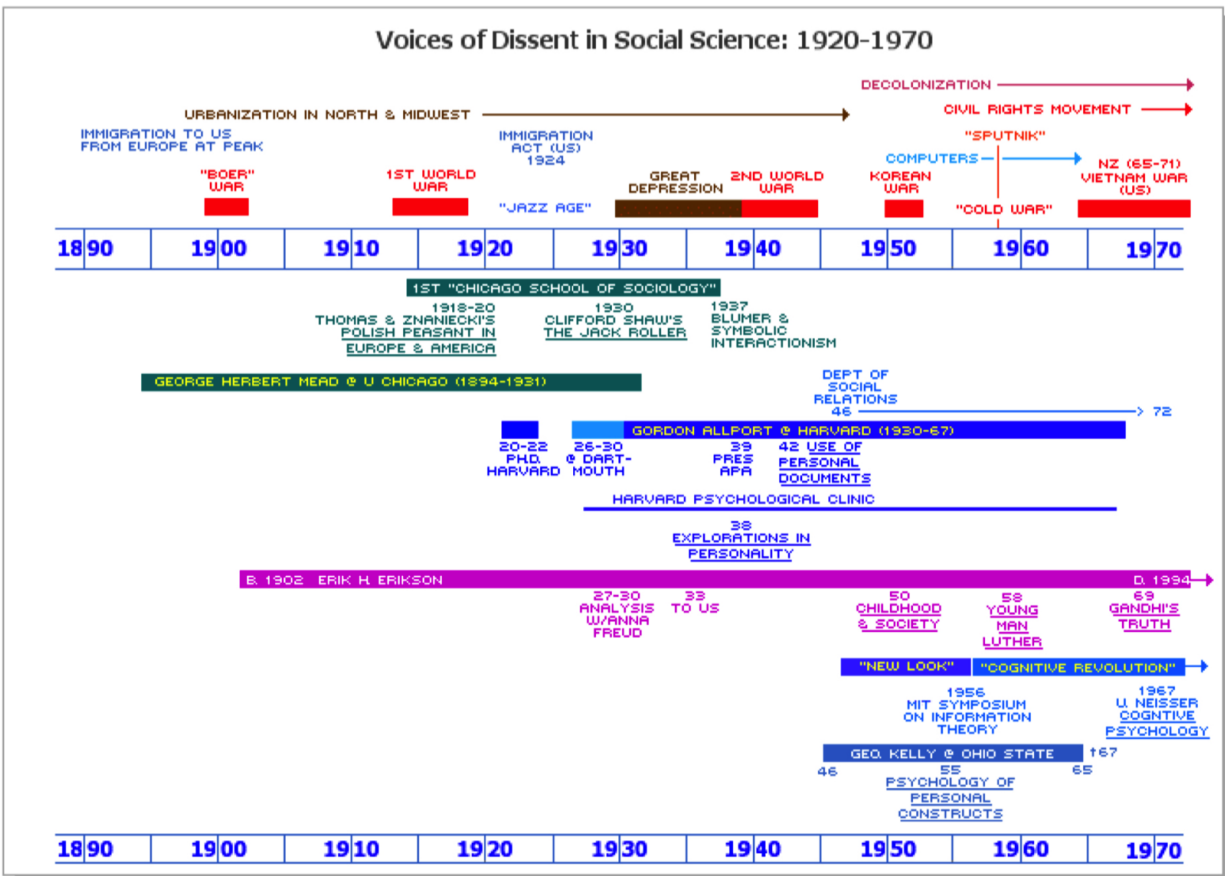


## Challenging the Standard Model of American Psychology: The Dissenters' Stories (Outline, 2023)

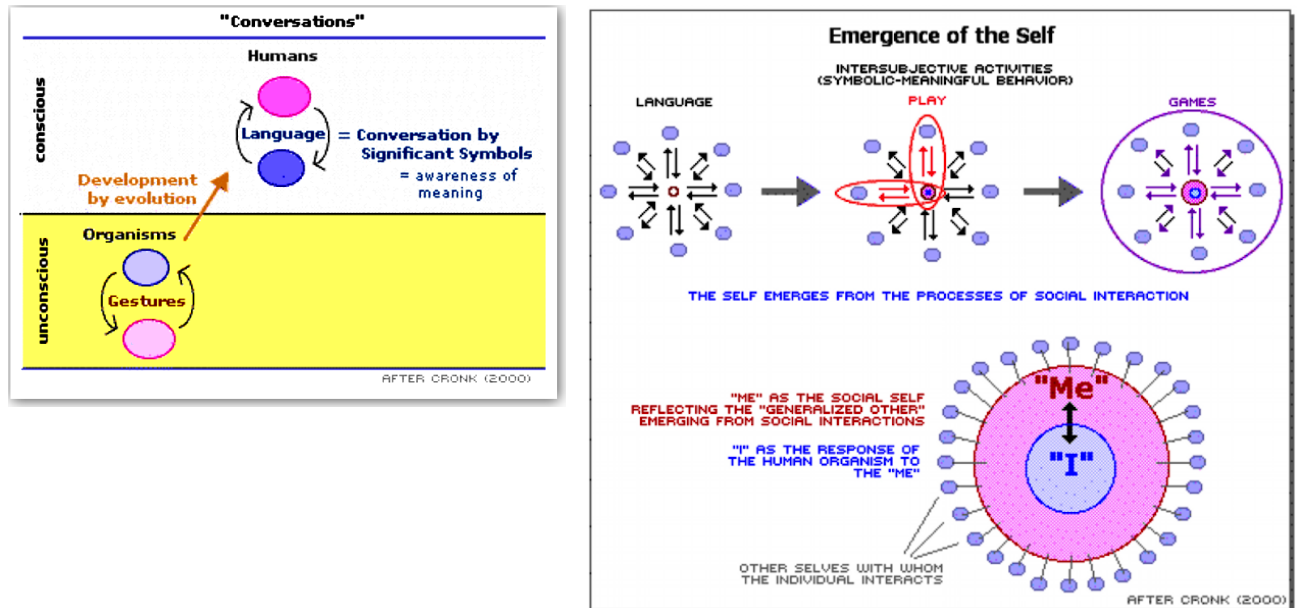


1. The first group comprises the *“First Chicago School” in sociology and the theory of symbolic interactionism*. From the late 1910s until the 1940s, the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago brought together a powerful group of theorists and researchers who were particularly interested in the **interaction of individual with the surrounding society**. This group included G. H. Mead, Ernest Burgess, Robert Park, Clifford Shaw, and Herbert Blumer.

### *G. H. Mead (1863-1931)*

- Growth of self takes place in social settings from the beginning via (1) **language**, (2) **play**, and (3) **games**. Increasing attention to (A) *social roles* and (B) *rules & symbolic relations* associated with social roles
- “I” and “Me”: Our social partners form **“the generalized Other.”** : “Reduced to simplest terms, your ‘I’ is what you think of yourself, whereas your ‘me’ is what you think that others are thinking of you” (Bogardus, 1963, p. 28).

*(see diagrams on next page)*



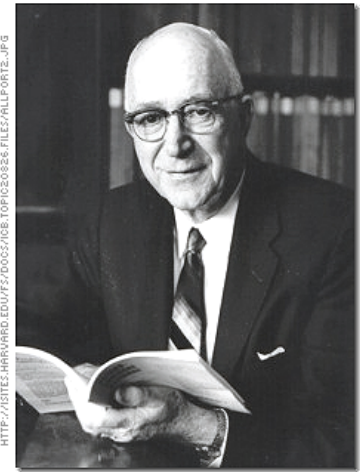
### *The "First Chicago School" of Sociology & Symbolic Interactionism*

- Study of the lives of individuals in Chicago in 1920s
  - Clifford Shaw looked at the life histories of individual adolescents in a study of juvenile delinquency. In 1930 he published *The Jack Roller*, the story of "Stanley" who became entangled in the criminal justice system but was rehabilitated. Shaw used both institutional records and the boy's own oral autobiography as data.
- Thomas & Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918-1920): use of personal documents (especially letters) to understand how these Polish immigrants experienced adjustment to U.S. culture. Is this use of documents scientific?
- Herbert Blumer: *Symbolic Interactionism*
  - (1) the **centrality of symbols, particularly language**, whose meaning arises within a process of negotiation.
  - (2) the social world as an **active process** in which persons are agents in their own growth and change,
  - (3) **interaction** as grounding for the self such that, even in its privacy, the self retains a strongly social quality; and
  - (4) an appreciation for the **empirical, everyday world** which requires close observation to arrive at understanding of its processes and meanings

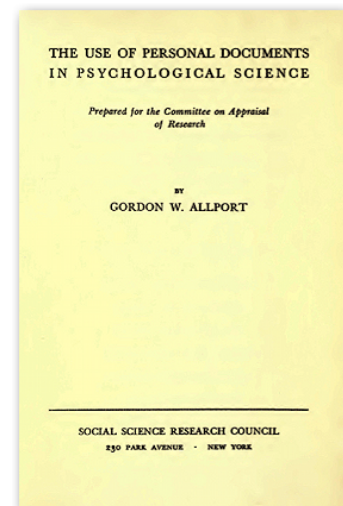
2. *Harvard University "Social Relations" Perspective* and its antecedents forms the second group. During the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Harvard's psychologists were predominantly experimentalists (e.g., E. G. Boring, S. S. Stevens, eventually B. F. Skinner). Yet, there were several psychologists as you will see below who advocated for a different approach. In 1946, the Harvard Psychology Department split (that is, the department "divorced") with the

experimentalists staying in the Psychology Department and a new Department of Social Relations was formed. They had been for a long time allied with the Harvard Psychology Clinic headed by Henry A. Murray. Among the Harvard psychology faculty who pioneered this new endeavor were imposing figures in psychology (Gordon W. Allport and Robert W. White) and other social sciences (Talcott Parsons and Clyde M. Kluckhohn). Each believed that the study of the human person went beyond the laboratory and required a close examination of the development of the individual life.

- **Gordon W. Allport** (1897-1967): Harvard University Psychology Professor
  - Wrote 1<sup>st</sup> textbook on personality psychology in 1937.
  - Employed distinction of Wilhelm Windelband elucidate *nomothetic* (that is, law-like) explanations for phenomena while the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) looked to provide *idiographic* interpretations of individual events and individual persons set within their socio-historical contexts. This approach also mirrors the distinction between the notions of *Verstehen* (“**Understanding**”) and *Erklären* (“**Explanation**”) in Germany philosophical thought.
    - “The concept of Verstehen was later used by the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey to describe the first-person participatory perspective that agents have on their individual experience as well as their culture, history, and society. In this sense, it is ... contrasted with the external objectivating third-person perspective of explanation (das Erklären) in which human agency, subjectivity, and its products are analyzed as effects of impersonal natural forces in the natural sciences and social structures in sociology” (“Verstehen” in Wikipedia, 20190220)
  - *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science* (1942): Monograph examining how non-experimental data sources as scientific: *autobiographies, questionnaires and interview transcripts, diaries and letters, and projective testing documents* (e.g., Thematic Apperception Test).
  - Harvard experimentalist Arthur Bills argued that psychology as a science had to be “*empirical, mechanistic, quantitative, nomothetic, analytic, and operational.*” However, when Allport was elected as president of the American Psychological Association in 1939, he argued that **psychological science could also be “rational, teleological, qualitative, idiographic, synoptic, and even non-operational.”** Allport claimed

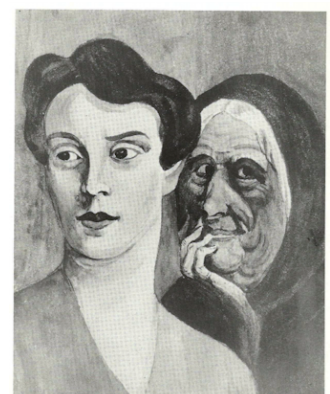
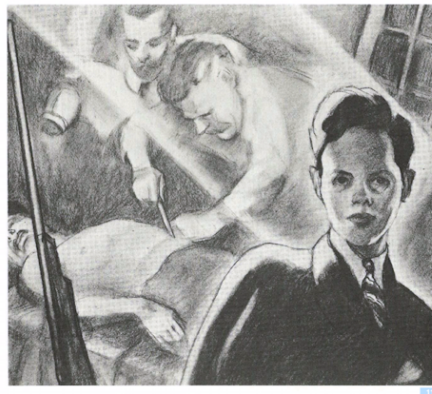


Gordon W. Allport

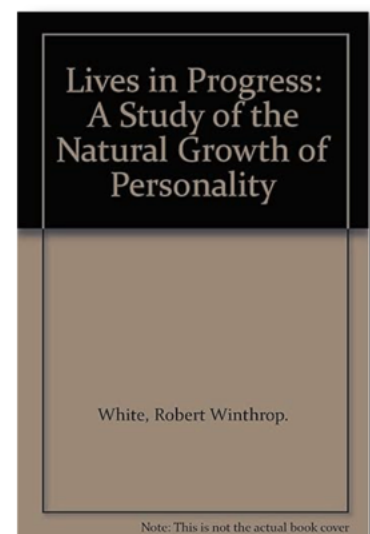


that **much of experimental psychology was *trivial and ignored real world problems.***

- **Henry A. Murray, Robert W. White, and the Harvard Psychological Clinic**
  - **Henry A. Murray, MD** (1893-1988) came to direct the Harvard Psychological Clinic in 1927 and remained there for the rest of his life. In 1935, Murray and his partner, Christiana Morgan, published a new projective psychological test, the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) consisting of 20 cards with ambiguous scenes and images. Subject or clients tested with the TAT were asked to look at each card and make up a story describing what happened before, during, and after the scene. He believed that an analysis of the themes of the stories could reveal the internal motivational needs and external environmental presses which were affecting the individual's psyche. See examples below of some TAT cards.



- **Robert W. White** (1904-2001) was a Harvard psychologist who taught at the university between 1937 and 1964. He worked with both Allport (who was a near contemporary at Harvard College) and Murray. While he did publish a textbook about abnormal psychology, he is best known for studying the lives of three individuals (two men and one woman) from their college years until they had reached middle adulthood. His final 1975 volume, ***Lives in Progress: A Study of the Natural Growth of Personality***, explained that these individuals demonstrated a dynamic unfolding of who they were as individuals and not just as members of a particular group or population. Here is an example of using case studies for data.



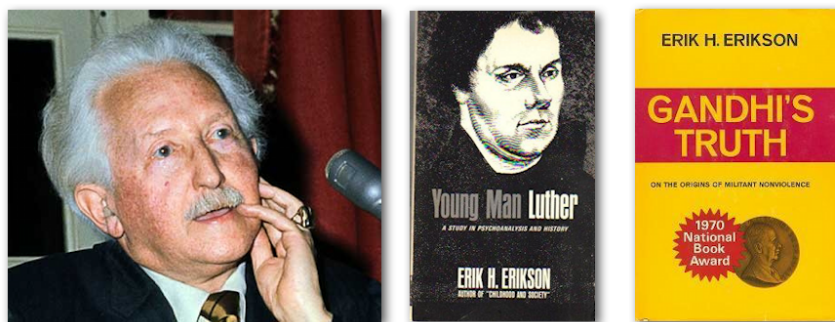
3. Another major dissenting voice belonged to **Erik Erikson** (1902-1994) and his work in **developmental theory** and **psychosocial biography**. Emigrating from Vienna where he had studied psychoanalysis with Anna Freud, Erikson's long intellectual journey in America emphasized the role of cultural setting and the quest for identity in the individual human life.

**Some Patterns of Human Development  
In Western Society**

	Birth-1	2-3	4-6	7-12	13-18	19-26	26-40	40-55	55-65	65-75	75-84	85+
	Infant	Toddler	Early Childhood	Late Childhood	Adolescence	Adult Transition	Early Adulthood	Middle Adulthood	Later Adulthood	Young Old	Old	Old Old
<b>Freud's Psychosexual Stages</b>	Oral	Anal	Phallic	Latency	Genital	Freud's psychosexual stages do not extend beyond adolescence.						
<b>Erikson's Psychosocial Stages</b>	Trust v. Mistrust Is the world safe?	Autonomy v. Shame-Doubt Can I do things myself?	Initiative v. Guilt Am I good or bad?	Industry v. Inferiority Am I competent?	Ego Identity v. Role Confusion Who am I?	Intimacy v. Isolation Can I share my life with another?	Generativity v. Self-Absorption Can I contribute to the future?	Integrity v. Despair Wisdom Has my life been worthwhile?				
<b>Piaget's Cognitive Stages</b>	Sensori-Motor	Preoperational		Concrete Operational	Formal Operational	Piaget's cognitive stages do not extend beyond adolescence						
<b>Family &amp; Interpersonal</b>	Basic attachment to caregivers "Stranger Anxiety" (9-20 mo.)		Quasi-social play	Same-Sex "Chums"	Dating	Leaving Family Home	Marriage Parenthood	"Empty Nest"	Loss of spouse			
<b>Work</b>			Preschool?	Going to School	Going to School	Career Prep-Entry	Building a Career	Peak Earnings	Early Retirement			
<b>Physical</b>				Puberty				Menopause				
<b>Language - Literacy</b>	Sounds "mama"	Simple sentences	More complex sentences	Reading								

Vincent W. Hevern 10/27/04

- The developmental trajectory of individuals is patterned (see above) and, in entering adolescence, becomes focused on “ego identity”—requiring an **integration of past and current history with future goals**. Emergence, therefore, of concern with “*what is the plot of my life?*”



Erik H. Erikson & His Psychobiographies

- Published two intensive **psychosocial biographical** studies [often called “psychobiographies”]: *Young Man Luther* in 1958 and *Gandhi's Truth* in 1969. While not all experts in fields such as history and sociology (psychology as well!) were supportive of Erikson's interpretation of Luther and Gandhi, he was engaged in a conversation in which **social science might interpret the individual life by paying attention to cultural contexts and the interplay of narrative plot and character**.

4. Under the broad heading of *cognitive constructivism*, a final set of voices included the many figures who participated in the “cognitive revolution” as well as the more individual approach of George A. Kelly's *Personal Construct Psychology*. The primacy of the behaviorist school in the social sciences began to give way in the post-World War II era as psychologists increasingly studied the influence of cognitive processes upon human activities. The 1950s and 1960s are often described as the time of the "Cognitive Revolution.”



George A. Kelly

George A Kelly (1905-1967 Ohio State University) brought an interest in clinical and personality theory to cognitivism as he enunciated his distinctive "personal construct" approach to psychology. He proposed that many of his clinical and experimental contemporaries were wrong. Too frequently, they interpreted the behavior of human beings solely as the result of unconscious dynamics (via psychodynamics) or blind internal forces (in various physiological or behaviorist theories). He offered an alternative formulation in which **each person is an active investigator of the environment -- one who explores and continuously seeks to make sense of what he or she experiences.**

In such exploration, an individual anticipates what might be encountered based on experience in the past; these take the form of "constructs" -- ideas, feelings, and even behaviors -- and serve initially to prime or orient an individual to new experiences.

However, if the anticipated construct does not adequately explain or cope with the experience, the individual must adapt to the new situation by reformulating or changing the initial construct. [NOTE: his theory is a kind of anticipation of the current model of how the brain works called “predictive coding”.] Throughout the life course, each person builds more and more constructs as past ones are inadequate in responding to novelty in day-to-day existence. In this theory, Kelly is suggesting metaphorically that all human beings are **scientists** who hypothesize about the world, test those hypotheses through their observations, and either accept their hypotheses as confirmed or alter them because they are disconfirmed. **The contents of the human mind -- one's vast store of verbal and nonverbal personal constructs -- ultimately represent the way an individual person construes or makes sense of the world at any moment of their lives.**

