Social Psychological Theory, History of

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Abstract

This article reviews the early history of thought linking mind and society and social psychological theories since the late nineteenth-century beginnings of the disciplines *psychology* and *sociology*. We emphasize the growth of thinking about populations in nineteenth-century nation-states, diverse theories of the early twentieth century, Lewinian field theory, growth in American social psychology after World war II, the 'crisis' of the late 1960s and early 1970s, attribution theory and social cognition, the separation of North American, European, and Asian social psychological theories, and contemporary dilemmas about embodiment and culture.

The Long Past of Theory in Social Psychology

Social psychology – like psychology *in toto* – has a long past and a short history. In the late nineteenth century, scholars began to imagine 'social psychology' as new disciplines *sociology* and *psychology* aimed for sciences of 'the mind' and 'society' respectively (Allport, 1954; Collier et al., 1991; Farr, 1996; Greenwood, 2004; Jahoda, 2007; Kruglanski and Stroebe, 2012). Carlo Cattaneo (1801–69) used the term 'social psychology' – *psicologia sociale* – in 1864. The first years of the twentieth century, several texts of 'social psychology' were published including Paolo Orano (1901), *Psicologia sociale*, and Carlos Octavio Bunge (1903), *Principios de psicologia individual y social*. But principled thought about the relationship between 'mind' and 'society' long precedes these events.

Around the *Spring and Autumn* period, Chinese spiritual leaders, notably Confucius (551–479 BCE), wrote enduring texts about the maintenance of social harmony and the ideal life. The enlightenment of Gautama Buddha (563–483 BCE) in the Himalayas initiated a spiritual tradition oriented toward enlightenment through the practice of virtue. In 'Pericles' century,' Socrates and the sophists refocused philosophy on individual morality, society, and language. Plato's (427–347 BCE) *Republic*, Aristotle's (384–322 BCE) description of the uniquely 'rational' human soul, and the theory of 'humours' originated by Hippocrates (460–370 BCE) all influenced medicine and politics in the ancient world, and the literary and scientific culture of the Abbasid Empire (750–1258). In the context of the scholastic philosophy of medieval Europe, framed by matters of Christian faith, William of Ockham (1287–1347) called for theoretical simplicity, a value that survives as 'Occam's razor.' The Italian renaissance prompted enduring reflections on 'society' as separate from such exercise of state power, such as Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1531) and Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (1528). The former author's name also identifies a twentieth-century personality variable.

The invention of the printing press, Protestant reformations, and the Catholic Council of Trent led many more Europeans to individualized relationships with Christian faith. This rise of individualism figured heavily in social theories of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The English civil wars limited the power of monarchs and prompted political theories about the basis of stable society. Thomas Hobbes' (1588–1679) *Leviathan* argued for a strong single ruler, but John Locke's (1632–1704) *Two Treatises on Government* (1689) argued for a 'social contract' between free individuals to jointly agree to be subject to the rule of law. Locke's vision of the person as a 'tabula rasa' contrasted both with Hobbes' view of 'the state of nature' as inherently brutal, and with Gottfried Leibniz' (1646–1716) later description of the human mind as innately capable of autonomous reason. Accounts of psychology's prehistory as a Locke–Leibniz debate make nature–nurture questions central but tend to obscure such theorists as Giambattista Vico (1668–1744) who emphasized how minds are shaped by history (see also Billig, 2008).

Philosopher-historian Michel Foucault (1926–84) described the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the period when 'the human' became an object of the sciences. In Britain particularly, systematic theories of the economy began to be theorized. The trend toward rational calculation of human life influenced the *utilitarian ethics* of Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) in which pain and pleasure – not kings and queens – became the 'sovereign masters' of human conduct. The most radical effects of placing the rights-bearing individual at the center of social thought were the republican revolutions that formed independent nations in North America in 1776 and France in 1789.

The Origins of Disciplines in the Nineteenth Century

Nation-states relate populations of individuals to areas of territory. Nations are characterized by conflicting commitments to individual freedom and government, through the exercise of law. Three approaches to 'population' shaped social theories that predate the academic disciplines of sociology and psychology; statistical thinking, theories of evolution, and Hegel's dialectic. First the 1790 American census defined 'the people' as countable individuals whose 'will' the government would express. In nation-states, not all humans matched the narrow category of *the people* to be politically represented, in

gender, age, religion, or increasingly, in 'race.' In the United States, disputes about counting slaves, Native Americans, and immigrants proliferated. An explosion of statistical thinking in the 1830s saw the rising Bourgeoisie pondering aggregate rates of individual crimes and suicides. Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874) observed that measures of individual physical attributes formed Gaussian distributions in aggregate, and specified median values as 'norms' (such as the 'body mass index' which still informs health psychology). Auguste Comte's (1798–1857) *Positive Philosophy* repeatedly imagined how such a science of society could rationally address the many social problems in France after revolution.

Second, Thomas Malthus' (1766–1834) *An Essay on the Principle of Population* of 1798 described population growth as geometrically increasing, food supply as arithmetically increasing, and demographic catastrophe as mathematically inevitable. Malthus influenced psychologist Herbert Spencer (1766–1834), whose popular works were celebrated in laissez-faire industrial Britain and later influenced early twentieth century social psychological theory. Spencer's works are often the target of critiques of 'social Darwinism's' Machiavellian attitude to the suffering and exploitation of the poor. Malthus did influence Darwin's (1809–82) theory of nature as a competition between individual organisms for survival in *The Origin of Species* (1859). The theory of evolution specified that variation was the raw material upon which natural selection acted to generate new forms, and that men embodied this variability more than women did (Shields and Bhatia, 2009). Darwin's cousin Francis Galton's (1822–1911) eugenic philosophy built on this idea in its proposals for societal improvement by increased reproduction among valued people, like political leaders and scientists, and by curtailing reproduction among the degenerate.

Finally, G.W.F. Hegel (1770–1831)'s *Phenomenology of Spirit* of 1807 described a dialectical process involving 'triads' in which self-consciousness emerges from its recognition by another in a power struggle, as that between a master and a slave. This 'dialectical' process was partially inspired by Hegel's observations of Napoleon's conquest of the Germanic states. The Hegelian suspicion of the unity of dominant knowledge created a doubtful orientation to all types of dominant knowledge. Karl Marx' (1818–83) dialectical *materialism* aimed to analyze and supersede the class conflict between capitalists and the proletariat created by nineteenth century industrialization. *The German Ideology* (1846) critiqued the 'false consciousness' of the ruling class who made their class interests appear 'natural,' Friedrich Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) described the lived realities obscured by such false consciousness. Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto* (1848) was a blueprint for the revolutions of the twentieth century based on class consciousness. Hegel also informed W.E.B. DuBois' (1868–1963) *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and Simone de Beauvoir's (1908–86) *The Second Sex* (1949).

Psychology developed as a science of the individual mind in some isolation from these developments (Fancher and Rutherford, 2012). Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) insisted that the native human mind necessarily perceived the world through the constructions of its intuitions and categories. In the fertile environment of the German university system, this theory outlived Kant's own doubts about any possible empirical science of mind. Hermann Helmholtz (1821–94) timed the speed of the nerve impulse, Gustav Fechner (1801–87) graphed psychophysical relationships between physical stimuli and the sensations they produced, and Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) built an Institute for Experimental Psychology at Leipzig in 1879 which trained a generation of researchers who replicated psychological training in multiple locations. Wundt demarcated experimental psychology from *Völkerpsychologie*, the study of culture. Cultural 'thought' was not amenable to study via the individual mind in the laboratory, because it followed a different 'psychic' causality that allowed for creativity and emergence. A related distinction lays in Wilhelm Dilthey's (1833–1911) distinction between *Naturwissenschaft* (natural science) and *Geisteswissenschaft* (social science).

Wundt was rivaled by William James (1842–1910) who taught a pragmatist psychology in the 1870 and 1880s at Harvard, influenced by Alexander Bain on the cultivation of positive habits, and C.S. Pierce's on clear scientific theory and sustained logical thinking. James' *Principles of Psychology* (1890) describes the self as multiple and social, and his account has remained relevant to successive generations of social psychologists' theories of the self. James theory suggested greater unity between mind and society than Wundt's. He and other psychologists disapproved when Wundt's student, Hugo Münsterberg (1863–1916) distinguished the 'ideographic' and the 'nomothetic' to separate historical and psychological kinds of explanations as limiting psychological theory prematurely.

Late nineteenth century French social psychology was informed by Jean Martin Charcot's (1825–93) theory of *grand hypnotisme* describing susceptibility to hypnotism as a symptom of hysteria. Charcot's experiments were shown to be effects of unintended *suggestion*, but 'suggestion' a popular explanation of social influence and 'hypnotism' a metaphor for mindless suggestibility. Gustav LeBon's (1841–1931) *The Crowd: The Study of the Popular Mind* (1895) analogized the collective actions of crowds to the suggestible person under hypnosis, explaining why crowds appear to autonomously follow leaders. Gabriel Tarde's (1843–1903) *The Laws of Imitation* (1890) also used hypnotism to analogize social influence. Tarde's laws included *descent* by which 'inferior' classes imitate superior ones, *geometrical progression* by which ideas disseminate rapidly, and *the internal before the exotic* by which in-group members inspire more imitation than out-group members.

French theories of suggestibility were matched by William James' and others interest in the 'ideomotor action' by which the idea of an act might give rise to the act itself. Tarde's work was translated into English by psychologist James Mark Baldwin who had begun to describe imitation as the means by which children enter society. American economist Edward Alsworth Ross (1866–1951) 1908 *Social Psychology: An Outline and Sourcebook* theorized social behavior as a consequence of 'imitation' or 'suggestion' along French lines, expressing a hope that an individual might rise above these influences, 'to become a person and not a parrot' (p. 4). Ross emphasized the influence of social customs and individual leaders or 'great men.' His claims about Whites' 'race suicide,' and views that some races were more suggestible than others, mirrored the

class anxieties of the French, and reached the ears of United States leaders, as the country was increasingly thinking about its own population in eugenic terms.

LeBon also analogized the crowd mind to that of the 'primitive.' Unusual individuals in 'civilized' societies – such as 'Victor,' a 'wild boy' in Aveyron found in 1800 – had long raised civilized minds. During the late nineteenth-century period of European and American colonial expansion, theories about 'primitive' minds and societies proliferated to legitimate this unprecedented extension of global domination by the few. Physical measurement or *anthropometry* – as in the racist 'American school' of the 1830s, or the 1898 Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait – had limited theoretical scope to ground the category of 'race.' Edward Tyler's (1832–1917) *Primitive Culture* (1871) likened the minds of 'primitives' and children, and described 'primitive' animist beliefs that souls can inhabit things and be separated from bodies (Richards, 2010).

Twentieth-Century Social Psychological Theories

Sexuality, like primitivism, prompted particular anxieties about 'degeneracy' in the late nineteenth century. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) theorized hysteria as an effect of repressed sexuality, to be revealed by analysis of dreams and symptoms. Freud's psychoanalysis had vast scope and regularly engaged the relationship between minds and societies. In *Totem and Taboo* (1913), Freud merged Locke's contract theory and contemporary anthropology to explain how laws emerged when a 'band of brothers' killed their father and repressed memory of the fact in agreement to share sexual rights to women and property. Here as elsewhere, women were secondary in Freud's theory even if they populated his consulting room (Gilman, 1990). Freud conceptualized the death instinct after World War I revealed unconscious compulsions to repeat among 'shell-shocked' soldiers.

William McDougall's (1871–1938) *Social Psychology* (1909) proposed an influential instinct theory for social psychology. Critical of utilitarianism, McDougall described pain and pleasure as mere indications of whether more basic instinctual drives such as fear, disgust, curiosity, anger, pugnacity, self-basement, self-assertion or the parental instinct were satisfied. Instincts might generalize, as through 'the sympathetic induction of emotion' by which an emotion is felt because it is observed in another. Both McDougall and Freud's theories of instincts were popular, but both drew criticism for their circular reasoning from behavior to taxonomies of hidden instincts and back again.

Several other influential social sciences theories of this period had comparatively *less* influence on social psychology. Émile Durkheim's *La Suicide* (1897) presented statistics to demonstrate how 'society' affected this most profoundly individual choice. Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), and Max Weber's *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904) continued to bring historical explanation to bear on subjectivity but never became social psychology 'classics.' The absence of an influence of Marxism on American social psychology is notable, but the empirical tradition of making observations of the English working class continued, particularly with Charles Booth's *Life and Labour in London* (1902).

Finally, theories that separated the individual and society, such as Wundt's, influenced the form of social psychology taught in the Chicago philosophy department by George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) after 1901. Mead looked to Darwinism to avoid the teleology inherent in notions of historical progress in German theories. Building also on James and others, Mead described self-consciousness as arising from taking the role of another with oneself. At Chicago, contextual empirical studies of urban realities flourished particularly in the 1920 and 1930s under the leadership of Robert Park (1864–1944). More progressive theories of group differences emerged early on in this context. The *Polish Peasant in Europe and America* published 1918–20 by W.I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki was influenced by anthropologist Franz Boas arguments against popular eugenics and notions of racial inferiority. Boaz and Thomas and Znaniecki examined the disruptive effects of urbanization and peasants' diverse 'attitudes,' although they did not measure 'attitudes' as later theorists did (Danziger, 2000a).

Social Psychology Theories between the World Wars

Social psychology increasingly aspired to address social problems between the World Wars. The scientific status of psychology in the United States was solidified by the rise of testing, measurement, and application, and behaviorist theory. In the 1920s, the measurement of individual attitudes, values, personality traits, and stereotypes all became more ordinary practices, and competing theories of what these constructs might be were generally occluded as they began to be measured with greater frequency and enthusiasm. Floyd Allport's (1890–1979) 1924 volume *Social Psychology* explained effects of suggestion and association in the behaviorist language of 'conditioned reflexes.' Allport defined the 'social' of social psychology in individualist terms, ruling out of court the idea that there was a 'group' level of description; which he described as a 'fallacy' (Danziger, 2000b). Freud's work stimulated a public appetite for psychological theory as sexual mores changed. Social theories, minds, and societies entered more active feedback loops particularly when social scientists were called upon to address social problems created by the great depression.

Theories of 'culture' and 'personality' put mind and society into theoretical relationships in ways that remained closely tied to psychoanalytic theory and practice rather than measurement. In 1928, anthropologist Margaret Mead (1901–78) published *Coming of Age in Samoa*, using variation in gender roles as 'negative instances' to disprove theories about universal human nature. Along with German émigrés such as Karen Horney (1885–1952), and American psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan (1892–1949), Mead and other anthropologists formed alliances around New York known later as 'the culture and personality school' whose members attempted to theorize modern subjective experiences of neurosis, anxiety, and freedom at the boundaries of psychiatry and the social sciences. Adolf Hitler's rise to power stimulated a very different need for 'cultural' explanation of consciousness and behavior.

At Frankfurt's Institute for Social Research, scholars such as Erich Fromm (1900–80) used Marx to theorize the problems of adjustment revealed by psychoanalysis as specific to capitalist societies. Fromm also contributed to the fertile culture and personality school, and his 1941 *Escape from Freedom* typifies a Marxist-Freudian style of historically embedded theory.

Hitler's rise to power in 1933 created a new form of dictatorship that stimulated a new interest in explaining 'suggestion' because of Hitler's effective propaganda. Prior to this, Gestalt psychology had flourished in Berlin, and psychologist Kurt Lewin's (1890–1947) attention was drawn particularly to social motivation (Ash, 1995). His 1935 *A Dynamic Theory of Personality* summarized 'field theory' – the most enduringly influential theoretical synthesis in social psychology from this period. Lewin specified that behavior was a function of a person and phenomenological proximal environment. Expressing a belief in the scientific status of measurement, Lewin's central axiom was expressed by a formula $B = f(P, E)$, used topographical diagrams to show which behaviors *could* occur, and 'vector psychology' to predict which behaviors *would* occur (Gold, 1999). The practical utility of this general theory seemed demonstrated by Lewin's own work on the effects of authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire leadership. Muzafer Sherif's (1906–88) 1936 studies of conformity to group norms also expanded the concept of the 'norm' beyond sociology, toward something that could be manipulated in a situationist experiment to effect the behavior of individuals and groups. John Dollard (1900–80) and colleagues' *Frustration and Aggression* (1939) was a similarly situationist theory that drew on behaviorism, engaging Freudian concepts to theorize aggressive behavior as a form of drive reduction. By linking patterns of lynching to low cotton prices in the South it went beyond classic Lewinian theory in examining historical change as well as the individual's immediate 'environment.'

American Growth after World War II

The resolution of World War II led to unprecedented international efforts to bring about enduring peace that looked to the 'social sciences' rejections of the notions of race differences and aggressive instincts. A 'cold war' between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics described by Eisenhower as a 'battle for hearts and minds' drew military defense and psyche closer together. Psychological research was generously funded by military organizations, private foundations, and the National Science Foundation, and grew in the United States to a totally unrivaled degree. Textbook publication in social psychology accelerated accordingly.

Theories of mind and society became increasingly mathematical and statistical. Influential theories that aimed to put the social sciences on mathematical footing included Von Neumann and Morgenstern's game theory, Shannon and Weaver's theory of communication, and systems theory. Psychologists more frequently used Ronald Fisher's inferential tests to stabilize doubt about the similarity or difference between groups in experiments. The 'construct validity' of tests was described by psychologists Lee Cronbach and Paul Meehl in 1955, curtailing faith in many popular interpretive projective tests. 'Variables' were increasingly theorized as existing in people prior to being observed, unlike the earlier operational understanding of variables as things that psychologists would 'vary' to produce experiments.

In this context, smaller theories developed with less ambitious scope and a closer relationship to experimental test. An early example is Carl Hovland's (1912–61) theory of persuasion as a process that occurred between a *communicator*, *communication*, and *audience*. Theory was increasingly tested in increasingly theatrical experiments, requiring more frequent deception of participants, and decreasing numbers of reminders – such as Hovland's (1959) – that the laboratory and the real world might be different from each other. The now-classic textbook theories and experiments date particularly from the 25 years after WWII; Solomon Asch's experiments on conformity, Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif's theory of realistic group conflict, Leon Festinger's theory of social comparison. British social psychologist Michael Argyle (2001) recorded being impressed by the United States culture of ingenious experimentation but also unsatisfied by its artificiality. Historian Frances Cherry (1995) described how implicit theoretical commitments can be gleaned from reading research from this period with an eye for the authors' troubled attempts to exclude 'stubborn particulars' from abstract experimental designs.

Prejudice became a new phenomenon to explain. Kenneth and Mamie Clark's study showed a preference for White dolls among Black children, and influenced the 1954 *Brown vs Board of Education* United States Supreme Court decision to desegregate schools and other institutions. Earlier theories about race and culture differences ceded to theories that explained belief in race difference as a form of *prejudice*, driven by authoritarian personalities in Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford's *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), or the intersection of personality with stereotyping in Gordon Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954).

Milgram's notorious demonstration of obedience to authority emerged from this context. In Milgrams' experiments, experimental variables were manipulated affecting the extent to which naïve subjects would be willing to obey an experimenter's authority and to deliver what appeared to be lethal electric shocks to a stranger in an adjacent room. Milgram (1974) presented his work as an explanation of the banality of evil shown during the Holocaust. In his account, it was not authoritarian personalities, or German culture that could explain this most unfathomable of historical events. Rather, forces in the immediate social situation, comprehensible as vectors in Lewinian fields, held explanatory theoretical value.

Theories of the constructive active person were suggested by Lewin's theory by virtue of its phenomenological roots. Social psychological theory of this period was responsible in part for the slow shift away from behavior toward cognition as the object of theories to be tested by experimental psychology. In the early 1960s, the theories of Jean Piaget, the first English translations of Lev Vygotsky, and Bandura and Walters 'socio-behaviorist' theory of how children learn through observation all suggested a more active child than the tabula rasa of John Watson's behaviorism. Theory was increasingly understood as developing through hypothetico-deduction rather than induction, as philosophers such as Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn critiqued the logical positivist assumption that induction and observation moved scientific theory forward. Leon Festinger's

theory of cognitive dissonance stimulated enthusiasm for experiments to test competing theories. Festinger theorized 'cognitive dissonance' as an unpleasant arousal state brought on by 'dissonant' thoughts, or dissonance between a thought and an action. Early experiments demonstrated the failure of parsimonious behaviorist theory to explain changes in attitudes without recourse to a need for 'dissonance reduction.' For example, Festinger and Carlsmith showed that young men reported linking a boring task particularly after they were given an insufficient monetary reward for leading another student to engage in it. However, Daryl Bem's 1967 self-perception theory invoked Occam's razor against Festinger's theory. Bem showed that some experimental results explained by 'dissonance reduction' could be attributed to the more simple process by which people infer their own attitudes from their behavior as if they were observing that behavior in another person. Several attempts to construct critical experiments to test the two theories followed.

Crisis and the Rise of Attribution Theory

The unprecedented growth of experimental social psychology prompted interrelated 'crises' toward the end of the 1960s (Collier et al., 1991). The first issue concerned the construct validity of experimental methods. Drawing on hypnosis studies, and echoing the questions that stalked Charcot, Martin Orne theorized the 'demand characteristics' by which participants try to fulfill experimenter's expectations of how they should act, as in Milgram's experiment, for example. Rosenthal and Rosnow (1969) showed dramatic unintended effects of such expectations on the results of human and animal experiments.

Second, the ethics of experiments, such as Milgram's, that deceived participants about purposes and procedures divided researchers. Some were happy to design experiments that scripted the use of electric shocks and orders to eat cockroaches, but Kelman's 1967 critique described deceptive methods as unethical and undermining of trust in institutions. Third, the *relevance* of theories and the shrinkage of theoretical ambition prompted anxiety, as debates about dissonance and attitude change led researchers to conduct 'experiments about experiments' rather than experiments about phenomena. Finally, Kenneth Gergen (1973) convincingly argued that history could modify all attempts to find universal laws of social behavior at the Lewinian level of analysis.

During this growth period, specifically *sociological* social psychologies grew more slowly and did not participate in the same level of crisis. Under Herbert Blumer's influence 'the Chicago school of symbolic interaction' emphasized how people act on the basis of meanings arising during social interaction and modified through interpretation. Symbolic interactionists eschewed quantification for reflexivity; insisting that research was also a process of symbolic interaction that social scientists must approach via 'sensitizing concepts.' Psychologists were most influenced by the writings of Erving Goffman (1922–82) among sociologists of this period. More skeptical approaches to generalizable social theory such as Glaser and Strauss' grounded theory, Harold Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, or Berger and Luckman's social constructionism influenced only those psychologists most determined that the crisis in experimental social psychology was a insurmountable.

Within the United States, *attribution theory* emerged as the theory to test experimentally from the crisis, shifting attention from the behavior of the person in the situation, to the cognitive *attributions* for behavior to either the person or the situation. Kelly's theory of covariation analysis (1967), Jones and Davis' *correspondent inferences* (1965), Jones and Nisbett's actor-observer effect (1972), and Ross (1977) *fundamental attribution error* kept Lewin's formulations central to social psychology, and responded to all four aspects of the crisis. Experimental methods could now claim to access cognitive meaning-making just as symbolic interactionists might do. Pencil and paper measures of attribution raised fewer ethical risks of earlier experiments on dissonance, or obedience. By describing people's behavior as subject to attributional 'biases' away from rationality, the theory implicitly argued for the relevance of a scientific study of social behavior to everyday life. Indeed, psychologists picked up their statistical tools and made theories of them, most obviously in work on judgment and decision-making such as that gathered in the 1982 Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky volume, *Judgment Under Uncertainty; Heuristics and Biases*. During the 1970s and 1980s, cognitive theories were applied to an ever-widening range of objects in American social psychology, particularly the self. Theories of self-schemas, self-presentation, self-discrepencies, self-affirmation, and possible selves flourished in the 1980s, often looking back to James, Baldwin, and Mead, but always imagining the self as an individual cognitive representation, however the contents of that representation might originate in some 'social' field. The self was increasingly theorized as relevant to health; optimism; and 'positive illusions' were healthy, as in James' pragmatism. Troubling claims about individualism were largely ignored by 'social cognition' theories (Pepitone, 1981), but growth in social psychology elsewhere troubled their foundations.

European independence from culture-bound individualist American theories was formally declared by Israel and Tajfel's *The Context of Social Psychology* (1972). European social psychological theories tended to reject the valorization of the individual over the collective mind. First, Serge Moscovici's *La Psychanalyse, son image, son public* (1961) had introduced 'social representations' which used Durkheim to theorize the relationship between individual and collective representations, focusing on how specialized knowledge becomes widespread and shared. Second, in 1971, Tajfel published, with others, 'Social categorization and intergroup behavior.' A rejoinder to Sherif's (1966) Realistic Group Conflict theory, Tajfel's 'minimal groups' experiment showed that people would sacrifice total net gain to express a discriminatory prejudice in favor of their in-group over an out-group. The minimal groups experiment anchored Tajfel's Social Identity Theory of how individual's behaved differently because of their status as group members (Brown, 2000). Third, Rom Harré's 'ethogenic' approach to social observation drew on Goffman and other sources to describe how meaning is made up in real social environments. Marsh, Rosser, and Harré's study of violent group behavior during British soccer matches; *The Rules of Disorder* (1978) described collective behavior as ordered in

ethogenic terms rather than as a 'deindividuated' crowd of LeBon's sort.

In recent decades, theorists have varied as to whether they seek to explain the age-old disparity between attitudes and behavior, or to deconstruct it. The theory of reasoned action resolved the problem of predicting behavior from attitudes by theorizing a moderating effects of subjective norms between the two, becoming a hegemonic unifying theory of health interventions. In contrast, discourse analysis and discursive psychology have tended to deconstruct the boundary between attitudes and behavior. Following Ludwig Wittgenstein, British ordinary language philosophers withdrew interest in the 'truth status' of language, describing words as forms of action. This understanding informed Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell's argument in their 1987 book *Discourse and Social Psychology*, that attitudes were of interest to social psychologists only when expressed in discourse, and hence were actions or 'behavior' in their own right. In contrast to dissonance theory, discourse analysts insist that talk is riven with contradiction that people barely notice, and 'discursive psychology' extended an understanding of social psychology without variables to memory, self, gender, and other topics (Potter, 2011).

By the 1990s, theorizing became more global as Asian experimental social psychology expanded and classic North American theories were shown to be culturally particular as in Joan Miller's early study of attributions among American and Hindu Indian adults and children. 'Universal' theories of social psychology developed within Western Industrialized Educated Rich and Democratic (WEIRD) nations are actually culturally particular. Theorists now often strive for innovation by abandoning the privileged position that WEIRD nations have in theoretical formations, as Moghaddam (2013) has recently done with democracy. Contemporary attempts to use the distinction between 'individualist' and 'collectivist' countries as a unifying framework for cultural psychology have garnered significant critique.

Simultaneously, the embodied organism has returned to challenge social cognitive theories. Instinct theories returned through evolutionary psychology, following Leda Cosmides' (1989) argument that humans evolved to reason about Locke-style social contracts. Explanations of autistic people as lacking a 'theory of mind' linked social cognition and neuroscience, focused attention on the mirror neuron system as the embodied basis of social cognition that resemble James' ideomotor action, Baldwin's imitation, and McDougall's sympathetic induction. Currently experiments showing how the implicit meanings of stimuli are evident in embodied ways are favored.

Conclusion

We conclude that unity in social psychology theory is an animal often stalked but rarely captured. Among social scientists, social psychologists have been relatively untouched by dialectical theories that emphasize how all types of dominant knowledge come to self-consciousness through conflict with their 'others' (Liu and Liu, 1997; Plon, 1975). However, hegemonic theories from Lewin's field theory to Festinger's cognitive dissonance have recognized individuals as being moved by environments in dialectical ways to new self-understanding and conduct. We cannot conscientiously say what theories would be possible if this irony in the science of social psychology were made more explicit.

See also: Attitude Formation and Change; Authoritarian Personality; Cognitive Dissonance; Collective Behavior, Social Psychology of; Critical Psychology; Cross-Cultural Psychology; Cultural Psychology; Embodied Social Cognition; Heuristics in Social Cognition; Intergroup Relations; Levels of Analysis in Social Psychology; Obedience: Social Psychological Perspectives; Persuasion Theories; Racism: Social Psychological Perspectives; Social Cognition; Social Comparison, Psychology of; Social Constructionism; Social Psychology: Research Methods; Social Psychology.

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