

**PSY 444
Story in Psychology**Last updated Sept. 27,
2022**Challenging the "Standard Model" of American Psychology:
The Dissenters' Story, 1920-1970****Challenging the "Standard Model" of American Psychology: The Dissenters' Story**

in the last class we explored the emergence of the "standard experimental model" in the social sciences and the application of that model in various practical domains. This class shifts the focus of our inquiry to some voices of dissent during the period from 1920 to 1970. These theorists did not embrace the standard model of the experimental laboratory as the only method of doing research and, equally, rejected the all-encompassing claims of behaviorism to explain human conduct. They were not "narrativists" by any contemporary standard, but endorsed various approaches which contributed to narrative's eventual emergence. While the voices of dissent were more widespread than most traditional histories of the social sciences generally acknowledge, today's lecture will focus upon four significant groups whose analyses were particularly crucial. These include:

The "First Chicago School" in Sociology and 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, Herbert Blumer. and others.

The Harvard "Social Relations" Perspective and Its Antecedents

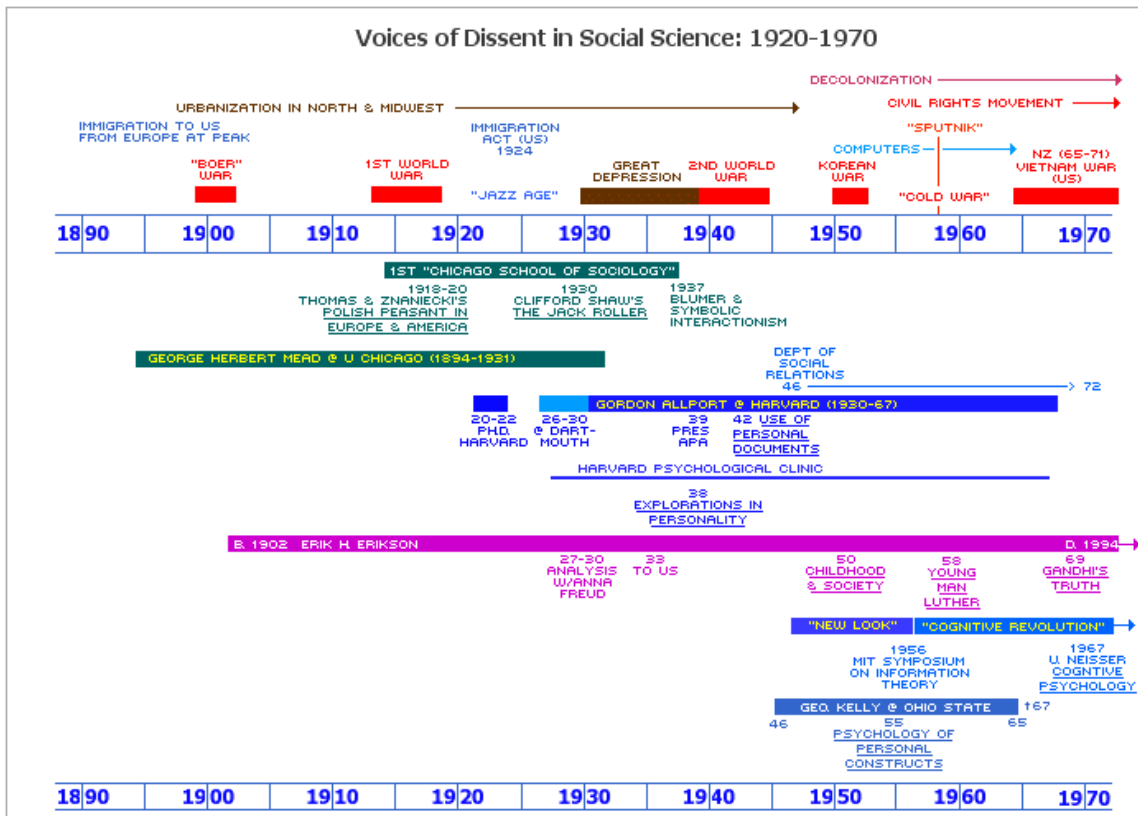
In 1946, the Harvard Psychology Department split and a new Department of Social Relations was formed. They had been for a long time allied with the Harvard Psychology Clinic headed by Henry A. Murray. Among the Harvard psychology faculty who pioneered this new endeavor were imposing figures in psychology (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.

Erik Erikson & Psychosocial Biography

Emigrating from Vienna where he had studied psychoanalysis with Anna Freud, Erik Erikson's long intellectual journey in America emphasized the role of cultural setting and the quest for identity in the individual human life.

Constructive Cognitivism: The "Cognitive Revolution" & George 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". A clinical and personality slant on cognitivism was given by George A. Kelly at the Ohio State University as he enunciated his "scientific" account of human behavior under the umbrella of his distinctive "personal construct" psychology.



The "First Chicago School" in Sociology and Symbolic Interactionism (G. H. Mead, Clifford Shaw, Herbert Blumer, and others)

The image of Chicago to the right, a "bird's eye" view drawn in 1916, looks across the central business district of the city toward the west. It suggests the extraordinary position of this gateway urban center which became the second largest city in the United States by the beginning of the twentieth century. A financial and transportation hub on the shores of Lake Michigan, Chicago stood at the eastern edge of the Great Plains. A vast territory of flat rich farmland stretched from the outskirts of Chicago to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains over a thousand miles distant. Chicago thought itself as the truly innovative metropolis of America where the latest technological and entrepreneurial advances contributed to the building of both the city and the nation it served. The streets of Chicago were filled with recent immigrant laborers from every nation of Europe as well as an economic aristocracy of Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, German, and Scandinavian heritage. The famous 1892 Pan Columbian Exposition showed Chicago to the world as the dynamic center.



By the turn of the 19th century, Chicago also could be proud of the emerging university which bears its name. Founded in 1890 by the richest man in the United States, John D. Rockefeller, under the auspices of the American Baptist Education Society, the University of Chicago was established in the south side neighborhood of Hyde Park (to

the left of the illustration above) on land donated by Marshall Field, the owner of the city's largest department store ("A Brief History of the University of Chicago," n.d.). It was modeled in large measure on the German research university



model and sought to attract the most eminent scholars to teach on its faculties. Two early additions to the university's ranks were the philosophers and close friends, John Dewey (1859-1952) and George Herbert Mead (1863-1931), both coming from the University of Michigan in 1894. Though Dewey left Chicago for Columbia University in New York City ten years later, Mead stayed at Chicago as a member of the

philosophy department until shortly before his death in 1931.

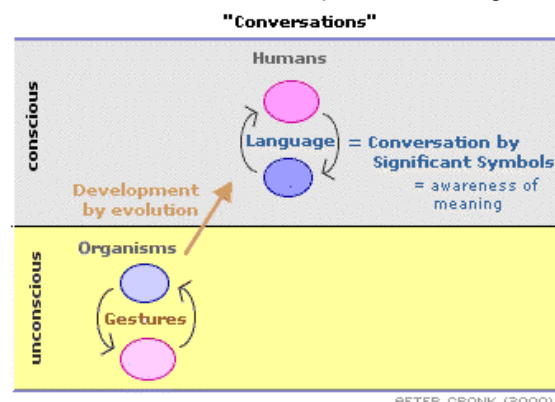
George Herbert Mead. Mead never completed his doctoral degree and never published a book in his lifetime. Yet, as one of the most important figures among the American Pragmatists (such as William James, Dewey and others) and arguably the seminal theorist for the school of **symbolic interactionism** in the social sciences, Mead's journal articles, mentorship of graduate students and class lectures were enormously influential. Following his death, his students and family gathered notes transcribed during those lectures. These posthumously published texts (Mead, 1934, 1936, 1938) made Mead's general ideas available to a wider audience than that found within the precincts of the University of Chicago itself.



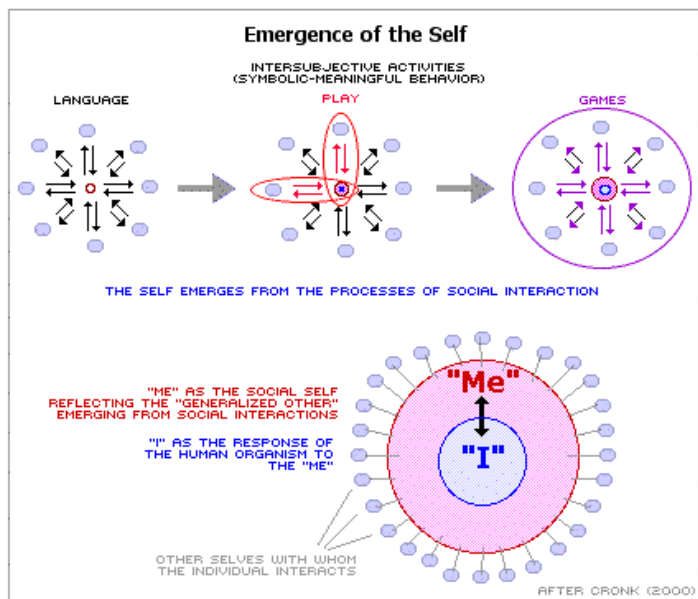
G. H. MEAD

At the core of his philosophical and psychological thinking, Mead believed that the human person is the product of social processes. He rejected both **Cartesian Dualism** and the individualism of psychological behaviorists such as Pavlov, Watson, and their successors. He elaborated a theory of the social genesis of human mind and individuality. A first step in understanding Mead's scheme rests upon his argument that living organisms engage in two forms of "conversation." The first of these conversational modes consists of behavioral

gestures: a second organism is affected by and responds to the gesture of a first organism which, in turn, is affected by and responds with a gesture to that of the second organism and so on (Cronk, 2000). These organisms are conversing by means of gestures. Mead proposes that this conversational exchange takes place without an awareness by either organism that it is actually conversing, i.e., such exchange of gestures takes place unconsciously. Over the course of evolution, however, the form of the conversation changed with the emergence of **language**, that is, conversation which uses "significant symbols." This interaction between two human organisms, then, takes place at a conscious level with an exchange of meaningful vocal and nonvocal gestures. The meaning arises out of the interaction of the two (or more) participants and is not independent of the social processes between them.



For Mead, the social world is primary and the basic matrix from which each human person develops (see diagram below). He rejects the notions of empirical and romantic philosophers like Locke, Hume, or Rousseau who claimed that the individual comes to or enters society with a prior distinctive entity. Rather, within the processes of social interaction, the human person emerges first as a body and, subsequently, as a mind.



How does the mind develop in Mead's estimate? "The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process" (Mead, 1934, p. 135) The process involves symbolic communication or exchange in three forms: **language**, **play**, and **games**. The most pervasive and earliest intersubjective activity which forms the mind involves language. Individuals are immersed in the linguistic world of others from the moment of their birth and eventually come to understand the other through the use of vocal symbols, i.e., language. The developing person uses language as the primary means of understanding the mind of others in its social world. This ability to engage in a form of social "role taking" -- comprehending what the other is thinking -- is elaborated by a second process of communication, namely, play. When persons play, they assume more fully the particular roles and identities of the characters whom they are playing (e.g., nurse, doctor, cowboy, fire

fighter, mommy, etc.) beyond that afforded by language. They use not only the words and expressions of the role they are playing, but also the dress, mannerisms, bodily stances or movements, and emotions of their characters. As persons further develop, they enter into a third, and more complex form of symbolic communication by means of games. According to Mead (1934), games involve an understanding of and acquiescence to a broad set of roles, rules, and symbolic relations among all the game's participants. When we come to discuss Goffman, Sarbin, and other role theorists in subsequent lectures, we will see how Mead's social process arguments were pathbreaking and later elaborated by others.

Mead is perhaps most famous for his proposal that the "self" must be viewed as a kind of polar or dimensional entity comprised of the "Me" and the "I". The "Me" consists of the judgments, comments, and conduct directed toward a particular individual by the many social partners who populate that individual's world or what Mead calls "the generalized Other." In this fashion, the "Me" is constituted by the world of others who offer both their own responses to the individual and create situations toward which the individual must offer a response. The "Me" might be said, therefore, to represent a kind of socially-constructed identity. However, the other pole of the self is the "I" and involves the active appraisal and response to the "Me" by the individual. As Mead (1934) describes, "the 'I' is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the 'me' is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes. The attitudes of the others constitute the organized 'me,' and then one reacts toward that as an 'I'" (p. 175). In the act of responding, Mead believes, the individual person can assume a novel or different stance than that represented by the "Me" and, in so doing, alter the processes of social interchange: "The response of the 'I' involves adaptation, but an adaptation which affects not only the self but also the social environment which helps to constitute the self; that is, it implies a view of evolution in which the individual affects its own environment as well as being affected by it" (Mead, 1934, p. 214). Emory Boargadus, a student of Mead's and sociologist at the University of Southern California, described Mead's theory (perhaps a bit unfairly) in plain language: "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. Room for errors abound in your 'me' concept, for you may misinterpret what another person is thinking of you, that is, you may misinterpret his gestures involving you. Here is a twofold source of misunderstanding, for the other person may misinterpret your responsive gestures" (1963, pp. 28-29).

The "First Chicago School" of Sociology & Symbolic Interactionism.

Mead's influence on the intellectual direction of the University of Chicago was felt outside his own department of philosophy (Burgess, 1948). One important locus involved the sociology department which had been founded by Albion Small in 1892, just two years before Mead himself arrived at the Hyde Park campus. For the next half-century, the Chicago sociology department saw a succession of both instructors and graduate students whose vision of what sociology needed to do reflected in many ways the urban setting of their study and research. Former newspaper reporter turned academic, [Robert E. Park](#) (1864-1944), once himself a student of Dewey and a 1904 Ph.D. under Georg Simmel in Germany, arrived in Chicago in 1914. Subsequent historians have often taken this date as the beginning of what has come to be called the "First Chicago School" of sociology. Park brought a profound concern for the city as a social setting (he invented the term "human ecology") and, along with his coworker in the department, Ernest Burgess (1886-1966), explored the social and physical contours and processes of Chicago in his own research and that of his students (e.g., Park, Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925). During a period which extended to the early 1930s, the department produced copious research which the historian of sociology Andrew Abbott (1999) characterizes as focused "on the locatedness of social facts and the importance of contextual contingencies" (p. 207). Thus, Clifford Shaw who was mentored by Burgess completed a doctoral thesis on juvenile delinquency by looking at the life histories of individual adolescents. Shaw's (1930/1966) study of *The Jack Roller* ("Stanley") used life-history documents -- both institutional records and a boy's own oral autobiography -- to tell the story of Stanley who became entangled in the juvenile criminal system, was rehabilitated, and serves as an example why older penal practices among the young should be revised.



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Arguably the most well-known work of this period was the monumental study by W. I. Thomas (1863-1947) and Florian Znaniecki (1882-1958) entitled *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (published 1918-1920). Across five volumes, Thomas and Znaniecki gathered together a vast collection of documents related to the emigration of Chicago's Polish community. These documents mostly consisted of series of letters written between residents of the U.S. and their families and friends remaining in Poland. Thomas was a strong advocate of the use of letters as a source of life-history information and a route to understanding how the individual personality grew (Bogardus, 1963). The content of these volumes also range across detailed background analyses of the social organization of life in Poland and America, the life story of a single immigrant, and a concluding study of the effects of social disorganization and disorientation in the move to the United States. For some social scientists, Thomas and Znaniecki appeared to have generated a set of scientific sociological conclusions regarding immigrants and the processes of acculturation on the basis of an inductive reading of documents gathered from a broad number of individuals. This claim received a strong rebuttal by Chicago sociologist, Herbert Blumer (1939), who asserted that "despite their broad citations of personal documents (letters, diaries, transcripts of interviews), Thomas and Znaniecki's conclusions were not directly and inductively derived from the documents themselves. Rather, the first-person data sources they used only confirmed their judgments originally generated via other means and evidence" (Hevern, 1999, p. 5) I cite this critique not only because it helped propel Gordon Allport to evaluate personal documents as a source of social science data (see below), but also since it embodies the general suspicion of many social scientists about the independence and validity of such "subjective" sources of information. Narratively-attuned social scientists have found in Blumer's (1939) analysis a cautionary tale for their own methodological choices.

Despite his response to the *Polish Peasant*, Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) became the founding voice in the **symbolic interactionist** perspective within sociology, a term he first used in 1937. He defined this approach in this fashion:

The term "symbolic interaction" refers, of course, to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human behavior. (Blumer as quoted by Gingrich, 2003).

Throughout its history, symbolic interactionism has been considered to be a "maverick" (Plummer, 2001) position vis-a-vis traditional positivist sociology. Nonetheless, it has embraced a set of positions which are congenial to or anticipate emphases within the narrative perspective. These include (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 in order to arrive at understanding of its processes and meanings (Plummer, 2000).



The Harvard "Social Relations" Perspective and Its Antecedents



EMERSON HALL, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Harvard University has been one of a handful of crucial centers for theory and debate over the nature of the social sciences for more than a century. We have already reviewed William James, the philosopher-psychologist, whose turn-of-the-19th-century efforts fostered psychology's rise as an independent discipline in America. In the 20th century, Harvard became even more important by serving as a kind of battleground of ideas about how to do social science and what these sciences formally represented. Thus, Harvard would foster a very strong experimental tradition which was embodied in E. G. Boring and (after his 1933 appointment to the faculty) S. S. Stevens, a fierce champion of strict empirical & objective methods in laboratory psychology. As Bales, Mayberry-Lewis, Maher, & White (2002) describe, "academic

psychology, at Harvard and elsewhere, was dominated by the brass instrument laboratories of experimental psychology, devoted to precise studies of psychophysics, sensation, perception, and reaction time." B(urrhus) F(rederick) Skinner, who outlined the principles of operant behaviorism and appeared to banish the mind from psychology's purview, acted as another mid-20th century proponent of the mechanist model of human action: persons were merely respondents to schedules of reward, punishment, and deprivation and never truly agents of intentional action except insofar as an act gained a reward or lessened a penalty. Nonetheless, there were a set of dissenters who found themselves uneasy at the ways in which human psychology was so readily studied by the same methods and with similar underlying presuppositions which were employed in research animals like rats or pigeons. Further, the rapid growth of statistical methods which put a premium upon the normal curve and analytic concern for whole populations rather than individuals seemed to remove psychology even more clearly from the ways actual people led their lives. Thus, while never rejecting the need for the social sciences to adopt "scientific" approaches in their inquiries, a small cadre of psychologists sought to enunciate a different viewpoint. These included Gordon W. Allport, Henry A. Murray, Robert W. White, and their students such as Jerome Bruner and Leo Postman among others.



GORDON W. ALLPORT

Gordon W. Allport (1897-1967). Most of Gordon Allport's life from the age of 18 was spent at Harvard -- as an undergraduate (1915-19) and graduate student (1920-22), a lecturer in social ethics (1924-26), and finally as a member of the psychology (1930-1946) and social relations (1946-1967) departments. Between 1936 and 1946, he served as chair of the psychology department. In those few years he was not at Harvard, he visited (and worked in) Europe and, for a brief period (1926-30), taught at Dartmouth College. In a talk I gave at the 1999 APA meeting in Boston, I provided this overall assessment of Allport's early career:

After completing his doctoral degree at Harvard in 1922, Gordon W. Allport traveled to Europe to explore the state of Continental (particularly German) and British psychology during a two-year Sheldon postgraduate fellowship [i.e., 1922-24]. Writing about this experience near the end of his life, he described "the powerful impact of [his] German teachers" in both Berlin and, later, Hamburg, upon his subsequent professional development (Allport, 1967). He recognized a special debt to William Stern in whose Hamburg home he lived for six months and who taught him the difference between "the common variety of differential psychology and a truly personalistic psychology that focuses upon the organization, and not the mere profiling, of an individual's traits" (Allport, 1967, p. 10). Indeed, in a 1924 paper Allport (1924a) contended that contemporary methodologies of personality study were flawed by an analytic reduction of the person to a set of unconnected and separate traits. What was lost, he argued, was that particular constellation or "form quality" of personal traits which comprise actual individuals in their unique integration. Though he moved beyond the Gestalt-inspired language of this early formulation, Allport maintained a dogged interest in both the "undivided" individual personality and scientific methods of studying such individuals throughout four subsequent decades of research and teaching. He returned repeatedly to a consideration of the pivotal role played by research methodology vis-à-vis a scientific understanding of the individual personality. His approach to proper methodology, however, often conflicted with the prevailing experimental operationism of his colleagues. Reflecting on the impact of his German postgraduate experience, Allport noted that "by the time I returned to America I was already a little bit out of touch and out of step with the Anglo-American traditions of positivism, statistics, and objectivism. Ever since then I've been somewhat of a maverick" (quoted in Evans, 1970, p. 18). As Mischel (1985) remarks, Allport's was "the lone voice speaking out critically against [the] dimensionalization of personality with numbers" during the 1930s and beyond. (Hevern, 1999, p. 1)

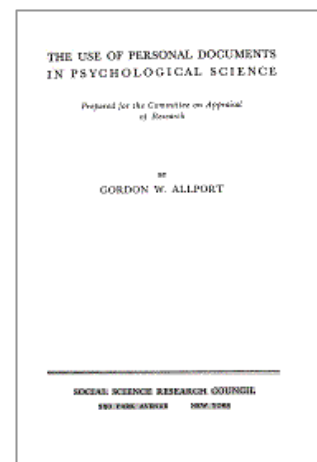
Closely connected to this methodological concern lay a theme about the aims of the various sciences which had been

proposed by the German philosopher, Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915). Windelband argued that the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) like physics sought to elucidate **nomothetic** (law-like) explanations for phenomena while the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) looked to provide **idiographic** interpretations of individual events and individual persons set within their sociohistorical contexts (Schwandt, 2001). Allport (1962) returned repeatedly to the "nomothetic-idiographic" distinction as he sought to wrestle with the best way of understanding the individual's life as a whole. Allport held that the individual life showed its own internal lawfulness and he sought to learn from lives what they might teach. As early as 1927 at Dartmouth, Allport required his students to read an autobiography, *The Locomotive God* (Leonard, 1927), as a primary text by which to understand the constituents and development of the personality. In later years, he used a case study based upon correspondence (and later published as *Letters from Jenny*, Allport, 1965) to achieve the same purpose.

Throughout the late 1930s Allport engaged in an escalating rhetoric of disagreement over scientific methodology with his experimentally-inclined colleagues (Hevern, 1999). In 1938, experimental psychologist, Arthur G. Bills, claimed that "at present the following criteria are widely accepted: that psychology as science is empirical, mechanistic, quantitative, nomothetic, analytic, and operational" (p. 377). Allport challenged that view in his APA presidential address in 1939 which was delivered within a week of German invasion of Poland and the start of the Second World War. My 1999 observations about this address noted the following:

Entitled "The Psychologist's Frame of Reference" Allport first presented a solidly empirical survey of trends across fifty years of scientific publication. He highlighted the recent growth in animal and nonverbal human research topics which avoided altogether higher levels of human cognition. He pointed to the growth of sophisticated statistical analyses and methodological demands for operationalism, the "watchword of an austere empiricism." He, then, engaged in a sharply rhetorical reflection upon the sterility and dangers resulting from the methodological directions revealed in that review. His language was, at turns, slyly ironic, broadly jocular, and pointedly scornful. In the second half of his address, Allport explicitly singled out articles and opinions of experimental purists--Lashley, Tolman, Bills, Stevens, and Boring among them--and challenged their claim to an exclusive understanding of research methods required by psychological science. He characterized his positivist peers as divorced from the urgent concerns of a world in chaos: "though [the experimentalist] generally repudiates a dualism of mind and body, he welcomes the equally stultifying dualism of laboratory and life." In an audacious coda, Allport focused upon historical rigidities in political thought (autocracy in ancient Greece, the medieval Church) and included the example of E. R. Jaensch, head of the German psychological society and Nazi-ideologue, who advocated a psychology tied closely to the racist aims of his government. In arguing from these potentially explosive examples, Allport sought to uphold the advantage of a pluralism in psychology's scientific methods: "the desirability of keeping alive diversified investigations and a diversified sense of importance is the generous lesson that democracy teaches us." As he would argue before students at the University of New Hampshire 18 months later, he feared the outcome of a cultist disregard for real-life issues and the embrace of trivial research projects by many experimentalists who demanded "slavish subservience" to the operational propositions famously advanced by A. G. Bills. Thus, Allport called for a psychology which would also be "*rational, teleological, qualitative, idiographic, synoptic, and even non-operational*" (Hevern, 1999, pp. 9-10).

The most extensive study of scientific methodology which Allport offered in support of his vision came with the publication of the 1942 monograph, *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science*. Prepared for the Committee on Appraisal of Research for the Social Science Research Council, Allport's (1942) effort covers 210 pages and surveys a broad class of non-experimental data sources including autobiographies, questionnaires and interview transcripts, diaries and letters and artistic and projective documents. His analysis of almost 200 individual works published after 1881 and most between 1922 and 1941 considered both their weaknesses and their utility in meeting the traditional criteria of science. He concluded that the use of such personal documents in the science of psychology is not only justified, but "properly used, such documents anchor a discipline in the bedrock of human experience, make the most of the predictive value of the single case in the normal process of human thought, exploit the idiographic principles of reasoning, and aid in meeting (more adequately than can unaided actuarial methods of work) the three critical tests of science: *understanding, prediction, and control*. (Allport, 1942, p. 191)



In 1946, the Department of Psychology could no longer remain united. Rather, Harvard agreed to the creation of a new, interdisciplinary department to be called Social Relations. It was formed by developmental, social, personality and clinical psychologists like Allport as well as sociologists and social anthropologists like Talcott Parsons and Clyde Kluckhohn. Remaining in the Psychology Department were the experimentalists like Boring and Stevens. This division

continued for the next quarter-century until the Sociology Department was separately reestablished (in 1970) and a new Department of Psychology and Social Relations was formed in 1972 (Triplet, 1999).

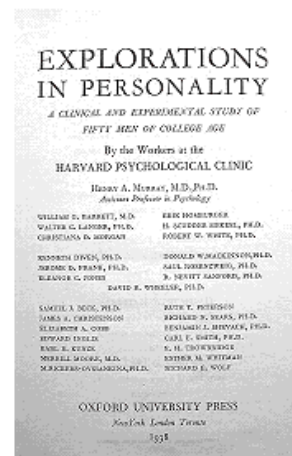


HENRY A. MURRAY

Henry A. Murray, Robert W. White, and the Harvard Psychological Clinic. Allport's was not the only voice which harbored doubts about the program of operationalized social science in the laboratory. The Harvard Psychological Clinic which had been founded by Morton Prince in 1927 attracted clinicians and researchers who were committed to a broader approach both in treating individuals and in understanding the developing personality more generally. These included the Prince's successor as the clinic's director, Henry A. Murray (1893-1988) as well as Robert W. White (1904-2001) and Erik H. Erikson (1902-1994).

Murray came to work at Harvard as a physician and Ph.D. biochemist whose previous experience had included a two-year surgical internship at Presbyterian Hospital (NYC) and research at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (later, Rockefeller University) in embryology (Hall & Lindzey, 1970, pp. 160-208; Triplet, 1992). During these years he developed a profound interest in psychology, particularly Jung's approach in *Psychological Types*, and soon became deeply involved in the study of psychoanalysis (he completed his own training in analysis by 1935). He accepted a position at the Harvard Psychological Clinic in 1927 and remained at Harvard for the rest of his career (except for service in the Army between 1943 and 1946). In 1935 Murray and Christiana Morgan (who was Murray's research collaborator and mistress) produced a new projective instrument, the **Thematic Apperception Test** (commonly called the "TAT"; Morgan & Murray, 1935). The TAT requires testees to look at 20 cards with ambiguous scenes and images and produce a story in which they describe what might be happening. The classic instructions for the test emphasize that the story should tell not only what is presently happening in the scene on the card, but what happened earlier and what will happen afterwards. Murray found in this test a method to evoke a rich source of internal dynamics of the personality. More specifically, he proposed that the resulting stories of testees could be examined to reveal the types of internal motivational *needs* and, simultaneously, the kinds of environmental *presses* which impinged upon the individual's psyche.

Murray's most famous published work was a collaborative effort with Clinic researchers: *Explorations in Personality: A Clinical and Experimental Study of Fifty College Aged Men* (1938). Twenty-seven names join Murray's among the authors including White, Erikson (then, Homburger [see below]), and Morgan as well as Jerome Frank, Donald MacKinnon, Nevitt Sanford, and Saul Rosenzweig, all productive researchers and theorists in the following decades. These collaborators interacted with their subjects with a wide range of testing instruments, interview methods, and other approaches to secure data by which they might interpret individual personalities. A great deal of the book is naturally concerned with Murray's theoretical propositions (usually called "personology") regarding needs, press, and other aspects of his motivational psychology. Whatever the ultimate validity of his particular theory, Murray's approach to research was notable for its rejection of many experimental designs which were or became *de rigueur* in academic social science. As Hall and Lindzey (1970) maintain, Murray's research methods were remarkable for their emphasis upon the intensive study of normal subjects, in small numbers, and set within natural settings (pp. 195-196). Further, he believed that research ought to reflect an interdisciplinary effort across different domains of expertise, e.g., psychiatry, psychology, sociology, and anthropology, an idea antithetical to so many experimentalists. Murray himself was never accepted by the Harvard Psychology Department as a tenured member but eventually found a home in the Department of Social Relations with others more congenial to his eclectic and original thinking (Triplet, 1992).



Let me finish this review of the setting at Harvard with brief mention of Robert Winthrop White, a collaborator of both Allport and Murray. I first encountered White's writings myself as a first-year clinical graduate student when our class read his seminal work, *Lives in Progress: A Study of the Natural Growth of Personality* (White, 1975). As I note at the [Narrative Psychology](#) web guide, this text was the third successive report which followed the life development of two men ("Hartley Hale, Physician and Scientist" and "Joseph Kidd, Businessman") and one woman ("Joyce Kinglesy, Housewife and Social Worker"). He had been tracing their lives from their college years and published previous editions in 1952 and 1966 as they moved into middle adulthood. Using depth psychological/psychoanalytic theory as well as biological and social perspectives, White sought to explain the dynamic unfolding of these lives as individuals rather than as members of larger groups or populations. Bales et al. (2002) emphasize that, for White, "personality inevitably changed over the life span and could not be captured by a static description of individuals at a specific point in life."



Erik H. Erikson (1902-1994) & Psychosocial Biography



The ship which brought Erik Erikson and his family to the United States from Europe also carried a young George Kennan, the diplomat who eventually designed in large measure the post-World War II response to Soviet expansion under the doctrine of containment. Erikson who spoke almost no English found himself discussing the character of the German people with the polyglot Kennan as the American sought to explain what the emigré might expect in the New World. Erikson also expanded his limited working English vocabulary on this trip by a couple of hundred more words. The world Erikson was leaving behind was on the verge of a descent into fascist repression and, ultimately, carnage and genocide (Friedman, 1999).

Born in Germany, Erikson initially believed that his mother's husband, Dr. Theodor Homburger, was his father and, so, he carried the name of Erik Homburger through his early adulthood (indeed, until 1939). In actuality, his father was an unknown Danish man who abandoned Erik's mother, Karla Abrahamsen, a young Jewish woman, before Erik's birth. Karla raised her illegitimate son alone for three years before marrying Homburger, a Protestant, who accepted Erik as his adoptive son but kept the secret of his birth from him. Trained as an art instructor, Erikson found himself wandering around Europe after high school until he settled in Vienna to teach at an experimental grade school run by Dorothy Burlingham, an American friend of Freud's daughter, Anna. There Erikson underwent psychoanalysis with Anna Freud and studied psychoanalysis himself. He was admitted to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society as a lay analyst and became a member of the International Psycho-Analytical Association. He moved to Copenhagen when the Nazis came to power in Germany with his wife, Joan, a Canadian dancer, and their two children. With some difficulty, he secured visas for himself and the family and arrived in New York City on the steamship, *Scanmail*, in the early Fall of 1933. He initially moved to Boston where he became associated with the Harvard Psychological Clinic and set up his own small practice of psychoanalysis with children, adolescents, and adults. Though he briefly attempted to complete a doctoral program in the Harvard Department of Psychology (Erikson did not even have an undergraduate degree), he found the experience unfortunate and never earned that credential. At the Psychological Clinic, he worked with Murray on *Explorations in Personality*. His contribution on a "Dramatic Productions Test" (pp. 552-582) was considered by many to be quite weak and reflective of his lack of previous research experience in an academic setting (Friedman, 1999). Erikson left Harvard for Yale University in 1936 and did not return to Cambridge until 1960 when was appointed professor of human development. In the intervening years, Erik moved from appointment to appointment across the United States: Yale University (1935-36) and Yale Medical School (1936-39), the University of California at Berkeley (1939-1951) and the Austen Riggs Center in Stockbridge, MA (1951-60) served as his principal venues while he also engaged in both research and visiting positions in other settings (including the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute, Menninger Foundation in Topeka, KS, and Western Psychiatric Institute in Pittsburgh, PA).

During his years away from Harvard, Erikson built upon his profound understanding of Freud's inwardly-directed psychosexual theory of development and fashioned a complementary psychosocial theory--his so-called "epigenetic" model. First presented at the Midcentury White House Conference on Infancy and Childhood in 1950, the Eriksons--both Erik and Joan--had worked together through the 1940s on an extension of Freud's model to cover the entire "life cycle" from birth to old age (see figure below). Popularized in a more abbreviated fashion in his *Childhood and Society* (Erikson, 1950), the model was grounded in multiple principles: each "stage" represented an interactive process between a developing individual and the key figures of its social world (parents at the beginning of life and its own offspring afterward); the outcome of each stage's process "involved struggles to move beyond oneself and to become engaged with others" (Friedman, 1999, p. 221); each stage was also somehow prefigured from the beginning and was intimately connected with earlier stages. Hence, rather than serving as a rigid, stratified, and discontinuous listing of age-specific achievements, Erikson's scheme intended to suggest a more fluid, overlapping, or circular set of processes. Many psychology instructors have implicitly understood this in explaining his 2nd, 3rd, and 4th outcomes: autonomy, initiative, and industry. Each outcome represents a somewhat higher level of achievement of a more basic thrust toward active interaction with the social and physical world. (Note that the figure below includes examples of other developmental stage theories: Freud's original psychosexual sequence, Jean Piaget's schema for cognitive growth, and Daniel Levinson's "Life Cycle" paradigm. Labels used to designate age-specific period are noted immediately beneath the chronological stages while some social milestones are illustrated as the final entry.)

Some Patterns of 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
Freud's Psychosexual Stages	Oral	Anal	Phallic	Latency	Genital	Freud's psychosexual stages do not extend beyond adolescence.						
Erikson's Psycho-social Stages	Trust v. Mistrust	Autonomy v. Shame-Doubt	Initiative v. Guilt	Industry v. Inferiority	Ego Identity v. Role Confusion	Intimacy v. Isolation	Generativity v. Self-Absorption	Integrity v. Despair Wisdom				
Piaget's Cognitive Stages	Sensori-Motor	Preoperational		Concrete Operational	Formal Operational	Piaget's cognitive stages do not extend beyond adolescence						
Daniel Levinson's Life Cycles	1. Childhood & Adolescence (Birth-20)					2. Early Adulthood (17-45)		3. Middle Adulthood (40-65)		4. Late Adulthood (60+)		
Family & Inter-personal	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			

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During the 1950s and 1960s, Erikson complemented his universal life cycle model with intensive psychobiographical studies of the actual lives of two major historical figures: Martin Luther, the initial voice of the 16th century's Protestant Reformation and Mohandas K. Gandhi, the Mahatma, who led the Indian subcontinent to independence from British colonial rule at the end of the Second World War. In the first, **Young Man Luther** (Erikson, 1958), Erickson explained via psychoanalytic theory the growth of Luther's character as a young adult. He focused on the period from 1505 to 1512 when Luther first entered a monastery, studied to be a priest, completed his doctorate in theology, and began lecturing on the Psalms at the University of Wittenberg. In this effort, Erikson used his theory of the adolescent identity crisis in order to explain Luther's "identity diffusion" (or "role confusion") at the end of adolescence and eventual achievement of identity as a young adult. Friedman (1999) reports that Erikson believed the book "was about a youth finding his voice. Words and language, enunciated through voice, was the key to Luther's newfound identity" (p. 278).

In 1969, Erikson published his second full-length biographical study, **Gandhi's Truth**, which won the Pulitzer Prize and (U.S.) National Book Award. As reviewer Christopher Lasch (1969) summarizes, the book "consists of a psychological reconstruction of Gandhi's early years in Kathiawar on the Arabian sea and his years of exile in London and South Africa, followed by a detailed analysis of the strike of textile workers in Ahmedabad in 1918, in which Gandhi first put into practice his own variety of militant nonviolence or *Satyagraha*." Erikson shaped his analysis within the cultural perspectives of India, South Africa, and the West as well as his psychoanalytic/psychosocial concerns (particularly, the quest for "generativity" in early and middle adulthood) as keys to appreciating Gandhi. Friedman (1999) concludes: "Embedding politics in presence, Erikson characterized Gandhi 'weaving' his actual being to his countrymen, to other generations, to other times and places and cultures, and to *Satyagraha*. The diminutive man who spun thread on a hand-powered wheel was essentially weaving identities, interpersonal connections, and Truth Force" (p. 388). Both books were the objects of scorn by many historians and psychoanalysts. They argued that Erikson had worked outside his field of competence (history) or had betrayed disciplinary orthodoxy (psychoanalysis). Yet, these texts also represented important milestones in a dialogue across disciplinary boundaries -- a conversation in which social science might interpret the individual life by paying special attention to cultural contexts and the interplay of narrative plot and character.

 **Constructive Cognitivism: The "Cognitive Revolution" & George Kelly's Personal Construct Psychology**

In the post-World War II world, psychology gained what was called for a short while the "New Look." Championed by fresh voices like those of Leo Postman and Jerome Bruner (whom we will meet in much greater detail in a future lecture), this approach explored how internal factors like motivations or expectations ("mental sets") influenced perceptual processes. The classic paper of Bruner & Postman (1949) demonstrated perceptual phenomena not easily explainable within the behaviorist model. Their introductory comment notes:

Stimuli, however, do not act upon an indifferent organism. There is never, in the old-fashioned language of G. F. Stout, anoetic sentience. The organism in perception is in one way or another in a state of expectancy about the environment. It is a truism worth repeating that the perceptual effect of a stimulus is

necessarily dependent upon the set or expectancy of the organism. And so, in many situations the student of perception must also specify the expectancies of the organism when exposed to stimulation. If we sometimes, in simple sensory experiments, fail to do so, the reason is not that we do not care about the attitude of the organism but, rather, that we take it for granted that the observer is attentive to the task and that he is seeking to judge in terms of some required sensory dimension and not some other (Bruner & Postman, 1949, p. 206)

As the 1950s unfolded, the initial impetus to consider the role of cognition as an explanatory factor in behavior steadily expanded its scope and adherents. When we later look at the career of Bruner, we will see that the impetus for the so-called "Cognitive Revolution" was related to the development of the computer and a broad set of theoretical insights into the nature of information and data processing. Many commentators use the 1956 Symposium on Information Theory sponsored by M.I.T. as a convenient marker of the arrival of the "revolution" (Gardner, 1985). The days in which "black box" psychology--one in which the inside structures and processes of the human mind could be safely ignored--had come to an end. By the time Ulric Neisser published his famous 1967 textbook, *Cognitive Psychology*, it was clear that a new subdiscipline had matured sufficiently to be given its own place within the standard curriculum of psychological science. However, I propose to leave an expanded description of this turn to cognition to the lecture on Bruner and conclude these notes with comments about George Kelly and his "Personal Construct" Psychology.



GEORGE KELLY

George Alexander Kelly (1905-1967). Kelly's is not one of the most well-known names in contemporary clinical or academic psychology. Yet, his ideas were path-breaking and anticipated a great deal found in the constructionist contributions of later thinkers. He was a farm boy who grew up as an only child in Kansas. His early education prepared him in multiple fields -- physics, math, sociology, and education -- and reflected his difficulty finding an intellectual tradition which could hold his attention or allegiance. A 1931 Ph.D. in psychology from Iowa State University, Kelly taught at several institutions and served in the Army before taking up a position at The Ohio State University in 1946 where he remained for almost two decades (Boeree, 1997). At the time of his unexpected death, he had assumed a chair in behavioral science at Brandeis University.

Kelly published his major work in 1955--a two-volume study entitled, *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*. 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 on the basis of past experience; 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. 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 particular moment of their lives.

Conclusion. This has been a lecture populated with many -- probably too many -- names, theories, and published works which cross a half-century of social science, particularly psychology. Throughout we have attempted to demonstrate that the univocal stance of experimental positivist social science did not extend to every social scientist of the day. Further, methodological approaches to research and their underlying conception of the objects of their study, human persons, looked to alternatives to the "stimulus-response" paradigm of laboratory purists. Gradually emerging from these efforts were concerns that the individual life was worth examining (Socrates would have been proud); persons were more than reactive vessels responding or discharging themselves according to mechanistic laws of energy conservation; and the social ecology of individuals served a fundamental role in shaping, directing, and structuring their lifeworlds. In our next class, we will add to this analysis by looking at a wholly different intellectual environment -- the world of drama and social role theory -- which shaped the thinking of many narrativists today, particularly the late Ted Sarbin, the co-"founder" (with Jerry Bruner) of narrative psychology.

Note 1. The U.S. did not maintain statistics for those entering the nation as slaves from Africa nor from ports on the West Coast. Thus, the data in the figure represent entrants at Atlantic & Gulf ports and from crossing points on the border with Canada. Secondly, while there was an increase in immigration in the late 1860 and 1870s, this represented a somewhat smaller percentage of the overall population of the nation than those added in the 1840s & 1850s and,

subsequently, in the 1880s-1914. For this reason, historians tend to speak of two great waves of immigration in the sense I make above.

Note 2. I might mention that I once personally encountered one of these "Marlboro" men from the advertising campaign. He was a fellow patient in a New York City hospital where I was recovering from an illness in the late 1980s. He lay in the bed across from me in a "semi-private" hospital room. One of his nieces informed me of the irony that, after providing the handsome face of his youth to promote the cigarette brand, he was now struggling with lung cancer. I believe he eventually died of the disease.

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