculturation. On the other side of the model, we have a host of environment variables, everything from its electromagnetic profile to its nutritional characteristics. These will all impinge on workload and performance, and, thus, on experience, cognition, and behavior. The payoff here is that this real-world-oriented approach can provide more ecological validity to our research. I can only imagine that the proportion of variance that we will account for will rise precipitously. This would be a great improvement over the current situation where, in many of our research studies, most dependent variance is left unexplained.

Grand Theory and Unification in Psychology

Turning to some of my work in progress, I would like to make one further point concerning unification, in which the worldview construct makes only a peripheral appearance. However, I warn you, in the course of making this point, I must name a concept that seems to inspire disdain, disgust, and even dread in the hearts of some of those who hear it: "grand theory."

A grand theory tries to explain human behavior on a grand scale. That is, it tries to explain behavior in many domains: work and love, sickness and shopping.

We have all heard the term "grand theory," and I suspect we have all encountered the vague feeling that it is something bad. As the legend goes, in the bad old days, theorists spun theories that purported to explain vast domains of human behavior.

But these grand theories, so the story goes, were unfalsifiable, not really scientific, and many of them had no data to support them. When law and order came to the Old Western world, the marshalls of science, led by the sociologist Robert K. Merton, imposed the dictum that, henceforth, proper theorists should focus on 'theories of the middle range,' where the deer and the antelope play with but a few variables in very limited domains.

Such is the legend. The truth of the matter, I think, is rather different. The grand theories of a former day, such as Watsonian behaviorism (Watson, 1930), did indeed address, in principle, vast areas of human behavior. Freudian psychoanalysis purported to describe essentially all human behavior: not only neuroses and psychoses, but also art, religion, the impulse to conduct scientific research, the very foundations of civilization. However, the grand *scope* of grand theories is not itself problematic. There is nothing inherently wrong with intellectual ambition. The physicists know this, which is why many of them are working on various versions of a Grand Unifying Theory of all physical phenomena (Weinberg, 1993). Anyone who thinks this is overreaching should be prepared to take up the matter with Stephen Hawking (1996/2003).

For the most part, it is not that the old grand theories were unfalsifiable; it is rather that most of the old grand theorists simply did not bother to *try* to falsify them. In particular, Freud showed a lordly disdain of quantitative research in this regard. The legendary lack of research available to support some of the old grand theories was also not necessarily an insoluble problem, either. The solution to homelessness is housing; the solution to hunger is food; and, the solution to a lack of data is research.

As I see it, the fatal problem with the old grand theories of psychology was that, although they were grand in scope regarding their *output* variables, they were positively anemic with regard to their *input* variables. I have no problem with a theory trying to explain work, love, pathology, and shopping; just don't try to explain it all on the basis of toilet training. The old grand theories were essentially *unidimensional*; that is, typically one construct (or a very small number of constructs) served as the foundation for the whole theory (for example, Skinner's conditioned learning). This, of course, is simply not realistic. Human life is exuberantly multidimensional, and to ignore this was ultimately fatal to the old grand theories. Such an approach is also a dereliction of scientific duty. As noted by George Miller (1969) in one of his most important papers, psychology is here to serve people. It cannot do that without getting a sense of the person as a comprehensive system.

We now find ourselves in a position that cries out for the return of grand theory—not the grand theories of old, but something like "Grand Theory, Release 2.0," or 'neo-grand theory.' The compelling reason for neo-grand theory is that science progresses best when it becomes truly cumulative. For this, an overarching theoretical framework—essentially, a grand theory—seems to be necessary (Parsons, 1950, pp. 4-6).

I call for psychologists to return to the construction of grand theories of human behavior. These will be 'grand' theories in *two* senses of the word. Yes, like the grand theories of an earlier day, the neo-grand theories will aspire to address many domains and dimensions of human behavior as output variables. However, in addition, the neo-grand theories should rigorously apply multiple *input* variables: motivation, personality, intellectual function, worldview, culture, historical variables, environmental variables by the truckload. Take the Globally Multivariate approach to research that I proposed a few moments ago, and use that as a template—really, a metatheory—for theory construction. Such an approach will promote better and more useful theories, and a more unified psychology. We are in possession of much more sophisticated tools for theory construction than were available to the old grand theorists (e.g., Higgins, 2004; Kukla, 2001; Slife,

Reber, & Richardson, 2005); we should use these better tools to construct more and grander theoretical edifices.

Conclusion

In summary, worldviews exist, and their effect is important. Disciplinary psychology has ignored worldview heretofore, perhaps because there may be survival value to letting worldviews do their work without much close attention. However, at present, there is probably more survival value to paying close attention to worldviews, their effects, and their differences. Through having many subdisciplines within psychology pay attention to worldviews, we promote unification in psychology. The worldview construct should play an important role within a larger overall approach to psychological research that I have called the Globally Multivariate model. Finally, the time has come to return to grand theory construction efforts, in a more sophisticated way than in earlier days; in this endeavor, the Globally Multivariate model also provides a useful metatheory or template.

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Is There Still Any Hope of a Unified Psychology?

by Robert J. Sternberg, Tufts University



Robert Sternberg

Robert Sternberg is the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts University and a Past-President of APA. This article is based on an invited Division One presentation, "Promoting Unity in Psychology," given by Dr. Sternberg at the 2005 APA Convention.

Years ago, I published with and consulted for a publishing firm. I was very pleased, and proud to be associated, with the firm, which I thought did really excellent work. Then the firm, like many others, was bought by a conglomerate. Although the name of the firm remained the same, it became an entirely different firm, and, in my opinion, was almost nothing at all like the firm in which I had taken so much pride via my association. One could argue over whether the firm had become better or worse, although I felt strongly it had become worse. Others might have felt that I was not keeping up with the times, or was nostalgic for a bygone era, or that one must simply accept changes, for better or worse. What was clear, however, was that the company was different with respect to its fundamental values and way of approaching and dealing with its employees, customers, and stockholders. I liked the old values more.

I mention this event because, in the past few years, I have felt more or less the same way about psychology—not as a discipline of knowledge, but rather, as a field of study for which some issues and approaches are socially preferred in a given time and place, but others are not. The field today only vaguely resembles the field that I chose to study long ago, and that I have come to love and admire. The name of the field is the same, but, like the publishing company, it has become a very different entity. Is it worse? As in the case of the publishing company, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

What are the signs of change? There are several.

The first is that if I look at the professors in some of the top-ranked psychology departments, the kinds of problems they deal with, for the most part, are quite different from the kinds of problems that professors dealt with a generation ago. When I started my career, for example, people were excited about things that, today, still are talked about: David McClelland's theory of achievement motivation, Irving Janis's theory of groupthink, Richard Atkinson's and Richard Shiffrin's three-store model of memory, Amos Tversky and Danny Kahneman's theory of heuristics. What was exciting about these ideas was not only their particular content, but that they dealt with big questions: What kinds of factors influence achievement besides IQ; what kinds of group processes can impair decision making, even among very smart decision makers; how is our knowledge organized and stored in memory;

how and why do smart people make poor decisions?

If one goes back a generation further, some of the big ideas of the grand theorists, such as Gordon Allport's notion of cardinal traits, still help us understand why the organizing principles of people's personalities seem to be different. Donald Hebb's notion of cell assemblies still informs contemporary thinking about how we learn. For that matter, Guthrie's cognitive theory of learning showed that one really needed to get inside the "black box." The big ideas of Freud, Skinner, and Piaget, right or wrong, set the agenda for much of the research that followed upon them, even if the research was, at times, to knock down these ideas. The work of these and many others of the top psychological researchers of the era had in common that it asked big questions. The answers were not always right, but one never had the feeling that the researchers shied away from asking fundamental questions about mind and behavior.

Fields advance and evolve, and, as they do, the kinds of questions they ask change. Fortunately, we are not still asking whether the seat of human thinking is in the brain (as believed by Plato) or in the heart (as believed by Aristotle). But I wonder whether, in our rush to emulate biology and map myriad psychological phenomena to the human brain, we still are as concerned with answering big questions as we were in earlier times. I wonder whether our field has not lost some of its heart, and perhaps a bit of its brain as well! This is not to disparage research on brain correlates of human behavior. There is, and always has been, a need to understand how psychological processes map to the human brain. There also has always been a need to recognize that the connection between mind and brain is bidirectional, and that changes in thinking can affect the brain, just as changes in the brain can affect the mind. But when more and more jobs and grant money are thrown at the same kinds of research on brain correlates of behavior, I wonder whether those who do not do this kind of research will, sooner or later, end up feeling marginalized—as though their field has lost its heart.

There is a chance that cognitive, affective, and other forms of neuroscience will separate from psychology. More likely, given present trends, is that they will increasingly "take over" the field. Some of my colleagues welcome this trend. And as I said, I believe in the value of this kind of research. Perhaps I am getting old, but I miss the feeling of great minds confronting big questions that first attracted me to the field. To me, the median question size seems to be getting smaller. It may be that a different sort of person will be attracted to what may be a new emerging field, one with a different kind of contribution to make. Perhaps, though, psychology will lose what has made it special.

Sternberg: Unified Psychology

My concern is that psychology is fragmenting into separate fields—one about mind and behavior, the other about brain correlates of mind and behavior (to the extent that the concept of mind is still accepted by brain researchers)—or worse, that the non-brain-science part of psychology is being extruded from the field. I worry that psychology, like the publishing company, increasingly is becoming another entity that merely shares the same name as its predecessor. I did like many of the old ways. But my confidence in the value of the old ways is tempered by two historical issues.

The first is my memory of when I started my career. There was a cognitive psychologist who, in the 1960s, had done very nice work on mathematical models of concept learning. But by the 1970s, such work seemed passé. I remember thinking that this poor sucker had let himself become out of date, and didn't even know it. He seemed positively Jurassic to me. So I realize that, today, I may have become the dinosaur I once thought he was.

The second issue is my realization that many of us have a particular fondness for the music with which we grew up, a fondness that is not shared by our own children when they grow up. We, of course, imprint on the music of our childhood and adolescence, but our children imprint on other music, which we may like no more than they like the music of our era. One of my favorite pieces as I grew up was the Mozart Requiem Mass in D Minor. I spent many hours listening to its beautiful but mournful notes. Perhaps someday someone will play it upon my death. But I hope that neither it nor any other requiem mass is played for the death of the psychology I have known and loved.

By the way, let me say what happened to the publishing company that changed hands. It was broken into pieces and sold off, bit by bit. Its name is kept only by a relatively small piece of the original, to the extent that this piece shares any overlap with the original. Let's not let this happen to our own field. Psychology can stay intact if we remain true to our values and ideals, and to our unity as a field of inquiry.



Ernest R. Hilgard Award

Classical Conditioning Since Pavlov

M. E. Bitterman, *Békésy Laboratory of Neurobiology*

The following is an abstract of an article scheduled for publication in the *Review of General Psychology* and based on an invited address sponsored by Division One, given at the 2005 APA convention on the occasion of Dr. Bitterman receiving the Ernest R. Hilgard Award for Lifetime Career Contributions to General Psychology. Questions or comments on this article may be addressed to M. E. Bitterman at jeffb@pbrc.hawaii.edu.



Jeff Bitterman

Since the publication in 1927 of Pavlov's *Conditioned Reflexes*, the accumulation of factual information about classical conditioning has continued, but there has been relatively little conceptual progress. Some of the ideas commonly thought to be new would not be new to Pavlov. Some that really are new, such as the widely accepted idea that conditioning depends on CS-US contingency rather than contiguity, are untenable. Certainly, there has been progress. We have a better appreciation of the generality of classical conditioning over animals and over systems within animals, of its relation to instrumental conditioning, of the nature of the associations that are formed, of the source of conditioned inhibition, and of the role of attention. But not much to show for the work of three-quarters of a century.

The only thing we have now that approximates a general theory of conditioning was introduced more than 30 years ago and continues to receive a good deal of respectful consideration despite a variety of generally recognized shortcomings that little has been done to remedy. An especially attractive feature of the theory has been its statement in equational form, which opens the door to quantitative prediction, but there are no values for the several parameters of the equation, which means that predictions can be no more than ordinal, and even those predictions are made on the naive assumption of a one-to-one relation between associative strength and performance. Nor does a systematic review of the most recent decade of work on conditioning, as represented by papers in two leading journals, give much reason to think that a more satisfactory theory is in the making.

What is wanting is agreement on a well-characterized model animal and on a set of highly standardized and efficient training procedures designed to generate a homogeneous body of data, exactly replicable and readily extendable, to which people working in different laboratories contribute. So equipped, we could begin with the data of some simple experiments to develop a rigorous quantitative theory, carefully evaluating its parameters, testing its exact implications in further experiments, and extending it as required by expansion of the data base and progressive broadening of the boundary conditions. This strategy, recommended many years ago by Hull who did not then have the computer resources required to pursue it properly, is exemplified by some recent work on appetitive conditioning in honeybees. A suitable vertebrate model, easily maintained in the laboratory and for which several sophisticated conditioning techniques already are available, would be a small freshwater



Nurturing Talent in a New Generation

by Lewis Lipsitt, Brown University
& Matthew Goodwin, University of Rhode Island

We invited Lewis Lipsitt, an established psychologist, and Matthew Goodwin, a young graduate student, to let us listen in on their conversation about the mentoring relationship.

—Ed.

Lewis P. Lipsitt: When I retired 10 years ago as a professor emeritus of psychology, medical science, and human development at Brown University, I was not ready to give up my career as a researcher and teacher entirely (and probably never will be). So I requested an appointment as a research professor and continued to work part-time at Brown on "soft money" and simultaneously accepted research consultancies for non-profit agencies serving children and adolescents with developmental and behavioral problems. This has proven to be, for me, an ideal way to keep my hand in work I love, continuing some longitudinal work on kids I first began studying at Brown over 40 years ago, and carrying whatever expertise I have into new territories. One of those consultations has been at the Groden Center, a non-profit school in Providence, RI serving the behavioral and educational needs of persons with autism and other developmental differences. The Executive Directors of the Groden Center, June and Gerald Groden, hold appointments at Brown through the Center for the Study of Human Development, the successor institution to the Child Study Center which I founded. It was in connection with my work at the Groden Center that I met Matthew Goodwin.

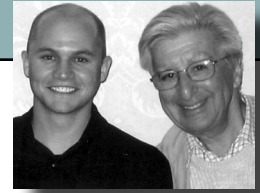
Matthew S. Goodwin: I began an internship at the Groden Center while pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. Under the supervision of Grace Baron, my faculty advisor at Wheaton and the Behavioral Consultant to the Groden Center, I engaged in an independent honors thesis reviewing the bio-psycho-social literature in autism and carrying out a preliminary study assessing basal heart rate telemetrically in children with developmental disabilities. Upon graduation in 1998, June Groden hired me to assist with assessment and intervention research.

LPL: Matthew was already engaged in research, and was serving as research coordinator at the Groden Center when we met. After numerous interactions, I invited him to moonlight by assisting me with various research and technical needs at Brown. Of special relevance to this column, I was the past-president of Division 1 at this time and responsible for coordinating the program for the 109th annual APA convention in San Francisco. Realizing Matthew's talents and interest in pursuing a career in psychology, I suggested he become a student member of APA and assist me in putting together a division program.

MSG: Assisting Lew with the Division 1 convention program was an incredible learning experience. I read hundreds of abstract submissions from a diverse set of researchers and, with kind support from Division 1, attended the meetings. The collective experience greatly expanded my view of the field, helped me establish contacts with other students and professionals, reinforced my engagement in psychological research, and motivated me to consider graduate training.

LPL: Given Matthew's research interests and previous work with physiological measurement, we began discussing ways in which we might capitalize on my previous research work with infants, adapting polygraphic recording and response measurement procedures to assess stress responses in children and adolescents with autism who are often unable to provide reliable self-reports about their emotional states. With enthusiasm from Grace Baron and the Grodens, we assembled a talented team of researchers in this effort including Wayne Velicer at the University of Rhode Island (URI)

and Stefan Hofmann at Boston University. I also encouraged Matthew to explore graduate programs in experimental and developmental psychology at this time to get more training in research methods and statistics.



Goodwin & Lipsitt

MSG: At Lew's urging I began to apply to graduate programs. Through my interactions with Wayne Velicer, and encouragement from the rest of the Groden research team, I enrolled in a doctoral program in Behavior Science at the University of Rhode Island, with a focus on quantitative methods. Since beginning my studies at URI I have completed my Master's thesis extending the work on telemetric assessments of cardiovascular reactivity in persons with autism and am currently working on my doctoral dissertation, utilizing the Groden Center research laboratory.

I also continue my affiliation with APA serving as the Division 1 graduate student representative and webmaster. My involvement in the Division couldn't be timelier. As recently as 2005, Division 1 had only one graduate student member (me), who is also the only member in the Division under the age of 30! Unfortunately, this membership statistic matches a general trend across the 54 divisions of APA. With the intention of recruiting more graduate students and young professionals into Division 1, I joined an ad hoc mid-Winter Executive Committee meeting in October of 2005 with President George Albee, past-president Bonnie Strickland, President-elect Harold Takooshian, and Membership Chair Howard Tennen. At this time we decided to offer a free one-year student-affiliated membership to APAGS members and to hold a 1-hour student poster session at the annual APA meetings in New Orleans. To date, more than 300 APAGS members have signed on to Division 1 and we're hoping to involve them further by establishing an Executive Student Committee for Division 1 to lobby for student needs within our Division and APA more generally.

LPL: Academic mentoring is a symbiotic affair, especially when one of the partners is, let us say, beyond the struggles of accomplishment and essentially satisfied with his or her career to this point, and the other is bright, eager to learn, and understands when the mentor shows signs of living in a different era. The mentor in fact learns much from the younger partner—about what is driving students these days, about the more stringent regulations governing just about everything, and even about the substantive aspects of the discipline itself. For me, the experience has been genuinely rewarding, especially from watching a young, talented, and generous person become assimilated into our scientific profession and discipline, and going on to a scholarly career. (Thank you, Matthew.)

More can be learned about the mentoring process, from one of the wisest developmental and general psychologists I have known, Harriet Rheingold (1994), from a book she wrote in her twilight years: *The Psychologist's Guide to Academia*.

MSG: In addition to the knowledge gained in the institutions of learning I've attended, I have benefited greatly from having a mentor who urges me to explore new areas of inquiry, connects me with established practitioners in the field, and who continually expresses interest in my development. (Thank you, Lew.)

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Better Right than Right-Wing: On Diversity in Psychology

George W. Albee, PhD, ABPP - University of Vermont, Florida Mental Health Research Center



George Albee

A close friend died recently. He was the most politically conservative person I have ever known. He was a retired Scotch-Presbyterian minister who was born and raised in South Carolina. He was an only child who lived in a fatherless home in bone-chilling poverty during the depression-years. His mother had low-paying jobs off and on in the cotton mills. They were often cold and hungry. He went regularly to find and pick up bits of coal in the rail yards. They ate the cheapest food—fat back, grits, greens. He worked his way through the University of South Carolina, then through Divinity School. He married a nurse. They had four children and little money. With the first hundred dollars saved they bought shares of Coca Cola. In 60 years their original investment grew beyond belief. They kept investing and became rich. They lived simply in a modest house and paid cash for all purchases.

He and I scheduled two two-hour conversations a week for the past half dozen years. We disagreed about politics, science, sex, religion, history and the origin of the Universe.

We became friends. I learned about conservatism and conservatives. I remain a radical and an atheist. He never deviated from his right-wing views.

Wright and Cummings (2005) have edited a book that is a shotgun criticism of many aspects of contemporary American psychology. They have assembled a group of contributors who challenge and criticize many aspects of current professional psychology. Because it is a shotgun effort, some quails are hit squarely, but some by-standers are wounded unnecessarily.

I want to direct my remarks to the book's criticism of liberal and "politically correct" positions in psychology.

Gottfredson (2005) defends Jensen and intelligence research, and Redding (2005) finds lack of diversity in University psychology departments where most faculty members, at least at Stanford and the University of Virginia where he sampled, are Democrats—some even liberal Democrats! Certainly he should have sampled other great universities—like Bob Jones and Brigham Young where he might have found more Republicans. But we are all fond of data that prove we are right!

Gottfredson fails to mention the long history of findings of intellectual inferiority in non-WASP groups by leaders in psychology: Galton (women and "Hottentots"); Pearson (Jews); Pintner (Irish, Italian, Poles, French-Canadian, Slovak); Goodenough (Italians); Eysenck (Irish, other immigrants, Blacks); Goddard (Jews, Hungarians, Italians, Russians). For review see Albee, (1982). It is not only historic figures in psychology who find race differences in intelligence. A more recent (conservative, surely) public statement on racial differences in intelligence test averages, signed by 52 "internationally known scholars" (mostly APA members), appeared in the Wall Street Journal on 12/14/94. It states that "American blacks score on average about 15 points lower than American whites-- Jews and East Asians score somewhat higher." Nowhere is there any mention of the High-Scope studies of the

remarkable improvement in IQ scores after intense pre-school training.

Neither reviews the influence of Sir Cyril Burt who is alleged to have invented data to demonstrate that intelligence was based on genetic factors and who designed British education around his biased views. The APA honored him, as it did his racist student Eysenck. Nor could I find any reference to the racist views of Yerkes or Terman or Garrett, past-Presidents of APA.

The great concerns in American Universities during the 20th century were the intellectual arguments of socialism and communism that might poison the minds of students. The Board at U.C. Berkeley insisted that everyone teaching sign a non-communist loyalty oath. Radicals were fired from universities across the country. Garrett, at Columbia, hinted at the tainted views of Franz Boas and his student Margaret Mead. He also wrote pamphlets arguing against desegregation and civil rights.

In the Nature-Nurture argument conservatives are nearly always on the side of nature and liberals for nurture.

We should not be surprised to find a majority of liberals in Liberal Arts Colleges. Redding did not sample the political views of medical school faculties, nor those in Schools of Business, Schools of Engineering, of Agriculture, and of Divinity. Diversity would require liberal medical professors, Marxists in Business, Greens in Agriculture, and Atheists in Divinity.

Liberal views among psychology faculty are a recent thing. American psychology was founded by white Protestant males. G. Stanley Hall was opposed to the education of women, so was E.G. Boring. Most early psychologists were in Academia. Most opposed giving advanced degrees to women. Most favored hiring "Christian gentlemen." Jews were largely excluded from teaching. (A few Jews adopted more WASP names. Terman advised a bright student, Harry Israel, to become Harry Harlow.)

Blacks of course were excluded from higher education in America. Between 1920 and 1966 the 10 most prestigious departments of psychology in the United States awarded 8 PhD's to Negro (sic) candidates while conferring 3,767 doctorates. Few women, too, were doctoral recipients.

It was not until the late 60s-early 70s that the White male dominance in graduate education was seriously challenged. Black psychologists and women psychologists confronted APA and demanded change. The climate in America higher education was receptive to more diversity in the last quarter century.

Because conservatives regularly oppose tax-supported welfare programs they are not often favorable to public health efforts at primary prevention. Public health programs are almost always tax-supported so they are neglected, under funded, opposed and/or ignored. Public health efforts frequently attempt to regulate damaging practices of corporations—such as toxic smoke emissions, dumping dangerous chemicals in land-fills,

A Word from Our President...

streams, and lakes, and condoning dangerous work-environments—in mines, animal slaughter, and using growth hormones and toxic fertilizers. Such control regulations reduce profits.

In the field of mental health/public health, efforts at primary prevention are underfunded and opposed. An important public health dictum—no disease or disorder has ever been treated out of existence—is ignored or suppressed. Instead the endless search for cure through individual treatment is the major focus of medicine, psychiatry, and psychology. This clearly is a conservative position. Primary prevention of mental disorders would require a major effort to reduce poverty and its damaging consequences for children. Narrowing the average income gap between rich and poor has major health benefits (Wilkinson, 1996). The words prevention and primary prevention do not appear in the index of Wright & Cummings (2005).

A symposium is planned for the APA convention in New Orleans that will examine the Wright-Cummings book in more detail. Please plan to attend so you can hear a more balanced discussion!

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At the midwinter Executive Committee meeting: (L to R) Bonnie Strickland, George Albee, Harold Takooshian, Howard Tennen, and Matthew Goodwin

Convention Program: 2006

The 2006 Division One convention program has been completed. There were many false starts this year due to the uncertainty of New Orleans as the actual convention site. We had very few program submissions up to the December 1 deadline, but then we suddenly had approximately twenty proposals from which to choose. As soon as the submission deadline was past, copies of the proposals were sent out to Doctors Bonnie Strickland, George Albee and Michael Wertheimer for review. Each reviewer rank-ordered the proposals based on how well they felt the topics fit the philosophy of Division One. Then a final ranking was developed and this was used for the final program selection.



Richard Meegan

Our program begins in the evening on Wednesday, August 9 with the Executive Board Meeting. On Thursday, we will open our program with a business meeting at 9:00 am. Something new to the division this year is the addition of a poster session on Thursday morning. The idea for this poster session is to recognize and encourage the work of graduate students and, we hope, to encourage some of them to become members of the division.

A major theme of our program focuses on the direction that the APA is moving in and an examination of the relative emphasis APA gives to practice as opposed to research. In this vein, we have scheduled a two hour program for Thursday chaired by Dr. Peter Salovey of Yale titled "Transforming APA: A Time for Revolution." On Saturday morning we have scheduled a debate titled "Psychology Needs Reform: APA Presidents Debate the 10 Amendments." This session will be chaired by Dr. Frank Farley of Temple University and will include Division One presidents Albee, Farley and Strickland, along with Dr. Nicholas Cummings. Additionally, Dr. Albee's presidential address scheduled for Saturday is titled "Is it time for a Third Force in American Psychology"? Dr. Bonnie Strickland will be a discussant for this presentation.

Other planned presentations are titled "Why Do Young Psychologists Study Aging," "Transforming Crisis Theory in Behavioral Health Care," "Positive Psychology Interventions Applied to Business Consulting and Coaching," "Bridging the Gap in the Second Century of Psychological Sciences: A Proposal from Latin America," and "Reviewing Books and Films for PsycCritiques".

Most of our award winners will be presenting addresses. These include Drs. Barbara Rogoff, Florence Denmark, Bruce Ellis, and Hazel Markus. Our congratulations go out to Dr. Michael Wertheimer for receiving the C. Alan Boneau for Outstanding Service to the Society for General Psychology. Our awards program was chaired by Dr. Nancy Felipe Russo who did a yeoman's job in preparing this year's program.

Division One is happy to honor our new fellows at a breakfast on Friday morning, followed by the presentation of the division awards on Friday afternoon. The division hopes all members will join us for a social hour and reception for our award winners and new fellows at 5:00 pm on Friday. We are most excited that one of our new fellows, Dr. Sharon Brehm, has been elected President of APA and we are hopeful that Sharon will be able to join us for the breakfast and social hours.

—Richard Meegan,
Division 1 Program Chair

Announcements...

The William James Book Award

Nominations materials should include three copies of the book (dated post-2001 and available in print); the vita of the author(s) and a one-page statement that explains the strengths of the submission as an integrative work and how it meets criteria established by the Society. Specific criteria can be found at <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div1/awards.html>. Textbooks, analytic reviews, biographies, and examples of applications are generally discouraged. Nomination letters and supporting materials should be sent to William James Book Award, c/o Harold Takooshian, PhD, Psychology-916, Fordham University, New York NY 10023. E-mail: Takoosh@aol.com. Nominations must be received by May 1st.

The Ernest R. Hilgard Award

This award is given by the Society for General Psychology (Division One) for a career contribution to general psychology. Nominations packets should include the candidate's vita, along with a detailed statement indicating why the nominee is a worthy candidate for the award and supporting letters from others who endorse the nomination. Nomination letters and supporting materials should be received by the extended deadline, May 1st, to Bonnie Strickland, 558 Federal Street, Belchertown, MA 01007. Phone: 413-323-5778; Fax: 413 545-0996.

The George A. Miller Award

This award is given by the Society for General Psychology (Division One) for an outstanding recent article in general psychology. Nominations packets should include: vita of the author(s), four copies of the article being considered (which can be of any length but must be in print and have a post-2000 publication date), and a statement detailing the strength of the candidate article as an outstanding contribution to General Psychology. Nomination letters and supporting materials should be received by May 1st, the extended deadline, to George W. Albee, 7157 Longboat Dr. N., Longboat Key, FL 34228.

For more information on all awards, see the Society's website at <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div1/awards.html> or contact: General Psychology Awards, c/o Nancy Felipe Russo, Awards Coordinator, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University, Box 1104, Tempe, AZ, 85287-1104; e-mail: nancy.russo@asu.edu.

Division One Elections

Ballots will be in the mailed April 15th for election of new Division One officers for the 2006-2007 year. The following individuals have agreed to run:

President-Elect Thomas Boucher, Steven Suomi
Member-at-large Leona Aiken, Frank Farley,
Janet Hyde

Ballots must be returned by May 31st.

The Arthur W. Staats Award and Lecture

The Society manages this American Psychological Foundation award given for creative synthesis, the building of novel conceptual approaches, and a reach for new, integrated wholes. The Staats Award has a unification theme, recognizing significant contributions that serve to develop psychology as a unified science. The winner will receive \$1000, will agree to give an address at the subsequent APA convention, and will provide a copy of the address for publication in *The General Psychologist*. The Staats Lecture will deal with how the awardee's work serves to unify psychology. Nominations or the Arthur W. Staats Lecture to be given in 2007, should be received by then extended deadline of May 1, 2006, to Peter Salovey, Department of Psychology, Yale University, 2 Hillhouse Avenue, PO Box 208205, New Haven, CT 06520-8205.

Full-Color, Interactive Version of TGP Available Online

If you are reading this as a printed, black-and-white document that you received in the mail, you should be aware that a full-color version is available on the Division One Web site at <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div1/newspub.html>. Moreover, the Web version is interactive—that is, clicking on a hyperlink, such as the one in the previous sentence, will take you to the Web site indicated. No password is required—so you can encourage your students and colleagues to peruse *TGP*, too.

We also have an ulterior motive: Hard copies of *The General Psychologist* are expensive to print and mail, while the electronic newsletter costs your Division almost nothing to send. So please take a look at *TGP* online: If you like what you see online, consider requesting us to send your next issue of *The General Psychologist* electronically by changing your preference on the Membership Application form.

APA Council of Representatives Meeting

by Bonnie R. Strickland, University of Massachusetts

The APA Council of Representatives met February 17–19, 2006, in Washington, DC. This was my first meeting as Council Representative from Division One and the first time I have attended Council in some 20 years. Although Council has almost twice as many members than when I was on before, much seems the same and many of the agenda topics are similar. Much is new, however, including about a 50% representation of women, a 10% proportion of Representatives of color, and a smooth meeting in terms of procedures and processes. For many years, a large number of Council Representatives have been identified with practice (about 70%) with some 30% identified as academics and scientists. This proportion within the overall APA membership is around 50/50. Of course, many of our members cross specialty areas and many identify with Public Interest.

The meeting began on a high note when it was announced that the Fiscal Year 2005 was our best ever. After giving a \$1,000 bonus to each staff member of APA (\$1 million), the remaining surplus was \$2.526 million. The 2006 budget calls for revenue of \$101,219,000, expenses of \$100,604,900 yielding a surplus of \$614,100. Membership dues account for about 14% of our revenues. Our overall assets are close to \$57 million; the 2005 annual rate of return on our investment portfolio 5.75% and 14.5% since inception.

APA members had raised some concerns in regard to our annual Convention in New Orleans. These included questions about health and safety, transportation, facilities and so on. Chief Executive Officer Norman Anderson spoke to each of these points and emphasized that New Orleans is recovering and is prepared for us. Indeed, our convention will be of considerable financial benefit to the city attracting some 16,000 attendees. Two other large conventions, one with 22,000 attendees and one with 26,000, will be held prior to ours. The APA Board of Convention Affairs has created a number of programs intended to give convention attendees an opportunity to make contributions to or participate in New Orleans recovery programs. On Wednesday, August 9, APA will partner with Habitat for Humanity and APA members are invited to spend the day building a house for a local family dislocated by Katrina. Convention attendees are also encouraged to bring school supplies to New Orleans. Collection sites will be around the convention center and APA will donate

all collected supplies (pencils, paper, calculators, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) to New Orleans Public Schools.

Many of the agenda items before Council were routine such as archiving outdated policies, however, several engendered substantial discussion. Council received a briefing on the completed work of the APA Task Force on Psychological Ethics and National Security (PENS). The two major underpinnings of the PENS report are Ethical Principle A,

Do No Harm, and Ethical Principle B, which speaks to psychologists' ethical responsibilities to society. In the coming months, the Ethics Committee will begin work on a casebook/commentary through which APA will provide members more specific guidance on issues of and surrounding national security investigations.

Council accepted a petition for the establishment of a new Division of Trauma Psychology, however, a petition for the establishment of a new Division—the Society of Human-Animal Studies was rejected. The latter petition engendered considerable discussion. There were concerns that the petitions to establish the Division were not consistent in their wording. Some questioned as to whether or not Human-animal Studies was a coherent body of scholarly and research activities. Scientists stood on the floor of Council and talked of how their laboratories and computer data had been destroyed by animal liberationists. Although reassured that members of the proposed Division were not against the use of animals in research, some Representatives were concerned that the new Division might be inimical to the aims of other already established Divisions. As the discussion continued, Past President Ron Levant proposed that if the scientists were deeply concerned about the establishment of the Division then perhaps the practitioners should join them in rejecting the petition. The petition was rejected but the proponents were encouraged to consider locating their Society as a Section within one of the current Divisions.

Council affirmed the doctorate as the minimum educational requirement for entry into professional practice in the health service domain as a psychologist. Post-doctoral supervision will no longer be required in order for psychologists to sit for licensure. Such requirements and regulations are promulgated within each state.

Council also approved a motion to add Council Representatives from the four Ethnic Minority Psychological Associations and received requests for discretionary funds to support various task forces, conferences, and workshops. All of these were approved and included Revision of the Model Act for State Licensure of Psychology, Increasing the Number of Quantitative Psychologists, and a National Conference on Training in Professional Geropsychology.

Overall, the Council meeting went smoothly and President Koocher did an excellent job as Chair. The schedule was full but exciting. I truly appreciate the opportunity to represent our Society and look forward to the next meeting. If there are initiatives or business items that you would like for me to bring before the Council, please let me know bonnie@psych.umass.edu.



Bonnie Strickland



Watson: "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It"

by Christopher D. Green, York University

Each issue of The General Psychologist includes a RetroReview of a classic article or book from psychology's past. The aim is to help set the often alien-sounding words and ideas of our intellectual forebears in their historical context and make them more comprehensible.

We hope that those who teach the history of psychology will bring some of what we offer to their classrooms, but the intended audience is broader than that: general psychologists from all backgrounds who simply have an interest in learning more about where their discipline has been, and where it might be going.

One can find Watson's original article, "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It," along with many other historic works, online at the Classics in the History of Psychology Web site: <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/>.

In the 1990s, consciousness re-emerged as a major topic to be contended with in both psychology and in the philosophy of mind (see, e.g., Baars, 1997; Chalmers, 1996; Dennet, 1992; Seager, 1999; Searle, 1997). A person having no familiarity with the history of psychology might well be tempted to ask, "Where was it before that? Isn't consciousness obviously the central phenomenon of mind?" Of course, we psychologists have a ready answer for such questions: Behaviorism.

Back in the early 20th century, psychology was in a shambles. Consciousness was widely recognized as the single most important phenomenon preventing scientific psychology from being reabsorbed by the experimental physiology whence it had emerged little more than two decades earlier. In the 1880s Wundt and his students attempted to fractionate simple conscious acts into their component parts. Later, Titchener attempted to divide the momentary conscious state into its presumed elements. Neither was having great luck. By contrast, William James and his functionalist descendents adopted the tactic of understanding the evolutionary origins of consciousness and, thereby, how consciousness enables the organism to better contend with its complex, changing environment.

Essential as consciousness was to the scientific autonomy of psychology, however, it proved an elusive fence to mend. Then as now, though everyone had strong intuitions, no one was able to get a firm grasp on precisely what consciousness was. Then William James (1904) lobbed an intellectual bomb into the mix with his article "Does Consciousness Exist?" which explicitly laid out the numerous confusions and contradictions with respect to what was supposed to be psychology's fundamental phenomenon. As one historian of psychology has paraphrased James:

Was consciousness a metaphysical entity or simply a particular sort of relationship toward objects into which portions of pure experience enter? Was consciousness a stream of experience, a kind of awareness, or thought? Was it an adaptive function or a composite of states; an energetic by-product of neurophysiological process, another name for associative learning, a form of arrested movement, a regula-

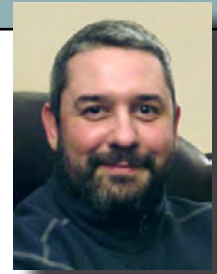
tor of future adaptation, or simply another way of describing "self"? (Wozniak, 1997, p. 201)

With the presumed foundation of psychology thus reduced to rubble, psychologists spent much of the next decade (and beyond) attempting to salvage the discipline from being reabsorbed by physiology and philosophy, or from simple oblivion. Psychology was, in essence, a science in need of basic vocabulary that no other discipline had already claimed for its own.

Little known at the time was a just-graduated student of James Rowland Angell (1907), the country's leading functionalist psychologist. Working at the University of Chicago as an instructor after having earned his PhD there, this novice, John B. Watson (1878–1959), was a troubled southerner who worked primarily on neurological development, particularly of the white rat. Although he had minored in philosophy with John Dewey, he would later confess that he had never understood what Dewey was talking about. In the fall of 1908 Watson was lured to an assistant professorship at Johns Hopkins by its head psychologist, the pioneering developmentalist James Mark Baldwin. Just months later, though, Baldwin was forced to resign in a scandal over his arrest in a Baltimore bordello.¹ On his way out, Baldwin handed Watson not only the chairmanship of the Johns Hopkins department but, probably more significantly, his journal editorships, including that of *Psychological Review*.

Watson immediately recognized the opportunity that had been dropped into his lap and began working to revolutionize psychology. As he saw it, the way out of the tangle with consciousness was simply to eliminate the concept altogether. Most of the tools for a new psychology, conceived of as a quantitative science of behavior, were already in place, though many of them had been developed by functionalists themselves in the service of illuminating various aspects of consciousness or by the functionalists' evolutionist forebears. Most obviously, there were Thorndike's (1898) puzzlebox experiments with cats. Prior to that, however, were the techniques Baldwin (1894) developed in studying the handedness of his infant daughters, John Lubbock's (1882) studies of the behavior of insects, Darwin's (1877) own study of the development of his first son (inspired by a similar French article by Hippolyte Taine, 1877), and Douglas Alexander Spalding's (1872, 1873) astonishing effort to place hoods over the heads of chicks while still in the shell in order to study the development of vision (see Wozniak, 1997).

Watson's would-be revolution was given an extraordinary boost when Robert M. Yerkes and Sergius Morgulis (1909) published the first detailed English-language account of Pavlov's conditioning experiments with dogs which provided Watson not only with a proven experimental paradigm, but also with a new, prestigious, and objective-sounding vocabulary in which to couch behavioral phenomena. Just five years after Watson (1913) had taken up his Johns Hopkins position, he published his manifesto, "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It," in the very journal he had inherited as a result of Baldwin's academic demise. Two years later he was elected president of the American Psychological Association.



Christopher Green

Contrary to common belief, however, there was no sudden behaviorist revolution in psychology in the wake of the publication of Watson's 1913 article. As historian Franz Samelson (1981) has detailed, behaviorism was seen as just one of several options for many years afterwards. Indeed, it wasn't until after World War I (the main psychological "success stories" of which were the Army Alpha and Beta intelligence tests) that behaviorism really began to develop a head of steam. Moreover, as Wozniak (1997) has shown, there rapidly emerged several variant "behaviorisms," many of which fell fairly far from the tree, as it were.

In any case, Watson did not have much time to enjoy his success. In 1920 the scandal surrounding his love affair with his graduate student Rosalie Rayner forced him from his position at Johns Hopkins. Watson published a few more times in the 1920s, but a dearth of academic opportunities for him soon led his career path away from psychology and into the advertising business. Rayner, now his wife, died suddenly of disease in 1936.

Many myths have circulated about Watson's life: that he and Rayner were involved in sex research (there's even a journal article with a photograph of the instruments he was supposed to have used), that "Little Albert" was Watson and Rayner's (possibly illegitimate) son, etc. There is no historical evidence for these oft-repeated claims (see, e.g., Buckley, 1989). It is true that some of his children experienced psychological difficulties, one son committing suicide as an adult in 1963. These events are often casually attributed to Watson's personal failings. To be sure, Watson was a rather rigid parent. It must be borne in mind, however, that his younger boys were children who had lost their mother early in their lives, and whose father, unable to cope with his grief, sent them to boarding school.

Behaviorism, of course, continued to grow even in the absence of its "father." Consciousness, the bogeyman that had led to behaviorism's emergence, was effectively squeezed out of most "respectable" psychology for several decades. It continued on, of course, in psychoanalysis, the dominant psychotherapeutic approach of the mid-20th century. It was revived in a joyful, if less-than-rigorous, form with the Humanism of the 1960s. Out of the cognitive revolution of the 1970s—initially wary of the topic of consciousness—came its explosive growth in the 1990s.

In short, we are still living in the aftermath of Watson's revolution and, but for some suggestive neurophysiological correlates, we are still not certain that we have much more to say about consciousness as a phenomenon than William James did 100 years ago.

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Note

¹ Perhaps ironically, because Johns Hopkins was officially non-denominational, it was peculiarly sensitive to public criticism with respect to the morals kept by its faculty and students. It had been stung once before when, in 1884, noted philosopher and psychologist Charles Sanders Peirce was forced out because he had moved in with his second wife before finalizing the divorce from his first wife. Peirce's demise opened the way for G. Stanley Hall to take the sole JHU philosophy professorship and, from that pulpit, launch the *American Journal of Psychology*, then win the presidency of Clark University, and found the American Psychological Association. Peirce and Baldwin would not be the last JHU psychologists to fall to scandal. Watson would be next.



What is Consulting Psychology?

by Jennifer Boyce, Toronto, Ontario

What distinguishes consulting psychology from other brands of psychology? Consulting psychology is an emerging new field. Indeed, its definition has been an evolution, as the Society of Consulting Psychology (SCP) is a mere 14 years young. This adolescent is forging a new path combining the expertise in human behavior with the fast pace and tangible results of consulting. Division 13 is making an active effort to increase membership among fellow psychologists and promote the profession as a whole. But there is only one problem. The target audience—psychologists—does not know exactly what it is we do. This article is meant as an introductory and explanatory piece for practitioners considering a venue for their skills beyond counseling and therapy.

Today, more and more organizations are recognizing the value of their workforce. People are seen as the main asset and thus, their development key to driving the business. Hence, companies seek expert opinion to aid them in optimizing their talent pool. Enter the consulting psychologist. In a report by the 2001 Future's Task Force as commissioned by APA's Division 13 (Lowman et al., 2001), formal definitions of consulting psychology and a consulting psychologist read as follows:

Consulting psychology...shall be defined as the function of applying and extending the special knowledge of a psychologist, through the process of consultation, to problems involving human behavior in various areas. A consulting psychologist shall be defined as a psychologist who provides specialized technical assistance to individuals or organizations in regard to psychological aspects of their work. Such assistance is advisory in nature and the consultant has no direct responsibility for its acceptance. Consulting psychologists may have as clients, individuals, institutions, corporations, or other kinds of organizations.

However accurate, this can be an intimidating mouthful for those interested in joining this field. More succinctly, Richard Davis, Consultant for RHR International and a social psychologist by training, described consulting psychology as the "use of psychological theories and practices in applied settings (e.g., corporations, schools, government, etc.) for the intended purpose of improving individual performance and increasing organizational effectiveness." More succinct still—consulting psychology is applied psychology to organizations and individuals within organizations. The critical question being, "What are the psychological issues at work within the organization/person? Thus, some argue, as University of Maryland professor Ellen Lent, that consulting psychology is not distinct at all, it is more a matter of context as opposed to the utilization of a unique skill set. She notes that, "It is easier to describe the activities and settings where consulting psychology takes places."

Consider the practice of consulting psychologist Ron Wu, Ph.D., founder and President of Ron Wu and Associates, Inc., a consulting firm in Sacramento, CA. Trained as a clinical psychologist, Dr. Wu honed his therapeutic skills in various organizations including the University of California at Davis counseling center, a Veteran's hospital, and the Mental Health Research Institute in Family Therapy. He specializes in family-owned businesses working with individuals with a process he

calls "Deep Personal Transformation." States Wu (personal communication, May 3, 2005):

My typical client is an Axis II type, Intermittent Explosive Disorder individual—very difficult to work with. He is the CEO/entrepreneur—very old school—who founded the company with an authoritarian rule. He knows the business well technically, but is not very reflective. I am called in when there is a crisis; He is going through a mid-life crisis such as a divorce. He is exploding at employees and/or key managers have left. The bottom line is hurting and the business may fold.

We deliver leadership training in emotional intelligence. The ultimate goal is to lead transformation of corporate culture toward greater profitability, growth, openness, integrity, and healthy humanness. We facilitate what we call primal release, which includes stress reduction training, meditation, yelling and pounding, and role-play with people they have issues with. The client becomes aware of his negative beliefs and begins to face his fears like, "I'm not good enough," or "I'm only worthy if I achieve." How emotions affect the bottom line (has been documented in) research for years. This process can take anywhere from 6 months to a year. We start with the top and trickle down into other areas of the organization moving towards a team approach, equality, professionalism, and integrity. Additional services we offer at this point include conflict resolution, team building, succession planning, and personnel selection with mid-managers.

Because the focus is on working with the human element of the organization, the practice of consulting psychology has also been described as human resources consulting. It is often housed under the human resources umbrella within an organization. Please note that this branch entails enhancing human performance and optimizing talent. It should be differentiated from what is normally thought of as human resources consulting which involves activities such as the assembly of compensation, retirement, and benefit packages by people trained in human resources management. Consultation can take place in a wide variety of settings including academic institutions, government agencies, not-for-profit agencies, churches, military organizations, and hospitals.

While the majority of Division 13 members consult to businesses, there is still a healthy portion who consult to the above types of organizations. Consider licensed psychologist Dr. Harriett Haynes, Director of the Counseling Center at the University of Minnesota. Her professional journey into consulting reads as follows (H. Haynes personal communication, December 5, 2005):

I got started in consulting 30 years ago as a trainer for the State Department of Education. My background includes both a Bachelor of Science in nursing and a Masters in Science in Public Health before I earned my Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology. As part of my role, I am an internal consultant to



Jennifer Boyce

faculty and staff. My typical consulting client is a university administrator and/or university department. My objective in working with an administrator and his/her organization is to help them move from where they are to where they would like to be. This might include a number of activities such as: orientation, assessment, feedback, action planning, follow-up, coaching, mediation, and training.

An example project could be as follows. A university faculty group experiencing communications problems wants to review their self-study, address problem areas, and build a more collegial culture for an approaching accreditation visit. Counseling skills that I utilize in consulting include: listening and observing, data gathering, diagnosing, interpreting, communicating, applying knowledge of human behavior, dealing with resistance, and coaching for change. The difference between consulting and clinical work is that clinical work frequently deals with helping an individual (in an individual or group setting) change his/her individual behavior. Alternately, organizational consulting focuses on organizational systems, that is, the individual (or group of individuals) as a worker in an organizational context.

Consulting psychology is often confused with industrial and organizational psychology. It is important to note that the training for these two areas is very different. Industrial and organizational psychology is very psychometrically based; There is a very high emphasis on assessment and quantitative analysis. Counseling and clinical are very relationship-based emphasizing how interpersonal dynamics affect people and situations. Yes, clinically trained psychologists do have training in assessment as well. In addition, where as I/O professionals are trained to operate within a business environment, consulting psychologist often consult in a variety of settings including business, government, mental health agencies, not-for-profit agencies. So, I/O training is often more directly linked to business job settings whereas clinical/counseling training is more indirect but has a wider breath potential once one develops the acumen to consulting in various settings.

As mentioned earlier, it would be useful to define the typical services that consulting psychologists provide. This author will purposefully use simplistic language in an effort so as clearly explain to those practitioners who are unclear about the link between their current skill set and that of a consulting psychologist. Examples are derived from clinical practice as most psychologists who enter this field hold doctoral degrees in clinical or counseling psychology. (Please refer to the Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Level in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology by O'Roark, Lloyd, and Cooper (2004) for a detailed account of competencies for consulting psychologists at the individual, group, and organizational levels.)

1. Employee Selection/Appraisal: The cornerstone of much consulting psychology is assessment of some sort. Typically, it involves the use of psychological assessment tools, in addition to the clinical interview, in order to evaluate suitability for a particular job. Akin to executive assessment described below, in this case overt and covert personality traits are measured and compared to that of an ideal candidate. This information is used to inform hiring of an individual and/or performance appraisal.

The Link: These first 3 services all involve assessment and thus the link is the same. This pulls from the same skill set as administering assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type

Indicator (MBTI), Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), or other personality inventories and compared that profile to typical profiles or scale scores.

2. Executive Assessment: Consulting psychologists assess personality traits of executives with the use of assessment tools such as the California Personality Inventory (CPI). The professional looks for areas of strength and weakness. Furthermore, these results are compared to someone who performs well in that position. Thereafter, the professional and the client develop an action plan on how to bolster strengths and minimize the impact of weaknesses. Assessment may also involve in vivo observation of the individual.

The Link: Administration of personality inventories such as the CPI, Personality Research Factor (PRF), etc., and perhaps other assessment tools with subsequent comparison to a profile.

3. Leadership Development: Leadership development entails assessing an individual's leadership skills (e.g., assertiveness, initiative, self-confidence, persuasiveness, effectiveness in leading change, etc.) typically with the aid of assessment tools and comparing them to the benchmark of an effective leader. This assists in targeting key areas of strength and weakness and subsequently developing an action plan to align strengths with optimal job functioning. Assessment may also involve in vivo observation of the individual.

The Link: Test administration and interpretation as described above.

4. 360° surveys: Three hundred sixty degree surveys are exactly what they imply, a look at all angles of a situation. Specifically, they entail assessing a target individual by surveying that individual and asking for perceptions of that individual from the most prominent people who interact with him/her. For example, you might be investigating the performance of a manager. People surrounding the individual including the manager, his/her boss, his/her direct reports, his/her secretary, his/her customers all fill out the same survey and may also be interviewed. The consulting psychologist will compile the results, make summary statements of behavior, and determine course of action.

The Link: Some clients require information from a variety of sources. An obvious example is children. It is quite common to get information about level of functioning from parents, siblings, teachers, and other professionals such as a group leader or psychiatrist. The culmination of information from all parties is used to determine the nature of the problem and where to intervene.

5. Executive Coaching: While it is distinguished from therapy or counseling, the boundaries are somewhat vague. Perhaps the critical information to keep in the forefront is that the primary focus is to improve functioning on the job. While this does interweave with one's personal life and overall well-being, unlike counseling, the job is generally the focus. The consultant would confront values, beliefs, and behaviors that impair job performance.

The Link: Counseling

6. Team Development: Team development deals with how to foster cohesiveness and encourage members to act as an integrated whole. Teams often lose time (and money) by ineffective communication and role confusion. So the goal is to ensure that groupings are appropriate and teach members

how to interact with one another effectively in an effort to become more productive.

The Link: Choosing members for a therapy group. Group process. As psychologists know, people often do not understand their behavior until an unbiased observer points it out, particularly in the context of a group. The consulting psychologist aids in “managing group conflict and enhancing group functioning so that it is better aligned with organizational objectives” (O’Roark, Lloyd, & Cooper, 2004).

7. Mergers and Acquisitions: Mergers and acquisitions involve the blending of companies and thus company cultures. This could involve work on the strategic end—Who stays? Who goes? Companies, like countries, have cultures, and the “American Way” of doing things may not be the “Canadian Way.” The work therefore becomes, how can we blend these cultures without annihilating one? How do we facilitate this change? However, it may be that one culture is intended to be annihilated and that makes the business case, how do we do this with minimal disruption to the whole? The consulting psychologist facilitates this change process.

The Link: Couples counseling. Facilitating groups where two different groups are encouraged to dialogue (e.g., men and women).

8. Succession Planning: This involves the selection and grooming process of an individual to assume the leadership role of his predecessor. For example, the CEO seeks his replacement. The task is to find an individual with a similar skill set both overt and covert. Things to consider include: Can s/he do the work? Does the company look inside or outside the company? Does s/he have the appropriate networks? Is his/her style conducive with the core values of the company and its future direction?

The Link: Since succession planning is particularly prevalent with family owned businesses, we can draw parallels with work in family systems. For example, pre-marital counseling involving the addition of a step-parent to an established family. This involves assessing and grooming a person for a new role previously held by another.

9. Organizational Development: This entails working on a global level with the company as a whole. The goal may be to assess the organizational climate (i.e., morale) via work force surveys (i.e., polling employees). The objective may be to facilitate congruence between the goals and mission of the organization with the day-to-day operations of the company. The role of the consulting psychologist here is to facilitate congruence between the section s/he is working with and the whole. Keep in mind the whole could be a subsection of the organization—aligning the sales forces with the marketing department.

The Link: When counseling clients, establishing the overarching goals for therapy and having weekly intermediate goals that work towards that end. Another example, is group counseling that runs in tandem with issues covered in individual counseling.

These are some of the typical services that consulting psychologists provide. One difference between consulting psychology and its clinical and counseling counterparts that is implied from the above discussion, is an emphasis on bolstering the positive as opposed to remedying the negative. Terminology such as ‘Peak Performance,’ ‘Talent Development,’ and ‘Optimizing Performance’ are testimony to this. The *Harvard Business Re-*

view touts positive psychology as one of the breakthrough ideas of 2004 (Coutu et al., 2004). Thus, the market recognizes the demand for our talents. It is true organizations call when they have a problem to solve. It is important to note that often times they want to make a good thing better—increase sales earnings, surpass sales projectives. This is a welcome shift from being immersed in the doldrums of dysfunction that typify traditional clinical practice. While not without dysfunctional situations, the consulting psychologist will be amidst very high functioning people in exciting environments.

Consulting psychology can activate a practitioner’s doctoral degree by expanding the options beyond community mental health and academia. And it pulls from expertise that is already in place. Quite simply, Webster’s Dictionary cites that “consultation” is “the act of seeking advice.” The domain of psychologists is human behavior. So consulting psychologists give advice and information about human behavior. This is typically within some sort of organization. The goal is to enhance human performance, which ultimately increases productivity and revenue. This is what consulting psychologists do. Consulting psychology embraces the skill set of the clinician and transports it to a result-driven, project oriented context at a spirited pace. It is less a departure than a stimulating detour. “Our training, character and smarts puts us at the 1% level and higher on this planet to lead, care about, influence and understand stuff in many ways—that also pays really well.” (J. Fennig, Managing Partner for DRI Consulting (personal communication, September 30, 2004).

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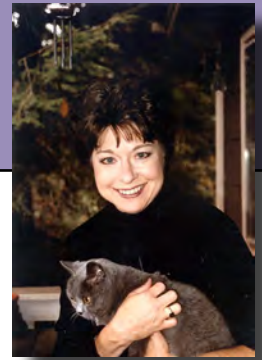
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Jennifer Boyce earned her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at Arizona State University. Her research has been in the area of interpersonal dynamics and issues of diversity. She is an active member of APA Division 13 (Society of Consulting Psychology), where she edits the Society’s newsletter, The Consulting Psychologist. Jennifer has done extensive work in the area of career development, group process, and personality assessment. Her work has been informed by her extensive international travel. You can contact her at jaboyme@mac.com.



Don't Say You Don't Remember: Amnesia in Cinema

by Ann Weber, University of North Carolina at Asheville



Ann Weber

So where are you? You're in some motel room. You just wake up and you're in a motel room. There's the key. It feels like maybe it's just the first time you've been there. But perhaps you've been there for a week, three months... It's kind of hard to say. I don't know. It's just an anonymous room...

So begins the narration of the character Leonard Shelby (Guy Pearce) in the successful movie *Memento* (2000), as he awakens to a time and place he does not recognize. Leonard is a trauma victim, and he's talking to himself—the “you” in his narration is Leonard-in-the-future, probably Leonard-the-next-morning, the next incarnation that must start anew the search for his wife's murderer. The attack that killed her has left him with anterograde amnesia, the inability to commit new events to long-term memory. Every day's experiences are retained until he sleeps, but he awakens every morning with no recollection of them. He recalls his past and identity (up to the trauma of his wife's murder), his skills and knowledge, but he can no longer retain new memories. He seeks to find and destroy his wife's murderer, but his “condition”—his anterograde amnesia—complicates his mission. So every night, before he sleeps, Leonard plants clues for himself to discover on waking, notes and Polaroids he labels and tucks into his jacket pockets. Any critical discoveries must be permanently tattooed on his body, in the order in which he is likely to see them: hands, wrists, arms, legs... He has transformed his own skin into a permanent *Cliffs Notes* to refer to as he seeks vengeance. He looks in the mirror and sees not a self but an illustrated man, decorated with crib notes for his angry mission.

Amnesia Appeal

Memento's action consists of Leonard's dialogues and encounters with various untrustworthy characters as he seeks his wife's killer. But even this motive is something he must renew with his scribbled and tattooed reminders. Even if he were to find and destroy his wife's killer, he would forget the deed too quickly to experience any satisfaction or closure. One character advises Leonard, “But even if you get revenge, you're not gonna remember it. You're not even gonna know it happened.” But Leonard can't quit: he has no sense of purpose, other than pursuit, and flight.

Leonard seems more annoyed than upset by what he calls his “condition,” he's a cold calculator and not a particularly sympathetic protagonist. The film draws us into the disorientation of his world not through his character but through the plot device of telling the story in reverse sequence: The first scene is the last chapter (without the climactic epilogue); the next scene in the movie shows the action that preceded that; and so on—a retelling in which each scene ends where the previous scene began. Thus we know how each chapter's conclusion will look, because that's how the last scene started. But until we go on, we won't know what led up to it or what it means.

Memento's memory-loss plot, unfolding in reverse sequence, intrigued audiences and made *Memento* a hit—although it was

not the first movie to employ this memory-loss complication or reverse-sequence portrayal. For example, reverse sequence was used very effectively in the 1983 film *Betrayal*, based on Harold Pinter's play. That movie tells the story of a doomed extramarital affair in three acts: first, the ending of the affair; then the developing triangle itself; finally, the fateful first touch between two not-yet lovers whose fate we have already seen. As later used by *Memento*, the reverse-telling has the effect of both revealing and distorting events, so the viewer has a sense of involvement, even responsibility, in what comes next—or perhaps what came before.

In real life, we psychologists know that anterograde amnesia is rare and still little understood, though our colleagues continue to study the famous case of Henry M. or H.M. This much-examined anonymous patient lost his memory-forming ability as a teenager, following surgery to relieve symptoms of epilepsy (Hilts, 1995). In movie life, memory loss is (over)simplified and glamorized into a new class of syndromes, a category we might call Movie Dissociation Disorders. Of all forms of MDD, anterograde amnesia is surely the least familiar, and thus the most intriguing. Audiences have become unimpressed with mere garden variety memory loss such as retrograde amnesia and fugue, which (along with multiple personality) are the “common cold” of soap-opera plots. For such jaded viewers as ourselves, Leonard's “condition” in *Memento* was an intriguing new twist—one not restricted to the suspense or drama genre. In 1994, anterograde amnesia was played for comic relief in the Dana Carvey vehicle *Clean Slate*. Carvey plays Pogue, a private investigator injured in his flight from bad guys and left with anterograde amnesia. Every night, Pogue uses a portable tape recorder to provide instructions and updates for his waking self, a gentler strategy than *Memento's* dramatic tattoos.

Ten years after *Clean Slate*, in 2004's romantic comedy *50 First Dates*, Drew Barrymore plays a young woman, Lucy, left with anterograde amnesia after an car accident. Lovingly deceived by family and friends in her small seaside town, Lucy is kept stuck in her own past, fooled into believing every day is the last day of her complete memories. Romance and conflict begin when a newcomer, Henry (Adam Sandler), meets and falls in love with Lucy, embarking on daily new efforts to win her heart. Eventually Henry overcomes the unhealthy protectiveness of Lucy's father and brother, and the couple begin to live one day (the same day) at a time, happily ever after—with videotaped summaries greeting Lucy every morning to update her on her life.

In *Memento*, *Clean Slate*, and *50 First Dates*, anterograde amnesia is the central characters' major challenge, complicating efforts to achieve vengeance, justice, or love. Two themes emerge as especially engaging in Anterograde Movie Amnesia: First, the protagonists are stuck in time, the opposite of movie time-travelers who visit the past or future to solve their mysteries. Watching them, we in the audience cannot quite sympathize because we know what they don't know: we have the long view, while

they are frozen in each day, succumbing to amnesia when they sleep. It's the reverse of the portrayals in the wonderful 1993 Bill Murray movie, *Groundhog Day*, where cynical TV weatherman Phil Connors relives that February day so many times he acquires many lifetimes of skills and a nicer personality, while the people around him experience each redux of the day as if for the first time, with no memory of Phil's past. The second device common to the films is the amnesics' efforts to "talk to themselves," save every day's discoveries in a way that can be quickly relearned the next morning, and the next, whether relying on helpful others or on written, audio, or video records. How might you keep records that can overcome your own incredulity about your life and yourself? Herein lies some of the movies' inventiveness and engagement.

It All Started with Fugue

Anterograde amnesia may be the new darling of dissociative cinema, but it is retrograde amnesia, particularly the loss of the episodic memories that shape one's own identity, that first captured movie audiences' interest. A recent documentary film, *Unknown White Male* (2005), recounts the true story of Doug Bruce, a young man who "came to" in Coney Island one day a few years ago, with clothes all wrong for the weather and no memory of his identity or past life. Bruce was able to speak only in the present tense, and never truly recognized the loved ones who finally identified him. Recalling neither his former life's key people and episodes nor his own former tastes and talents, Bruce had no self-concept. As one reviewer (Mondello, 2006) summed it up, "Who was he, if not the sum of all the experiences he could not remember?"

The memory losses of amnesia and Alzheimer's fascinate us because they challenge the solidity of self. If one's identity is made up of memories and access to them, then our very selfhood disappears when memory "goes." Today, Doug Bruce of *Unknown White Male* has begun a second life, eagerly experiencing things again for the first time: first love, first new experiences and lessons. However, fictional amnesia emphasizes vulnerability and loss, nowhere more than in stories of dissociative fugue. Surely the classic story of memory loss and new life is *Random Harvest* (1942), based on James Hilton's bestselling novel about a shell-shocked veteran of the Great War. It is 1918, and "John Smith" (Ronald Colman) is an unidentified patient in the new military wing of the Melridge Asylum in the English Midlands. (Colman himself served in World War I at the Battle of Ypres.) Halting in his speech, weary of incarceration, this pleasant, intelligent major with no memory walks out of the asylum during an air raid and lies low in the nearby town. He is taken in by Paula (Greer Garson), a showgirl with a heart of gold, and spirited away to a country village to escape detection. They soon marry, build a new life and family, and cease to wonder about "Smithy's" true identity.

Happy with his wife and baby in their rose-covered country cottage, Smithy sets off for a job interview in Liverpool. Distracted when crossing the street, he is struck by a motorcar, receiving only a mild bump on the head—and a complete recovery of his old life. He is Charles Rainier, aristocrat and industrialist—but has no memory of his life and family as John Smith. In renewing his life and work, he wins enough fame to catch the attention of his bereft former wife, who has sought him for years, since his disappearance and the death of their baby. Hiding her identity, Paula wins a position as Rainier's secretary "Margaret," working with his former psychiatrist to find a way to restore Charles'/Smithy's

lost memory—that is, the memory of his fugue life. Charles becomes drawn to "Margaret" just as Smithy had been to Paula, but only platonically, still feeling tied to the life he loved but cannot quite recall. Alone on a chance business trip to Melbridge, Charles revisits the people and places of his other happier life, eventually finding the asylum, and then the rose-covered cottage, where "Margaret" finds him. Recognition dawns, Charles at last recollects being Smithy, and begins life anew with Paula—presuming there are no more bumps on the head.

Traumas Wrapped in Time

Random Harvest is a great old drama, and I mean it no disrespect. But long before I ever saw the real thing on the late show, I saw it funnily parodied, particularly in a memorable (sorry) 1973 skit on television's "Carol Burnett Show." The "Rancid Harvest" skit featured comedienne Burnett in the sympathetic Greer Garson role opposite Harvey Korman's brilliant spoof of Ronald Colman's dashing voice and diffident manner. Korman/Colman's memories are lost, then restored, then lost again through repeated minor bumps on the head, each time accompanied by a dramatic musical flourish. With every minor mishap or thump on the noggin, our hero remembers, and then forgets, his pitiful bride. The comic skit exaggerates the fragility of memory, but it captures a central theme of movie fugue: it is trauma—shock or injury—that causes the loss of memory, even the loss of self.

Movies have a more serious take on losing and recapturing or reconstructing memory. Collectively, cinema versions of memory loss suggest why and how it makes psychic sense to lose access to one's memories and oneself. Three of my favorite amnesia movies, of rather different genres, illuminate some of the public's shared assumptions about how trauma impacts the mind, and the conditions in which the mind disassociates and re-associates: *The Long Kiss Goodnight*, *Nurse Betty*, and *The Majestic*.

In *The Long Kiss Goodnight* (1996), Samantha (Geena Davis) is a happy wife and mother with no memory of whatever life she led before she landed in this small New England town several years earlier, injured and amnesic. But an accidental *bump on the head* brings back bits and pieces of an ugly past as Charly, a hard-bitten assassin for a secret agency. Now that she has a conscience, her regained memories make her dangerous to her old colleagues, who plot to eliminate her. She hires Mitch (Samuel L. Jackson), a budget private eye, to help her find them before they find her. It's an entertaining and suspenseful film in the cast of Alfred Hitchcock classics with Cary Grant or Gregory Peck—especially the latter's similar role in *Mirage* (1965). During *The Long Kiss*, however, we must suspend disbelief about whether retrograde amnesia means not only identity loss but complete personality change, from the cold and vicious assassin to the Happy Homemaker.

The title of *Nurse Betty* (2000) refers to the alter-ego of a mousy waitress and soap-opera fan (Renée Zellweger) whose dishonest husband is cruelly murdered before her eyes. Fleeing and traumatized, she becomes convinced she is the true love of a doctor character played by a soap star (Greg Kinnear). She manages to meet the actor who plays the doctor on TV, who is charmed by her "act," not realizing she believes her fantasy of being the nurse he truly loves. Further complications arise as the murderers pursue her as the only witness, although one of them (Morgan Freeman) falls into his own romantic fantasy about her. Betty's escape into her imagined relationship with

protects her from horrific memories, and Betty surely knows no better script for a new identity than that of her favorite soap. The suspension of disbelief in *Nurse Betty* is less about whether a fictional role makes for an appealing refuge than how so many of the people around Betty can fail to recognize that she is not in touch with reality. The movie is a fantasy not only because the trauma victim escapes reality, but because most of those around her do the same.

The Majestic (2001) stars Jim Carrey as screenwriter Peter Appleton, at the peak of success in 1951 Hollywood, driven to reckless self-pity when he is victimized by the anti-communist blacklist. Wallowing in drink and self-pity, he wrecks his car and lands in a river. When he washes ashore (with no memory of his past or identity because of a *blow to the head*) in a small, depressed town, he is eagerly mistaken for one of the local heroes who never returned from the Second World War. When the missing man's father and fiancée join those convinced that he is really Luke Trimble, Peter allows himself to slip into the identity of this man who was so greatly loved and mourned—a welcome contrast to the miserable reality his mind is unwilling to recover. He works to restore his “father's” movie theater, *The Majestic*, a symbol of the town's pre-War hopes and dreams, even as he begins to remember who he is—and as the bad guys (anti-communist investigators) begin to track him down.

Each of these movies presents amnesia as an unconscious solution for trauma, wrapping time like protective veils around painful memories. The movies tell us this is more likely when the traumas have been produced by life events—or by life itself—that became hazardous to sanity. Dissociative fugue ensues if a promising new identity becomes available. In *The Long Kiss Goodnight*, Samantha gets this chance after her rescue, when neither she nor her rescuers have any clue to her true past. In *Nurse Betty*, Betty's flight after her husband's murder becomes a transformation into the soap-opera character whose “life” has long been Betty's dream. And in *The Majestic*, Peter finds love and acceptance as Luke, soon wishing as much as his fellow townspeople do that he might really be their long-lost son. In each story, the assumed identity is vastly preferable and even more virtuous than the real past, which is not only forgotten but almost discarded.

Deliberate Remembering—and Forgetting

No discussion of movie amnesia should overlook the (so far) fictional process of deliberate memory alteration. In the 1990 movie *Total Recall*, Arnold Schwarzenegger plays Quaid, a man in a future time who leaves his troubled life for a “virtual vacation” to Mars, courtesy of a memory chip transplanted to give him the memories of having gone—the next best alternative to a real vacation. On his “return,” however, Quaid's life takes a dangerous turn and he finds it impossible to know which life is the real one: the false one he increasingly remembers, or the real one that seems increasingly imaginary. Inspired by Philip K. Dick's 1966 short story “We Can Remember It for You Wholesale” (reprinted in Dick, 2002), *Total Recall* reflects an appealing science-fiction speculation about whether real memories can be distinguished from false ones—a question that years of research and false memory scares have not resolved.

Finally, almost as appealing as acquiring better (if false) memories might be the prospect of deliberately losing or forgetting painful (real) memories. This is the premise of another Jim Carrey film, *The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004). (The title

is a line from Alexander Pope, celebrating the joy of the “[t]he world forgetting, by the world forgot.”) Joel (Carrey) suffers so much grief after his breakup with Clementine (Kate Winslet), he elects to have a medical procedure to erase his brain of all memories of the affair. But mid-procedure, as he dreams all the recollections he will lose, he realizes he would rather remember the pain than forget the love. But the procedure, once undertaken, is not easily reversed . . . “Don't say you don't remember,” sang Beverly Bremers in 1971, “[or] how can I go on living with myself?” Like the theme of this song about lost love, Joel in *Eternal Sunshine* has concluded that his memories, whether painful or happy, have become part of his very identity.

Eternal Sunshine is haunting and provocative. It poses the kind of question science fiction writers obsess about: If you could “erase” painful memories at the expense of losing also any happiness associated with the pain, would you go ahead with it? Would you choose to forget all pain, if it meant you must forget all joy as well? Amnesia in the movies is both an affliction and an opportunity, a second chance for life or redemption when real life has been cruel or unfair. We enjoy these movies not because we deny the complexity of memory, but because we dream of possibilities, of contentment or love in any life, once we find some way to wrap trauma in time.

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What They're Reading . . .

Edited by Ann Ewing, Mesa Community College



Ann Ewing

If you are in the market for book recommendations from some really brilliant people, this feature is just what you are looking for. Three prominent psychologists, Elizabeth Loftus, Roy Cohen, and Robert Johnson have each generously described the books lying on their bedside table. These renditions are bound to inspire a trip to your favorite bookstore to secure your own copy of some of the following titles.

Elizabeth Loftus is Distinguished Professor at the University of California, Irvine. She holds positions in the Departments of Psychology & Social Behavior, and Criminology, Law & Society. She is well known for her outstanding work on human memory, eyewitness testimony and courtroom procedure. She has authored 20 books and more than 400 articles. Elizabeth kindly shared her perspective on the following books that she has recently read.



Elizabeth Loftus

The Popular Policeman and Other Cases

by Willem Albert Wagenaar & Hans Crombag
Amsterdam University Press, 2005.

The Popular Policeman is a tour de force. This powerful collection and analysis of examples shows the enormous significance of psychological science to the resolution of legal cases. Whether the case is about long ago memories concerning a stolen Mercedes, or consumer confusion about potato chips, or psychological coercion in a false confession case, or human reflexes in a climbing wall accident case, readers will eagerly absorb the science as they think through its application to the fascinating case to which it links. Wagenaar and Crombag display eloquence as writers, and their flair for narrative combined with faithfulness to science makes this book a remarkable work on psychology and law.

Abducted

by Susan Clancy
Harvard University Press, 2005

Abducted is a brave, smart, original book. Here, Clancy gives us the benefit of her highly innovative research with people who believe strange things, in this case believing that they have been abducted by aliens. Her wide-ranging book shows keen insight into their circumstances, and enormous courage involved in pursuing this interest with an open mind. *Abducted* offers a masterfully original and beautifully written perspective on why and how people come to believe strange things.

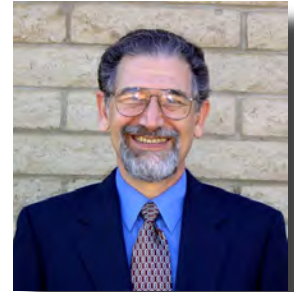
Don't Believe Everything You Think: The 6 basic Mistakes We Make in Thinking

by Thomas Kida
Prometheus Books, 2006

Don't Believe Everything You Think is a treat. Thomas Kida brings the science of psychology to the public, explaining how we often believe things because we want to, even when they are not true.

With its keen insight into how these mental errors can be costly, Kida offers a "six-pack" of solutions for how to make better life decisions. Even if you haven't worried about the minefields of thinking, you'll want to read this book.

Roy Cohen, has been a professor of Psychology for over 30 years. His primary career has been teaching at Mesa Community College in Mesa Arizona. He is a former therapist and is active in several professional psychology organizations. Roy is a prolific reader and has many suggestions of excellent reading selections.



Roy Cohen

John Adams

by David McCullough
Simon & Schuster, 2001

John Adams is an excellent biography of our second president who, perhaps as much as any single individual, was responsible for American independence. Adams played a variety of roles throughout the years, both before and after the Revolutionary War, and this book brings his intelligence and extraordinary personal integrity alive as if the reader lived through those seminal times. This is a good choice, even for those readers who do not usually indulge in biography, because of the author's wonderful writing and painstaking scholarship. Also recommended by the same author is the Pulitzer Prize (1993) winning biography of Truman, the "accidental president," who faced some of the toughest decisions of any modern president and whose determined electoral campaign pulled off the greatest upset in modern presidential history. Truman's administration featured tremendously talented cabinet members whose collective policy advice shaped the remainder of the twentieth century.

The Collected What If?

edited by Robert Cowley,
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2001

The Collected What If contains brief essays by the most eminent historians in the country that speculate on the many ways that history hung in the balance at key moments and how things might have turned out very differently if weather or the actions of just one individual had been altered. The book includes the complete texts of two earlier volumes and, while it is over 800 pages, remains accessible to casual reading since the chapters stand alone and can be consumed during brief periods, i.e., bedtime.

One famous example is George Washington's famous debacle at the very beginning of the Revolutionary War when he faced a superior British force in the defeat that was the Battle of Long Island (or Brooklyn). Staring at certain annihilation because he had made the rookie General's mistake of having the East River at his back, preventing an orderly retreat, while the British ships threatened his rear flanks, Washington took advantage of a lucky thick fog which obscured the American forces as they floated their troops, horses and even cannon in boats to Manhattan during the night. It could have been all over almost before it

Reading...

had started and the future president rightfully thanked “Divine Providence” and learned a valuable lesson.

The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin

by Gordon S. Wood,
Penguin Press, 2005

The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin, by Pulitzer Prize winner Gordon S. Wood, is somewhat more than another superb biography by a prominent historian. In addition to enumerating the countless contributions that Franklin made to his country in diplomacy, in science, in politics, etc., Wood makes a compelling case for viewing Franklin as the first true American because of his underappreciated impact on our culture. Franklin was the penultimate example of the self-made man who rose to world famous prominence not as a gentleman of breeding but as result of his accomplishments and acumen.

Middlesex

by Jeffrey Eugenides,
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002

Middlesex, also a Pulitzer Prizewinner, is so beautifully written that I was sorry to come to the end of the book. It is primarily a novel about a hermaphrodite trying to make his way in the world of conventional sexual identities, but that description doesn't do it justice. Told through extensive flashbacks, it recounts three generations of an immigrant family's escape from the warfare between the Greeks and Turks, their adaptation to American culture, and the twentieth century history of their experiences in Detroit. Never will you read about a loving, albeit incestuous, relationship that produces an offspring with a genetic defect with more humor, compassion and empathy than the protagonist of this novel.

Brunelleschi's Dome

by Ross King,
Penguin Group, (USA), 2001

Brunelleschi's Dome describes, in brilliant detail, complete with illustrations, how a Renaissance genius won a competition to build a dome over the new cathedral in Florence to be built over thin air. Shunning the flying buttresses that supported cathedrals all over Europe, he designed a soaring creative construction (143 feet in diameter) that is still the largest dome in the world, without using any central support. In the fifteenth century, he reinvented architecture without electricity, steam power or other assistance.

And for fun, Roy Cohen recommends Jonathan Kellerman's numerous Alex Delaware detective novels. Delaware is a clinical psychologist who is frequently called in as a consultant by the L.A. police department on difficult cases and works primarily with his good friend Milo Sturgis, the only openly gay detective on the force. Kellerman's novels now number over a dozen and are available in paperback; they're always a delightful read as Delaware brings his expertise as a clinician to uncovering useful clues and insights that help to solve the crime. Specific titles include *Survival of the Fittest* and *Therapy*. A clinical psychologist himself, Kellerman makes it plausible that psychologists could be extraordinarily helpful in this role.

Robert Johnson is a retired professor of psychology from Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon. He was a founder of PT@CC (Psychology Teachers at Community Colleges) and is currently editor of *The General Psychol-*

ogist. He claims to be locally renowned for his pottery and sourdough bread.

Collapse

by Jared Diamond
Viking, 2005

In this sequel to *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Diamond explores the common factors among disparate failed societies, including those of the Greenland Norse, the Anasazi, the Mayan Empire, Rwanda, and Haiti. All exploited their environments to the point of collapse, unwittingly and variously abetted by geographic vagaries, cultural bullheadedness, shortsighted politics, climate change, and unfriendly neighbors. For psychologists, Diamond's *Collapse* is a reminder that behavior is shaped by forces on many scales. In the end, Diamond gives us (some) reasons to hope that our own civilization can be rescued from the brink of collapse.



Bob Johnson

Freakonomics

by Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner
Harper-Collins, 2005

Levitt is the guy who came up with the idea that the drop in crime rate in the 1990s was a result of Roe vs Wade back in 1973: The could-be criminals, he argues, were aborted. He also tells how high-stakes testing (the kind which is supposed not to leave any child behind) led to documented cheating by Chicago teachers and how the KKK never recovered from a blow dealt—no kidding—by Superman. A renegade economist by trade, Levitt tells us that human behavior is controlled by incentives. But he has come up with lots of behavioral quirks that have never been reported by behavioral psychologists.

What the Best College Teachers Do

by Ken Bain
Harvard University Press, 2004

Bain spent fifteen years studying the best teachers, as defined by students, colleagues, and administrators, at dozens of colleges and universities across the country. In many respects, these super-profs were all different: Each had a unique style. But, in certain important respects they were all the same. Most of the similarities will not surprise you: They all cared about their students; they were all enthusiastic about their disciplines and about teaching; and they all were experts in their respective fields. None of them were just lecturers. And they were all distinguished from their lower-rated colleagues in one other important respect that you will learn about when you read Bain's book...

And there you have it. This collection of titles, from serious psychology to history, anthropology, and economics, to light fiction, should inspire readers of all perspectives and persuasions. You may want to keep these titles handy for your next trip to the bookstore. This list should readily stock your nightstand with intriguing reading material for the upcoming summer months.



**Quasi-Random Samples:
APA 2005**



Wm. James Book Award
winner Richard Nisbett



Staats Lecturer
Frans de Waal

Ernest Hilgard Award winner
Florence Denmark
with Division 1 Awards Chair
Nancy Russo



Jolly new Fellows of Division 1:
Thomas Blass, Jefferson Singer, Sven Ingmar Andersson, Nicholas Cummings, Henry David, Peter Merenda, Antonio E. Puente

Alan Boneau Award winner
Michael Wertheimer (R) with
eponym, Alan Boneau (L)



Prescription Privileges Symposium:
(clockwise from top) Thomas
Greening, Michael Sullivan,
M. Brewster Smith, George
Albee, Patrick DeLeon

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The Olympics Are about More than Gold Medals

by Joseph J. Palladino, University of Southern Indiana

Mitchell M. Handelsman, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center



Joseph Palladino

forts put forth by the participants. Just how do they do it? What is their secret? Where do they get the motivation? After careful study and reflection, we finished our sandwich and realized that it is the *sports clichés* that make the difference!

Sport clichés seem to transcend sport; they have meanings when adapted by anybody in a motivating role. For example, the clichés that coaches use to motivate superb athletes can be used by those of us in academia to motivate ourselves, our colleagues, and our students. At times difficult messages can be communicated in a much more effective (or, at least, less offensive) way via the sports cliché. Let's take a look first at clichés that can convey otherwise anxiety-laden messages in upbeat ways.

"The team that wants it the most will win this one!"

If used by a dean, this cliché means, "Entire departments are being cut; yours could be one of them if you don't shape up."

If said by a faculty member to a student, this cliché means, "If you get a C in my psych class, you should consider majoring in sociology."

"Let's give 110%!"

Dean to faculty: "I know we're not paying you to serve on these six committees, but it'll help for tenure."

Senior faculty to junior faculty: "Always keep the outliers or your results will not be significant."

Faculty to students: "There'll be extra credit!"

"You can't teach that..." (in regard to sports, this often refers to height, speed, quickness, shooting ability, etc.)

Dean to faculty: "You can't teach that course, because the guy who's teaching it now has a building named after him."

Faculty to students: "You can do without review sessions; after all, this is a stats course."

"He's a serious student of the game!"

Dean to faculty: "He belongs to both APA and APS so he can be listed in their publications, and he spends more time figuring out who will be on his tenure committee than reading the literature in his discipline."

Senior faculty to junior faculty: "You should spend more time reading my articles!"

Faculty to students: "This student is spending more time on the extra credit project than on studying for the tests."

"She's from the old school!"

Dean to faculty: "She gets her work done, even though she still owns and uses a Smith-Corona manual typewriter, has not yet mastered phone mail, and has decided to wait for Microsoft to get *all* the bugs out before using PowerPoint."

Faculty to students: "She still takes notes in class."

"Let's take the crowd out of the game!"

Dean to faculty: "Please don't tell the chancellor that I haven't read any of the reports I've signed."

Faculty to students: "Please tell your parents to stop calling me when you get a B on your tests."

"It's Gut-check time!"

Dean to faculty: "Budgets are being cut, but you need to publish more."

Faculty to students: "Tuition is going up, but class sizes are increasing."

"It's a whole new ballgame!"

Dean to faculty: "Yeah, there was travel money last year but not this year."

Faculty to students: "You can skip the review sessions; I haven't taught this course before."

"You need to have ice-water in your veins!"

Dean to faculty: "Budget cuts; there'll be no heat in your offices."

Faculty to students: "Budget cuts; there'll be no heat in the classroom."

"You need to be an unselfish player!"

Dean to faculty: "You're going to share office space next year."

Faculty to students: "Please don't come to my office hours."

"She caught great air on that run!"

Dean to faculty: "She ran 10 minutes over in her lecture."

Senior faculty to junior faculty: "The dean is going to spend 45 minutes on her 10-minute start-of-the-semester talk; email me if she says anything important this semester."

Faculty to student: "She ran 3 pages over on her paper."

"Good call by the official!"

Dean to faculty: "I'm the official; don't question my calls."

Faculty to students: "I'm right even when I'm wrong."

"A week off will do them some good!"

Dean to faculty: "My physician said YOU should retire."

Senior faculty to junior faculty: "Just think – six more years and you too can have a two day schedule."

Faculty to students: "Some of you might want to consider Spring Break an invitation to explore other options."

"You need great instincts to play this game!"

Dean to faculty: "The criteria for tenure keep changing."

Faculty to students: "The tests are all essay."

"You need to execute!"

Dean to faculty: "No credit for 'under review' papers in your merit calculations."

Faculty to students: "No penalty for guessing."

"It's defense that wins championships!"

Dean to faculty: "Don't be offensive."

Faculty to students: "Don't be offensive."

Lighter Side...

"This team is like family."

Dean to faculty: "Yes, we give new meaning to the word dysfunctional."
Faculty to students: "I yell a lot in class; get used to it, my children did."

Some sports clichés are not used when talking with athletes, but when talking *about* them. Here are some examples applied to academia:

"They won't go quietly."

When Deans use this cliché, they are referring to faculty members whose favorite sentence is, "Let me check with my attorney and get back to you."
When faculty members use this cliché, they are referring to students who come to class to entertain themselves with IPOD downloads.

"We're glad to get out of here with the 'W.'" or, "It's a game of inches."

or, "It's a nail biter."

or, "We've got a real barn-burner!"

Dean about faculty: "I'm glad I was able to leave the faculty meeting without having to call security (again)."

Faculty about students: "I'm glad students fill out course evaluations before I have to give them final grades."

"That was a textbook play."

Dean about faculty: "This faculty member I'm observing is lecturing straight from the book; how disgusting."

Faculty about students: "This university lets me lecture right



Mitchell Handelsman

from the book; how enlightened."

"They brought their A-game."

Dean about faculty: "These instructors are inflating grades again."

Faculty about students: "These students must be getting their papers on the Internet."

"This team is really starting to gel."

Dean about faculty: "This department is over-tenured."

Faculty about students: "This class is copying from each other!"

"Everybody's on the same page."

Dean about faculty: "Finally, more than three faculty showed up to a meeting."

Faculty about students: "This class is copying from each other!"

KNEE-SLAPPER AWARDS

Do you know a good joke about psychology or psychologists? The APA Society for General Psychology is pleased to announce a contest seeking the best of such humor. Three awards and \$100 checks will be presented during the APA convention: (1) Best joke, (2) Best joke submitted by a student, and (3) Best original cartoon. Entries are due by May 1, 2006. Further details are available from Humor Chairperson Joseph Palladino, jjpallad@usi.edu.

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