Cultural Psychology

A Perspective on Psychological Functioning and Social Reform

Carl Ratner

CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

A PERSPECTIVE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING AND SOCIAL REFORM

This page intentionally left blank

CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

A PERSPECTIVE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING AND SOCIAL REFORM

Carl Ratner

LAWRENCE ERLBAUM ASSOCIATES, PUBLISHERS
2006 Mahwah, New Jersey London

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2008.

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers
10 Industrial Avenue
Mahwah, New Jersey 07430
www.erlbaum.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ratner, Carl.
Cultural psychology : a perspective on psychological functioning and social reform / Carl Ratner
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-8058-5477-0 (cloth : alk. paper)
ISBN 0-8058-5478-9 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Ethnopsychology. 2. Social psychology. 3. Social problems. I. Title.

GN502.R373 2006
158.8'2—dc22 2005050058
CIP

ISBN 1-4106-1731-9 Master e-book ISBN

This book is dedicated to the generation of Americans
who came of age in the 1960s.
Their political idealism, intellectual audaciousness,
and cultural creativity inspired my political passion
and intellectual growth, which have culminated in this book.

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

This page intentionally left blank

Preface

This book aims to help resolve two urgent needs of our era: the need to develop a scientific comprehension of human psychology, and the need to reform society in order to solve pressing social ills. I seek to accomplish this dual objective by developing a cultural theory of human psychology.

It may sound odd to propose that scientific psychology and social reform have anything to do with each other, and that they can be jointly advanced by one activity. However, this is indeed the case. Both scientific psychology and social reform are only viable to the extent that they understand the cultural nature of human psychology. The cultural nature of human psychology binds scientific psychology and social reform together.

The discipline of psychology will only become scientific when it develops concepts and methods that explicate cultural aspects of psychological phenomena. The discipline must explain the nature of psychological phenomena that makes them susceptible to cultural influence, how psychological phenomena become culturally organized, the important cultural factors and processes that organize them, and the ways in which psychological phenomena reflect, support, and disturb culture.

These issues are equally vital to social reform. To be successful in improving human life, social reform must strive to enhance psychological functioning along with health care, education, child care, material well-being, and family integration. Social reform directed at psychological functioning must understand why it is open to cultural influence that will improve it. Social reform must understand ways that psychology is affected by cultural factors. It also identifies particular cultural factors that need to be expanded to generate fulfilling psychological functioning, and cultural factors that need to be modified or eliminated to limit unfulfilling psychological functioning. Social reform also needs to know how new social factors will enhance psy-

chological functioning, and the ways this improvement will be manifested. Social reformers also need to know how to make social reform palatable to individuals with a given psychology. All of these issues concern the cultural nature of psychology.

Psychological science and social reform both need to comprehend the cultural nature of psychology in order to be successful in their respective domains. We may say that psychological science and social reform are two sides of the same coin. They address cultural psychology from different starting points (theoretical-academic vs. political) and with different objectives (understanding vs. practical improvement). However, they enrich (cross-fertilize) each other. Without the other, each is deprived of vital information that it needs.

This book elucidates a systematic cultural–psychological theory that contributes to scientific psychology and social reform.

I outline a theory that explains that psychological phenomena have cultural origins, characteristics, and functions. I name this theory *macro cultural-psychology*. It emphasizes that broad macro cultural factors, such as social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts, are the basis of psychological phenomena, organize the form and content of psychological phenomena, and are the function, or *telos*, of psychological phenomena. I present evidence that substantiates these propositions.

Regarding psychology as tied to macro factors has the greatest significance for social reform and psychological change. For the more deeply that psychology is embedded in culture, and the more profoundly culture is embodied in psychology, the more necessary it is to understand culture in order to understand psychology, and the more necessary it is to reform culture in order to enhance psychological functioning. Conversely, the less central culture is to psychology, the less necessary it is to understand and reform culture in order to comprehend and enhance psychology. If psychology is primarily individually or interpersonally constructed with great individual variations, or if psychology is primarily determined by biological mechanisms, then there is little need to understand and reform culture in relation to psychological issues.

The political and scientific goals that inform this book complement each other. The political understanding and reforming of macro culture contributes to the scientific goal of understanding macro culture's importance for psychology. A political orientation does not necessarily impede scientific objectivity. Of course, politics does not supplant science. We need science to test the plausibility of political analyses. However, the political motive is quite central to emphasizing macro culture for psychology.

Until more psychologists develop a political orientation to question and reform macro culture, they will fail to include macro issues in their academic study of psychology.

This book is not a compilation (handbook) of psychological variations in different societies. A great deal of social science research already demonstrates *that* psychological phenomena vary with cultural factors. The more important task is to understand *why* and *how* cultural variations in psychology occur. That is the objective of this book. I seek to understand the nature of human psychology, the nature of culture, the nature of the relation between them, the processes by which psychology comes to be culturally organized and variable, the ways in which the cultural organization of psychology is manifested, how psychology influences culture, and the role of agency, subjectivity, creativity, and personal responsibility in forming and reforming culture and psychological phenomena.

"Why" and "how" questions are the central questions that science seeks to answer. Describing *what* occurs, or observing *that* something occurs does not qualify as science. Science is not content to compile facts. It uses facts as representatives of essential, unobservable explanatory principles and properties. This book follows this direction. It seeks to elucidate an explanatory science of human psychology by articulating the relationship (processes or mechanisms) between psychology and culture.

This book also contributes to multicultural understanding and communication. It sensitizes us to the ways that psychological phenomena are organized differently in different ethnic groups. It helps us understand psychological differences that lead to different behaviors. It enables us to communicate more effectively by taking psychological differences into account. The book additionally explains how macro cultural-psychology can aid people on an individual level to examine and enhance their personalities, emotions, perceptions, reasoning, and learning strategies.

In addition to articulating a general theory of psychology, this book articulates methodological principles for investigating the relationship of cultural factors and psychology. These methods enable us to apprehend cultural factors embedded in psychological phenomena. They also enable us to perceive contradictions between culture and psychology that emanate from their distinctness. I emphasize qualitative methodology as the most objective and useful methodology for cultural–psychological research. I explain how it is more scientific, objective, and useful than positivism.

Macro cultural-psychology challenges definitions, explanatory constructs, theories, and research procedures that have been designed to study

noncultural aspects of psychological phenomena. It also challenges individualistic approaches to culture, social reform, and psychotherapy. To study macro cultural aspects of psychological phenomena, culture, social reform, and psychological change, we need a new conception of culture, psychology, and their interrelation. Simply adding variables to mainstream psychology is insufficient. Macro cultural-psychology requires audacious, impertinent, critical, passionate thinking that does not shy from controversial, unpopular, radical, heretical ideas. These are attributes that generate all revolutionary scientific advances. They are sorely needed if psychological science, therapy, and social reform are to understand and enhance human psychology.

This book is a synthesis and extension of my earlier work into a systemic approach. It articulates a richer, more adequate definition of culture, a deeper integration of psychology and macro factors, and detailed principles of this relationship. This book goes beyond my earlier works in emphasizing the political dimension of psychology, applying cultural psychology to social reform and personal growth, outlining a philosophy of science and a social philosophy for macro cultural psychology, and comparing macro cultural-psychology with individualism, subjectivism, naturalism, and positivism.

This book is unique in discussing a wealth of psychological phenomena (emotions, sexuality, aggression, eating disorders, terrorism, adolescence, cognition, memory, perception, learning, self-personality, religion, mental illness, developmental processes, defense mechanisms, and language), psychological theories (mainstream psychology, evolutionary psychology, cultural psychology, cross-cultural psychology, psycho-biology, Vygotsky's cultural–historical psychology, activity theory, Piaget's theory of cognitive stages, and Freudiain psychoanalysis), social theories (functionalism, structuralism, feminism, Marxism, the Annales school of historiography, Dilthey's *Verstehen* and hermeneutics, Boasian anthropological theory, the Frankfurt school, micro sociology), and philosophies of science (postmodernism, social constructionism, dialectics, critical realism, positivism, naturalism, subjectivism).

The diverse issues that this book addresses will be useful to psychologists, educators, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers, and others interested in social theory, culture, psychology, and the individual. Another audience will be policy makers and practitioners in public health and social service. The increasing numbers of citizens concerned with social reform should find this book helpful in understanding the reasons for so-

cial–psychological problems, and for identifying directions that effective social activism can take.

I have written this book in a straightforward, jargon-free style that is accessible to the educated layperson and students in social science, social policy, and philosophy. It would serve very well as a supplemental text in many areas within psychology, in social science theory and methodology, cultural studies, social policy, social philosophy, philosophy of science, and biological aspects of human psychology.

—*Carl Ratner*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Of particular help to me in writing this book have been Lumei Hui, who supported me in many ways, and Gus Bagakis, who listened to my fermenting ideas, referred me to important references, and made me feel that this book might make a difference.

This page intentionally left blank

I

Psychology, Culture, Politics, Science

This page intentionally left blank

1

Introduction to Macro Cultural Psychology

In order to advance psychological science and social reform, we are going to explore the cultural nature of mind. This means more than describing psychological variations in different cultures. It also means more than associating cultural variables and psychological variables. Exploring the cultural nature of mind means explaining why and how these variations and associations occur. It means explaining why and how the mind originates in cultural processes and factors, is organized by them, embodies them in its form and content, and functions to support them. Like all scientific theories, a cultural theory of psychology strives to elucidate unobservable principles, processes, elements, relationships, and dynamics that underlie observable phenomena.

Macro cultural psychology is a radical reconceptualization of psychology. Its revising of conventional psychological theory is inspired and justified by other impertinent scientific reconceptualizations such as Galileo's view of our galaxy, Darwin's view of evolution, the atomic theory of matter, and Einstein's theory of time.

Reconceptualizing the mind as cultural involves emphasizing new cultural-psychological features, functions, factors, processes, principles, relationships, explanatory constructs, and methodology. These are introduced here and explained throughout the book. Let us begin by illustrating the distinctive orientations of mainstream psychology and macro cultural psychology.

MAINSTREAM PSYCHOLOGY VERSUS MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Most approaches to psychology regard it as an individual, universal, or natural phenomenon. All three of these perspectives overlook and obscure cultural issues.

The individualistic emphasis is paramount in mainstream psychotherapy. Furedi (2004) explained how therapy recapitulates and promotes the individualism of our age:

> Today, Western culture makes sense of the experience of social isolation through interpreting behavior through the highly individualized idiom of therapeutic discourse. Our culture has fostered a climate where the internal world of the individual has become the site where the problems of society are raised and where it is perceived they need to be resolved …. Social problems are frequently recast as individual ones that have no direct connection to the social realm. One of the consequences of this decline of the sociological imagination is a growing tendency to redefine public issues as the private problems of the individuals. This mood is vividly captured through the individualized idiom of therapy. (pp. 24–25)

The decline of the sociological imagination is also evident in, and reinforced by, mainstream academic psychology. A recent review of research on aggression (in the prestigious *Annual Review of Psychology*) states: "Infants manifest frustration and rage." "During the second and third years of life, behavioral signs of temper tantrums and aggression toward adults and peers can be observed …." "In early childhood, conflict is inevitable …." "Gender differences in levels of aggression become marked in the years between the third and sixth birthdays …" (Loeber & Hay, 1997, p. 375). These descriptions give the impression that aggression is a natural phenomenon that follows developmental laws. Behavior simply appears on its own: "More serious violence *tends* to increase with age, especially during adolescence." "Most violence appears to *erupt* in youths who have been aggressive earlier in life" (pp. 381, 384, emphasis added).

When the authors mention conditions that might exacerbate aggression, they limit these to (a) temperamental differences, low intelligence, and attention deficit, which make it difficult for some children to find nonaggressive solutions to interpersonal dilemmas; (b) parental maltreatment, which includes rejecting children, coercing them, behaving aggressively toward them, and favoring other siblings; (c) having deviant peer friends, and being rejected by peers; and (d) "Stressful life events."

The review never once mentions specific cultural practices, concepts, and artifacts that promote aggression. It never mentions the fact that watching violent television and movie programs contributes significantly to violent beliefs, emotions, and behavior (Anderson et al., 2003). It never mentions cultural differences in the prevalence of aggression (Flannery & Marcus, 2003; Fromm, 1973; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996); or the fact that conditions that foster violence—such as exposure to familial violence, the incidence of crime within one's neighborhood, and contact with aggressive peers—are related to social class (Evans, 2004, p. 78; cf. Olson, 1981; Pelton, 1994). Of course, some psychologists are more sensitive to cultural influences on aggression. However, these are usually construed as peripheral to "basic" psychological processes. This means that cultural factors affect slight variations in the incidence of aggression, but these do not challenge the essential universality of aggression as a natural human behavior based in biopsychological mechanisms akin to those in animals.

Actually, cultural factors and processes are central to aggression. Robarchek (1977) reported its virtual absence among the Semai people, a primarily hunting and gathering people in Malaysia. Frustration, unfulfilled desire, and anger, which lead to aggression, are carefully prevented by the social organization of needs and interpersonal interactions, described as follows:

1. Desires are satisfied whenever possible. Eating, drinking, dancing, bathing, and sex are enjoyed until the point of satiety because being unfulfilled can make people destructive.
2. Food is shared so that no one will be unfulfilled about food.
3. Requests for almost anything are typically granted so that the requester's desire will be fulfilled. If someone makes even a passing reference to an object, the owner will offer it to him.
4. Requests are made sparingly and they are tailored to increase the likelihood of being honored. In this way, the requester reduces his chances of being frustrated.
5. Individuals are very responsible about keeping promises, such as keeping appointments. This reduces the frustration of others around them. People try to promise only what they can deliver, and they usually do so. Heavy punishments are meted out for transgressions such as failing to keep appointments.

These cultural measures are so effective that in 3 months, not one fight or serious argument occurred in this village of more than 200 mem-

bers—this, despite the fact that drinking alcohol is common, with half the men in the village becoming drunk every evening.

The social organization of needs and interpersonal relations is clearly central to the occurrence of aggression. Aggression does not follow a natural developmental trajectory as mainstream psychologists believe.

All psychological phenomena depend on the way life is socially organized. The irritation that an American adolescent feels toward her parents is a good illustration. It appears to be a personal feeling directed at a unique set of parents in a private household. However, it is actually a common feeling that almost all American adolescents experience. It is a cultural phenomenon. It is fostered by the social organization of life; it is a necessary emotion for participating in this socially organized life. Adolescent irritation at parents is engendered by characteristics of American social institutions, concepts, and artifacts. Specifically, adolescence is a time when dependent children make the transition to independent individuals. Adolescents are not simply becoming adults; they are becoming particular kinds of adults suited to participate in capitalist society, which emphasizes individual autonomy, self-interest, and change. This individualism drives adolescents to develop their individuality in opposition to their parents. If they remained attached to their parents' influence, they would be ill-suited to asserting themselves as consumers and employees. To succeed in the culture, adolescents must rebel against their parents, socially and psychologically.

Pressure to do this comes in the form of ideology to be an independent person. It also comes from commercial pressures to make purchasing decisions (Cook, 2004). It also comes from legal statutes allowing adolescents the right to drive cars, which endows them with enormous independence and weakens social ties to parents. An adolescent's psychology is also cultivated by public images of adolescents striving to assert their individuality against authority figures. These images appear in movies, television, advertisements, and friends' behavior.

An adolescent's irritation at her parents is not an individual feeling governed by idiosyncratic or biological processes. It is a cultural phenomenon that encompasses almost all adolescents in America because of the way that their lives are structured by social institution, cultural concepts, and artifacts. It is a cultural phenomenon that incarnates many aspects of adolescents' social position in a particular society. It would not exist in a society of different cultural factors. Piaget (1993) expressed this point as follows:

> The boy begins at [11–13 years old] to feel himself more and more on the same level as adolescents and to free himself inwardly from adult constraint

> …. There can be no doubt that this phenomenon is peculiar to our civilization, and therefore falls under the Durkheimian scheme …. [In contrast] in so-called primitive communities, adolescence is the age of initiation, therefore of the strongest moral constraint, and the individual, as he grows older, becomes more and more dependent. (p. 99)

Piaget agreed with Durkheim that in small, localized societies, each social unit is a closed system and individuals tend to behave homogeneously, in accordance with stable customs. As societies develop more intense division of labor, it "differentiates individuals from one another psychologically and gives rise to individualism and to the formation of personalities in the true sense. Individual heteronomy and autonomy would thus seem to be in direct correlation with the morphology and the functioning of the group as a whole" (Piaget, 1932, p. 97).

This is the perspective that we develop under the rubric of macro cultural psychology. It emphasizes that psychology is cultivated by the manner in which people socially organize their lives. This is why psychology varies in different cultures. Psychology is part of culture, and culture is embedded within psychology; it is not simply an external structure or context. Macro cultural psychology recognizes that every individual is both unique and a cultural player (a socius, as Baldwin termed it). However, it is concerned with cultural patterns of psychological reactions that the individual enacts in common with many other individuals through participating together in broad social norms, concepts, and artifacts. "Cultural psychology is the study of the way cultural traditions and social practices regulate, express, transform, and permute the human psyche, resulting less in psychic unity for humankind than in ethnic divergences in mind, self, and emotion." "In the language of cultural psychology there are no pure psychological laws, just as there are no unreconstructed or unmediated stimulus events …. Cultural psychology signals an end to the purely psychological in psychology" (Shweder, 1990, pp. 1, 24).

CULTURE COMPRISES THE EXPLANATORY CONSTRUCTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

The reorientation from a psychological to a cultural explanation of behavior was expressed by Durkheim (1951) in his analysis of suicide:

> Since suicide is an individual action affecting the individual only, it must seemingly depend exclusively on individual factors, thus belonging to psy-

> chology alone. Is not the suicide's resolve usually explained by his temperament, character, antecedents, and private history? …
>
> If, instead of seeing in them only separate occurrences, unrelated and to be separately studied, the suicides committed in a given society during a given period of time are taken as a whole, it appears that this total is not simply a sum of independent units, a collective total, but is itself a new fact *sui generis*, with its own unity, individuality, and consequently its own nature—a nature, furthermore, dominantly social. (p. 46)

Durkheim argues that suicide has a social character despite the fact that it is conducted by separate individuals. The social character is the reason that a given number of individuals in particular cultural groups (ethnic, gender, class, nationality) in a particular era commit suicide.

Durkheim (1897/1951) pointed out a vital fact that attests to the cultural basis of suicide: "The individuals making up a society change from year to year, yet the number of suicides is the same so long as the society itself does not change" (p. 307). This fact indicates that "the victim's acts which at first seem to express only his personal temperament are really the supplement and prolongation of a social condition" (p. 299). There must be social forces that impel a regular number of unrelated individuals to commit suicide every year. Personal factors cannot explain this regularity because they are idiosyncratic and coincidental (p. 305). "Today's population has not learned from yesterday's the size of the contribution it must make to suicide; nevertheless, it will make one of identical size with that of the past, unless circumstances change" (p. 308). Social pressures and conditions are obviously at work in suicide even though it only afflicts a small proportion of the population (p. 300).

Actually, personal factors could be involved in suicide. However, they would have to be socially generated in regular demographic patterns to provide the stable demography of suicide. In this case, cultural factors ultimately explain suicide, although indirectly by generating a social demographic pattern of temperaments (and other personal factors) that interact with a pattern of social conditions to yield the demography of suicide.

Durkheim's point, that seemingly individual behavior is actually a social fact, was endorsed by Kroeber and other structuralists. The point applies to psychological phenomena in general. All psychological phenomena are culturally organized and distributed. They all evidence quantitative and qualitative variations across cultural groups and historical eras. Rates of suicide vary dramatically throughout the world (China having the highest suicide rate in the world); perception of optical illu-

sions is culturally variable, with Americans tending to misperceive the Muller–Lyer illusion (overestimating one of the lines by 20%) whereas certain African peoples do not; color perception is culturally variable, with Americans perceiving blue and green as different colors whereas many premodern people perceive them as similar; sound perception is culturally organized, with Japanese people unable to distinguish "l" from "r" sounds whereas Americans can; memory is culturally organized, as adult females and individuals from Western cultures have an earlier age of first memory, and have longer and more detailed memories of their childhood, than do adult males and individuals from Asian cultures (Fivush & Nelson, 2004, p. 573); Kpelle people have great difficulty remembering separate facts apart from a context, whereas Westerners easily recall them; individuals who live in the culture of highland New Guinea cannot conceive of themselves apart from their social structure, whereas Americans regard themselves as unique, independent individuals; mental illness manifests quantitative and qualitative variations among cultural groups—there is a 10-fold increase in risk for depression across generations in the United States (using diagnostic interviews on randomly selected adolescents, of those born in 1972–1974, 7.2% had experienced a severe depression, in contrast to 4.5% of older adolescents born in 1968–1971; Diener & Seligman, 2004, pp. 16–17). The quality of childhood is different for American middle-class children, peasant children in the Middle Ages, and poor children in Brazil whom Scheper-Hughes studied (cf. Ratner, 1991, pp. 86–87). The psychology of womanhood and manhood similarly varies dramatically across ethnic groups, millennia, and classes. Culture even affects brain structure. Animal sounds and human voices are localized in the verbal hemisphere of Japanese brains, but in the nonverbal hemisphere of Western brains. Western music and Japanese music are processed in the nonverbal hemispheres of Western brains, whereas Japanese brains process Japanese music in the verbal hemisphere and Western music in the nonverbal hemisphere. Japanese individuals who are raised in the West manifest the Western brain structure, and Westerners who are raised in Japan manifest the Japanese brain structure (Ratner, 1997, p. 119).

Cultural factors underlie and predict psychological phenomena more so than personal factors do. The job market, unemployment, and gender predict mental illness better than any personal factor does. Social class predicts domestic violence, educational achievement, linguistic development, parent–child interactions, mental illness, and IQ better than personal factors. Gender and social class predict eating disorders better than personal, psy-

chological attributes do. Anorexia and bulimia are more common among American middle-class women than among other groups of people (Polivy & Herman, 2002; Ratner, 2002, pp. 39–40, 49–50).

Of course, personal factors do affect psychology, however not as robustly as macro factors do. As Vygotsky (1997a) said, "The social moment in consciousness is primary in time as well as in fact. The individual aspect is constructed as a derived and secondary aspect on the basis of the social aspect and exactly according to its model" (p. 77). Vygotsky termed this fact "the sociologizing of consciousness."

Psychological constructs that refer to individual, interpersonal, natural (biological), abstract, or universal processes/principles cannot account for the demographic differences in psychological phenomena. Psychological constructs cannot account for the particular quality that depression has in contemporary United States and its overrepresentation among women; the particular quality that anorexia has (in contrast to its very different psychology among medieval nuns) and its overrepresentation among middle-class, American women; the manner in which Westerners perceive colors, in contrast to the color perception of nonmodern people; the different levels and practices of sexuality among different peoples of the world.

In a paper entitled "Culturological vs. Psychological Interpretations of Human Behavior," Leslie White (1949, pp. 121–145) explained that historical-cultural behavior such as war, prejudice, and slavery result from complex social needs and dynamics; they are not products of individual psychological functions. His argument is worth pursuing because it applies to cultural-historical aspects of psychology.

Fascism is not due to a search for a father figure; the Roman empire was not the result of a personal need to control people; war is not caused by an aggressive, antisocial personality; terrorism is not explained by a psychological propensity to distinguish an in-group from an out-group; the nuclear family is not conditioned by a maternal instinct; social violence does not spring from temperament; crime is not due to low self-esteem; slavery is not due to an individual desire for superiority; child labor is not the result of individual children's or parent's decisions; and consumerism is not generated by natural individual desires.

Psychological constructs do not have the characteristics of historical phenomena. They do not have principles of complex, specific social organization and ideology built into them. Consequently, they cannot generate, or explain, historical-cultural phenomena. General psychological tendencies no more determine specific behavior than our biological needs for food and shelter determine the modern diet or housing architecture.

The need for a father figure (if there were one) would not include specific principles of a fascist state. A need to control people (if there were one) would not entail specific principles that would impel Romans to build enormous armies for conquering distant populations and establish governing bodies to rule them in a particular manner. Free decisions (if there were such a thing), or interpersonal negotiations, would not lead masses of people, dispersed over vast spaces, to, at the same historical moment, act in a similar manner—for example, to work in factories, or buy expensive, name-brand sneakers or bottled water. A maternal instinct (if there were one) would not entail the characteristics of the modern nuclear family, such as its separation (privacy) from politics and the economy, its foundation in romantic love between parents, and its child-centered approach to socialization. An aggressive instinct (if there were one) would not explain the vast social organization involved in conducting war (including the training of soldiers, making and storing of weapons, making a political decision to engage in war, preparing propaganda to arouse support for it). As Ehrenreich (1997) said, "War … is too complex and collective an activity to be accounted for by a single warlike instinct lurking with the individual psyche" (p. 1997).

Similarly, high or low self-esteem can enact any kind of behavior; they do not necessarily lead to good and bad behaviors, respectively. High self-esteem can lead to violence, racism, and risky behavior if one feels superior to others and invulnerable to harm. Conversely, low esteem can lead to avoiding risk and isolation; it is not necessarily related to delinquency, violence, smoking, drug use, or racism (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Emler, 2001).

In the same vein, unfamiliarity with a group does not necessarily lead to hatred or suspicion toward it. Unfamiliarity could lead to an eager desire to learn about the group's social customs. Similarly, distinguishing an in-group from an out-group does not impel members of the former to form negative stereotypes about and terrorize members of the latter. An out-group can identify people in need whom we help, such as handicapped individuals. An out-group can be respected and admired as multiculturalists advocate.

Sociobiologists and evolutionary psychologists explain religion as rooted in a natural drive for social solidarity that has survival benefit. However, social solidarity can be achieved in many ways besides religion. The former is a general need that does not necessarily lead to the specific social belief of religion. The details of religion must therefore have a different origin than solidarity.

The historical dimension and development of psychological phenomena must be explained in terms of specific social conditions, policies, organiza-

tion, control, classes, artifacts, and ideologies. "It is the way in which society is constituted, not the way in which we are constituted individually, that explains why these facts appear in one, rather than another, form" (Durkheim, 1900/1960, p. 372).

There Is a Hiatus Between Psychological Constructs and Historical Phenomena. Historical phenomena, including historical-cultural aspects of psychology, have specific dynamics and content that do not originate in general, abstract psychological constructs. Durkheim (1900/1960) aptly observed that:

> The salient features of the individual mind are too simple, too general, too indeterminate to account for those of social practices and beliefs, the variety of their forms, and the complexity of their characteristics …. If one labors to reduce social phenomena to phenomena of a psychological sort … one is condemned to the advocacy and practice of a sociology that I venture to call facile and abstract …. All the minute, concrete manifestations of social facts, all that constitutes their wealth and specificity, escapes him by necessity. (p. 369)

CULTURE

Macro cultural-psychological theory depends on defining culture. One's definition of culture determines the factors that are considered pertinent to psychological phenomena. It also determines one's conception of the power of culture to affect psychology. It also determines the extent to which individuals are seen to control their psychology and their culture. It also highlights factors that are necessary to reform in order to improve social life and psychological functioning.

Conventional definitions of culture regard it as socially constructed and shared ideas, meanings, and behaviors. These definitions bring out important aspects of culture; however, their scientific and political usefulness is limited. They fail to identify (a) the reasons humans construct culture; (b) the scope of culture—is it clusters of individuals or nation-states; (c) the kind of integration that culture consists of—for example, a sum of individual actions or a collective organization that modifies individuals; (d) elements of culture; (e) differences in importance between major and minor cultural elements—that is, their relative influence on each other and on psychology; (f) who controls cultural factors—that is, power and class relations; (g) cultural dynamics and tendencies; (h) how the behavior of sepa-

rate individuals comes to be shared; (I) variations (and inequalities) within culture; and (j) how culture changes.

These problems can be dispelled by formulating a more concrete definition of culture. I propose that culture consists primarily of "macro factors." Macro cultural factors are social, physical, and ideational structures that are the cornerstones of society. As such, they unify masses of people in common behaviors. They set the parameters of interpersonal and personal actions.

There are three kinds of macro cultural factors: *institutions* (such as family, schools, government, economic enterprises, spiritual organizations, and health care institutions), *artifacts* (art, tools, clothing, eating and cooking utensils, housing), and *cultural concepts* (about time, wealth, women, morality, nature, and sex). Humans survive and fulfill ourselves through these macro cultural factors.

Macro cultural factors have specific characteristics in particular societies. Child, woman, tools, art, love, collectivism, industrialization, urbanization, agriculture, and big government can exist in a number of different concrete forms. Agriculture can be cooperative or competitive; big government can be a feudal bureaucracy or the American government; collectivism can be a democratic form of mutual support or autocratically imposed. The particular form that macro factors have depends on which groups of people control them, how they control them, and the interests they express through their leadership. Power and interests impart a concrete character to macro factors.

The notion of macro cultural factors introduces specificity to culture. It emphasizes concrete characteristics of cultural elements that are administered and promoted by people who occupy different social positions, command different resources and opportunities, and employ specific social mechanisms to maintain their interests. It also recognizes that competing groups struggle for control of cultural factors and that the competition results in transforming the character of macro factors.

Cultural factors are envisioned and maintained by subjective processes such as thinking, perceiving, emotions, and motives. However, the products that subjectivity produces reciprocally structure it. We are produced by the products we produce. A simple example is the fact that if you decide to become a painter, photographer, or poet, you adapt your consciousness (your perception, feelings, memory) to the skills and materials that comprise the craft. The craft that people have created, and that you have decided to embrace, makes you into a certain kind of person. Culture is a system in which our products produce us, we are made by what we make, and human objectifications objectify consciousness in particular ways.

Now that we have some idea about what culture is, we can proceed to introduce its relation to psychology.

MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Macro cultural psychology rests on a simple proposition. Because macro cultural factors are the means by which humans survive and fulfill themselves, psychological phenomena must be devoted to constructing, maintaining, and refining them. For instance, to establish, maintain, and refine a social institution (such as a school, a church, a government, or a workplace), an artifact (such as driving a car on a Los Angeles freeway, tilling the soil with a hoe, stalking game with a bow and arrow, wearing a mini skirt or a corset), or a cultural concept (such as time as composed of measurable, discrete units, or a philosophical concept of existentialism, or calculus, or the sonata form in music), people must develop particular forms of thinking, perceiving, learning, feeling, and self-concept. These psychological phenomena must have a form and content that is congruent with the form and content of the macro factors they construct, maintain, and refine.

Consider the complex psychology that is necessary for the institution of formal education to operate. Formal education is the specialized practice of teaching and learning that is removed from everyday life. It occurs in isolated campuses in sterile classrooms. It is conducted by specialized experts called teachers who specifically study and refine the specialized practice of teaching. In this special educational environment, pupils and teachers need to formulate explicit, precise concepts to describe a world that is not directly experienced. They need to think abstractly; verbalize abstract concepts; control their attention in sterile classroom; suppress emotions and bodily movement; have an impersonal relationship between teacher and pupil; memorize decontextualized information; fulfill requirements punctually; work quickly and independently; and recall information quickly.

This set of psychological competencies is specifically tailored to participate in formal education. It is not natural. It is tailored by the entire structure of physical artifacts, social relationships, and concepts that comprise formal education.

An entirely different set of competencies is required by apprenticeship learning. Apprenticeship is hands-on learning in the context of everyday events. Weaving, for example, is taught and learned in natural settings. There is no specialized teacher role or student role, no specialized teaching practice, no specialized learning skills that are prepared and practiced outside work. The apprentice works alongside the weaver. Instruction consists

of pointing to immediate objects and modeling behavior in context. There is no conversion of things into abstract symbols that are verbalized and memorized out of context (Mitchell, 1988, pp. 85–89). Because meanings are contextualized in things, there is no concept of "meaning" as a distinctive phenomenon. Because it is not decontextualized in practice, meaning is not decontextualized in thought.

The psychological competencies that are required for formal education would be maladaptive in apprenticeship. Conversely, the competencies that are required for apprenticeship would be maladaptive in formal education. Inappropriate competencies preclude constructing, maintaining, and refining the particular macro cultural factors that are necessary for our survival and fulfillment in any historical era. If students did not develop the psychological competency to quietly, dispassionately, and individually concentrate on abstract ideas for an hour at a time in a sterile classroom, the institution of formal education could not function.

Similarly, if people in a collective hunting and gathering society thought and treated themselves as individuals, the collective economy would collapse. If individuals in a capitalist economy did not develop a sense of personal autonomy, they could not successfully compete in the job market where they need to sell themselves, take individual responsibility, and accept sudden dislocations. The competitive job market would collapse. If churchgoers engaged in critical thinking, and used principles of logic and empirical evidence to evaluate religious doctrines, theological concepts and institutions would attract no following.

The cultural function of psychological phenomena can be indicated by asking, "What is the cultural function of thinking about abstract ideas at school, or memorizing abstract concepts apart from any practical context? Would I be engaging in these psychological competencies if I were in a different macro cultural system such as apprenticeship?" "What is the cultural function of my flirting with this boy or girl? Is it related to the marriage system in this country? Would I be flirting if I lived in a system of arranged marriages?" "What is the cultural function of considering myself an autonomous self? Would I have this self-concept in a tribal society?" "What is the cultural function of my being jealous when a classmate gets a better grade than I do? Would I have this emotion in a communal society?"

Of course, individual variations exist within psychological and behavioral commonalities. However, they do not displace the commonalities that comprise macro cultural factors.

Macro cultural psychology is unique in recognizing that *psychology is a cultural mechanism*. It is a mechanism for culture in the sense that it makes activities cultural—that is, planned, coordinated, communicated,

learned, motivated, conscious, and changeable. Psychology is also a mechanism *of* culture in the sense of being a culturally organized "habitus" that resides inside the individual's body and mind, and regulates behavior in accordance with the parameters of macro cultural factors. Accordingly, psychology has a cultural basis, *telos*, form, and function. Psychology can be regarded as a Trojan horse. It operates within the individual and appears to belong to the individual; however, it actually allows culture to enter the individual and guide his behavior from within. (Of course, being culturally organized and conscious, psychology is not a physical mechanism like a thermostat. It is rather akin to social policies, which are mechanisms for maintaining the social order.)

A Top-Down Rather than a Bottom-Up Conception of Culture and Psychology. It is common in our individualistically oriented society to believe that the reason that people in different cultural domains have different psychologies is that individuals naturally differ psychologically, and that different individuals will then develop and seek out cultural niches that correspond to their competencies. In this bottom-up theory, culture is the result of individual psychology; psychology is not molded by culture. This model contains a grain of truth. Individuals do take jobs for which they are suited emotionally, cognitively, and motivationally.

However, this model does explain the culture. We have seen that individual psychological constructs do not have historical characteristics. They cannot explain why culture has the form (niches) it does at any particular time. Individual psychology cannot explain why free-choice marriages exist, why they displaced arranged marriages, why schools exist, why informal apprenticeship was replaced by formal education, or why selling cars and real estate replaced barter or distribution according to need as in hunting and gathering societies. Cultural niches are historically unique; they are neither natural nor universal. Therefore, they cannot be explained by a natural distribution in a natural set of basic psychological phenomena.

The congruence between personality and selling cars, free marriage, or formal education cannot spring from natural psychological tendencies because the cultural domains are not natural and neither are the psychological competencies that correspond to them.

We cannot say that individual mathematical capacity is the basis of mathematical competence in school because the mathematical competence is historically variable. Calculus involves different competencies than arithmetic. Even contemporary measurement is different from measurement during colonial times (Linklater, 2003). Consequently, a natural, indi-

vidual capacity "to do math" (if there were one) could not contain the specific mathematical skills necessary to work on culturally variable mathematical problems.

The same holds for intelligence. Particular cultural activities require corresponding kinds of intelligence. If there were a natural individual capacity for general intelligence, it would not have the specific features and operations necessary to understand/resolve culturally specific problems. Again, there is a hiatus between individual psychological constructs and cultural factors.

Similarly, Piagetian sequences of cognitive psychogenesis cannot explain historical developments in mathematical geometry. It took centuries of research in geometry to develop sophisticated notions about transforming physical shapes. This cognitive competence that arose within the cultural practice of mathematics has nothing to do with the ontogenetic development of perception and cognition.

Any similarities in the historical development of a cognitive phenomenon and its ontogenetic development are spurious and superficial. They involved completely mechanisms. For instance, the historical development of language proceeds from strings of words to complex, grammatical sentences, just as the ontogenetic development of language does. However, the simplified language of a baby is due to physiological immaturity of its cortex, and its biological incapacity to synthesize complex symbols. The limited language of early human adults was due to cultural immaturity, not biological immaturity. Early human adults possessed the same neuroanatomy as modern adults. They had the biological capacity to learn advanced language; however, they lacked the cultural foundation. History no more recapitulates ontogeny than ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. Superficial behavioral similarities do not imply similar processes. The fact that adults and babies both cry does not indicate that adults are infantile when they cry. When an adult cries from reading a tragic poem, it is not analogous to a baby crying when it is hungry. Psychophysiological processes in babies are not analogous to cultural processes in adults.

We have to explain the match between psychology and culture by starting at the cultural level, not the psychological level of the individual. We have to go from the top down rather than the bottom up. We need to explain why formal education exists as a particular cultural activity, what concrete characteristics this activity has (which are quite different from teaching and learning through apprenticeship), and why/how these specific characteristics are reflected in certain individuals' psychology. We need to begin with the social facts of arranged marriages and free-choice marriages and under-

stand how these social relations demand and elicit different forms of premarital sexuality and emotions.

Mainstream psychology is misled by its individualistic focus into reversing this process. It sees that individuals possess certain psychological competencies and rely on them to make cultural choices. Mainstream psychology thus assumes that individual psychology is the basis of culture. However, this confuses the end of the process with its beginning. Individual psychological competence, which individuals utilize to function in society, is the outcome of a cultural process, not the origins of culture. Macro cultural psychology elucidates this process.

A New Scientific Theory. Macro cultural psychology is a "Copernican shift" away from the individually centered view that dominates mainstream psychology. It formulates explanatory constructs of psychology from macro cultural factors and processes rather than in individual, natural, or universal factors. In the study of language, for instance, "where previously attention has focused on speech as the biological competence of individuals, here our themes are social. To study communication is inevitably to study social structure, social conflict, social strategies, social intelligence" (Knight, Studdert-Kennedy, & Hurford, 2000, p. 19).

Macro cultural psychology does not deny that individual and biological processes contribute to psychological functioning. However, it construes them as subsidiary to macro cultural processes and factors.

As a scientific theory, macro cultural psychology does not simply associate particular cultural variables with psychological variables. Such associations are no more scientific than observing that rain is associated with plant growth. Macro cultural psychology explains the reasons for these associations, just as biological science explains why plants need water and how water makes them grow. Macro cultural psychology elucidates fundamental issues such as what is the internal relation between culture and psychology, why are psychological phenomena susceptible to cultural organization, why do they require cultural stimulation and support, why does culture elicit psychological phenomena, what is culture, how does culture organize psychology, what function does psychology play in culture, what are the major components of culture that are central to psychological phenomena, how is culture embodied in psychology, and what is the role of subjectivity/agency/responsibility in culture?

Macro cultural psychology is a general theory about the cultural origins, characteristics, and functions of psychological phenomena. It does not simply identify cultural aspects of psychology. It understands and explains

them. Macro cultural psychology is a philosophy of cultural psychology, as well as a science of cultural psychology—just as philosophy of history develops a theory of history, of why historical changes occur, what the principles are that govern these changes. Macro cultural psychology explains the range of psychological phenomena—perception, emotions, reasoning, memory, learning, motivation, personality, mental illness, developmental processes—in terms of a parsimonious set of principles. This is the objective of all science.

Macro cultural psychology views psychology from the perspective of culture and history. It is a cultural perspective on psychology, not a psychological approach to culture. It draws on research in humanities and social science that touch on psychological issues. Cultural anthropology, philosophy of history, sociology of art, sociology of emotions, and schools of history, provide vital insights into psychology embedded in, and engaged with, culture. They illuminate psychology's concrete cultural character. Their research addresses such cultural-psychological questions as:

> What did it mean to be a man in early New England? To what ideals of masculinity or manhood did Anglo-American colonists there aspire? What were the social, cultural, and emotional imperatives that shaped those ideals, and in particular how did women affect the ways that manhood was imagined? How did men think and feel about their bodies and their sexuality? What kinds of husbands and fathers were they? Did their sons love them and want to be like them, or did they secretly resent them and long to get away? How were their ideals of manhood related to attempts by the Puritan founders of the New England colonies to reform early modern English society and culture? And how did those ideals ultimately become obsolete, to be replaced by others more like those with which we are now familiar? (Lombard, 2003, p. 2)

Macro cultural psychology requires a familiarity with the fundamental issues of culture and psychology addressed by this research. One cannot jump into the field to study cultural variables and psychological variables without understanding this literature

Macro cultural psychology problematizes issues that mainstream psychologists have regarded as unproblematical. The question of how macro cultural factors inspire and organize psychology when psychological phenomena are also necessary to initiate and maintain macro factors is one problematic we deal with.

Other problematics that macro cultural psychology raises are: How can a culturally organized mind critique society and envision alternative social

formations? What is the role of social reform for psychological change, and the role of psychological change for social reform? How do we account for the common historical-cultural psychology of diverse individuals who interact with different family, friends, coworkers, and bosses. How is it that psychology manifests a shared character that is specific to particular historical eras and cultural formations?

Macro psychological psychology reinterprets data and conclusions produced by mainstream psychologists. Whereas they are prone to assume their findings are universal and due to natural processes, macro cultural psychology identifies cultural features of psychology that other viewpoints overlook (cf. Cushman, 1991; Ratner, 1989a, 1989b; Ratner, 1991, pp. 113–146; Rothbaum, Weisz, Pott, Miyake, & Morelli, 2000). Macro cultural psychology does not necessarily reject mainstream research. It integrates much of it within a new conceptual framework. It does, of course, reject inadequate data generated by faulty theories and procedures.

This is the same kind of reconfiguring, reinterpreting, and problematizing that occurred in the Copernican shift from the earth as the center of the planetary system to the sun as center. The manner in which macro cultural psychology reconfigures our perception of the mind is illustrated by a simple perceptual exercise. Look at Fig. 1.1 and note your perceptual experience.

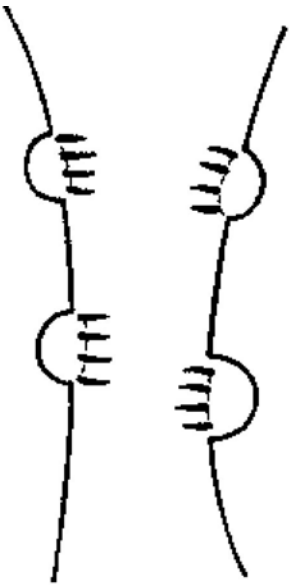

FIG. 1.1. Cognitive structuring of perception.

Now, I inform you that the figure depicts a bear climbing a tree, and the bear is on the far side of the tree, hidden from view, so you are facing its claws wrapped around the front of the tree. Don't you now *perceive* the figure and its features differently? The concept ("bear climbing a tree") has directed you to perceive the vertical lines as belonging together as edges of a solid object. You see the perpendicular short lines as part of the semicircles (they are now the claws of the feet), and you see the semicircles as connected via the bear's body and legs, which are behind the tree. You saw the elements (lines) before; however, they *looked* different from their present conceptually informed appearance.

This is how a cultural perspective on psychology highlights features that were invisible to the individualistic perspective. When you learn that psychological phenomena are cultural phenomena and sustain macro cultural factors, this information reorganizes your perception and conceptualization of psychology's characteristics.

Of course, Fig. 1.1 is easy to reconfigure because it is ambiguous. Changing one's view of psychological phenomena is extremely difficult because the old view is definite, established, and legitimated. Introducing a cultural perspective requires de-legitimizing (critiquing) the individualistic view, constructing new principles of a macro cultural-psychological approach, and legitimizing them through logical argument and empirical evidence. This is what this book is about.

ONTOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Every undertaking in social science, whether theoretical or empirical, is guided by ontological and epistemological principles. We may believe that our concepts, definitions, methods, data, and conclusions directly reflect the nature of things. However, they reflect ontological and epistemological principles at least as much as they reflect things in themselves. Different principles would generate different concepts, methods, data, and conclusions. Because things are complex, linked through networks to distant other things, and contain properties that are invisible to sense perception, apprehending the full, real nature of things depends on utilizing appropriate theories and methods.

It is important to make ontological and epistemological principles explicit. This will clarify the meaning and limits of our concepts, definitions, methods, data, and conclusions. It allows us to alter the fundamental approaches we take in our work, and to make them more objective in helping us comprehend our subject matter.

Dialectics

Macro cultural psychology utilizes a dialectical conception of the nature (ontology) of cultural and psychological phenomena, and the manner in which they interact. We also utilize a dialectical conception of how to acquire knowledge about this subject matter (i.e., epistemology).

Dialectics was systematized by Hegel, Marx, Engels, Marcuse, and Sartre. It has been adopted (with varying levels of sophistication) by numerous approaches to social science. These include hermeneutics, phenomenology, structuralism, critical realism (e.g., Bhaskar, Campbell), Gestalt psychology (including Kurt Goldstein, Kurt Lewin, and Solomon Asch), functionalism, ecological psychology, constructionism, and certain systems theories.

A brief introduction to the main principles of dialectical ontology will help the reader understand applications that appear throughout the book. Dialectical epistemology is discussed in chapter 4 on research.

The central idea of dialectics is that elements are interrelated in a field where they are interdependent, interpenetrating, and internally related. As such, a particular element takes on the characteristics, or qualities, of other elements. Qualities thus vary with the context of interrelated elements.

Elements may be depicted as interlocking circles, as in Fig. 1.2. Depicting elements as interlocking circles illustrates how an element is intertwined with and overlaps into another (cf. Asch, 1952, p. 261). Each contains others within itself. Elements impart qualities to each other. The character of each is a complex blend of its own properties and those of its context. Elements are distinctive, but not independent. Their character depends on other elements in the system and the way in which they are organized together. *Elements are distinctive parts of a system.* Each element in Fig. 1.2 contains the system within itself. Yet each maintains its distinctiveness. *It is the system as seen from a particular position.* An element is neither independent of the system nor swallowed up by (in) the system (Asch, 1952, 257–268). Dialectics opposes both atomistic fragmentation of elements and a mystical holism in which elements lose their distinctiveness (e.g., as in some Indian spirituality, which renounces individual mental activity, analysis, and striving in favor of becoming "one with the universe"). The complex, specific blend of qualities that an element acquires by virtue of its interpenetrating, internal relation with other elements is its concreteness (*Bestimmung* or *Bestimmtheit* in German).

Dialectical ontology has direct application to macro cultural psychology. If the elements in Fig. 1.2 consist of a cultural factor and a psychological

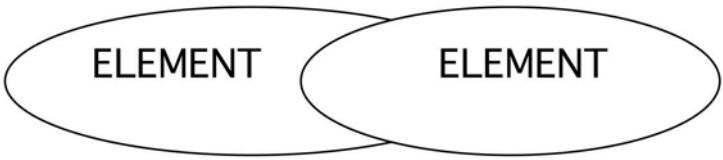

FIG. 1.2. Dialectical relation of elements.

phenomenon, then culture penetrates into the heart of psychological phenomena. It organizes them.

Macro cultural factors do not stand apart from psychological phenomena and mechanically determine them. Macro cultural factors encompass psychology. They impart their features to psychology by forming a structure that molds and nourishes it. Psychological phenomena grow within macro cultural factors, as part of them. This process is akin to a mother's forming the features of her fetus by imparting her genes to it, and also by providing the milieu and nourishment it needs to grow. The vital constituents of the fetus come from the mother. The fetus eventually outgrows the mother and takes on novel features. However, the mother clearly forms it through her internal relationship with it—through its being within her and drawing on her.

Dialectics is useful because it respects the distinctiveness of the elements at the same time that it recognizes their interdependence and interpenetration. Psychological phenomena are distinctive and need to be investigated in their own right. They cannot be presumed, or read off from, macro cultural factors. Macro cultural psychology is not sociology. It does not diminish or abandon psychology by reducing it to macro factors. An emotion is not a social institution. Although emotions have a form and content that derives from social institutions, emotions are distinct.

Dialectical ontology encompasses another vital scientific issue, namely, the relationship between the scientist and the object of inquiry. If the elements in Fig. 1.2 refer to the scientist and his object of study, it becomes clear that the scientist is intertwined with his object while also being distinct. The scientist resides in the natural and cultural world, is influenced by, and saturated by it. At the same time, the scientist is distinct from his object. He is not his subjects. He must reach them, and fathom them. He must ensure that his understanding of them reflects their cultural psychology. This requires painstaking research. It is not

spontaneous or intuitive. The application of dialectics to philosophy of science is discussed in the Epilogue.

Functionalism

Macro cultural psychology emphasizes that psychological phenomena are a function of macro cultural factors. Psychological features depend on cultural factors, are organized by cultural factors, and function to create and maintain macro cultural factors. The cultural function of psychological phenomena determines their character.

This kind of analysis is known as functionalism. Functionalism is a broad principle that governs all kinds of phenomena. For example, the function of an airplane wing is to aid liftoff, flying, and landing. This function necessitates the wing's size, shape, materials, location on the fuselage, and strength of attachment to the fuselage. Knowing the function of a wing explains its properties. If we are ignorant of a thing's function, we will never fully understand why it exists, what it does, and what its properties are (Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992, p. 10; Dunbar, 1998, p. 92).

Likewise, the cultural function of psychological phenomena is the key that unlocks the social nature of mind. The functionalist perspective explains the internal relation between psychology and culture, the role that psychology plays *in* culture, and why psychology has the characteristics it does. Functionalism makes the discipline of psychology into an explanatory science.

Functionalism has a conservative connotation of a static system that all the components work to maintain. Indeed, structural functionalists such as Durkheim and Parsons were concerned with social unity and stability. They discounted social contradictions and fundamental social reform (Coser, 1960).

However, functionalism is not necessarily conservative. Its conservatism can be overcome by recognizing that social integration is one tendency of a system, but it is never absolute. In addition to the tendency toward integration, every social system also contains contradictions. These are normally contained within the system—through suppression, marginalization, and co-optation—as functionalism emphasizes. However, they occasionally are harnessed by people to transform the system. For example, poverty is normally functional for a capitalist economy. It is the result of normative capitalist principles that seek to minimize labor costs by reducing wages. These policies that create poverty are functional for increasing the value of the business. They are applauded by business leaders and politicians. They lead to enthusiastic rises in the price of a company's stock. Laws protect these practices that produce poverty. Police stop protests against them. Poverty is

a functionally important, normative part of capitalism. Yet poverty is also detested by the poor (and their sympathizers), who strive to eliminate it. They mount struggles that are normally suppressed. However, occasionally, they manage to muster enough strength and support in order to transform the policies that maintain poverty. They repudiate the normative practices, concepts, artifacts, and psychological phenomena that functioned to support poverty.

Functionalism is necessary for understanding the persistence of poverty. It is not an aberration. It is not something that social leaders could eliminate or wish to eliminate. It is a linchpin in the economic system. Yet we must also recognize that poverty is a social contradiction that can be harnessed by people as an incentive for transforming society. In order to eliminate poverty, people must understand the network of factors that promulgate it. They must utilize a functional analysis in order to reform society. Thus, functionalism is indispensable to social reform.

Marx incorporated functionalism in his revolutionary social theory. He recognized the vast, almost uncanny integration of elements within a social system. Cultural concepts, laws, family relations, art, and consciousness support the economic system in Marx's view. Social leaders exercise vigilance in maintaining this order. They suppress opposition to it. Yet certain sectors of the system do occasionally explode the contradictions that are latent within it. This culminates in social revolutions. Marx showed us that functionalism is compatible with revolution and with revolutionary social theory. He showed that functionalism can be subsumed within dialectics. Dialectics, as we saw in the previous section, emphasizes the interpenetration and interdependence of components within a system. This is a strong form of functional integration. However, dialectics also emphasizes that a system is a unity-of-differences that contains contradictions that lead to change. Poverty, for example, is a moment of capitalism that normally enriches it, but can motivate people to change capitalism. Subsuming functionalism within dialectics captures the balance between social integration and social change (cf. Merton, 1968, pp. 73–138 for an incisive explanation of functionalism and its compatibility with change).

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHER APPROACHES TO CULTURE AND PSYCHOLOGY

The two main psychological approaches to studying culture and psychology are cross-cultural psychology and cultural psychology. Macro cultural psy-

chology is different from both. The difference lies in its emphasis on (a) a comprehensive theory of culture as an emergent phenomenon composed of well-defined macro cultural factors, (b) the dialectical unity of interdependent, interpenetrating macro factors in a concrete system that is expressed in distinctive ways in each of its elements and endows each with a concrete richness, (c) the political dimension of cultural and psychological factors that consists in their being administered by vested interests through formal and informal policies, (d) macro cultural factors as explanatory constructs of psychology, (e) the dialectical unity of macro cultural factors and psychological phenomena that preserves the distinctiveness of both while recognizing their interdependence, (f) a psychological theory that explains the nature, origins, and functions of psychological phenomena, and their biological basis, and (g) improving psychological functioning through reforming cultural factors.

Cross-Cultural Psychology

Although cross-cultural psychology may seem to be a close relative of macro cultural psychology, the two approaches differ in their understanding of culture, psychological phenomena, and the relation between the two. The two approaches are rooted in opposing philosophies of science.

Cross-cultural psychology applies mainstream theories and positivistic methods to the study of psychological phenomena among diverse social groups. As explained in chapter four, cross-cultural psychologists have no theory of culture or psychology; they are poorly informed about specific cultures, they have a weak analysis of the relationship between culture and psychology, and they employ a deeply flawed methodology that invalidates many of their conclusions. Cross-cultural psychologists generally ignore concrete cultural factors. They typically single out a few, peripheral, poorly conceived cultural factors without any sense of the larger social system. The psychological phenomena they study are similarly abstract (cf. Ratner & Hui, 2003 for documentation of these points).

These problems are exemplified in Greenfield, et al.'s (2003) attempt to articulate cultural influences on psychological development. In typical fashion, the authors commence by defining culture in a few, uninformative sentences. They say it consists primarily of shared activity and shared meaning (p. 462). The authors also conform to the normative practice of defining shared activities in a limited way—as socializing practices, or interactional processes and symbolic tools used in cultural learning (pp. 463, 466). Nowhere do Greenfield, et al. mention such central macro cul-

tural factors as social institutions, politics, social class, power, alienation, transportation systems, news media, housing distribution, increasing disparities in the wealth controlled by rich and poor people, occupational restructuring, decimating of government services, deteriorating education, war, financial and political corruption, discrimination, or working conditions. Evidently, these do not qualify as cultural factors for Greenfield, et al. Nor do these macro cultural factors affect the cultural meanings and interactional processes that the authors acknowledge. These two factors appear on their own with no basis in concrete society. The authors never explain why specific meanings/ethnotheories or socialization practices appear at a particular place or time.

Greenfield, et al. (2003) exemplify another weakness of cross-cultural psychology, which is to construe cultural and psychological factors as separate, singular variables with simple, homogeneous character. This leads cross-cultural psychologists to overlook their depth and complexity. Variables foster a superficial view of culture and psychology (cf. Ratner, 1997, chap. 1). This is can be seen in the most popular cultural variables in cross-cultural psychology: *collectivism* and *individualism*. Individualistic cultures are defined as those where people identify themselves as private individuals and pursue their own self-interest. This definition is incomplete. Individualism of capitalist society includes much more. It includes competition, private ownership of property, instability, alienation, utilitarianism, and hedonism, Individualism is part of an entire way of life. It is not a fragmentary, singular element. Focusing on a fragmentary aspect of individualism obscures its concrete cultural character.

In the same vein, collectivistic cultures are defined as those in which people identify themselves as group members and obey group norms. Collectivism thus applies to contemporary China, feudal Europe, and hunting and gathering societies. Yet this abstraction overlooks vast differences in the collectivism practiced by these societies. Modern Chinese collectivism was substantially formed by the political system of the 1950s–1980s. During this period China was a police state. Every aspect of life was controlled by the Communist Party. People were forced to identify with and obey their culture by ruthless coercion. Chinese citizens who associated with foreigners were tracked by secret police and informants. They were punished and prevented from having further foreign contacts. Citizens were forced to study Party documents every week, and to use specific political terminology in school assignments and scientific reports. Foreign travel was restricted to prevent defections. This concrete political character of Chinese collectivism is expunged by the abstract construct *collectivism*. The abstract term

leads to construing Chinese collectivism as a quaint, voluntary concern for the group in the same sense as a band of hunters care for each other. However, to discuss Chinese collectivism without referring to the Cultural Revolution is as derelict as describing German politics in the 1930s as "a set of laws promulgated by a political party," and not mentioning Naziism.

The fact that people identify with a group and obey its norms is only a fragment of collectivism. Chinese collectivism, for example, includes unique economic and political features. The abstract aspects of collectivism are thus a minor organizing factor of culture or psychology (for a discussion of appropriate abstractions in cultural psychology see Ratner, 1991, chap. 3). Cross-cultural psychologists are quite wrong to emphasize *collectivism* and *individualism* as major features of cultural and psychological phenomena. Their claims do not withstand scrutiny.

For instance, Greenfield, et al. stated that "the interdependent pathway [i.e., collectivism] appears to be an adaptive response to small face-to-face communities and a subsistence economy" (2003, p. 465). Yet China is a primary example of a collectivist society and it is a massive bureaucratic society, centrally controlled, and not face-to-face. Greenfield, et al. made a similarly unsupportable claim about ethnotheories and culture: "the goal of scientific intelligence belongs to the individualistic pathway" (p. 472). This is contradicted by the fact that collectivistic societies such as China value and excel at science, and surpass American test scores. Greenfield, et al. further claim that collectivistic societies favor spatial representation in terms of absolute points such as east and west, whereas individualistic societies favor relative directions such as left and right (pp. 477–478). However, this is contradicted by the fact that collectivistic Chinese speakers describe directions in terms of right and left in relation to themselves.

The attempt to force cultural and psychological factors into abstract categories such as individualism and collectivism, or masculine and feminine, fails. These categories are simply too fragmentary to represent concrete culture and psychology. They are also poorly formulated on the basis of an ahistorical understanding. Individualism and collectivism were each derived from three ambiguous questions about peoples' work experience (cf. Ratner & Hui, 2003).

Construing cultural and psychological phenomena as singular variables leads cross-cultural psychologists to make sweeping generalizations. Ji, Peng, & Nisbett (2000, p. 952) claimed that "East Asians are more attentive to relationships in the environment than Americans." East Asians are regarded as a homogeneous group because East Asia is regarded as a singular cultural variable. The authors have also assumed that attentiveness to envi-

ronmental relationships is a discrete, contentless psychological variable that pertains to all phenomena and manifests only quantitative differences among people. From this perspective the authors feel no need to specify what kinds of relationships among what kinds of objects in what environments subjects attend to.

Of course, "attentive to environmental relationships" is a fiction. No group of persons is more or less sensitive to all environmental relationships. Ji et al.'s statement is as scientifically and politically objectionable as claiming that Caucasians are more intelligent than Blacks (cf., chap. four, this volume, and Ratner & Hui, 2003 for further critique of this kind of research).

Cross-cultural psychology is too close to mainstream psychology to challenge it, or to support macro cultural-psychology. Cross-cultural psychology presumes conventional psychological constructs to mediate macro culture.

For instance, Michael Bond (2004), a leading cross-cultural psychologist, analyzed aggression from the point of view that "any examination of the interface between culture and aggression must focus on the individual determinants of these coercive behaviors" (p. 62). He postulated a model in which macro cultural factors naturally trigger a psychological variable, which, in turn, triggers another psychological variable or behavior.

For instance, in simple societies (politically integrated, stratified, and sedentary) parents reject their children; rejection violates children's natural need for positive feedback; violation of this need naturally leads children to become aggressive. In this example, the unmet need for positive feedback from others is the true basis of aggression.

Culture has been reduced to independent variables—simple society, parental rejection—that naturally trigger psychological variables—unmet positive feedback, aggression. Each is a singular, separate phenomenon. Concrete culture has been eliminated from the cultural and the psychological variables. Parental rejection has no cultural character in this scheme. It is not embedded in a social system that endows it with variable, concrete features. Parental rejection is a singular, universal, natural thing.

Bond (2004) employed the same strategy to understand the manner in which a cultural code of honor leads to aggression. He said that the honor code leads people to easily feel insulted and to desire a restitution of honor. These feelings and desires lead people to become aggressive. Again, a cultural phenomenon naturally triggers a feeling, which naturally triggers behavior. The cultural phenomenon of honor code is treated as a variable that has a natural, universal character that naturally triggers a feeling of insult.

However, this sequential argument is fraught with non sequiturs. An honor code does not inevitably heighten one's sensitivity to insult. It can

equally serve as a moral shield that enables one to rise above insults and not react violently. It all depends on what the code specifically stipulates. It is the cultural values embodied in the code that determine whether one becomes more sensitive to insults and how one reacts to insults. But treating an honor code as a singular independent variable eliminates cultural values from it. Furthermore, a heightened sensitivity to insult does not directly and necessarily lead to violence. It could lead to any number of behaviors. It could lead to leaving the situation, or taking pity on the insulter, or hating her, or taking pride in one's ability to withstand the insult. Violence is not a necessary outcome at all.

Similarly, parental rejection of children does not necessarily intensify their feelings of rejection and their propensity to act aggressively. Parental rejection means different things in different cultures. Children respond to it differently depending on its cultural meaning.

Finally, Bond's (2004) naturalistic analysis offers no prospects for mitigating aggression. The lockstep sequence of simple society-honor code-insult-aggression admits no variation or intervention. Honor codes can have no different characteristics that might stimulate different feelings and behaviors. The price of natural universality is immutability.

Cultural Psychology

Cultural psychology seeks to overcome many of the problems inherent in cross-cultural psychology. Cultural psychologists such as Shweder, Rogoff, Cole, LeVine, D'Andrade, Holland, Quinn, Lutz, M. Rosaldo, Geertz, Kleinman, Super, Harkness (Harkness, 2002), and others propose a more organic conception of culture as a system. They also regard culture and psychology as organically integrated and interdependent. Cultural psychologists have also worked on a psychological theory that explains the cultural nature of human psychology, instead of merely associating psychological variables with cultural variables as cross-cultural psychologists do.

Though cultural psychology has contributed vital theoretical insights and empirical data, it has not developed a comprehensive theory of culture, or of culture-in-relation-to-psychology. In fact, since the 1990s cultural psychology has retreated from this endeavor. Recently, many cultural psychologists have renounced culture as an organized system that organizes psychological phenomena (Boggs, 2004; Shweder, 2002, p. 8; see also chap. 7, this volume). They propose that culture is composed of subjective, psychological processes.

Adams and Markus (2004), for example, insisted that structural notions of culture misrepresent culture as a reified, static, stereotyped, monolithic, and essential entity. This is why cultural psychologists reject the idea that culture organizes psychology. For them, such a concept is tantamount to submerging the individual in a depersonalizing, monolithic, immutable context. To overcome these errors, and to resuscitate the dynamic, constructive agency of individuals, the authors proclaimed that cultural worlds are "psychological products: produced, re-produced, and sometimes changed in the course of everyday activity" (p. 338). The authors proposed that culture as an entity should be replaced by culture as flowing patterns: "A conception of culture as patterns locates the unit of culture at a 'micro' level of analysis" (p. 344).

This micro, psychological levels aims at uncovering "the essentially psychological 'natural forces' through which individuals unintentionally create, sustain, and change the cultures that they comprise" (Schaller & Crandall, 2004, p. 4). These psychological foundations of culture include self-awareness, understanding intentions of other people, neural plasticity, need for closure, terror of death, rejection of deviants, self-interest, empathy, interpersonal communication, memorability, and dynamic construction of experience (Adams & Markus, 2004, p. 347).

Because I critique subjectivist cultural psychology in chapter 7, at this point I simply indicate that privileging psychological foundations of culture over the cultural foundations of psychology has led cultural psychologists to neglect or misunderstand macro factors. Instead, their focus is on individual/interpersonal processes of constructing personal meanings with which to interpret and utilize culture (cf. Ratner, 1993; Ratner, 1997, pp. 95–96, 101–103; Ratner, 1999; Ratner, 2002, chap. 2). I have shown that psychological constructs are incompatible with cultural constructs, and incapable of explaining them.

Moscovici (2001) explained this fallacy of the individualistic approach to culture:

> Society has its own structure, which is not definable in terms of the characteristics of individuals; this structure is determined by the processes of production and consumption, by rituals, symbols, institutions, and dynamics that cannot be derived from the laws of other systems. When the "social" is studied in terms of the presence of other individuals or of "numerosity," it is not really the fundamental characteristics of the system that are explored but rather one of its subsystems—the subsystem of interindividual relationships. The kind of social psychology that emerges from this approach is a "private"

> social psychology which does not include within its scope the distinctiveness of most of the genuine collective phenomena. It can therefore be argued that … social psychology has not been truly concerned either with social behavior as a product of society or with behavior *in* society ….
>
> For these reasons it is ambiguous to maintain that social behavior is currently the real object of our science. (pp. 109–110)

METHODOLOGY

Although individualistic cultural psychologists misconstrue culture, subjectivity, and the relation between them, they are correct in stating that individuals are involved in constructing their culture and psychology. We select among cultural influences, adopting some and rejecting others. We actively invest events with meaning. We do not passively receive cultural inputs and produce behavioral outputs.

This means that people's cultural psychology may be different from official policies, pronouncements, and images. Just because advertisements or movies present certain objects, images, and behaviors does not mean that people believe the pronouncements, abide by the policies, or imitate the behaviors. Peoples' cultural psychology (the concrete cultural features of psychology) cannot be assumed from such official policies, pronouncements, and behaviors. It can be known only by examining the actual character of psychological phenomena displayed by individuals in their interpersonal interactions, statements, and reflections on these.

A distinctive methodology (epistemology) is necessary to accomplish this. It must elicit full expressions of psychology and detect features of macro factors embedded within them. It must be sensitive to distinctive ways in which cultural features are expressed in psychological phenomena. We shall see that qualitative methodology is best suited to accomplish these objectives.

In a sense, our methodology proceeds in the opposite direction from our theory. Cultural-psychological theory construes psychology as emanating from broad macro cultural factors. Yet our methodology studies cultural factors reflected or refracted in psychological phenomena. It focuses on psychological phenomena and identifies cultural origins, features, and functions within them. Focusing on psychology, and respecting its distinctiveness, avoids reducing it to macro cultural factors, although we do emphasize its dependence on them.

Macro cultural psychology is the psychological study of social issues. It studies social issues as reflected in psychological phenomena. It examines

the psychological components and consequences of social issues. It does not employ individualistic psychological constructs to explain culture.

MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIAL REFORM, AND PERSONAL GROWTH: INTEGRATING SCIENCE, POLITICS, AND THERAPY

Macro cultural psychology traces the form and content of psychological phenomena to macro cultural factors. This opens up the need for social reform in order to improve psychological functioning. Deleterious macro factors that foster prejudice, egocentrism, stress, depersonalization, loneliness, passive conformity, insecurity, violence, irrationality, hypocrisy, repression, ethnocentrism, arrogance, disrespect, authoritarianism, detachment, dissociation, timidity, defensiveness, and psychological dysfunction need to be transformed. Beneficial macro factors that promote fulfilling psychological functions need to be developed.

In addition, individuals can use macro cultural psychology on a personal level to understand the positive and negative psychological effects of macro cultural factors. They can renounce and avoid deleterious factors, and gravitate toward beneficial macro factors—that is, work and raise their children in humane social environments, associate with community-minded people.

Mainstream psychologists have a different perspective on psychological change. They employ psychological principles to effect psychological changes in individuals. For instance, cognitive processes are targeted to alter stereotypes and to reframe situations so that different emotions will be generated; negotiating and communicating techniques are proposed to increase understanding and resolve conflicts; displacement techniques are suggested to defuse negative emotions and aggression; meditation is used to alleviate stress; self-control and personal responsibility are suggested to avoid addictions and dangerous temptations; behavior modification is introduced to improve school performance and social behavior; principles of cognitive dissonance, primacy, and recency are employed to alter attitudes.

Psychologists believe that these efforts at changing individual psychology and behavior will ultimately improve society. The assumption is that if enough individuals are helped to improve their psychological competencies and cease their debilitating, antisocial behavior, society as a whole will improve. This viewpoint is known as psychologism.

This is the approach taken by the American Psychological Association's Presidential Task Force on Prevention of Mental Disorders, established in 1998 under the leadership of Martin E. P. Seligman. This committee spon-

sored a review of prevention programs that concluded that "the most beneficial preventive interventions for young people involve coordinated, systemic efforts to enhance their social-emotional competence and health" (Weissberg, Kumpfer, & Seligman, 2003, p. 425). The review continues this focus on psychological competencies of individuals:

> Effective programming that enhances children's social, emotional, and ethical behavior uses diverse, interactive skills training methods (e.g., role plays, modeling, applied practice) and creates opportunities for effective use of the newly learned skills in daily life. Young people learn to recognize and manage their emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish positive goals, make good decisions, and handle interpersonal situations and conflicts. They also develop responsible and respectful attitudes and values about self, others, work, health, and community service. (p. 425)

When the review mentions policies, institutional practices, and environmental supports, these were ones that nurture optimal development and healthy behavior through positive personal relationships with prosocial peers and adults who provide nurturing, clear standards, high expectations, guidance, and encouragement. The focus remains on improving the psychological competence of individuals.

This focus also dominates psychologists' solutions to violent media. The American Psychological Society recently launched a new journal devoted to *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*. In a special issue documenting that media violence fosters violent behavior and attitudes, Anderson et al. (2003) found that research on intervention programs consisted in changing consumption of media by individuals. These individual solutions include parents controlling the kinds of programs their children watch, trying to reduce positive identification with violent characters, and helping children understand that the programs do not portray real life. These are recommended because they are easy and inexpensive. There is no mention of changing the production of media at the industry level. This would necessitate changes in business practices, government interference in the free market, and possibly new forms of ownership of the media industry.

Individualistic, psychologistic techniques of psychological change contribute little to social reform because they eschew analyzing or transforming societal factors. Principles, policies, practices, and leaders of business, schooling, the church, medical care, and politics are absolved. Individualistic, psychologistic techniques even generate little psychological change on the personal level. They ignore cultural issues that affect individuals' psychology, which people could negotiate on a personal level. Moreover, indi-

vidualistic techniques are ineffective because they require dealing with separate individuals, one by one. Reforming policies and conditions affect masses of individuals simultaneously.

Linking psychological phenomena to macro cultural factors makes social reform germane to psychology, and psychology germane to social reform. It adds a psychological dimension (and expertise) to social reform, and it adds a cultural dimension to psychological change. It enriches social reform by providing psychological reasons for it.

Macro cultural psychology also contributes to social reform by making it palatable to citizens with their existing psychology. People must understand the programs and feel comfortable with them. Macro cultural psychology can elucidate the current psychology and identify ways that programs for reform need to be tailored to match it.

Finally, macro cultural psychology identifies ways that psychological phenomena must change in order to facilitate reforming macro cultural factors in particular directions. In order to develop new kinds of macro cultural factors, people must develop complementary motivations, perceptions, reasoning, self-concept, and emotional reactions. Macro cultural psychology identifies new forms that these psychological phenomena must take in order to promote particular kinds of macro cultural factors. If, for example, it is decided to develop cooperative social institutions, then macro cultural psychologists would enumerate features of a collective self-concept that would function well in those institutions. This is what all pioneers of social change do. All movements for social change throughout history sought to cultivate new psychological phenomena that would facilitate and succeed in new macro cultural factors. Macro cultural psychology deals with the chicken-and-egg relationship that exists between culture and psychology.

INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Some of the principles of macro cultural psychology were conceived by Vygotsky and his colleagues Luria and Leontiev. They articulated a general theory of human psychology that emphasized that psychological phenomena develop with the development of culture across species (phylogenetically) and across the individual's life span (ontogenetically): "The structure of mental activity—not just the specific content but also the general forms basic to all cognitive processes—change in the course of historical development" (Luria, 1976, p. 8; cf. Luria, 1971). "Scientific studies show that in the process of cultural development of behavior, not only the content of

thinking changes, but also its forms; new mechanisms, new functions, new operations, and new methods of activity arise that were not known at earlier stages of historical development." "Higher mental functions [are] the *product* of the historical development of humanity" (Vygotsky, 1998, p. 34, emphasis added).

This theory was based on Marx's philosophy of historical materialism. The main tenet of this philosophy is that humans survive and fulfill themselves through socially organized activities and artifacts. Consciousness is therefore geared to constructing, maintaining, and refining social activities and artifacts. As Marx and Engels (1964) said in *The German Ideology*, "Men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking" (p. 38).

Vygotsky accepted this philosophy that productive forces and social structure shape the psychological makeup of people. Even in modern society, where these social factors are mediated by complex material and ideological factors, "the basic law of historical human development, which proclaims that human beings are created by the society in which they live and that it represents the determining factor in the formation of their personalities, remains in force" (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 176; cf. Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004; Vygotsky, 1997a, p. 341).

Vygotsky's cultural-historical approach to psychology was inspired by his political beliefs. He was a committed Marxist and socialist. He did not support the Stalinist political program, and indeed was chastised as an idealist. He did support the general effort at radically reforming society to improve men and women's material and psychological life: "New forms of labor will create the new man" (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 183). Alongside the socialist revolution, "a change in the human personality and an alteration of man himself must inevitably take place …. Along with the withering away of the capitalist order, all the forces which oppress man and which … interfere with his free development will also fall away. Along with the liberation of the many millions of human beings from suppression, will come the liberation of the human personality from its fetters which curb its development" (p. 181).

These statements highlight the interdependence of Vygotsky's political and psychological beliefs. For a social revolution to improve psychological functioning, the latter must be socially formed and reformable. Conversely, if psychology is culturally organized, psychological change *requires* altering its cultural basis. Cultural-historical psychology thus calls for social reform.

Though emphasizing that psychological phenomena have a historical basis and character, Vygotsky and his colleagues did not explore them. They

never defined practical activities, culture, or its major elements. They never explored ways in which concrete psychological phenomena (e.g., romantic love, individualistic self) are induced by concrete social institutions, concepts, and artifacts, and embody particular historical-cultural qualities.

Vygotsky and his colleagues occasionally mentioned that social class is central to organizing psychological phenomena. They mentioned that lower-class life impedes high psychological functioning. They mentioned that authoritarian teaching styles are anathema to good learning. They mentioned that thinking in formal concepts is inspired by formal education. However, these comments were never followed up by detailed analyses. Vygotsky and his colleagues conducted a cross-cultural investigation in Uzbekistan in the early1930s that uncovered interesting psychological differences between peasants and modernized teachers. However, the authors did not explain specific cultural factors that promoted these differences. They simply mentioned that some of them were associated with formal education.

It is fair to say that Vygotsky and his colleagues failed to conceptualize or investigate the relation of culture and psychology on the concrete historical level. Their contribution to psychology consists of investigating how social relations, tools, and language, in general, stimulate psychological phenomena in general. They demonstrated these principles in microsocial interactions between caregivers and children that revealed the sociogenesis of psychological phenomena.

Followers of Vygotsky, known as activity theorists, have continued to explore general, abstract properties of human psychology and action. They ponder the relation between needs, motives, goals, and actions; they ponder the integration of subjectivity and objectivity in activity. With few exceptions, such as Engstrom, activity theorists generally ignore concrete social life and historical and cultural features of psychological phenomena. They do not consider concrete activities such as alienated work, or formal education in capitalist society, and the kind of subjectivity that is operative within them. Activity theorists use insights about general psychological issues to devise useful pedagogical techniques. They stimulate cognitive development through creating "zones of proximal development" within the classroom. But they rarely comment on the need for reforming the concrete educational system (e.g., power relations among administrators, teachers, and students; working conditions of teachers; social relations between teachers and students; relations between students and management of the school; the ways students treat each other), the physical infrastructure of schools, and surrounding cultural factors such as commercialism, the media, and work opportunities.

Macro cultural psychology seeks to develop cultural-historical psychology that Vygotsky anticipated but never worked out.

Bronfenbrenner has contributed a great deal to this endeavor. He introduced the term *macrosystem* to emphasize social influences beyond the interpersonal, "microscopic" level (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 8; Bronfenbrenner, 1989, pp. 228–230; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Moen, Elder, & Luscher, 1995). He and his colleagues have explored important issues concerning the relation of macro cultural influences to psychological development and individual agency. One point concerns the fact that macro factors can indirectly affect individuals who do not directly participate in them. Children in the family are exposed to work pressures via their parents. Parents' work experiences outside the family affect their relations with their children. Consequently, what appears to be a personal interaction between parent and child in the sanctity of the home bears the imprint of outside cultural factors.

Historical figures who have contributed to macro cultural psychology include Eric Fromm; Marx and Engels; Marcuse; Sartre (especially his two-volume *Critique of Dialectical Reason*); role theorists (e.g., C. W. Mills); Dilthey; social historians of "mentalities" such as Braudel, Ariès, Febvre, Bloch, Elias, Foucault; and structural functionalists in anthropology and sociology (Bourdieu, Parsons, Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown). A brief review of some of their ideas introduces some of the concepts that appear in macro cultural psychology.

Dilthey said that for a psychology to be really empirical, it must examine the social relations that permeate the individual. The individual, instead of being a center of meaning, is seen to derive his own meaning from his place in historical and social processes. "The whole content of psychic life is only an ephemeral specific form within the more encompassing content of spirit in history and society … The object of psychology is thus always merely the individual who has been singled out from the living context of socio-historical reality" (Dilthey, 1989, pp. 81–82; cf., Hodges, 1952, pp. 171, 287; Tuttle, 1969, pp. 47, 49). To comprehend the full psychology of people, it must be perceived as formed by, and embodying, a socio-historical context. Because the discipline of psychology does not study this context, it does no possess the tools to fully understand its subject matter—namely, human psychology. "A proper psychology must use the whole wealth of facts which comprise the subject matter of the human sciences in general … Since psychology by no means contains all those facts that comprise the subject matter of the human sciences … it follows that the subject matter of psychology is only a portion of that which takes places in each individual" (Dilthy, 1989, p. 81).

Dilthey's observations echo Marx and Engels, who introduced their historical materialism with the following words: "This method of approach is not devoid of premises … Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and rigidity, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions. As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists" (Marx & Engels, 1989, p. 38). Macro cultural psychology adopts this approach and describes human psychology as an organic part of active life-processes within definite conditions.

Durkheim and Levy-Bruhl argued that socially formed "collective representations" of things act as filters that structure our thinking, perceptions and sensations. Collective representations define the nature of things; they comprise the categories into which we place things; they form our expectations of how things will act; they guide our behavior. They are generated in social practice, vary with it, and are man-made. Yet they are emergent collective products that transcend individual beliefs and acts.

Social historians have illustrated the social-historical construction of psychological phenomena. Especially useful has been the historiography of the *Annales* school in the 1920s. Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, the founders of this school, were concerned not simply with the history of ideas, but with the history of the mind—how mental *faculties* develop historically. These social historians of "mentalities" argued that the mental equipment of the mind consisted of macro cultural factors such as social institutions and linguistic forms. These set the parameters of mental functions. Bloch sought to distinguish the mental *faculties* of the medieval mind from those of the modern mind. He contended that modern critical reasoning was lacking, or undeveloped among medieval people. The Middle Ages were dominated by supernatural ideas, free speculation, and acceptance of fate and unpredictability. These precluded rigorous analysis and criticism. It was only with the development of secular, materialistic, calculating, scientific society that critical cognitive faculties emerged in the ordinary citizen.

Norbert Elias similarly concluded that the development of capitalist work rules imposed a new form of discipline and restraint on psychological functions that were formerly spontaneous. Medieval emotionality, for example, was volatile in comparison with bourgeois emotionality. Bodily functions and sexual talk and activity were quite public before they were tamed. Shame and a "superego" became much more prevalent as internal mechanisms to control behavior. People became much more sensitive to, and in-

tolerant of, deviant behavior under capitalism. Formerly, such behavior was unremarkable (Hutton, 1981).

The anthropological school of Boas and his students (Benedict, Mead, Kroeber, Herskovits, Sapir, and others) emphasized the concrete, distinctive character of particular cultures and the way it organizes personality, mental illness, and other psychological phenomena.

We are now in a position to explore the details of macro cultural psychology as a scientific, therapeutic, and political program. The first task in delineating a macro cultural-psychological theory is to define macro culture.

2

Macro Culture

ENUMERATING AND DEFINING MACRO CULTURE

Macro culture is a system of broad, enduring cultural factors that are the social, ideational, and physical cornerstones of society. There are three categories of macro cultural factors: (a) social institutions and policies, (b) the physical infrastructure and artifacts, and (c) cultural concepts that comprise the cornerstones of a social system (Ratner, 1997, 2002; Tomasello, 1999, pp. 2, 5). Examples are, respectively, governments, corporations; school buildings, highways, traffic lights, advertisements, textbooks; religious doctrines, concepts about women, sex, time, and personhood.[1]

Whether a pattern of behavior, an artifact, or a concept qualifies as a macro factor depends on the number of people it affects, and the significance of its consequences. If an institution, artifact, or cultural concept deeply affects the behavior and psychology of many people, it is a macro cultural factor.

Humans form social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts in order to overcome the limitations of individual bodily strengths, knowledge, sensory information, and skills. Macro structures combine the strength, knowledge, skills, and creativity of many people in coordinated social, physical, and conceptual acts. People then become members of macro structures, and become socially structured individuals (Ratner, 1991, chap. 1).

Consider, for instance, how a health care system is established. A few individuals develop ideas for it and eventually compromise, adjust, and consolidate their ideas into a plan. The plan takes account of existing medical practices and facilities, medical technology, financial criteria, and so on, which are all broad macro factors that transcend the individuals who formulate the plan. The plan is then refined by financiers, government medical

bureaus, urban planners, building contractors, medical associations, and employee associations—all of whom act on the basis of their policies and principles, which have been refined through prior group discussions and struggles. The final plan for the health care system is an emergent social product that transcends a sum of individuals.

The resulting health care system becomes a macro cultural factor in its own right. It becomes a massive system of differentiated roles/positions, and infrastructure into which people must fit. It operates according to administered principles, objectives, and norms for obtaining supplies, recruiting doctors, treating patients, earning sufficient revenue, distributing earnings in particular ways. Individuals within the system are not free to act as they wish; nor can the system be said to result from the sum of their individual actions. It is more meaningful to say that individual actions are organized by, and geared to, the organizational features of the system.

Individuals run the system. But because their activity is directed toward maintaining it, their activity is structured by the requirements of the system that is to be maintained. As Durkheim argued, the system's requirements for continuity become the parameters of individual behavior.

Although subjectivity envisions, plans, and administers macro cultural factors, it becomes structured by them. Subjectivity becomes organized by participating in its own objectifications. Subjectivity is a product of the macro factors that it produces. It is inspired by macro factors that it inspires. Any individual who uses, or participates in, a macro factor is constrained by its social, physical, or conceptual features. Macro factors thus possess "demand characteristics," which demand certain behaviors of people. They thereby provide organization, coordination, and continuity to social life.

It is a false dichotomy to separate subjectivity from macro factors. Macro factors do not exclude subjectivity and subjectivity is not antithetical to macro cultural factors. On the contrary, macro factors presuppose subjectivity for their creation, maintenance, and change, and subjectivity is cultivated by macro cultural factors. The relationship is one of chicken and egg.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE MORE THAN AGGREGATES OF INDIVIDUALS

They must be more in order to overcome individual limitations. To offer strength and support, macro cultural factors must include coordination, sharing, concern for the other, learning from the other, adjusting to the other, and compromising with the other, in objectified, stable, predictable institutions, artifacts, and concepts that command allegiance from many

individuals. The individual renounces his independence and uniqueness to gain strength, support, and stability from outside himself.

Macro cultural factors are created, maintained, and transformed by people. But social individuals reciprocally take on the characteristics of the social organizations (institutions), conceptual organizations (cultural concepts), and physical organizations (artifacts) that provide them with strength, support, and stability (cf. Asch, 1952, pp. 170–178).

Durkheim (1900/1960) explained that society is certainly composed by and of individuals, but it is not an aggregate of individuals that preserves their individuality. Society is an organization of individuals into an emergent phenomenon with its own properties and dynamics.

Durkheim illustrated this point with an analogy. He said that living cells are composed of hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen atoms; yet cells have properties completely different from their constituent atoms. Cells are alive, grow, and die; whereas the atoms are nonliving and have none of the properties of cells. Life and death are not differentiated on the atomic level. A live and a dead body both contain atoms of hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen. Biology is thus not reducible to chemistry. There is more to living organisms than their atoms, per se. Life is atoms organized in a particular structure. The organization of atoms produces an emergent phenomenon with new characteristics and dynamics. Another example of an emergent whole is the zygote, which results from the combination of an egg and a sperm. The zygote has different properties from its components even though it would not exist without them. The components combine in a way that produces a new whole that has nothing in common with its components.[2] The organization of individuals into a society is the same. Society is individuals, but it is individuals organized together in a structure that changes their individuality.

Emergence is a central principle of dialectics, discussed in chapter 1. Figure 1.2 depicted elements as interpenetrating each other to form a unity. Interpenetration alters each element, imbuing it with qualities of other elements. The result is a complex combination of the parts, not the mere sum of them; nor is it reducible to them. The structure is more than the parts; however, it depends on them. Structure is an organization of parts. It is not a mystical structure independent of the parts. Parts and system are integrated in dialectics. Neither is obliterated by the other, but each is altered by the other. Parts affect the whole, as changes in parts lead to different wholes. However, the structure also alters the parts, unifying them in an interlocking system. To change a part, it is necessary to change the other parts that interpenetrate it. The part ceases to be a free-standing unit that can change itself.

This viewpoint has been developed in systems theory (Bunge, 2004; Sawyer, 2004) applied to physical, chemical, and biological systems. Social interactions manifest emergent properties as well. Different kinds of social interactions entail different kinds of emergent structures and properties. Dyads are the simplest form of social interaction. Their emergent, holistic character can be illustrated in the case of two boys carrying a log: "Here is a unity of action that embraces the participants and the common object. This performance is a new product, strictly unlike what each participant would do single and also unlike the sum of their separate exertions" (Asch, 1952, p. 174). Larger social units, such as teams, manifest different emergent properties in the form of complex group interactions. Massive social units, such as macro factors, contain the most complex emergent properties. These are objectified as enduring properties of organization that are administered by numerous individuals dedicated to the task of preserving the organization as such. The individual has less influence in larger social units. Although we like to believe that the individual human being is the most intricate unit of existence, the social unit is far more complex.

A former vice president of General Motors Corp. described how corporate culture takes on qualities that are quite different from those of individuals: "The undue emphasis on profits and cost, control without a wider concern for the effects of GM's business on its many publics seemed too often capable of bringing together, in the corporation, men of sound, personal morality and responsibility who as a group reached business decisions which were irresponsible and of questionable morality" (Wright, 1979, p. 6). A case in point is the production of the Corvair:

> The car was approved even though serious questions were raised about its engineering. These were not immoral men who were bringing out this car. These were warm, breathing men with families and children who as private individuals would never have approved this project for a minute if they were told, "You are going to kill and injure people with this car." But, those same men, in a business atmosphere, where everything is reduced to terms of costs, profit goals and production deadlines, were able as a group to approve a product most of them wouldn't have considered approving as individuals. (Wright, 1979, p. 6)

Belief systems of a population have this collective, emergent, objectified, institutionalized quality that is more than the sum of individual attitudes or discourses. The secularization of American life, which oc-

curred between 1870 and 1930, is a case in point. Far from being a spontaneous change in the thinking (or discourse) of individuals, it was actually a socially organized movement that challenged the power of established authority and institutions:

> The secularization of American public life might be helpfully thought of as a kind of revolution in several ways. First, before the revolution, there existed an established regime whose institutional privilege and dominance provoked increasing grievances among excluded groupings. Second, in response, these aggrieved groups mobilized movements to depose the established regime from its positions of control. Third, aided by a set of facilitating forces and events, these insurgent activists managed to overthrow the established regime in most quarters and to transform the institutions which it had previously dominated. Fourth, in the process of transferring power and control from the old to the new regime, this insurgency effected a profound cultural revolution which transformed cultural codes and structures of thought, expectations, and practices. (Smith, 2003, p. 2)

The way in which secularization was achieved in the field of education illustrates how ideology is the outcome of an organized political struggle. It was led by certain sectors of the population with definite social and economic interests, which took control of social institutions and systematically transformed them.

American public education became secularized largely through a political struggle within the National Education Association (NEA) in the 1880s and 1990s. From its founding in 1857 until the early 1870s, the NEA leadership fervently supported, through formal organizational policy, devotional Bible reading in all public schools. In the mid-1970s, secular educators, such as presidents of universities, and teachers of science and political science, gained leadership positions in the NEA and succeeded in instituting policies that banned religious education in public schools. By 1900, secular policies had become hegemonic (Smith, 2003, pp. 160–173).[3]

The secularization of education was conceived by individuals. However, it became a popular ideology only because these individuals worked through national organizations (macro cultural factors) to disseminate and enforce it. The process is illustrated in Fig. 2.1.

The individual originators did not disseminate secularization by personal interactions with students, parents, and teachers. They implemented it by controlling macro factors such as institutions and artifacts (textbooks, test materials, class projects) that influenced masses of people.[4]

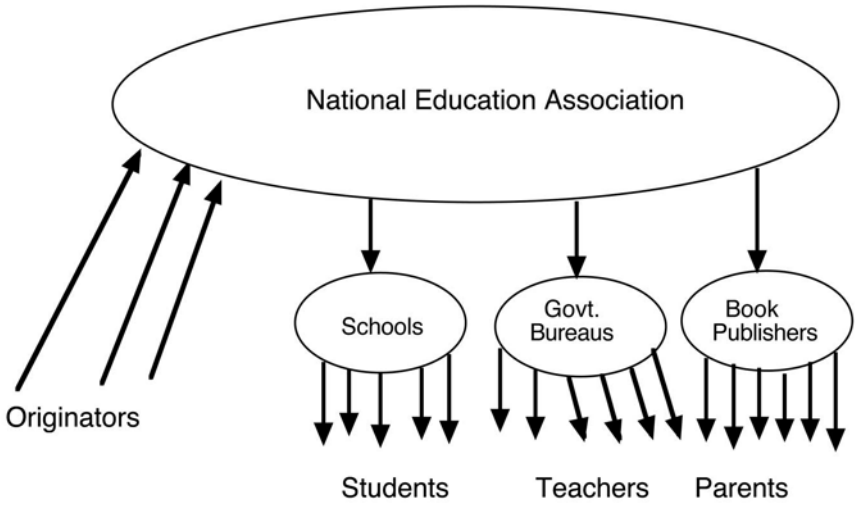

FIG. 2.1. Institutionalization of secular education.

THE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES THAT UNIFY AND DIRECT A MACRO FACTOR MAY NOT BE IN THE THOUGHTS AND MOTIVES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO FUNCTION WITHIN IT

For example, a health care system may be privately owned with the objective of enriching the investors. This guiding principle is not built up from the sum of each employee's goal to enrich the investors. On the contrary, it is imposed from the top by the administrators, and it may not even be known by the individuals who work for the system.

Laboratory technicians may be aware only of ostensible laboratory norms to work efficiently. They may be unaware of underlying purposes and principles such as commoditizing health care and making it impersonal. Technicians may not realize the full cultural character of their efficient behavior, which, as a result of corporate constraints, is to commodify health care. Technicians may not realize that their service has a tacit commodified character that is experienced by the patient and resented. The fact that corporate goals, principles, and effects are not within the technicians' consciousness means that their consciousness is not the basis of macro cultural factors (cf. Merton, 1968, pp. 114–136).

Soldiers at war face the same dilemma of not understanding the social motives and effects of their own behavior. The soldier has the intention, motivation, perception, and emotion to defend his country. However, the purpose and conduct of the war is decided by military commanders and politicians. The soldier probably does not know what these are. He does not know that the purpose of the war is to colonize another country, for example. Yet this macro purpose tacitly informs his behavior. It leads him to destroy or control the country's infrastructure. It leads him to capture innocent civilians and torture them for information. He believes he is doing this to defend his own country against attack. However, the real reason for his actions is the imperialist strategy of the commanders and politicians. Because he is unaware of it, it cannot result from his consciousness. On the other hand, the fact that he is unaware of it does not excuse his behavior or negate its atrocity. The idea that we should support our troops because they are good soldiers doing their jobs confuses their personal qualities and self-understanding with the political objectives that inform military action and are the basis on which it should be judged.

Because the macro cultural features of psychology are not known to the individual, the researcher must discover them. Just as an astute observer needs to connect the lab technician's efficient behavior to commoditization, and the soldier's destructive behavior to imperialism, so the macro cultural psychologist needs to discover macro cultural factors tacitly embedded within individual psychology. We do not ask individuals about the macro cultural origins, features, and functions of their psychology. Rather, we regard psychological expressions as clues that need to be explained and amplified by a knowledgeable macro cultural psychologist.

THE SOCIAL, PHYSICAL, AND CONCEPTUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MACRO FACTORS ARE CONSCIOUSLY ADMINISTERED AND ENFORCED BY SOCIAL BODIES BECAUSE THEY ARE PIVOTAL TO SOCIAL REGULARITY

Norms of social institutions are administered by managers and government agents. Even less formal institutions such as the family are regulated in numerous ways by the government. Cott (2000) explained that "From the founding of the United States to the present day, assumptions about the importance of marriage and its appropriate form have been deeply implanted in public policy" (p. 2). "No modern nation-state can ignore marriage

forms, because of their direct impact on reproducing and composing the population" (p. 5; Desan, 2004).

The use of artifacts is regulated by instruction manuals and advertisements, which specify particular uses of products, and by government codes (building codes, traffic rules, and safety rules), which govern the manufacture and use of artifacts' features.

Cultural concepts are monitored by organizations, which have a vested interested in the meanings that concepts stipulate about things. Women's groups carefully monitor the way that women and girls are described to ensure that pejorative meanings are rebuffed. Likewise, the concept of personal responsibility is enforced by laws and policies that hold people responsible for their behavior.

IN MOST SOCIETIES, MACRO FACTORS ARE NORMALLY REGULATED AND PROMULGATED BY A POWERFUL ELITE

They are normally not democratically controlled.[5] The fact that "people" form macro factors does not mean that all people have equal power in forming/controlling macros or that all people derive equal benefits from them. It is imperative to ascertain just which people control and benefit from macro factors. Powerful elites often control macro factors and derive most of the benefits from them. Ordinary citizens are obliged to participate in these macro factors because there simply is no alternative, and they have insufficient power to change the existing macro factors.

Today, most economic institutions are owned and controlled by an elite group of wealthy capitalists for their own private profit. The people who work in them have no control over corporate policies, wage levels, or working conditions.

This elite control over macro cultural factors is called hegemony. There is hegemonic control of cultural concepts (ideology), artifacts, and social institutions. For example, in France, the metric system was imposed on local populations by the central government after the Revolution. "The metric system was not designed for peasants. It discarded the bushel in favor of a system of wholly unfamiliar quantities and names, most of them drawn from an alien, dead language …. The new units were given Greek names" (Porter, 1995, p. 26).

Many social institutions, artifacts, and concepts that appear to be spontaneous creations of ordinary people are actually planned and implemented by a powerful elite. Consumerism, with all its products, inducements, signs,

stores, and showrooms, was planned and implemented during the turn of the 20th century, by executives of national corporations, banks, law firms, business schools, and book and magazine publishing companies. These executives even interjected consumerism into national holidays (Ratner, 1997, p. 116; Ratner, 2002, p. 46).

INDIVIDUALS INTRODUCE CERTAIN VARIATIONS AS THEY IMPLEMENT MACRO FACTORS— HOWEVER VARIATIONS MUST BE LIMITED IF SOCIAL REGULARITY IS TO BE MAINTAINED

Consequently, macro factors are not continually personalized, renegotiated, or ignored as social constructionists and microsociologists believe. Personal constructions and variations are more common at the micro level, among friendships, for example. Even at this level, however, definite social norms exist about proper behavior.

Contemporary Western societies allow individuals to reject particular instances of cultural behaviors and concepts, but the overall patterns remain intact. People may reject a particular product that is put on the market, but the system of marketing, advertising, producing, and disposing of goods remains the obdurate reality.

Macro factors can be transformed; however, this requires incisive critical thinking, alternative visions (which come from noticing contradictions in the system that hold the potential for new forms of macro factors), and bold and brave political action that directly transforms the structure, leadership, and control of cultural institutions, concepts, and artifacts.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE SPECIFIC TO PARTICULAR SOCIETIES

The prevalent concepts about women and children in contemporary America are quite different from the concepts that Puritans or early American Indians held. Education is quite different in contemporary America compared to the form it takes among isolated, indigenous people in Latin America (Kalberg, 1994, pp. 98–101). Family structure is radically different among the Na people of Yunnan Province in China from what it is in most of the rest of the world. The Na do not believe in exclusive, monogamous sexual relationships; they practice true free love. There is no such thing as marriage. Consequently, the family takes a unique form. Adolescents freely sleep with whomever they wish on a daily basis. Young men come to a girl's

house, and if she likes the man she invites him to spend the night. The next night others come and she chooses again. A boy or girl can have several partners in a single evening. Some girls have 100 lovers by the time they are 23. It is not unusual in a village for a man to have sexual relations with every woman in his age group.

A man and woman may decide to become a couple. However, this is unusual. It is also temporary. Whenever one person loses interest, the relationship is summarily terminated. And during the relationship both man and woman have other, known sexual partners. In the rare case that a Na couple becomes monogamous, the villagers make fun of them. The monogamy rarely lasts. "According to the Na, a vow of fidelity is shameful because it is considered a negotiation, an exchange, which goes against their customs .... Sexuality is not a piece of merchandise but a purely sentimental and amorous matter that implies no mutual constraints" (Hua, 2001, pp. 214–215).

Women have many children of unknown paternity. It is not important to know who the father is. Fathers have no relation with their children, and provide no resources to them, because they do not know who they are. Male lovers never live with their girlfriends. They visit only at night—if the girlfriend is not occupied with another man. Instead, women live with their brothers for their entire lives. Brothers function as surrogate fathers for their sisters' children. Children relate to their maternal uncles the way children in other societies relate to their fathers. Men have no interest in, and take no pride in, fathering children because they will have no relationship with them, and not even know who they are. Men take pride, instead, in how many children their sisters have.

Instead of a nuclear family, the Na family consists of a mother, her children, her mother, and her brothers. The mother and brothers provide resources and raise the children. The family unit consists exclusively and permanently of consanguineal relatives—a mother and her children and her brothers. Because women never marry or live with a man from a different family, no outsider ever enters a family unit. Lovers can be only friends, never relatives. This imbues the love relationship with a very different quality from what it has in nuclear families. In the next chapter, we see how this distinctive family structure generates distinctive emotions.

Macro factors have concrete cultural content that is not captured by terms such as *agriculture*, *large population*, or *collectivistic*. Such terms are uninformative about culture because they may be organized in a great variety of ways. Agriculture may be organized as communes or corporate farms; large populations may be organized collectively or ruled by an autocrat; col-

lectivism may take any number of forms, from conformity to obedience to altruistic concern for others. A macro cultural factor is thus not a "variable" that is qualitatively uniform in different societies, and simply varies quantitatively (Ratner & Hui, 2003; Rogoff & Angelillo, 2002; Smith, 2003, p. 14). Work, schooling, family, housing, neighborhood, cars, and medicine vary greatly with social stratification, including class, ethnicity, and gender.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE INTEGRATED WITHIN A SYSTEM

The totality of macro cultural factors are interwoven with each other to form a social system. They are not segregated entities, though they can be conceptually distinguished on the basis of different features. Artifacts and institutions express and objectify concepts; concepts and artifacts express and objectify institutions; and concepts and institutions express and objectify artifacts. The dialectical integration of macro cultural factors is depicted in Fig. 2.2.

Sklar (1988) explained that capitalism is an integrated system of macro cultural factors, "Even considered strictly as a mode of production, capitalism encompasses not simply economics but property and class relations, values, ideas, law—in short, intersecting modes of consciousness—as well

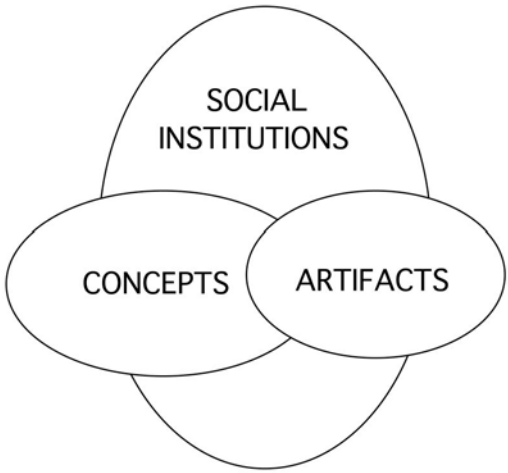

FIG. 2.2. Dialectical relation of macro cultural factors.

as such 'material' phenomena as technique, equipment, labor power and resources" (p. 6).

The interlocking of macro cultural factors means that any one of them provides insight into the others. We can perform a cultural hermeneutics (á la Dilthey) of how American football, for example, expresses characteristics of social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. We can use football as a perspective on (window into) important aspects of our society. We can do the same for other cultural events, such as popular music, high school sports, clothing styles, a presidential election, shopping malls, cowboy movies, transportation systems, church designs, gambling casinos, English flower gardens, English high tea, cell phones, fast-food restaurants, pedagogical methods in grammar school, maps (Linklater, 2003), and sleeping arrangements in the family. Foucault explained how social practices such as the treatment of mentally disturbed individuals embodied social values about disease, work, responsibility, and power (cf. Mitchell, 1988, pp. 64–71). Medications such as Viagra, Prozac, and Ritalin reflect and illuminate cultural practices and values. "Viagra narratives, like sex stories, flow from the culture and back into it; thus they are major sources for comprehending a culture" (Loe, 2004, p. 212).

WITHIN A SOCIAL SYSTEM, CERTAIN MACRO FACTORS ARE MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN OTHERS

Integration of elements does not imply they all possess equal strength. Certain ones generally dominate others. Institutions generally (not always) have greater relative weight than cultural concepts and artifacts. Smith (2003) made this clear in his critique of intellectualist history: "From a sociological perspective, for any robust explanatory account, the force of ideas and philosophies must be situated in relational and institutional contexts, which account for real interests, power, authority, resources, role relations, social conflict, and so on"[6] (p. 17).

Within institutions, economic institutions set the parameters of other institutions such as family, education, politics, law, and, increasingly, science and athletics. One reason is that economic production is basic to survival. Other institutions and macro factors must support the mode of production. Another reason in modern times is that capitalist economics incessantly drives to increase its profit, which makes it convert as many social factors as possible into profit-making branches of economic enterprises.

E. Williams (1966) compared the relative influence that economic conditions and prejudicial racial concepts had on fomenting slavery in the

Americas during the 17th and 18th centuries. He found that slavery was primarily a response to the need for labor. Any group that could be appropriated for this use was enslaved. In fact, Indians and poor Whites were enslaved before Blacks were. "The [racial] features of the black man, his hair, color, and dentrifice … were only the later rationalization to justify a simple economic fact: that the colonies needed labor and resorted to Negro labor because it was cheapest and best" (p. 20). "Slavery was not born of racism; rather, racism was the consequence of slavery" (p. 7).

Sklar (1988) explained the economic domination of society as follows:

> The corporate reorganization of capitalist property and market relations [in 1890–1916] substantially affected, or integrally related to, changes in intra-class and inter-class relations, in law and public policy, in party politics, in international relations, in prevalent modes of social thought, in education and philanthropy, in civic association, in the structure and role of government, and in the government–society relations in general. As [President] Woodrow Wilson put it at the end of the new century's first decade, "the world of business" had changed "and therefore the world of society and the world of politics." With the change in "our economic conditions from top to bottom," he noted, had also come the change in "the organization of our life," so that the great "economic questions" of the day were also "questions of the very structure and operation of society itself." "Leaders in policy-forming politics of the time, including presidents Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson … argued that the nation's laws, institutions, thinking, and habits, must be reformed to facilitate and regulate the emerging corporate-capitalist order." (p. 5).

An additional example of economic institutions dominating other macro cultural factors is the fact that commercial business fostered a new concept and technology of measurement. As capitalism arose in the 17th century, it needed a system of uniform quantitative measurements that could be applied to a wide variety of products so that they could be exchanged for equal value on the market.

Porter (1995, pp. 21–29) explained to us that before capitalism, local communities had their own unique systems of measurement that were neither precise, standardized, applicable to many products, nor commensurable with those of neighboring communities. Different towns had their own bushels. Measures of goods were negotiated rather than standardized and impersonal. And there were different units of measurement for different goods. Silk would be exchanged in different measures from linen, and milk from wine. These local variations were a serious impediment to generalized

trade. In order for the market economy to develop and encompass a wide variety of products from diverse locales, a general system of standardized measurement was required. "The expansion of capitalism was one important source of the impetus to unify and simplify measures" (p. 25). Reciprocally, the development of standardized measures promoted capitalist trade (cf. Linklater, 2003, for additional history of measurement changing to facilitate capitalist social relations).

Standardized measures led to reorganizing the shape of land parcels into regular rectangles so that they could be readily measured. The physical infrastructure of towns and countryside, alike, became reorganized into regular patterns and grids of straight lines. (Such patterns also accommodated straight roads, which were necessary for speedy transportation associated with rapid commercial transactions.) Orderly patterns of lines became embodied in the cultural concepts of civilization and beauty. A place was defined as civilized and beautiful to the extent that its physical infrastructure took the form of regular grids of straight lines. Convoluted infrastructures had the connotation of messy, ugly, and uncivilized (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997, p. 127).

Economic practices also shape religious doctrines. For instance, "During the 'second reformation' of the late 1700s, British Protestantism had refashioned itself with cultural fabric milled by the industrial revolution …. The habits of mind formed by the evangelical revival paralleled those of the business world" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997, p. 168).

An extensive literature demonstrates that education serves economic needs and interests. For instance, at the turn of the 20th century:

> Corporate capitalist interests required a different kind of graduate than those earlier Christian colleges had been educating. In the previous economic era, American colleges specialized in training and graduating gentlemen broadly educated in the classics and intellectually socialized into a coherent Protestant moral universe. They would go into the traditional professions to become leaders and sustainers of the prevailing social order. But corporate capitalism did not need classically educated gentlemen. It needed technically and professionally trained employees in management, finance, law, advertising, engineering, and other material sciences …. Traditional faculty scholarship in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin languages, moral philosophy, theology, literature, science as inductive Baconian specimen-gathering, and the like contributed little to the industrial corporation's production of material wealth and accumulation of capital. Rather, corporate capitalist interests were better served by technical knowledge generated by basic and applied scientific research producing scholarship useful for boosting material pro-

> duction and economic growth. Not geology focused on harmonizing with the Genesis creation account, but geology intent on locating and excavating minerals and petroleum was what corporate capitalism, by systematic logic, was interested in. (Smith, 2003, p. 76)

This transformation of education was deliberately and systematically implemented by business interests. Businessmen not only funded private universities, they funded professorships, departments, research programs, and pension funds. University boards of trustees replaced clergymen on their board with bankers and lawyers (Smith, 2003, pp. 75, 77).

Wilcox (1982) found that school interactions between teacher and pupils recapitulate the hierarchical economic system. Teachers treat their pupils according to their perceived social class. They enact and enforce cultural concepts (ideology) of what is expected of different social groups. The structural-functional perspective (also known as the cultural reproduction perspective) argues that schools need to ensure that children are prepared to assume adult work roles so that the economic system endures. The features of work roles thus help to explain variations in educational and psychological training of pupils. Lower-middle-class pupils are being prepared to assume jobs where they follow orders from supervisors and take little initiative. Upper-middle-class pupils will eventually have jobs that require significant decision making and internal responsibility:

> One fundamental characteristic of adult work roles in the culture of the United States is that these roles are highly differentiated and stratified …. The school becomes an institution which is crucial in differentiating students, in allocating them to one level or another, and in socializing them to perform adequately in and at least minimally accept their place …. This is not to say that there is no room at all for change, for innovation, or for ideals in education, but that to expect an institution responsible for child socialization to depart radically from the needs of the culture as currently constituted is to expect a culture to commit suicide. (Wilcox, 1982, p. 271).

From the structural-functional perspective, the educational level of a population would be expected to correspond (at least roughly) to the labor needs of the economic sector.

Spindler utilizes a structural-functional approach to explain how family interactions reflect concepts and practices of economic, political, and religious institutions. When a Palauan mother suddenly and sternly rebuffs her 5-year old child, Azu, "What is learned by Azu and transmitted by his mother is at once a pattern of child training, a dimension of

Palauan *world view* (Palauans see the world as a place where people do not become emotionally involved with each other), a modal personality trait (most normal adult Palauans distrust others), and a pattern for behavior in the context of the many subsystems (economic, political, religious, and so forth) governing adult life" (Spindler, 1974, p. 281). Spindler explained that family interactions guide neonates to become talking, thinking, feeling, moral, believing, valuing members of socioeconomic systems. Personal interactions make young humans come to want to act as they must act if the cultural system is to be maintained (p. 279; cf. Henry, 1963; Ratner, 1991, pp. 171–178).

Family relations promulgate social class by structuring children's language development in accordance with social roles and opportunities. Parents' socializing of children's language is strikingly different in different social classes. Low-income parents compared with middle-income parents speak less often and in less sophisticated ways to their young children. Middle-class mothers spend twice as much time in face-to-face interaction with their infants, talk to their daughters for significantly longer intervals, and are substantially more likely to focus vocalizations to their child without providing competing sensory input. There is a fourfold difference in the amount of parental verbalizations to children in families on welfare versus professional families. Similar class differences are also found for speech quality (e.g., nouns, modifiers per utterance) and for verbal responsiveness of parents to children's verbal and nonverbal behaviors. As children grow older, low-income parents are less likely than middle-income parents to engage jointly with their children in literary activities such as reading aloud or visiting the library. In a nationwide study of American kindergarten children, 36% of parents in the lowest-income quintile read to their children on a daily basis, compared with 62% of parents from the highest-income. The higher the social class of parents, the less likely they are to direct or order their children's behaviors and the more likely they are to speak to their children in order to initiate and sustain conversation (Evans, 2004; cf. Heath, 1983; Snow, 1999, p. 269).

These differences in socialization result in corresponding differences in children's language competencies. All infants are born with equal language competence—they vocalize 150 times per hour—however at 36 months linguistic competence becomes heterogeneous as children follow the linguistic competence of their parents. "Mothers' talk to children differs as a function of socioeconomic status, and properties of mothers' talk to children account for individual differences in the rate of children's vocabulary development" (Hoff, 2003, p. 1369). "With few exceptions, the more par-

ents talked to their children, the faster the children's vocabularies were growing and the higher the children's IQ test scores at age 3 and later." And, "vocabulary growth and vocabulary use were strongly associated with SES (*rs* = .65 & .63)" (Hart & Risley, 1995, pp. xx, 144).

It is not simply the number of words that parents direct at their children that accounts for cognitive growth. It is the kind of communication that is important: whether parents speak about diverse things, encourage their children to attend to language learning, describe things symbolically, prompt the child to linguistically respond. Middle-class parents engage in all of these behaviors much more than lower-class parents do. These parental behaviors at 2 years of age correlate highly (.60–.70) with their children's language competency at 10 years (Hart & Risley, 1995, p. 161).

Although personal and family issues appear to be the basis of language, IQ, and many other psychological phenomena, they actually reflect, or stand for, another cultural factor, socioeconomic class. Of course, the family is influenced by many macro cultural factors. Social class is only one. Ethnic background is another. Thus, working-class parents of Jewish heritage may incorporate more education into their socialization practices than other working-class parents.

The fact that economic relations dominate macro cultural factors means that they are not entirely governed by their own logics or internal dynamics. Technological advances, artistic forms, athletics, educational policies, religious doctrines, and family relations generally express and support in many ways economic relations and principles. Educational policies are not implemented simply because they are the naturally best way of teaching children. Transportation systems are not constructed because they are the naturally best way to move people and goods from one place to another. Shopping malls are not built because they are the naturally best way to market products. Food is not produced and served in ways that are necessarily best for human health. Prisons are not an effective way of preventing crime. Privatizing government services (such as schools, prisons, military supplies and services, highways, utilities, and water systems) does nothing to improve the quality of service. Imperialism does not bring democracy to foreign people. These macro factors have the characteristics they do because they serve capitalist economic relations that benefit the capitalist class.

The class structure of society makes functionalism class specific. To be functional does not mean to serve the interests of the population at large, or to be technically efficient. On the contrary, what is functional for the upper class is often dysfunctional for the population at large.

For example, public education has deteriorated markedly in the United States. This deterioration of public education is dysfunctional to the majority of citizens. However, it is functional for capitalist job creation. The greatest job growth in recent years has been in low-skilled, low-paying jobs that maximize profit for businesspeople. Consequently, educational deterioration corresponds to capitalist economic requirements, and economic benefits to capitalists. Educational deterioration prepares people to function within low-skilled jobs. Weaknesses in public education also function to exacerbate the dominance of the upper class in society. Children are forced to rely on their families to supplement the skills that schools do not provide. Upper class families provide more resources than lower class families, consequently, upper class children will perform better in school and go on to reap all the advantages that this brings. Today, students attending the elite Ivy League universities are more overrepresented from the higher social strata than they were decades ago. Inferior public services serve a vital function of preserving upper class control. Today, social mobility is lower than it was decades ago. Children's social position more strongly depends on, and resembles that of their parents (Bowles, Gintis, & Groves, 2005).

This functionality is only revealed by a political-economic functional analysis that emphasizes unequal power relations and conflicting social class interests. A purely technical analysis of education or health care cannot explain the persistence of technically dysfunctional institutions and artifacts.

THE COMPONENTS OF A SOCIAL SYSTEM ARE DISTINCT AT THE SAME TIME THAT THEY ARE INTEGRATED

Although the economic domain dominates other social domains, it does not wield absolute power, reducing them to itself. If it did, other domains would not exist; they would be mere epiphenomena of economic activity. In fact, noneconomic social domains have distinctive qualities that reciprocally influence the economy. This is what makes society a complex unity, which we noted in the previous section. A unity must contain a plurality of distinct parts that are unified. A single, global part would not be a unity of things because there would be no plurality of other things to unite together. Uniting together requires diverse things that are united. Noneconomic domains exist and are indispensable supports to the economy. Social leaders work to ensure that noneconomic domains are congruent with economic

institutions because they know that the other domains affect the economy. If they are allowed to diverge too far, they may undermine the economy.

Even though economic social institutions dominate other cultural factors, these retain a degree of independence and distinctiveness. They have different traditions and operate according to different principles. A certain inertia develops in the infrastructure of these macro cultural factors. A bureaucracy builds up, recruiting and training procedures are codified, behavioral norms are institutionalized. Individuals are reluctant, and sometimes incapable, to modify these norms, even in response to new requirements from the economy.

There is great variation in the dependence and independence of macro cultural factors in relation to the economy. Social sciences are dominated by the economy, and are little more than ideological reflections of it and legitimations of it (usually by naturalizing it or diverting attention away from it). However, the natural sciences retain a great deal of autonomy from the economy. Basic scientific concepts of relativity physics and germ theory do not reflect capitalist practices and concepts. The capitalist need to expand material production stimulated the quest to understand and manipulate nature. However, capitalist economics did not configure the scientific theories that produced this knowledge. In fact, it is in capitalism's interest to allow the natural sciences to maximally pursue objective knowledge of nature. This produces the most accurate information about how to exploit nature. Consequently, the natural sciences follow their own leads. Of course, institutional funding for science is an economic matter. However, the practice of science itself is not.

Nuclear science was certainly stimulated by the social desire for an atom bomb to end World War II. However, nuclear science was not composed of social, political, or military principles. Its principles reflected the atomic structure of matter. The same is true for many technological artifacts. Trains, cars, and airplanes were spawned by social and economic interests to achieve quicker transportation of products. Computers may have been spawned by the desire for quicker ways to accumulate and calculate information, and write documents. However, these socioeconomic interests did not comprise the technical principles of these artifacts. Economic interests and principles did not constitute the electronics of computers, the aerodynamic science of aviation, or the mechanical workings of the internal combustion engine.

The relative independence of macro cultural factors is as important as the unity of social systems. The dialectical unity-of-differences among macro cultural factors is depicted in Fig. 2.2.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS UNIFY THE BEHAVIOR AND PSYCHOLOGY OF DISPARATE INDIVIDUALS

Disparate individuals who occupy different physical locations nevertheless participate in common macro cultural factors. The properties of the macro cultural factors structure the behavior and psychology of disparate individuals in similar ways. Shared behavior and psychology is not necessarily, or ordinarily, due to direct, personal interactions among individuals. It is primarily a function of the "impersonal" organization of psychology that results from participating in the same social, ideational, and physical infrastructure. This is diagrammed in Fig. 2.3.

Figure 2.3 shows four macro factors integrated together. The economic system is portrayed as dominant. Each macro factor contains particular instances (e.g., the school system contains individual schools, marked with an "x"). Unrelated individuals appear to have different experiences with differ-

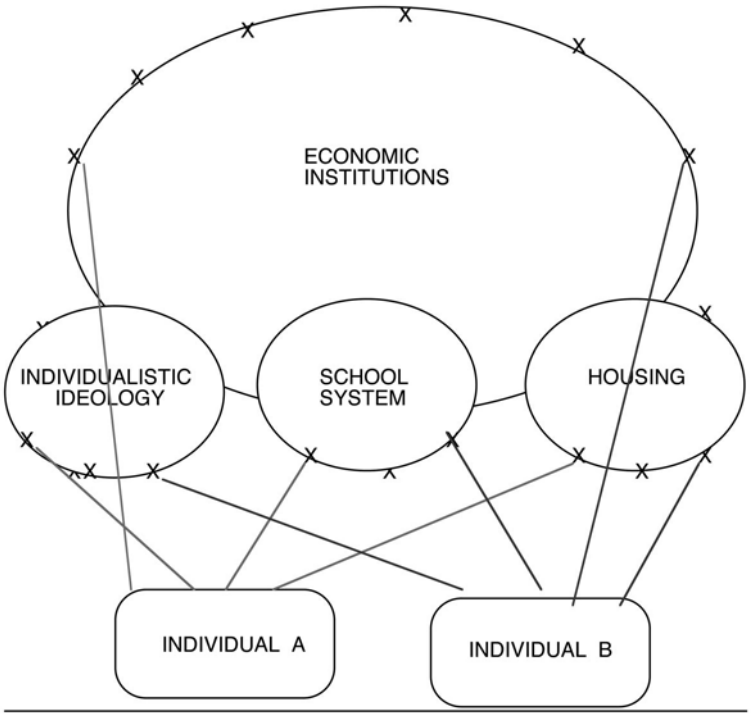

FIG. 2.3. Macro cultural factors unify the psychology of disparate individuals.

ent schools, families, and housing. However, they actually share a great deal because their schools have common features by virtue of being part of a school system; their families have common features by virtue of being part of the family institution; and their houses have common features by virtue of falling within general practices and principles of house building. Individuals also share a great deal because the different macro cultural factors are unified under the dominance of the economic system. Thus, apparently diverse experiences contain underlying commonalities.

Individuals Share Common Experiences Not Because of Their Direct Personal Relationship, but Because They Participate in a Common, Coherent Culture That Is Structurally Integrated on a Societal Level. (Individual A and B have no direct link in Fig. 2.3). Of course, each instance of a macro cultural factor possesses idiosyncratic features as well as common ones. Each school is somewhat unique, as is each family. This accounts for idiosyncratic experiences that parallel common ones (Ratner, 2002, p. 93).

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE THE PRODUCT OF SOCIAL STRUGGLE

Macro cultural factors emerge through a struggle among groups each of which wants to objectify/express their motives and interests. The struggle to define and control macro cultural factors is usually quite bitter. It involves ideological, political, organizational, and even military conflict. An illustrative example is the modern conception of time as linear, precise, and composed of discrete, measurable, equivalent units.

This conception was promoted during the rise of capitalism by mercantilists and industrialists in opposition to divergent concepts of time held by other groups with different life styles and interests:

> Throughout the whole medieval period, there was a conflict between the cyclic and linear concepts of time. The scientists and scholars, influenced by astronomy and astrology, tended to emphasize the cyclic concept. The linear concept was fostered by the mercantile class and the rise of a money economy. For as long as power was concentrated in the ownership of land, time was felt to be plentiful and was associated with the unchanging cycle of the soil. With the circulation of money, however, the emphasis was on mobility. In other words, men were beginning to believe that "time is money" and that one must try to use it economically and thus time came to be associated with the idea of linear progress. (Whitrow, 1973, p. 402)

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE ACTUAL PRACTICES, NOT OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS AND POLICIES

Sociologists distinguish formal norms from informal norms. They recognize that official pronouncements and policies about the way things are done are often contradicted by actual practices "off the books." Labor laws are often violated, democratic concepts/ideals are often corrupted, technology that is supposed to make life easier can be injurious, schools that are supposed to stimulate intellectual growth often stifle it, students who are supposed to do homework (and say they do it) actually do not, advertisements that present products in a particular light may not appeal to consumers. The reality of social institutions, cultural artifacts, and concepts is the informal norms—actual practices, conditions, and attitudes. Social scientists must research the true nature of macro cultural factors. They cannot accept official pronouncements and policies at face value.

Describing macro cultural factors requires observing people's behavior and speech, plus questioning them about their practices and concepts. To understand a cultural concept of "child," we must observe how parents and teachers treat them, talk to them, and talk about them to each other. It is not sufficient to simply observe how children are portrayed in movies or on television, for that may not reflect how people actually treat and think about children (Lee, 1963). Because culture is lived by individuals, it makes sense that that is where culture should be studied.

This does not reduce culture to individual behavior. The fact that teachers become disillusioned with their profession and do not live up to pedagogical ideals encoded in teachers' manuals does not mean they freely choose their behavior as individuals. Their behavior is organized by macro cultural factors. These factors are simply configured differently from official proclamations. Teachers who put little effort into teaching and adopt an authoritarian teaching style, are responding to a definite educational system composed of budgets, working conditions, physical infrastructure, administrators, interest groups, and quality of students.

Similarly, the widespread pattern of financial fraud throughout the leading corporations is endemic to them despite the fact that it violates official publicity and policies. Fraud is not an individual choice by a few corrupt executives. It is engendered by lax regulatory agencies that are staffed by corporate leaders, compensation agreements that reward corrupt behavior, minimum penalties, and a prevalent concept of avarice.

The fact that consumers resist buying certain products does not imply their purchasing choices are free individual decisions. It simply means they are influenced by other standards, concepts, and practices. Although individuals select among diverse macro cultural factors, their choices are not freely made. The act of choosing is influenced by macro cultural factors. A person's choice to purchase one commodity over another is influenced by advertising, social values, price, and advice from other people. Moreover, people are generally unaware of influences that guide their choices (e.g., the positioning of merchandise in the store, the lighting that brings out certain appearances, the subtle advertising techniques). Nor are people fully aware of their motives for making choices. Choices are not necessarily "owned by" the individual who makes them. Although subjective activity is carried out by individuals, it is not an individual product. It is stimulated and organized by culture. (Although people actively select their spouse, they do not realize the childhood experiences and parental role models that affect their choice. People do not even realize many of their motives, expectations, and fears that affect their choice of spouse. Subjectivity activity is not necessarily understood and controlled by the individuals who carry it out).

Informal norms are macro cultural factors. Because they are unofficial and hidden from public view, they must be ascertained by detailed observation and questioning. The researcher must attend board meetings, interview executives and their secretaries, scrutinize compensation agreements, observe behavior of investment bankers with clients, read their e-mails, visit school classrooms and faculty lounges, and interview teachers privately.

This page intentionally left blank

II

Principles of Macro Cultural Psychology

This page intentionally left blank

3

The Dialectical Integration of Psychological Phenomena and Macro Cultural Factors

Psychology, too, is destined to renew itself, in part, under the influence of sociology. For if social phenomena penetrate the individual from the outside, there is a whole realm of individual consciousness that depends partially upon social causes, a realm which psychology cannot ignore without becoming unintelligible.

—Durkheim (1900/1960, p. 375)

With macro cultural factors central to human survival and fulfillment, our psychological phenomena must be geared toward constructing, maintaining, and refining macro cultural factors. If our perceptual, emotional, cognitive, learning, and motivational styles were not oriented toward participating in vital macro cultural factors, these factors could not function, and our individual survival and fulfillment would be jeopardized (Wang, Ceci, W. Williams, & Kopko, 2004). Psychological phenomena must be congruent with macro cultural factors so that individuals will possess the internal guidance mechanisms to generate and maintain macro cultural factors. This is why Luria (1971) said: "Cognitive processes (such as perception and memory, abstraction and generalization, reasoning and problem-solving) are not independent and unchanging 'abilities' or 'functions' of human consciousness; they are processes occurring in concrete, practical activities and are formed within the limits of this activity" (p. 226).

Luria's (1971) pregnant statement captures the essence of macro cultural psychology. This chapter is devoted to articulating specific principles of this theory. I document the fact that psychological phenomena are part of macro factors, stimulated and structured by them, embody their features, support them, and contribute to modifying them.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS WERE THE IMPETUS FOR HUMANS TO DEVELOP PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPACITIES

The phylogenetic development of psychological phenomena was spurred by increased complexity in artifacts, social organization, and cultural concepts (cf. Ratner, 1989a, 1991). Paleoanthropologists have arrived at this conclusion by examining artifacts and fossils from our prehistory and reconstructing the mental functions that designed them. For example, symbolic artifacts from 40,000 years ago indicate that humans developed symbolic thinking during this period—known as the Upper Paleolithic, or the Aurignacian, when anatomically modern humans, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, emerged. (Symbolic artifacts require a two-step process of forming a mental representation of a thing, and then creating an artifact that resembles the representation. One symbolizes an object and then objectifies the symbol.) As Mithen (1999) observed, "60–30,000 years ago does appear to mark some form of threshold in human cognitive development in light of the changes in the archaeological record at that time which are apparent throughout the world, including the colonization of arid regions, technological developments, as well as the first representational art" (p. 153; see also Lindly & G. Clark, 1990, esp. pp. 250–251). Because mental symbols are the tools of language, we can deduce that this period marks the beginning of genuine language as well.

More complex artifacts from the "Neolithic revolution" about 10,000 years ago indicate that more modern forms of psychological competence arose with advances in crafts, art works and tools, domestication of plants and animals, complex, hierarchical, sedentary social institutions, and complex symbolic codes such as writing and mathematics (Dennett, 1991, p. 190; Renfrew, 1996, 2001; Tomasello, 1999, pp. 1–4).

The question is, why did psychological phenomena develop in conjunction with macro cultural factors? Part of the answer is that reasoning, memory, emotions, learning, perception, motivation, and self became increasingly sophisticated and generated the construction of macro cultural factors. However, this does not explain the appearance of psychological

phenomena in the first place. It makes it appear that they mysteriously arise on their own. There must be more to the answer.

Many paleoanthropologists believe that psychological capacities were stimulated and supported by macro cultural factors. This counterintuitive formulation is derived from Darwinian principles of evolution. These principles explain organismic traits as due to environmental pressure and support. Traits persist because they are functional in a particular environment. Now, culture is the supreme enhancer of survival. Macro cultural factors pool and extend the strengths of many individuals; they are changeable to allow for rapid improvements. Macro cultural factors are unique ways of enhancing survival and fulfillment. Consequently, macro cultural factors require novel mechanisms of operation. Psychological phenomena are these mechanisms. Psychological phenomena have unique features that generate and operate the distinctive features of macro cultural factors. The awesome collective power, productivity, flexibility, and creativity of human culture (to produce food, housing, transportation, education, medical care, symphonies) is possible only because psychological phenomena (consciousness) emerged to construct, maintain, and refine it.

Natural processes, such as instincts or reflexes, produce automatic, stereotyped, simple behaviors. Such behavior cannot produce, maintain, or refine social institutions, artifacts such as technology, and cultural concepts. They cannot determine that a woman will work as a receptionist, drive to work in a certain model car, arrive at work on time, dress in a socially fashionable style, and speak in a particular tone of voice to customers and managers. Social institutions and other macro cultural factors require the psychological capacity for thinking, memory, emotions, motivation, learning, informed perception, identifying self with people and things, and understanding the intentions of others. "Whereas chimpanzees clearly created and maintain social traditions broadly defined, these very likely rest on different processes of social cognition and social learning than the cultural traditions of human beings." "Human cultural traditions may be most readily distinguished from chimpanzee social traditions … by the fact that they accumulate modifications over time, that is, they have cultural 'histories.' They accumulate modifications and have histories because the cultural learning processes that support them are especially powerful. These cultural learning processes are especially powerful because they are supported by the uniquely human cognitive adaptation for understanding others as intentional beings …" (Tomasello, 2001, pp. 138, 139). Human culture could not exist unless the natural processes that generate and maintain animal behavior were replaced by psychologi-

cal processes, or consciousness (cf. Geertz, 1973, chaps. 2, 3; Ratner, 1991, pp. 31–38, 47–52).[1]

The adaptive value that psychological phenomena have is that they construct macro cultural factors that enhance our survival and fulfillment. This is the reason that psychological phenomena evolved. The process was as follows: Certain individuals in our prehistory evolved biological changes that enabled the development of rudimentary psychological capacities that could construct rudimentary macro cultural factors. The survival benefit conferred by these cultural factors led to promulgating the psychological capacities that constructed them. In this sense, macro cultural factors were the impetus and support system for developing psychological capacities.

This is the same kind of analysis that Darwin employed to explain the evolution of physical traits. According to Darwin, the environment is the ultimate raison d'être of an organism's traits. Traits evolve because they are functional for a particular environment. Postulating that unique human psychological capacities evolved under the impetus of a unique cultural environment accords with Darwinian principles. (Strangely, evolutionary psychologists claim that Darwinian principles lead to very different conclusions—namely, that human psychology has the same biological nature and basis as animal behavior. We examine their argument in chap. 7.)

Human psychological capacities are different from animals' because their environment is different. It is cultural. Psychological capacities must have qualities that facilitate, and function within, cultural institutions, artifacts, and concepts. The requisite psychological capacities for culture include symbolic capacity, intentionality, sensitivity to intentions of others, identifying self with things and other people, the capacity to coordinate attention and behavior with others, and the capacity to control and alter one's behavior. These are general capacities. Humans did not evolve tendencies for particular behaviors, such as war, private property, monogamy, religion, individualism, or collectivism. Instead, we evolved general psychological capacities to construct culture because it is more efficient (adaptive) to devise specific behavior on a cultural level than on an individual level. The adaptive advantage that culture offers is that behavior is devised, coordinated, and modified by a number of individuals. Predetermined, automatic, fixed, specific behavioral tendencies endemic to the individual would preclude the cultural construction of behavior. Humans evolved general psychological capacities that are realized and concretized in macro cultural factors. Concrete human psychology is constructed in and through concrete social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. Tomasello (2001, p. 143) aptly explained how this occurred. Evolved cognitive capac-

ity "makes possible an evolutionarily new set of processes, that is, processes of sociogenesis, that have done much of the actual work—and on a much faster time scale than biological evolution.

Language is a case in point. Language as a psychological capacity was called for by the need for social cohesion and communication in constructing social institutions (Deacon, 1997). Individuals with a rudimentary language capacity utilized it to devise simple cultural formations that enhanced their survival. The need for more sophisticated social institutions, to further enhance survival, served as the impetus to develop a sophisticated language capacity. "Language—including its distinctive representational level—is intrinsically social, and can only have evolved under fundamental social selection pressures" (Knight et al., 2000, p. 9). Language was called for by the need to create communities (Dunbar, 1998, p. 105). The general capacity for language was/is realized and concretized into specific languages through a cultural process. The particular form a language takes depends on the kinds of social institutions, artifacts, and concepts people construct.[2] It would be counterproductive for language to have a single, fixed, automatic form because that would limit humans' ability to communicate, and would interfere with constructing diverse cultural factors to meet changing circumstances. Intrinsic, fixed, predetermined programs or tendencies negate the advantages that culture provides for survival and fulfillment.

The social basis of language is evident in the social skills that are prerequisite for using it. Using language involves a social skill of understanding the significance and meaning of the speaker's utterances (Dunbar, 1998, p. 101). This social skill is more than a technical encoding and decoding of information that occurs in mechanical systems such as computers and voice recognition. Worden (1998) maintained that language grew out of nonlinguistic cognitive skills involved in social communication and social intelligence. Snow (1999) and Iverson & Goldin-Meadow (2005) stated that the pragmatics of communication are the basis of learning semantics and syntax. A child's social participation predicts grammatical capability at later ages.

The social dimension of language is reflected in neuroanatomy. Language use activates cortical areas associated with social skills and understanding meaning (the prefrontal cortex), which are significantly larger than Broca's and Wernicke's areas for language, per se (Dunbar, 1998, p. 103).

Macro cultural factors require and elicit other general psychological capacities in addition to language. New forms of memory are necessary to remember vast amounts of information transmitted in social interactions.

Complex social relationships also demand flexible attention that can attend to diverse tasks of different participants. Social relations also require new forms of reasoning and self-control which facilitate planning, negotiating, and reforming conjoint behavior with other people. (One cannot act impulsively, on his own, and for his own sake if he is to work with other people.) Culture requires a psychological capacity for learning so that it can be rapidly transmitted to newcomers (Ratner, 1991, chap. 1).

Reflecting the notion that macro cultural factors inspired human psychological capacity, Alexander (1989) concluded that "the human psyche was designed primarily to solve *social* problems within its own species, not physical and mathematical puzzles .... This hypothesis rejects the notion that complex intellects evolved because they saved early humans from starvation, predation, climate, weather, or some combination of such challenges"[3] (p. 457).

Macro Cultural Factors Have Properties That Elicit Psychological Phenomena. Rudiments of this can be seen with domestic pets. Pets are drawn into the social world of humans, who talk to them, point out things, associate objects together on a regular, predictable basis, and arrange regular sequences of events and patterns of behavior (e.g., regular feeding times). These social and instrumental actions stimulate the rudiments of psychological phenomena in pets. They develop competencies to learn, control behavior, and understand people's intentions and significations. Wild animals do not develop these psychological competencies because they lack the stimulation and structuring of culture.

Chimpanzees in the wild do not show any linguistic capacity, and have very limited use of tools. However, when raised in an artificial culture they can develop these competencies to a remarkable degree. They can make stone tools and use them purposefully; they can understand English sentences; they can use visual symbols to communicate and coordinate their behavior with other enculturated apes. "In sum, after undergoing this radical process of enculturation, pygmy chimpanzees do not act, think, or communicate like the same species. They do things they could never achieve in the wild, obviously without any changes to their genome" (Donald, 1998, p. 8; cf. Tomasello, 2001, p. 137).

"Chimpanzees are genetically much closer to humans than they are to most other primates, and yet their cognitive profile is far closer to that of other primates than it is to that of humans. This suggests that we need to invoke something more than genetically-entrenched changes in individual capacity in the case of hominid cognition" (Donald, 1998, p. 13; see also

Engels, 1964, p. 175). In other words, the genetic proximity of chimps and humans does not produce similar cognitive capacities. The enormous cognitive disparity between genetically similar chimps and humans is partially due to the fact that humans possess culture, which stimulates and organizes cognitive capacities—although the 2% genetic difference is also critical in determining cognitive differences, because no amount of enculturation will raise ape cognition to the level of humans.

Vygotsky explained that cultural participation stimulates and structures psychological development in children, in the same way. Babies respond impulsively and automatically to external stimuli. However, the properties of social interaction, communication, and instrumental behavior with objects, lead children to develop new psychological competencies for utilizing them. Children utilize cultural factors to mediate their reactions, and they develop control over attention, motivation, memory, thinking, and behavior (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 24–57; see also Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991, pp. 234–239). "In interacting either with adults or among themselves, children not only demonstrate more advanced forms of cognitive organization than those they are capable of alone prior to interaction, but also are able to produce by themselves these more advanced forms after the interaction" (Doise & Mugny, 1984, p. 27). Language learning directs children to reorganize their cognitive apparatus. As the child internalizes a linguistic symbol, she learns that symbols objectify a human perspective. Symbols do not merely represent perceptual or motoric aspects of a situation (Tomasello, 2001, p. 142).

Cultural participation promotes psychological development. It is far more effective than utilizing psychological techniques on an individual basis.

In certain passages, Piaget lucidly observed how social relations elicit psychological phenomena. Although he referred to general social interactions rather than macro cultural factors, his conception is directly applicable to the latter:

> Cooperation is the source of three kinds of transformation that occur in individual thought, all of which give the individual a better grasp of the reasoning inherent in all intellectual activity. Firstly, cooperation produces reflexivity and self-awareness .... Secondly, cooperation allows the subjective and the objective to be separated. It is thus the origin of objectivity .... Thirdly, cooperation ... promotes the rule of autonomy, or pure reciprocity, which is an important element of logical thought and of the system of notions and signs.
>
> Social interaction is a necessary condition for the development of logic. We thus regard social interaction as transforming the very nature of the individ-

> ual as it promotes him from an autistic state to one of intersubjective personality. As regards cooperation, we see it as a process in which new realities are created and not merely an exchange between already fully-developed individuals. (cited in Doise & Mugny, 1984, p. 19)

Doise and Mugny (1984) integrated Piaget's point with Vygotsky's more elaborated social conception of psychological development. They demonstrated, through numerous experiments, that learning to coordinate one's action with others in social interactions includes mastering certain cognitive abilities that can later be reproduced autonomously (p. 23). Doise and Mugny emphasized that social interaction includes cognition, and, conversely, cognition has a social basis and character. They coined the term sociocognitive to express this organic integration (p. 159). For example, sociocognitive conflict stimulates cognitive growth:

> One of the characteristics of "preoperational thought" is ignorance of distinct points of view, or … egocentrism …. In a conflicting relation with others, a conflict is created which makes the difference explicit. In other terms, sociocognitive conflict is a source of disequilibrium. It is disequilibrium that is at once both social and cognitive. It is cognitive disequilibrium in that the cognitive system is unable to integrate simultaneously its own responses and those of others within a single coherent whole …. It is social disequilibrium since this is not simply cognitive disagreement. It involves relations between individuals for whom this conflict poses a social problem. Without this social problem the child would be unlikely to feel cognitive conflict. (Doise & Mugay, 1984, pp. 159–160)

The foregoing examples demonstrate that macro cultural factors inspire human's general psychological capacities. Macro cultural factors are the telos and raison d'être of psychological phenomena. They are also the operating system of consciousness, as we now explain.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE THE "OPERATING SYSTEM" OF THE MIND

Macro cultural factors are the constituent mechanisms and means of psychology. They comprise the "operating system" of psychological phenomena. It is illuminating to pursue the analogy of cultural factors to a computer operating system, despite obvious differences between them.

Cultural symbols—artifacts—are introduced into the brain, much like software is introduced into a computer. They realize the physical capacity of

the brain in specific operations that are not given by the neuronatomy of the brain itself—much like an operating system directs a computer to function in ways that are not given by the hardware capacity and mechanics. Without the operating system of cultural symbols, the brain would not perceive tables as tables, nor would it encode and search for information in memory.

Geertz (1973) described why the particular form and content of consciousness derives from an external cultural template rather than an endogenous one. Symbols, he says, "are extrinsic sources of information in terms of which human life can be patterned—extrapersonal mechanisms for the perception, understand, judgment, and manipulation of the world .... The reason such symbolic templates are necessary is that human behavior is inherently extremely plastic. Not strictly, but only very broadly controlled by genetic programs or models—intrinsic sources of information—such behavior ... must be controlled to a significant extent by extrinsic ones" (pp. 216–217).

The operating system of the computer is *functionally autonomous* of the hardware, just as the operation and products of consciousness are functionally independent (though not physically independent) of the brain. In both cases the hardware is a necessary substratum for the operating system, but it does not determine the specific characteristics of the operating system or the quality of the output. (At most, the hardware or brain could affect the amount of information that could be processed, and the speed of processing it.) The form and content of psychological phenomena cannot be determined by brain mechanics.

A final analogy between an operating system and consciousness is "its successful installation is determined by myriad microsettings in the plasticity of the brain, which means that its functionally important features are very likely to be invisible to neuroanatomical scrutiny in spite of the extreme salience of the effects" (Dennett, 1991, p. 219).

Although the analogy of cultural consciousness to an operating system has heuristic value, significant differences between the two must be noted. Consciousness is not a mechanical, inert program. Consciousness is alive, volitional, creative, and changing. In addition, consciousness structures the brain, whereas operating systems do not structure hardware. The more consciousness engages in a particular activity—perceiving a particular form, thinking about particular subjects—the more the brain alters its anatomy to facilitate the activity. It is well known that the number of neurons and synapses is a function of experience, which means that the capacity of the brain is altered by the individual's social and physical experience.

Evidence From Human Cognition—Vygotsky and Keller. Vygotsky demonstrated that thinking, and associated psychological functions, depend on linguistic symbols (a macro cultural factor). We think in (and through) language. Semiotic symbols are the constituents of cognition and related psychological functions. Words structure and restructure thoughts; they do not simply express them. Vygotsky recognized that thought and language are not identical, however they are internally (dialectically) related.

Vygotsky emphasized that psychological phenomena are conscious in the sense of resting on thoughts and symbols. He said that human perception is intellectualized perception. This means that perception is part of, filtered and organized by, thoughts, which are symbols. Thoughts and symbols are the constituents (operating system) of perception. They are what makes perception fraught with *interpreted* meanings. Devoid of thoughts, perception would not involve interpretation by the observer. It would not be meaningful to him; it would not be mental or psychological. It would simply be a passively received impression.

Human memory also depends on symbolic concepts. It is these that comprise memory traces. They are what is "stored" and "retrieved." Symbols are thus the constituents of memory; its sine qua non. The self is also a "self-concept"; it is a concept about what the self is. Emotions are also conscious in the sense of resting on ideas, or concepts. We *know* we are sad; we have a concept of sadness that shapes our feeling experience; we have a concept of what an emotion is. Emotions are not pure feelings.

The fact that psychological phenomena are symbolic, mental, and conscious means that we know that we are perceiving, feeling, thinking, and so on; in contrast to animals, who simply perceive, feel, recognize without knowing that they are doing these. Humans can reflect on and control psychological phenomena. We can decide not to become angry through an intellectual thought process. This would be impossible if psychological phenomena were not mental, conscious, symbolic, and thoughtful in nature.

Helen Keller demonstrated how psychological phenomena depend on language. The mysterious disease that robbed her sight and hearing at 19 months of age, also precluded her learning language. Her cognitive (and all psychological) processes did not develop until she learned language over several years. The slow, tortuous process of learning language made visible its connection with thinking.

Learning linguistic symbols was the beginning of a mental world, a mind that could think. The mind could represent things, conceptualize them,

mentally play with them, imagine them, reconstruct them, understand them, and think about them. Keller stated this clearly: "Until that day my mind had been like a darkened chamber, waiting for words to enter and light the lamp, which is thought" (Shattuck, 2004, p. 21). Engaging in mental activity generated a sense of selfhood and initiative that she never possessed before: "Before my teacher came to me I did not know that I am. I lived in a world that was a no-world …. I had neither will nor intellect" (Shattuck, 2004, p. 23). Linguistic symbols not only constituted the tools for thinking and specific meanings of thoughts; they inspired the sense that a mental realm could be constructed, that the individual can actively create and inhabit a mental world.

Donald (2000) explained that "symbolic literacy cannot exist without installing, in thousands of developing children, an elaborate complex of lexicons, use rules, automated component subskills (such as decoding letters and symbols, finding words, and forming letters), and a number of memory management and attentional alogorithms, each of which must be entrenched in its own neural architecture" (p. 24). Other conceptual and artifactual systems, such as mathematics, the sonata form, artistic forms of representation, scientific and philosophical concepts become operating systems in the same way. They are not simply objects that the mind manipulates; they are constituents of the mind. They form the mind as much as the mind forms them (Ratner, 1991, pp. 47–52).

Emotions. Emotions depend on cultural concepts that define and interpret a situation (Ratner, 1989a; Ratner, 1991, pp. 76–83). When you discover that your neighbor has been sticking pins into dolls, the emotion that you experience depends on the cultural concept you employ to interpret his action. If you believe in voodoo—that is, that sticking pins in dolls has malicious power to harm you—you will experience the emotion of fright/terror. In the absence of this cultural concept, you will feel humor or surprise at your neighbor's act. Similarly, a cultural belief in monogamy leads to jealousy when a spouse has an affair. A belief in free love leads to pleasure that one's spouse is having an affair. A cultural belief in god leads to revering and fearing "him." An atheist who lacks this belief cannot experience such religious emotions.

Worrying about misfortune (another component of depression) similarly depends on culture-bound concepts. Worry results from dwelling on negative experiences that have happened or may happen. The Machiguenga Indians of the Peruvian Amazon are free from worry because they do not think about fearful experiences (A. Johnson, O. Johnson, & Baksh, 1986). They

become afraid during a momentary event (such as a thunderstorm, being bitten by a snake, or learning that a loved one is about to leave). But the Machiguenga do not seem to anticipate fearful experiences or fret over past troubles. Living in the present mitigates worry.

The American concept of childhood leads mothers to develop distinctive emotions toward children. American mothers usually regard their toddlers (1–2 years of age) as capable of intentional misbehavior (i.e., they understand that hitting, pulling hair, or destroying property hurts the other person, yet they do it anyway). Consequently, misbehavior generates anger at the child because the mother assumes it was intentional. In contrast, Mayan mothers do not attribute personal intention and responsibility to toddlers and do not punish them for misbehavior (Mosier & Rogoff, 2003, p. 1954). Child abuse is low in Turkey for the same reason (Olson, 1981). Southern Americans become more angry than Northerners because they have a concept of honor that leads them to take offense at insults more readily than Northerners do (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996).

To feel hyperactive, one must have a concept of hyperactivity. A general irritability is not hyperactivity. It only becomes such when it is mediated through a cultural concept that defines it and generates expectations about the feeling and behavior—just as concepts structure color perception. When a person accepts the medical model of hyperactivity she *experiences* it *as* a biochemical abnormality, not as a personality flaw which reflects on her self (Schmitz, Filippone, & Edelman, 2003). A different concept of hyperactivity, for example, that it was the product of a sinful act, would lead to a experiencing it *as* a personal defect, guilt-ridden, and fearful.[4]

Memory. Macro cultural factors such as language similarly comprise the operating system of memory. Symbolic concepts enable consciousness to encode events in semiotic symbols, store an enormous amount of information in memory (e.g., we can remember the names of hundreds of people, we can memorize the Bible and Shakespeare's plays), recall events by "auto-cuing," retrieve events in any number of categories (e.g., we can recall people we have met by "searching for" the women, the tall people, the nice people, the foreigners, individuals we've met recently vs. long ago, etc.), and visualize past events.

The natural memory of animals cannot do this. Animals can re-cognize situations they presently encounter because of their physical resemblance with prior situations. However, animals have no capacity to consciously recall events outside their immediate presence. Only humans have an explicit memory capacity that *stores information* encoded in symbols

(Donald, 1998, p. 15). Thus, human memory is not analogous to animal memory. The two operate according to different mechanisms and derive from different origins.

Research on skilled memory demonstrates that individuals can learn to remember large quantities of information by adopting and rehearsing mnenomic strategies. These strategies encode information in distinctive patterns with distinctive associations that enable them to recall the digits and letters. An Indian student named Rafan could recall 75 digits and 20 letters by grouping them into small clusters and then associating the clusters together according to an invented schema:

> All of our research findings on Rajan's memory is consistent with the emerging effects of such an extended focused practice. Recent research employing brain imaging techniques has also suggested that exceptional memory primarily reflects acquired skill. The brains of individuals with exceptional memory have not been found to differ reliably from the brains of control participants. Even more interestingly, Maguire et al. found that differences in brain activation during exceptional memory performance could be explained by the exceptional individuals' unique strategies and encoding techniques. (Ericsson, Delaney, Weaver, & Mahadevan, 2004, p. 235).

Feats of memory thus depend on mnenomic strategies. They are not based on an enlarged natural capacity to recall more information. Mnemonic strategies often draw upon cultural knowledge of a particular subject matter. For example, "chess grandmasters accurately reproduced the location of 25 chess pieces from a real in-progress chess game after viewing the game for only 5 seconds. A college student, SF, used his extensive knowledge of trach-and-field to accurately recall a string of 82 rapidly presented digits … Extensive domain knowledge is believed to provide organized retrieval strategies that facilitate memory" (Van Overschelde, Rawson, Dunlosky, & Hunt, 2005, p. 358).

On the ontogenetic level, the individual develops memory only after learning a language of symbols. Events that occur during infancy cannot be recalled because they were not symbolically encoded and stored. Memory of prelinguistic experiences is akin to animals' having a familiar sense when encountering a situation that resembles a previous one. This is different from the explicit knowledge contained in adult memory.

Fivush and Nelson (2004) stated the centrality of language to memory:

> Language is not simply the way in which memories are expressed, but is instrumental in providing an organizational structure for personal experience

> …. Dialogues facilitate children's developing abilities to form organized representations of their experiences …. When a child and adult experience events together, the adult provides a linguistic "scaffold" that helps to focus the child's attention and organize the event into a coherent whole. Several studies have demonstrated that those aspects of an experienced event that were linguistically scaffolded by an adult are better recalled by the child than aspects not scaffolded through an adult's language, even when the child demonstrated interest in those particular aspects of the event.
>
> Talking about the past involves more than recalling details of what occurred. Children must also learn the canonical narrative structure of autobiographical recall in early parent-guided conversations. Those parents who provide more orienting information, setting past events in time and place, and more evaluative information, placing events in emotional and personally meaningful contexts, have children who, by the end of the preschool years, are recounting more coherent and more evaluative narratives of their own personal past. (pp. 574–575)

Perception. Cultural concepts also bring about distinctive qualities to human perception that make it very different from animal perception (Ratner, 1989b). Human perception sees objects as recognizable kinds of things. We see a "tree," a "house," a "table." We see objects as categories of things. This is because we categorize things as we perceive them. Perception entails conceptual categorization. We see the tree in the winter without leaves as "the tree" that we saw in the summer with leaves because we *know* from our concept of tree that it has leaves sometimes and has no leaves sometimes. This essential knowledge enables us to perceive the object as "the tree" regardless of its having or not having leaves. Vygotsky called this "intellectualized perception" (cf. Ratner, 2004a).

Animals devoid of concepts do not perceive recognizable objects as categories. They are sensitive to particular sensory properties of objects they encounter (size, color, smell), and they react similarly to objects that have similar sensible properties. However, they do not perceive an object as "a table" or "a rock" because they have no concepts that could categorize an object as being of a certain kind. Humans, on the other hand, do not simply perceive sensory qualities of things; we literally *perceive rocks and tables*. Normally, sensible qualities are perceived *as* qualities *of* the categorical object (Lowe, 1998, pp. 91–92; cf. Hanson, 1965).

All these cases demonstrate that macro cultural factors comprise the operating system of psychological phenomena. They are the mechanisms by which psychological phenomena operate.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA ARE PART OF MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS

Psychological phenomena are organically integrated with macro cultural factors. Neither could exist without the other. On the one hand, the mind is a mechanism of macro cultural factors. Mind is the emotions, perceptions, self-concept, reasoning, memory, motivation, and learning that construct social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. Macro cultural factors require psychological phenomena. At the same time, psychological phenomena depend on macro factors to stimulate and structure them as concrete functions. The psyche forms as people form and utilize macro cultural factors. Its features derive from and are congruent with macro cultural factors (cf. Ratner, 2002, p. 59, for further discussion). The organic integration of psychological phenomena and macro cultural factors is depicted in Fig. 3.1.

Thus far we have discussed the relation between general features of macro cultural factors and psychological phenomena. We have examined how social interaction, symbols, and artifacts call for and inform language, memory, perception. This general level is an abstraction. In reality, general

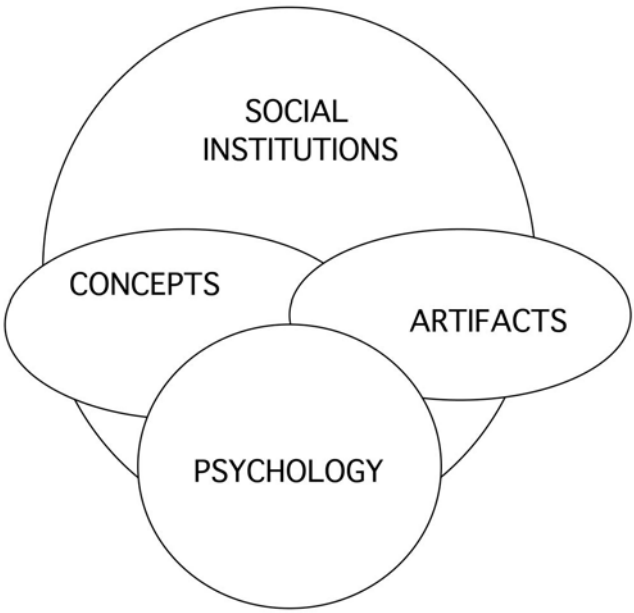

FIG. 3.1. Dialectical relation of social institutions, artifacts, cultural concepts, and psychological phenomena.

features of macro cultural factors and psychological phenomena are embedded in concrete forms. Social interaction exists only as a particular kind with specific features. We may conceptually abstract essential features that all particular social interactions possess in common. But this abstraction has no independent existence. Likewise, memory, perception, learning, self, motivation exist concretely only with specific forms and content. When we say that social interaction fosters memory, we are abstracting from certain kinds of social interaction that foster certain kinds of memory. We are disregarding their concrete features and are focusing on general features. Although these general features are real, they do not exist on their own. They exist in concrete forms—what Husserl (1970) called the *Lebenswelt*. Husserl emphasizes that the *Lebenswelt* is the basis of abstractions. People construct a *Lebenswelt* of concrete life forms. These contain essential commonalities that may be abstracted out for intellectual purposes. However, the concrete basis of these abstractions must always be kept in mind (cf. Ratner, 1991, chap. 3).

The remainder of this book explains the relation between concrete features of macro cultural factors and psychological phenomena. We begin with several examples that illustrate how psychological phenomena are organically part of specific macro cultural factors. We then tease apart this organic relation to understand its composition in detail.

Self-Concept/Personality. Block explained that economic changes in England during the 16th and 17th centuries entailed activities that increased the reliance on personal judgment, initiative, and responsibility. Businessmen made business decisions on their own, and to maximize their own profit. They did not follow traditional community business practices, consult with community members, or act for the benefit of the community. An individualistic self was therefore built into the economic changes:

> The culture of modern individualism emerged most prominently and pervasively in England in the century leading to the English Revolution. It began with the rise of a Puritan opposition in the 1560's … Its constituents were the product of profound changes in the English economy. During that century, the privatization of agricultural holdings and the emergence of a national market had stimulated widespread commercialization with incentives for specialized production, technological improvements, and a consolidation of holdings. The increasing role of individual initiative, business acumen, and responsibility for success in this new market economy generated a rising group of enterprising rural gentry, yeomen, and artisans …. The dependence of fortune on an individual's own actions increased the re-

> liance on personal judgment and initiative. (Block, 2002, pp. 39–40; cf. Ratner, 2002, pp. 41–42)

Sociology, anthropology, and psychology have confirmed that a movement from agriculture to commerce in the economic realm included the development of a more independent psychology.

A long-term ethnography in India indicated that increasing commercialization is associated with patterns of socialization that produce more independent individuals. A comparison of two Mayan communities in Guatemala found a greater emphasis on autonomy from the extended family and generally greater perceived internal locus of control in a community involved in commercial cottage industry, compared with one that engaged only in subsistence agriculture. Similar psychological effects of the historical movement away from agriculture were obtained in Iowa. Greater independence was manifested in those participants who had not become farmers than in those who had (Greenfield, Maynard, & Childs, 2003, p. 457).

Thomas and Znaniecki observed that socioeconomic changes in Poland at the turn of the 20th century entailed corresponding psychological changes. The peasants' psychology remained traditional as long as they remained isolated from the institutional changes that initially occurred in urban areas. But as new activities swept through the countryside, displacing peasants from their farms into capitalist industries and promulgating new concepts about life, dramatic and systematic psychological changes ensued. As commodity production expanded, the peasants began to calculate the value of their personal actions and to require compensation for them. Even children became less willing to care for their parents because the chance of recouping this expense was small. Under the old system, an act of social help did not create an expectation of a particular and determined reciprocal service. Everyone expected to be helped when a need arose. But with the introduction of the exchange mentality, the economic value of the service rendered becomes essential, instead of its social value (Cook, 2004; Ratner, 1997, p. 216).

Gender Identity. Gender identity is another psychological attribute that is part of macro cultural factors. In the early decades of the 20th century:

> As men increasingly came to work in large, bureaucratic corporations rather than small shops; as they sought leisure in large, impersonal cities rather than in small towns, and as they viewed the world through mass-circulation maga-

> zines rather than local newspapers, they began to devise new ways to think about their identity as men. The masculinity that evolved alongside this modern culture came to emphasize personality, sexuality, self-realization, and a fascination with appearances, all traits that made men well suited to participate in the social and economic institutions of the period. (Pendergast, 2000, p. 13)

These masculine characteristics became dichotomized from women's among the middle class. The gender differences in personality included dominant versus submissive, fast-paced versus patient, physical versus spiritual, active versus passive, loud versus quiet, demanding versus supportive, aggressive versus peaceful, calculating versus sentimental. Gender differences in personality were built into, and recapitulated, the roles that men and women occupied. "Male and female imagery and activities became more distinct and increasingly associated with contrasting 'rational' and 'affective' styles. This process of sexual differentiation closely corresponded to the progressive divergence of science and art, state and church, work and home" (Bloch, 2003, pp. 49–50; cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 104–105; Ratner, 2002, p. 116).

Emotions. Emotions are part of the arsenal of subjective processes that guide the construction, maintenance, and transformation of macro cultural factors. Macro cultural factors need emotions, and emotions are inspired and organized by macro cultural factors.

Historians have compared England at two different times, before 1780 and after 1780, and found that romantic love became a major motive in courtship and marriage only in the later period after capitalism had become institutionalized. After 1780, romantic love was confined to the bourgeois class, which initiated and managed the capitalist system. Other classes that had not yet adopted bourgeois roles and values did not experience romantic love (Ratner, 1997, p. 216).

Economic changes in the 18th century also led to dramatic changes in emotional expression. Most 18th-century middle-class American men and women were noticeably more restrained emotionally than people were in earlier times. Men and women were taught to master their emotional expressivity, including their facial countenance, laughter, and language. Men were expected to be more restrained than women. "Before the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, extremes of jubilant laughter, passionate weeping, and violent rage were indulged in with a freedom that in later centuries would not be permitted even to children" (Kasson, 1990, p. 147).

These forms of emotional expression supported social activities. Controlling emotional expression was important for 18th-century middle-class men because it was part of the self-discipline they had to develop in order to compete in the market economy. Competing in the business world required a calculating mentality that was free of sentiment and personal biases. Men not only struggled to develop job skills; they also worked on themselves to develop the proper demeanor of competence, diligence, and reliability so that they could appear marketable. An unemotional demeanor was also an important way of hiding information from competitors. Displaying anxiety, trepidation, and even intense desire might be exploited by one's competitor in business or politics (Ratner, 2000a, pp. 18–19).

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ORGANIZE PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

Macro cultural factors form the character of psychology. They are not mere external influences that elicit or constrain natural, preexisting features of psychological phenomena, or that merely affect peripheral expressions of psychological phenomena.

This is evident in the case of language. As Vygotsky emphasized, language is a symbolic system that people use to coordinate behavior in social institutions, and to think about, define, and categorize things. Social institutions and artifacts also organize psychological phenomena.

Macro cultural factors comprise *structures* and *objectives* that "push" and "pull" psychological phenomena into formation. *Structures* are specific characteristics of existing activities, artifacts, and concepts that constrain (push) the formation of psychology in certain directions. *Objectives* are features of macro factors that need to be attained and that incite, or pull, psychological phenomena to develop (Ratner, 1997, pp. 110–116). Structures are the "stick" and objectives the "carrot" of psychological formation. Let us examine each of these processes in more detail.

Macro Factors Are a Goal, or Telos, of Psychological Phenomena

The first section of this chapter described how macro cultural factors are an impetus or incentive for general psychological capacities. Our capacity for thinking, remembering, learning, perceiving, and emotions develops (in part, at least) in order to create and maintain macro factors that enhance survival and fulfillment by providing support, coordination, and stability. Even at the incipient stage of macro factors, people sense the possibility of

developing them, and this draws out the development of psychological phenomena to aid in the process. Macro cultural factors act as an "in order to" motive, in Schutz's terminology.

People do not construct culture in general, as an abstraction. They create concrete cultures. The specific features of concrete cultures act as an impetus for developing specific psychological phenomena—that is, phenomena with a specific form and content.

Macro cultural factors are a goal, or telos, for the originators of a culture. These founders strive to cultivate personality traits, emotions, motivation, and ways of thinking, perceiving, learning, and remembering that will facilitate social construction. Macro cultural factors also are a goal for new participants in a culture. As they strive to participate in existing macro factors, they work to cultivate appropriate psychological phenomena—as when a job seeker cultivates an appropriate appearance, linguistic style, personality type, and motivation that will enhance his appeal.

Because psychological phenomena are the mechanisms that guide macro cultural behavior, individuals must possess particular qualities to their psychological phenomena in order to construct and maintain macro cultural factors. This is the sense in which the latter are the impetus or telos of psychology. People must possess a particular psychology in order to construct and maintain: assembly line production, monogamy, arranged marriages, commerce, driving a car on a Los Angeles freeway, the Scholastic Aptitude Test, a modern army, television entertainment programs, mini skirts, fast-food restaurants, fundamentalist religion, a collective hunting and gathering society.

Ogbu and Stern (2001) described how macro factors comprise goals that inspire psychological phenomena:

> Cultural activities are amplifiers when they require, stimulate, increase, or expand the quantity, quality, and cultural values of adaptive intellectual skills. Some obvious cultural amplifiers in Western middle-class eco-cultural niches include handling technology, participation in a large-scale economy, negotiating bureaucracy, and urban life. These cultural activities require and enhance intellectual skills such as abstract thinking, conceptualization, grasping relations, and symbolic thinking that permeate other aspects of life. Each eco-cultural niche presents a wide array of cultural amplifiers of the intellectual skills that are required for success in that particular niche. Different eco-cultural niches require different repertoires of intellectual skills. Some skills enhanced by activities specific to one niche may also be of value in other eco-cultural niches. Other examples of cultural amplifiers and the associated intellectual skills found in various

> eco-cultural niches are pottery making-conservation, market trading-mathematics, foraging-spatial perception, video games-spatial perception, and verbal games-verbal abilities. (pp. 8–9)

Ogbu takes a structural-functional view of psychological phenomena. They function to adapt the individual to the social structure. They are called for by the structure. Sternberg, Gardner, and Wang similarly regard individuals' cognitive competencies as skills requisite for assuming various roles in the technological and economic spheres of their society (Wang, et al., 2004, p. 226)

Historically, commerce acted as an objective that stimulated reading. During the rise of capitalism, business centers had the highest rates of literacy (Ratner, 2002, pp. 23–24). Commerce also acts as an impetus to develop mathematics. Numerical calculations are vital to commerce, so as people become inclined to engage in commerce they seek to develop and learn mathematical principles and procedures in order to become more successful in business. Businessmen also provide funding incentives to mathematicians to develop and teach mathematics. Commerce was the incentive for Greek mathematics, Babylonian mathematics, and Renaissance mathematics. In the New Guinea highlands, as commercial activities were introduced, children changed their counting systems to become more sophisticated mathematically (Ratner, 1991, pp. 98–99).

Macro Factors Are Structuring Frameworks of Psychological Phenomena

As macro factors become consolidated, they form a context of pressures, constraints, and filters that mold the psychological phenomena of those who participate in them. As Weber put it, macro factors ("sociological loci" in his terms) consist of shared life chances, routine experiences, social conditions of existence, and demands and premiums placed on the social action of individuals. Macro factors structure life in a particular manner that makes it highly likely that that people will adopt psychological phenomena that are functional in that structure. For instance, Weber stated that the commercial activity of the urban petty-bourgeoisie fostered the likelihood of a calculating mentality, a respect for honoring contractual obligations, an abhorrence of emotional indulgence, and a practical concern with one's specialized position in the division of labor rather than a theoretical concern for the meaning of life in general (Kalberg, 1994, pp. 42–43). "Rather than simply evolving and flourishing as a consequence of the rational

choices of individuals, action-orientations acquire, Weber argues, an imprint and shape by milieus" (Kalberg, 1994, p. 40).

The fact that macro cultural factors structure psychological phenomena does not imply they are separate from them and precede them, as an independent variable causes a dependent variable. The macro cultural factors that structure the psychology of cultural participants were themselves conceived and coordinated using perception, language, emotions, reasoning, memory, learning, and motivation.

Macro cultural factors comprise conditions that structure one's experience and sense of life. Material conditions, standard of living, artifacts, opportunities and constraints, stressors, supports, treatment of people, and the physical infrastructure of a community (transportation system, aesthetic appearance of a community, proximity of stores, schools, and workplaces, and homes) foster a sense of who one is, one's capabilities, what to attend to, what is related to what, and how one must think, express feelings, express oneself, learn, and become motivated. Macro cultural factors also provide the conceptual means by which we define and interpret things. Cultural concepts define the nature and significance of love, pleasure, emotions, studying, child, marriage, and wealth.

For instance, we form a notion of self through being treated in particular ways by parents, teachers, and bosses, and by internalizing prominent cultural concepts of self. Teachers inculcate an individualistic self in students by insisting that they sit at their own separate desks, do assignments alone, take tests alone, and also by explicitly explaining that each student is unique.

Dewey (1902) explained how work structures psychological phenomena in this manner:

> Occupations … furnish the working classifications and definitions of value; they control the desire processes. Moreover, they decide the sets of objects and relations that are important, and thereby provide the content or material of attention, and the qualities that are interestingly significant. The directions given to mental life thereby extend to emotional and intellectual characteristics. So fundamental and pervasive is the group of occupational activities that it affords the scheme or pattern of the structural organization of mental traits. Occupations integrate special [psychological] elements into a functioning whole. (pp. 219–220)

Occupations organize psychology by implicitly and explicitly structuring people's movements, speech, and knowledge; demanding certain kinds of motivation, reasoning, forms of emotional expression and restraint, and learning strategies; presenting regular physical and social stimuli; modeling

behavior; expanding or limiting opportunities for action; and treating employees and consumers in particular ways.

Research has found a host of psychological phenomena that are organized in these ways by occupations. Occupational self-direction engenders intellectual flexibility, self-confidence, independence, low stress, personal responsibility for actions, antiauthoritarian attitudes, and modern attitudes toward living with children and parents (e.g., not willing to take parents into one's own home, or keep elderly children at home). Path analysis reveals that whereas the path from occupational self-direction to psychological factors is significant, the path from psychological factors to occupational self-direction is insignificant (Ratner, 2002, p. 29).

Macro cultural factors structure psychological phenomena explicitly and tacitly:

1. They do it explicitly through rules and instructions of how to feel, think, perceive. These include statements such as "Don't feel sad." "Get in touch with your feelings." "This is how to solve problems …." "Buy now." "This is blue and that is green. Don't confuse them." "Girls don't do well at math." "Arrive at work on time." "You're pretty." "You never do anything right." "You will be punished if you flirt with your students." "You will punished if you make sexual jokes to coworkers of the opposite sex." "You're imagining things." "You know you love your mommy" (when you don't).
2. They do it tacitly by treating people in certain ways, limiting their opportunities, surrounding them with models, speaking to them in certain ways, constraining certain actions while facilitating others—although not explicitly instructing people to act in particular ways. Tacit structuring of psychology is difficult to apprehend. It is more insidious than explicit structuring, and more difficult to resist.

The organization of psychological phenomena by macro cultural factors is not a mechanical process. The individual is actively involved in the process. Gerth and Mills (1953) explained this well: "By his experience in enacting various roles, the person incorporates certain objectives and values which steer and direct his conduct, as well as the elements of his psychic structure" (p. 22). "Expertness at fulfilling some role often involves psychic training: it involves learning what to look for as well as the meaning of what is seen" (p. 70). Although the individual is active in the cultural organization of his psychology, it is nevertheless true to say that "His memory, his sense of time and space, his perception, his motives, his conception of his self, his psychological functions are

shaped and steered by the specific configuration of roles which he incorporates from his society" (p. 11).

It will be instructive to present extended examples of the ways in which macro cultural factors structure psychological phenomena. We present examples of explicit and implicit structuring, as well as structuring by conditions and by cultural concepts.

Conditions That Structure Psychological Phenomena. Martin-Baro (1994) (a priest and psychologist who was murdered by a Salvadoran death squad for his progressive political activities) explained how fatalism among Latin American people is tacitly structured by macro activities and concepts:

> Fatalism is a way for people to make sense of a world they have found closed and beyond their control; it is an attitude caused and continually reinforced by the oppressive functioning of overall social structures. Marginalized children in favelas, or champas, or other shantytowns of Latin America internalize fatalism not so much because they inherit it from their parents as because it is the fruit of their own experience with society. Day by day they learn that their efforts in school get them nowhere; the street does not reward them well for their premature efforts at selling newspapers, taking care of cars, or shining shoes; and therefore it is better not to dream or set goals they will never be able to reach. They learn to be resigned and submissive not so much as the result of the transmission of values through a closed subculture as through the everyday demonstration of how impossible and useless it is to strive to change their situation, when that environment itself forms part of an overall oppressive social system. (pp. 210–211).

He continued:

> Though fatalism is a personal syndrome, it correlates psychologically with particular social structures …. We do not to assume a mechanical cause-and-effect relationship or to postulate a "basic personality." We are simply noting the obvious fact that the organization and functioning of each social system favors some attitudes while impeding others and rewards some kinds of behavior while prohibiting and punishing others …. Fatalism is a behavioral pattern that the social order prevailing in Latin America encourages and reinforces in certain strata of the population. (p. 213)

Finally, he concluded, "In order for the Latin American masses to do away with their fatalism, not only must they change their beliefs about the nature of the world and life, they must also have a real experience of

changing their world and determining their own future" (p. 218). Martin-Baro highlighted the political implications of a macro analysis of psychology—because conditions promote fatalism, social reform is necessary to eliminate it.

The physical infrastructure of houses, factories, prisons, churches (Lurie, 2003), classrooms, office buildings, cities, supermarkets, and shopping malls also tacitly structure experience and psychological phenomena. The physical design of colleges in isolated campuses composed of sterile classrooms, isolates learning from practical activities, and fosters learning of abstract concepts through verbal exchange, intellectual manipulation of ideas, and emotional suppression. Structuring classroom periods in hour segments structures students' concentration for that length of time, without explicitly telling students they should concentrate. Likewise, when a caretaker sleeps in the same room, or bed, with an infant, this form of interaction generates a different psychology in the child than when a caretaker sleeps in a separate room. Apart from the content of what the caretaker says, the separation or closeness of the two people generates a different sense of self in the infant.

Similarly, when a mother holds her infant facing herself during feeding or communicating, this form or style of interaction tacitly generates a more individualistic sense of self than when a Samoan mother holds her infant facing toward other people. When Mayan mothers restrict their babies' movements by swaddling and holding them, this produces a more placid personality than when American mothers allow their babies great freedom of movement. When Mayan mothers customarily do not look at their babies' faces or talk to them, this inculcates a more restrained, collectively oriented personality than when American mothers engage in face-to-face interaction and communication—apart from the content of what is communicated. When American mothers attribute intentions to babies, ask them questions, wait for them to respond before the mothers act, and explain matters to them, this inculcates an expectation in the child that he or she is the center of attention, apart from what is said. In contrast to this self-centered orientation, Samoan and Kaluli children develop a sociocentric sense of self as a result of the style of their interactions. An apprentice relationship between an elder and a youth—where the former closely teaches and monitors every movement—tacitly inculcates a less independent self-concept than a Western teacher who assigns students homework to do on their own. Smiling at girl children more than boys, and being more emotionally responsive to girls than boys tacitly encourages different kinds of emotional activity from the two genders (cf. Ratner, 1991, pp. 173–178; Ratner, 2002, pp. 19–20).

Schooling explicitly structures students' psychological competencies through academic and behavioral rules. These explicit rules dictate that students concentrate on abstract verbalizations and concepts in class for an hour or more. Rules dictate that they control their bodily movements, talking, sexuality, emotions, and bodily functions such as belching. Assignments and tests force students to learn abstract material quickly to keep pace with a rapid syllabus and fulfill daily or weekly assignments. They are graded for punctuality in completing assignments on time. They must acquire memory skills that can memorize abstract concepts out of context. Students are graded on their ability to verbally articulate ideas in ways that denote objects that are not immediately present. They must work on their own and develop an individualistic self-concept. Cooperation is punished as cheating. They must perform on timed tests, which require rapid recall and problem solving.

These examples demonstrate an important aspect of psychological socialization. A particular social activity can be used to socialize psychological phenomena that are functional for a different activity. Many of the behavioral and academic rules governing the learning of a subject matter, are psychological competencies necessary to succeed as a social participant outside the school in a job (cf. Levine, Levine, & Schnell, 2001). The ability to memorize abstract concepts and facts by rote, the ability to complete assignments on time, the ability to learn material quickly and to recall and recite it quickly on timed tests, the ability to solve problems alone without social cooperation, the ability to sit still, control bodily movements and functions, and concentrate on abstract concepts in a sterile classroom, devoid of emotions and social interaction are not useful for learning and using a subject matter, per se. In fact, they increase the difficulty of learning. Quite opposite competencies and contexts would make learning much more effective. The socialized psychological competencies are useful for fulfilling the social roles involved in work in a capitalist economic system.

The same point holds for parents teaching their children language and other skills. Many of the ways parents treat their children during the teaching of skills, actually socialize psychological competencies that are extraneous to the skill, but useful for social roles. Teaching language, for example, inculcates an individualistic or a collectivistic self that has nothing to do with learning language, per se.

Extraneous psychological socialization is often confused with the socialization of a skill. Teachers and parents believe that their treatments and rules are necessary to teaching the skill, when, in fact, they are really teaching social-psychological competencies for other activities. Extraneous psy-

chological socialization is a common, powerful, but subtle procedure for social reproduction.

An important tacit structuring of psychology occurs in advertising. Henry (1963, chaps. 3, 7, 8) argued persuasively that commercial advertising tacitly suggests ways of reasoning to viewers. The juxtaposition of commercial products with natural scenes, social situations, and famous people leads viewers to assume a logical connection even without being explicitly told there is one, and even when there is none. The juxtaposition implies that using the product results in being popular or successful when this is not the case. This misleading association and implication, in order to stimulate spending, is "pecuniary logic." Henry pointed out that pecuniary logic in advertisements has profound cognitive effects on the viewer. It encourages illogical thinking—believing that things are related when they are not. It leads to accepting all sorts of false, coincidental associations; and it negates critical, rational analysis.

The dizzying presentation of new, "better" products has an additional psychological effect. It makes people dissatisfied with what they have. It makes them constantly restless for new things, experiences, and gratification even if not explicitly told to be so. Motivation, patience, satisfaction, and irritability are all affected by the sheer number of dazzling products that are paraded before us. Unrestrained hedonistic gratification that is encouraged by consumerism also promotes irrational subjectivism. Self-indulgent individuals accept their desires; they do not rationally analyze their origins, content, and consequences.

Macro cultural factors additionally structure people's psychology by containing and displaying models of emotions, personality, motivation, and reasoning. Psychological phenomena are displayed in advertisements, songs, books, television, and movies. People imitate these models in forming their own psychological functioning.

Cultural Concepts Structure Psychological Phenomena. Cultural psychologists have emphasized how cultural concepts structure psychological phenomena by filtering and classifying sensory information.

Geertz (1973) explained this in his essay, "Religion as a Cultural System." He stated that cultural concepts/symbols are models of the world, and they are also models for how to act/experience. Concepts do not merely interpret things, they also call for behavioral and psychological reactions. They induce a set of tendencies, capacities, skills, motives, and moods (e.g., exultation, melancholy, self-confidence, self-pity, solemn). For instance:

> The Azande learns from witchcraft, conceptions not just to understand apparent "accidents" as not accidents at all, but to react to these spurious accidents with hatred for the agent who caused them and to proceed against him with appropriate resolution. *Rasa*, in addition to being a concept of truth, beauty, and goodness, is also a preferred mode of experiencing, a kind of affectless detachment, a variety of bland aloofness, an unshakable calm. (p. 124)

Cultural concepts comprise color categories, which organize color perception. Luria demonstrated this in research in Uzbekistan in 1930. He presented 27 colored pieces of wool to traditional peasants and modern teachers on large collective farms. He asked them to categorize the wool pieces into five categories of colors that looked similar. The peasants were unable to group 27 colors into five categories. They did not perceive sufficient resemblances among any of the colors to classify them together. They said that "pig's dung" does not look like "cow's dung." The teachers had no difficulty in classifying the 27 colors into five groups of similar colors. They perceived the browns as resembling each other, and so on.

Although Luria did not say so, the reason that the two groups perceived the colors differently is that they had different cultural concepts of color. The peasants construed color as integrally part of objects, and most of their words for color were words for objects (e.g., orange). The teachers construed colors as distinctive phenomena in their own right, and most of their color terms were abstract (e.g., blue). These differences in linguistic codes and cultural concepts led to differences in perception. The peasants perceived the colors as properties of particular objects. Two colors appear similar only if the objects they reside in are functionally related. Colors are not colors in their own right, so perception of colors is a function of how objects go together in life. The objects that bear the colors used in the study did not have any functional relationship in the peasants' lives. Consequently, the colors appeared to be dissimilar. In contrast, the teachers' cultural concept and linguistic lexicon for color abstracted color from objects and construed it as a distinctive property based on wavelength rather than object. They perceived colors as similar or different on this basis, and were thus able to see resemblances that the peasants did not.

Thus, cultural concepts and linguistic terms for color organized the very sensory appearance of the colors in the experiment. Of course, both groups "saw" the 27 colors that were presented to them. However, they did not see them in the same ways. Their perceptual experiences of the colors were shaped by the cultural concepts and terms.

Ozgen (2004) supported these findings. He compared English speakers with speakers of African languages that do not have a blue–green bound-

ary. Triads of colors (two blues and a green, or two greens and a blue) were shown to both groups with the task being to pick the odd color. English speakers tend to pick the color that is from the different category, whereas African subjects did not identify an odd color because they all fell within the broad blue–green category. Similarly, Turkish separates blue into two categories based on lightness. Consequently, Turks perceive two blue colors as different if they reside in the different categories. English speakers perceive the same two blues as similar because they reside within the same color category in English. On a search task, to identify a target color among distractors, Turks located a blue faster than English speakers if the distractors were from the other blue category in Turkish. The reason is that the Turks perceived the distractors as different from the target color and so quickly identified the latter. English speakers perceived the target blue and the distractors as similar because they all fell within the broad blue category in English.

Ogzen (2004) found that subjects can be taught to categorize hues in different ways. They can be taught broad or narrow color categories. After such training, subjects can discriminate colors on different sides of a newly taught boundary better than they could before the boundary was introduced. Detection thresholds (just noticeable differences) are much lower for colors on different sides of learned color boundaries than they are within a color category. Teaching conceptual color categories structures perception of color.

Societies perceive colors as similar or dissimilar on the basis of their color concepts and terms. The Dani of Indonesian New Guinea use the terms *light* and *dark* to classify colors quite differently from the way that we do. A green color chip with a brightness of 8 is called dark whereas a red chip with a brightness of 3 is called light—despite the fact that 8 is measurably brighter than 3 (cf. Ratner, 1989b; Roberson, 2005; Roberson, Dandoff, Davies, & Shapiro, 2005 for additional examples).

The human eye can distinguish 7.5 million wavelengths of light ("just noticeable differences"), yet we *perceive* only relatively few colors that are culturally salient. Similarly, the rainbow is a continuum of light varying smoothly from the shortest to the longest wavelengths of the visible spectrum. Yet we do not see a continuum; rather, we see bands (or categories) of hues separated by distinct boundaries. Ozgen (2004) demonstrated that color concepts and terms organize the diverse wavelengths together into distinct colors.

Cultural variations in optical illusions are additional evidence that cognitive schemata that underlie visual perception are culturally formed (cf.

Ratner, 1991, pp. 204–212, 70–75). Auditory perception is similarly shaped by cultural concepts. In a musical tradition that does not recognize chromatic intervals, C sharp is identified with C. In our musical tradition, C and C sharp are *heard* as very different tones (Ratner, 1991, pp. 70–73).

Semantics of spatial relations also organize cognitive processes. Certain languages (such as the Maya language Tzeltal) primarily use absolute, or cardinal directions, such as north, east. This contrasts with English, which generally employs relative terms such as left, right. Tzeltal speakers cannot say, "The cup is on the left," or "my right hand." Instead they have to say "Pass me the cup on the west," or "My north leg." Speaking in absolute spatial directions *requires* cognitive operations that simply are not present for English speakers. Absolute spatial terms require that the speaker know where north, south, east, and west are at every moment. For one to describe the position of any object at any time, its cardinal coordinates must be known. Memory must also store the cardinal coordinates of every object so that one can remember a thing's position that was previously encountered. English speakers are unconscious of cardinal directions in everyday life. We do not think in these terms, nor do we remember in them. We might, sometimes and with difficulty, be able to figure out the direction your dining room table faced, and whether the cup we used was east or west; however, it is not the normal operating system of our cognition and memory (Levinson, 2003a, 2003b). Levinson found that speakers who employ absolute coordinates have a better sense of direction than do "relativists." They, in fact, know where north, south, east, and west are all the time and are able to describe the cardinal coordinates of new locations easily. Speakers of relative directions are extremely weak on this cognitive task. If, after perceiving an object's location, speakers of absolute directions are rotated 180 degrees, they are able to recall the object's location far better than speakers of relative directions. The fact that linguistic codes form cognitive categories and competencies supports the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis (Levinson, 2003a, pp. 40–41; cf. Ratner & McCarthy, 1990).

Linguistic systems form templates that structure infants' perception of sounds. During the first 6 months, infants discern differences between all the phonetic units used in the world's languages. By 1 year of age, infants cannot discriminate sounds that their native language does not discriminate. For instance, 6-month-old Japanese infants discriminate (respond differentially) to "r" and "l" phonemes, just as Americans do. By 12 months, Japanese no longer demonstrate this ability. When Japanese adults are presented with "r" and "l" sounds, they hear both as "r" because Japanese has

no "l." In contrast, Americans become much better at discriminating the two phonemes because their language uses both of them.

Language similarly constrains the production of sounds. Neonates throughout the world produce a universal set of utterances. Their utterances soon begin to diverge reflecting the influence of the ambient language. By the end of the 1st year, prosodic (intonations) and phonetic sounds conform to the language they hear.

The cultural organization of perceptual and motor competencies by linguistic sounds occurs in advance of learning semantics and syntax. The former competencies assist children in learning higher order properties of language. Infants use information about phonetic units to recognize word forms. American children utilize their perceptual discrimination of "r" and "l" to learn words that begin with the two consonants. If they did not have this perceptual competence, they would confuse the semantic words. This is exactly the difficulty that Japanese people have distinguishing English words beginning with "r" and "l".

Learning (sound patterns) promotes development (of language). Language development does not intrinsically unfold from endogenous competencies, as Chomsky believed. Nor does input simply trigger innate tendencies. Rather, it establishes categories (templates, scripts) that serve as the operating system of mind (Kuhl, 2000). The language one happens to speak affords, or conversely makes less accessible, certain complex concepts. There are languages with no or very few number words. It would be impossible for those speakers to think of the number "73," let alone perform mathematical calculations (Levinson, 2003a, pp. 33–34).

Additional "Whorfian" effects of language on psychology are the following: The Yucatec language does not have number markings on nouns. On nonlinguistic tasks of judgment and recognition, speakers tend to ignore number. English speakers are extremely accurate in their judgment and recognition of number, due to the semantic emphasis on number.

The notion that language primarily reflects underlying conceptual development needs to be greatly revised to emphasize that language structures conceptual development (Levinson, 2003b, pp. 301–307).

Macro Factors Are Resources That Individuals Draw On

Though macro cultural factors mold psychological phenomena through their structuring of life activity, they can also function in a less demanding fashion, as a set of resources that individuals draw upon in order to function in daily life.

In his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Sartre explained how individual acts draw upon various affordances in the environment. An act selectively draws together, or "totalizes," aspects of one's milieu. The act embodies, or "incarnates," prior conditions, yet it simultaneously fleshes them out in idiosyncratic ways (cf. Aronson, 1987, pp. 54ff). Sartre explained how becoming a boxer totalizes together the violence of the fighter's lower class life, his desire to escape from that class, the economic fact that boxing earns money and so offers the possibility of escaping the lower class, the boxer's physical qualities, the audience's desire to observe violent fighting, and the community of other boxers who affect his likelihood of success. The fighter coalesces all of these conditions in becoming a boxer.

He does not create these conditions. Nor does he freely use them as he wishes (as many cultural psychologists believe). Rather, he adopts the role of a boxer because it is one of the few options for success that *society* makes available to men of his ethnicity and social class. Far from being a free choice, boxing is the realization of a social possible within social conditions. The boxer actively chooses boxing, and he conditions himself to succeed. However, his activity occurs within a structure of possibilities that he did not create. And his activity adapts itself to the requirements of this structure.

Becker (2004) demonstrated how ideals of body shape totalize and incarnate social opportunities and demands. Adolescent girls on Fiji radically altered their ideal body form from a robust figure suitable for agricultural work, to a slim figure after the introduction of a market economy and American television programs in the 1990s. Adolescent girls imitated the slim body images they observed on American Television as a means to feel modern and worldly, to obtain better jobs in the commercial sector that favored slim, youthful women, to satisfy their parents' demands that they cultivate a slim appearance, and as a means for exercising a modern sense of agency by controlling their figure. Fiji women renounced traditional cultural factors as sources of identity and embraced modern cultural factors as sources of their gender and sexual identity. They did so in order to adapt to a market society.

People often draw on macro cultural factors in order to cope with stress. They adopt normative values and behaviors in an effort to find acceptance and security. Young, middle-class, Western, White women who are under stress seek to find acceptance and security by cultivating a stereotypical physical appearance. They may become avid consumers of clothing, or they may control their body weight. These choices entrench women more deeply in social norms.

Brison concluded that most cases of suffering lead individuals to adopt coping strategies that recapitulate social norms and values. For example, bereaved Kwanga (New Guinea) women and men unwittingly followed cultural scripts that allowed them to work through diffuse pain by defining and expressing their emotions in ways that won communal approval. But in doing so, women internalized a view of themselves as helpless victims whereas men took on the personas necessary to exercise leadership in the village. In short, in the attempt to maintain a positive sense of self, individuals were drawn to think and feel in ways that ultimately supported male dominance in Kwanga society (Brison, 1998, p. 372).

Derne (1994, p. 218) analyzed strategies that contemporary Indian women devise to enhance their subordinate position. She concluded that paradoxically, "women respond to structural constraints by creating meaning systems that reconstitute that social structure" (p. 222). Kandiyoti (1988, p. 275) similarly concluded that women strategize within a set of concrete constraints that reveal and define the blueprint of a "patriarchal bargain." Patriarchal bargains exert a powerful influence on the shaping of women's gendered subjectivity.

Individuals under stress utilize cultural factors in an extreme form because their need to cope is so desperate. Just as a starving person feels compelled to eat an exaggerated amount of food to feel satisfied, so the anxious person compulsively adopts exaggerated forms of cultural behaviors in order to feel satisfied with herself. Ordinary levels of conformity are insufficient, just as ordinary helpings of food are insufficient to a starving man (Ratner, 1991, pp. 273–274).

Hysterical women in Victorian times adopted extreme forms of middle-class feminine behavior in response to their restricted domestic role and heavy domestic responsibilities. They became weak, sickly, and lost motor functions (walking, lifting) and sensory functions (hysterical blindness and deafness). These hysterical symptoms were exaggerations of the feminine stereotype for middle-class women. The norm was to be frail, submissive, protected from sensory stimulation and physical exertion (women were believed to have "weak nerves" and "thin blood," which precluded physical work and formal education). White, middle-class women under social stress utilized the feminine stereotype as a model for reacting to the stress. They became "hyper-feminine." Hysteria allowed them to desist their normal stressful activities. However, it contained them within the parameters of their role and prevented real social change.

Eating disorders are another example of people drawing upon cultural models in order to cope with distress. White, middle-class, American

women are prone to coping with distress by imitating the cultural ideal of a perfect body shape. They achieve this shape by controlling their eating behavior. They gain satisfaction by imitating this ideal, in the same way that people feel good about themselves from wearing fashionable clothing or driving a fashionable car. These women exaggerate the culturally ideal slim shape and they control their diet in exaggerated ways because they are fulfilling an exaggerated (desperate) need to be happy and accepted. Their difficulty in finding fulfillment motivates them to try harder to use the cultural means at their disposal.

A recent review of the literature concluded that the determining factor in these eating disorders "is whether the individual seizes upon weight and shape as the answer to the problems of identity and control. Some young women become invested in achieving a 'perfect' body as an existential project (i.e., as a way of giving their lives meaning, coherence, and emotional fulfillment that are otherwise lacking)" (Polivy & Herman, 2002, p. 199; see also Ratner, 2002, pp. 39–40, 49–50). It is when individuals attempt to cope with distress by adopting the cultural stereotype of a thin body that eating disorders occur. Polivy & Herman ruled out psychological explanations for eating disorders because they are too general and do not account for the specific problem. Psychological (individual) factors such as childhood sexual abuse, self-directed hostility, guilt, depression, low self-esteem, and impulsiveness can motivate a vast number of behaviors. Conversely, eating disorders can be an attempt at coping with all these psychological factors. Consequently, there is no association between eating disorders and any particular psychological factor. Eating disorders are a result of a cultural coping strategy (adopting an exaggerated cultural ideal of a slim body) that is adopted by a culturally circumscribed group of people (White, middle-class, American women).

Proof that eating disorders are cultural phenomena comes from the fact that they become prevalent among non-Western women to the extent that non-Western countries adopt capitalistic social relations. Eating disorders have increased sixfold in the past 25 years in Japan. "Without question, the rise in eating disorders in Japan correlated with increasing industrialization, urbanization, and the fraying of traditional family forms following World War II" (Pike & Borovoy, 2004, p. 493). Additional macro cultural factors that spurred eating disorders include middle-class gender roles for Japanese women and slim body ideals of beauty. Katzman, Hermans, Van Hoeken, and Hoek (2004) reported that anorexia is rare on the Caribbean island of Curacao. The few cases that exist are confined to well-educated, high-income women of light skin, who have lived abroad. No cases of anorexia are

found among the majority Black population. The women who become anorexic are attracted to light-skinned, Western, middle-class ideals of thinness because these ideals are salient to their social position. These women exaggerated the middle-class feminine ideal of a slim body to deal with the stress of social dislocation. They were attempting to emulate the White upper class and distance themselves from the Black majority. They encountered difficulty moving up due to their mixed racial background and skin color; and they were unacceptable to the Black majority because of their skin color, middle-class lifestyle, and international experience (cf. Becker, 2004; Le Grange, Louw, Breen, & Katzman, 2004).

Given the profound and subtle ways that macro cultural factors organize psychological phenomena, it is incumbent on us to carefully scrutinize the psychological effects of cultural factors. Macro cultural psychology contends that seemingly discrete macro cultural factors, such as a road or a shopping mall, structure the social fabric of life and inculcate a range of behaviors and psychological phenomena. The same is true for clothing styles, commuting patterns to work, the content and artistic level of entertainment programs, the fragmenting of TV programs with commercial breaks, the frequency with which parents smile at their sons versus daughters, the structure of buildings, the physical condition of a neighborhood (public spaces, dilapidated buildings, garbage on the street, noise), the use of lawyers instead of friends to settle disputes, the use of professional instructors instead of relatives or friends to give our children swimming lessons, the manner in which jobs are structured, the presence of loud music in fast-food restaurants, the introduction of food-scanning machines in grocery stores, privatizing pension plans and water services, patenting genes, and commercial telephone-answering machines that keep the caller waiting with an oxymoronic message that says how important his business is to the company. All of these model and shape psychological phenomena.

The cultural organization of psychological phenomena not only determines how and what we perceive, learn, recall, feel, strive for, and reason about. Cultural organization also determines what we do not perceive, learn, recall, feel, strive for, and reason about. It makes certain matters inconceivable to us, unconscious to us (cf. Ratner, 1994). For instance, capitalist institutions, physical infrastructure, and cultural concepts foster a sense of individual autonomy that is blind to social influences on behavior. Capitalist macro cultural factors lead an individual to overlook them as the basis for his behavior and his individualistic self-concept, and to overlook the fact that they are the reason he overlooks them!

The Cultural Organization of Psychology Is Not a Mechanical Process, But Depends on Subjective Activity

When we say that macro cultural factors form psychology, this is shorthand for saying that people form psychology under the push and pull of macro cultural structures and objectives. People adjust their perceptions, emotions, motivation, personality, reasoning, memory, learning, and motivation so they can form, reform, and participate in macro factors. Both the initiators of psychological phenomena, and their followers, engage in these subjective cultural processes.

People form their psychology as they participate in macro cultural factors. They are constrained by macro cultural factors to make psychology congruent with them. Making this happen requires activity and agency. Psychology is not a mechanical by-product of macro cultural factors (as CO^2 is a by-product of running a car). We actively create identities out of macro factors by actively identifying with them. We define ourselves in their terms. For instance, middle-class people define themselves in terms of their social position between the lower and upper classes. The middle class takes pride in this identity. They feel superior to the lower class for having achieved a higher standard of living. And they feel superior to the upper class for having resisted its arrogance and profligacy. The middle class deliberately adopts styles of fashion, moral principles, personal behaviors, motives, emotions, reasoning, learning/studying, concentration, diligence that set them apart from lower- and upper-class individuals.

Middle-class identify/self is constructed, though not freely, randomly, capriciously, or personally. Their self is constructed to succeed in macro cultural factors and support them; it must be congruent with them as all psychological phenomena are.

"Although individuals are highly active in the process of self-making, the materials available for writing one's own story are a function of our public and shared notions of personhood. American accounts of the self, for example, involve a set of culture-confirming ideas and images of success, competence, ability, and the need to 'feel good'" (Oyserman & Markus, 1998, p. 123; cf. Ratner, 2002, pp. 84–86). A dramatic example of this is K. Clark and M. Clark's (1939, 1940) research on racial identity. They found that about 44% of 3 to 5-year-old Black children, *in segregated schools* during the 1930s and 1940s, identified Black boys (oneself or a classmate) with a drawing of a White boy. Even when the skin color of the subjects was broken down into light, medium, and dark, 41% of the dark children identified themselves as White. A large percentage of Black children had internalized

the society's privileging of White over Black in their self-definition, even though they were entirely segregated from Whites.

When Black children, aged 3–7, were requested to choose between a Black and White doll according to (a) which one was a nice doll, 67% selected the White one; (b) which one looks bad, 50% selected the Black doll; (c) which one is a nice color, 60% selected the White doll (K. Clark & M. Clark, 1947). Racial identification changed significantly with age. The light-skinned Black children identified more with Whites as they aged from 3 to 5 years (from 42% to 61%). Medium- and dark-skinned children increased their identification with Blacks: Among medium-skinned subjects, 32% of 3-year-olds identified themselves as Black whereas 53% of 5-year-olds did so. Among dark-skinned 3-year-olds, 52% identified themselves as Black, whereas 70% of dark 5-year-olds did so. Forming an identify, even a physical identify, is an active process; however, it involves identifying with models and ideals that are prominent in the environment (cf. Becker, 2004).

Of course, subjectivity also introduces idiosyncratic variations into experience with macro factors (Ratner, 2002, pp. 62, 93). However, macro cultural psychology is unconcerned with these. We are concerned with shared commonalities in psychological phenomena that stem from common participation in social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS IMBUE PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA WITH CONCRETE CHARACTERISTICS

Because psychological phenomena originate in, are permeated by, and support concrete macro cultural factors, they embody their concrete characteristics. Psychological phenomena are "totalizing" phenomena in the sense that they draw from, and draw together, a number of aspects of macro cultural factors. As Sartre explained, boxing is not simply a technical skill. It incarnates a range of social issues and unifies them in that skill. All phenomena act in this way. Memorizing an equation in school, falling in love, having sex, becoming angry with your husband, reading a story to your child, all incarnate and totalize numerous cultural issues that concretize them.

Memory. A case in point is the remarkable memory agility that medieval scholars cultivated. They could recite entire works backward, they could recite the next-to-last verses in each book of Virgil, and they could recall all the passages on a given topic in a lengthy work. Some in-

dividuals could dictate three different memorized passages simultaneously. Students were taught to accomplish these feats by dividing texts into sections that were identified by cues. Oftentimes the cues would be embedded in the written material to facilitate memory. Such cues included capitalizing the first word of a paragraph with a large, vivid letter, drawing images in the margins next to paragraphs, and even coloring the pages to distinguish them.

Another demonstration that macro cultural factors form the operating system of memory is the fact that Westerners have acquired a facility for recalling information out of context, which contrasts with non-Westerners' memory for contextually based information. "Free recall" and "contextual recall" are quite different forms of operations that are necessary in different macro cultural factors.

Reasoning. "All that constitutes reason, its principles and categories, has been made in the course of history" (Durkheim, 1983, p. 67).

Reflecting Levy-Bruhl, Vygotsky argued that reasoning can take different cultural forms. One is thinking in concepts, which involves associating things on the basis of an essential identity. An example might be "these people are moral." Another form of thinking is thinking in complexes. This involves associating things on the basis of a single concrete property. An example is "these birds have red breasts" (cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 166–167).

Entire populations of people reason according to logical principles that are incomprehensible to most readers of this book. Consider a compound premise, "I stood (A) and I heard it (B)." For most readers of this book, the sentence means that both A and B are true. The sentence is incompatible with the statement "I did not stand (–A) and I heard it (B)." It logically follows that "if A and B," then "–A and B" cannot be true. However, Navajo Indians judge the entire premise as true when only B is true, regardless of whether A is true or false. Thus, "I did not stand (–A) and I heard it (B)" is adduced to be compatible with the original sentence. The two are logically consistent, whereas for us they are inconsistent (Ratner, 1992). This example demonstrates that the rules of reasoning—that is, what conclusion is deemed to follow from a premise—are culturally constituted.

Some populations have not acquired syllogistic reasoning from premises to conclusions based on formal logical relationships. When presented with the syllogism: (a) Berlin is a city in Germany, (b) There are no camels in Germany, and (c) Are there camels in Berlin?, entire populations reply "I don't know, I've never been to Berlin." The ability to logically deduce con-

clusions from premises on the basis of abstract principles is a culturally acquired cognitive operation (Ratner, 1991, pp. 91–92).

Religious faith may be considered a distinctive, culturally organized, form of reasoning. It violates logical principles and empirical evidence, which govern secular thinking. Catholics believe that Jesus was born from a virgin birth, that his body ascended from earth to heaven where it still hovers as a being that knows all, hears everyone's prayers, understands all languages, and speaks to Catholics in all languages. None of these beliefs conforms to scientific facts about birth, gravity, or the psychobiology of language and perception.

Different enculturation is necessary to inculcate religious and scientific thinking. Interestingly, devotees learn both kinds of thinking. In secular matters, they reason logically. They note contradictions between a hypothesis and evidence, and they modify theories in light of evidence. If their spouse disappeared and someone claimed he had seen the body rising into the sky, they would never believe this. However, in religious matters, they eschew common sense, logical reasoning, and empirically based thinking. They switch back and forth between the two kinds of enculturated thinking.

Modern Romantic Love. Modern romantic love is an emotion that has a distinctive, concrete quality that originates in, embodies, and supports particular historical-cultural factors. It is a distinctive constellation of sensuous passion, personal attraction and compatibility, intimate sharing, privacy, quick arousal, transcendence ("love overcomes all problems and differences"), euphoria, and lack of realism and rationality ("love is blind," "love is chemistry"). Modern romantic love was invented by the bourgeoisie in the 17th century, and is found only where bourgeois socioeconomic relations exist.

Romantic love recapitulates the individualism and the separation of personal life from public life that characterize capitalist socioeconomic relations. People who regard themselves as unique individuals seek a lover who appreciates their uniqueness and is compatible with it. However, in a world of unique individuals it is difficult to encounter someone who is compatible with you. This difficulty is compounded by conditions of impersonal materialism, competition, and estrangement. The very conditions that make love difficult also make it desperately desirable. One needs love to provide intimacy and support in a world that delivers little of them. When a compatible person is found who cares about you, it is a kind of unexpected, magical

luck. This makes love exhilarating: In one fell swoop, love eliminates incorrigible problems of life.

Romantic love is part of a personal domain that has been segregated from the competitive, materialistic, calculating domain of work and public life. This accounts for its intensely personal, intimate, spontaneous, and emotional nature. Romantic love has little connection to rationality, seriousness, and social behavior. It is stimulated by personal traits and lightheartedness.

The subtle qualities of romantic love thus derive from the manner in which life is structured in social institutions and cultural concepts. These macro cultural factors foster the quality of love (and all emotions), the situations that elicit it, its manner of expression, and its organization (i.e., which emotions are experienced as similar and which are dissimilar). Macro factors do not simply affect peripheral features of love such as its intensity.

Love has very different qualities, expressions, organization, and eliciting conditions in different historical-cultural conditions. Medieval romantic love, in the 12th century, was typically an adulterous affair between a married aristocratic woman and a lowly knight. It was rarely sexual. Nor was it personal or intimate. It was a frustrated yearning rather than a consummated fulfillment. Courtly love was based on a stereotyped image of the lover's social standing, public accomplishments, and perhaps physical appearance. It emphasized service and courtesy, which recapitulated feudal relations. It was a spiritual sentiment that elevated the souls of the lovers. Love in ancient Greece was an entirely different kind of love from either courtly or modern romantic love. And love in colonial America had yet its own distinctive features—it was a kind of spiritual admiration for the work and soul of the other. It was rational and reserved (cf. Ratner, 2000a).

Love varies with particular groups of people who are engaged in particular kinds of social relationships in particular historical eras. Love is not the sum of universal, natural components. Quite the opposite, love reorganizes any universal, natural phenomena such as caring, attraction, and sex into a cultural-psychological system and imbues them with concrete, variable qualities.

Anger. Even universal emotions such as anger are organized differently in different cultural institutions and concepts. Rites, rituals, religious authority figures, and group sanctions on thinking, feeling, and acting all determine the way emotions are experienced.

An ethnotheory of anger affects its quality. One may believe anger is good to know and express (Americans); it is dangerous to express and

must be monitored so ensure it never is expressed (Bali); it is dangerous so one should not attend to it, but rather shift to another thought or emotion (Ifaluk, Phillipines). These three experiences of anger will be quite different. Americans will feel relieved and fulfilled after expressing anger, whereas Balinese and Ifaluk will feel frightened, surprised, and ashamed after expressing it. Conversely, Americans will feel resentful, frightened, and ashamed of themselves if they do not express anger; whereas the Balinese and Ifaluk will feel comfortable and self-righteous if they do not express it.

Sadness. Buddhism accepts the fact of suffering and sorrow as everyone's common fate. Hopelessness is therefore usual, expected, understood, and shared. Actually, Buddhist religious customs construe sadness as ennobling and pleasurable because it testifies that one is an ordinary person who is afflicted by the common problems of life. They are usual, expected, understandable, and shared. They testify to human frailty and humility. Accepting this state of affairs defines one as a good person. Sadness testifies to one's strength of character and to one's commonality with other people. Striving to avoid or alter one's fateful position is a manifestation of hubris. Sadness in Buddhist societies rarely degenerates into depression because it is socially shared, understood, and accepted. North American sadness has quite different qualities because of its conceptual underpinning. Sadness is regarded as a deviant state that contradicts our normative values of success, pleasure, and optimism. In addition, sadness is regarded as a personal state due to personal misfortune and is shared by few other people. This conceptual basis makes sadness a solitary, lonely, unusual, disturbing, unpleasant, pitiful, helpless ("what shall I do?"), overwhelming state of failure that one anxiously seeks to overcome. However, these qualities make it difficult to overcome and lead to degeneration into depression (Ratner, 1997, pp. 106–107).

The difference between the two forms of sadness is not simply the situations that trigger sadness, but rather the feeling quality itself. The feeling of sadness is a different experience for a Buddhist in Sri Lanka and an American. Of course, there is some common element that makes both of them forms of sadness. However, this common element is shot through with specific differences (Ratner, 1991, pp. 265–268; Ratner, 1997, pp. 106–107).[5]

Shame. Shame is another emotion whose very quality depends on and varies with cultural concepts. Shame that rests on Taoist concepts has a different quality from shame that rests on modern concepts of self, success,

material wealth, and social relations. Ancient Taoists believed shame to be an intrinsic human frailty, namely the inability to achieve Tao. Tao was an ideal state in which the individual relinquishes intellectual reasoning and achieves an intuitive awareness of the unity of subject and object. The near impossibility of achieving this state of self-fulfillment causes shame. Shame is a universal, ontological, permanent condition that results from the inability of the human being to relinquish his own consciousness and merge with the world. It is a socially shared bond that unites people together and is infused with sympathy and compassion. This emotion is qualitatively different for a modern Korean who feels shameful because of her poor dress, for example. For her, shame is a personal lapse at a specific time and situation. It is a failure to employ reason and self-control (rather than relinquish them). Modern shame is theoretically possible to avoid by greater personal resolve (e.g., work harder and live better), and it has nothing to do with human nature or with overcoming the distinction between subject and object. In addition, modern shame is a negative condemnation by others that ostracizes the individual; it is not a shared feeling infused with bonding and commiseration. The two kinds of shame share a general sense of inadequate capability; however, the feeling of inadequacy is quite different as a result of the different mediations that modulate it (Ratner, 2000a, p. 11).

Shweder (2003a) made the same point about shame in the United States and India: "Lajya on the East Coast of India and 'shame' on the Upper West Side of Manhattan are not *just* two different manifestations of the fear of being judged defective, because each of the particular ways that such an abstract ideas has taken cultural and historical shape creates a new mental state of a distinguishable kind" (p. 1127).

Sexuality. Sexuality is another function that is organized into concrete experience by macro factors. Foucault explained that sexuality is not a natural fact, a fixed element in human experience. Rather, it is a complex of feelings, ideas, desires, motives, behaviors, rights, and personal relations that are culturally organized. Certain elements of sexuality may be universal; however, these are always subsumed within cultural-psychological processes. Certain sexual *acts* may be universal; however, sexual *identity* and *experience* are culturally variable.

Foucault contended that sexual experience was organized by systems of knowledge (my cultural concepts) such as psychiatry, medicine, psychology, and criminology, and by relations of power (my social institutions) such as in therapy, prison, school, family, and work.

The erotic sexuality in 21st century capitalism is different from Puritan sexuality.

Sexual *identity* is not a necessary feature of the human individual (though sexual *behavior* normally is). Foucault observed that before the 19th century in Western Europe, sexuality was equivalent to sexual anatomy. One's sexuality was one's anatomy. If one was anatomically female, her sexuality was, by definition, feminine. There was no such thing as sexual identity as a personality trait. There was no conceptual or experiential basis for such a thing. It would have been as impossible to experience sexuality apart from anatomy as it was for Luria's peasants to experience color apart from objects.

The particular constellation that we call sexuality today is a sense of sexual identity characteristic of our self or personality. With sexuality dependent on personality, it could exist only where self is treated and conceptualized as a distinctive phenomenon. Where self is treated and conceived as part of the social and natural world, the conceptual and psychological basis of sexual identity would be absent. A psychological notion of self as distinct from body, society, and nature is prerequisite to there being personality traits such as sexuality. A whole way of treating, and thinking about, people is prerequisite to the modern sense of sexuality. Thus, the idea that was newly expressed in the 1870s, that removing the uterus of a woman does not destroy her sexual identity, would have been inconceivable earlier when anatomy completely defined sexuality. At that time, with that definition of sexuality, a woman would have experienced a major change in her sexuality after hysterectomy—just as a believer in voodoo will experience dread after learning that his enemy has pierced a doll with needles.

Our modern character of sexuality did not arise until the 17th century and did not become prevalent until the 19th century in the West. In Ancient Greece, sexuality was tied to social status. One could have sexual relations only with people who stood in a particular social relationship to you. An adult, male citizen of Athens could have legitimate sexual relations only with social inferiors. What an Athenian did in bed was determined by his or her social status vis à vis the sexual partner. It was not a distinctive phenomenon of individual psychology. It did not define or express one's personality. "Different social actors had different sexual roles: to assimilate both the superordinate and the subordinate member of a sexual relationship to the same 'sexuality' would have been bizarre" (Halperin, 1998, p. 256).

In Greece, there was really no such thing as sexuality per se, because sexuality was embedded in their different social roles (and anatomies). It was not an abstract phenomenon. If this sounds strange, we would do well to emphasize that many other phenomena that we regard as distinctive have no such independent reality for premodern people. Color, time, quantity, emotions, and self were all regarded as components of broader things in premodern times. Most cultures did not even have distinct concepts or words for them. They only became construed as abstract, distinctive phenomena in the modern era as art, education, the family, and work became distinctive activities. This difference in cultural significance and function led these phenomena to be experienced very differently in the different eras (Ratner, 1991, pp. 69–111). As Halperin (1998) explained:

> The correspondences in classical Athens between sexual norms and social practices were so strict that an inquiry into Athenian "sexuality" *per se* would be nonsensical; … it would conceal the sole context in which the sexual protocols of the classical Athenians make any sense—namely, the structure of the Athenian polity.
>
> What is fundamental to their experience of sex is not anything *we* would regard as essentially sexual; it is instead something essentially outward, public, and social …. Erotic desires and sexual object-choices in antiquity were generally not determined by a typology of anatomical sexes (male versus female), but rather by the social articulation of power (superordinate versus subordinate) (pp. 256–258).

Because sexuality was an integral part of social status, sexual categories were social categories that had little to do with sex, per se—just as color categories can be object categories and have little to do with color, per se. This leads to a remarkable conclusion that the gender of the sexual partner was far less significant than his or her social status. A male citizen having sex with a foreign woman or man was performing the same kind of sexual act because it was defined by the social status of his partners rather than their genders. Both partners were of the same subordinate social status in relation to himself.

This eliminated the distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality. They were reduced to simple predilections, or matters of taste, akin to individual preferences for different food:

> The currently fashionable distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality … had no meaning for the classical Athenians: there were not, so

> far as they knew, two different kinds of "sexuality," two differently structured psychosexual states or modes of affective orientation, but a single form of sexual experience which all free adult males shared …. There was no conceptual apparatus available for identifying a person's fixed and determinate sexual *orientation* ….
>
> It is not immediately evident that patterns of sexual object-choice are by their very nature more revealing about the temperament of individual human beings, more significant determinants of personal *identity*, than, for example, patterns of dietary object-choice. And yet it would never occur to us to refer a person's dietary preference to some innate, characterological disposition, to see in his or her strongly expressed and even unvarying preference for the white meat of chicken the symptom of a profound psychophysical orientation, …; nor would we be likely to inquire further … [about its] beginning in earliest childhood or originating with a gastronomic trauma suffered in adolescence …. That is because we regard the liking for certain foods as a matter of taste …. In the same way, it never occurred to the ancients to ascribe a person's sexual tastes to some positive, structural, or constitutive sexual feature of his or her personality. Just as we tend to assume that human beings are not individuated at the level of dietary preference and that we all, despite many pronounced and frankly acknowledged differences from one another in dietary habits, share the same fundamental set of alimentary appetites, and hence the same "dieticity" or "edility," so most premodern and non-Western cultures, despite an awareness of the range of possible variations in human sexual behavior, refuse to individuate human beings at the level of sexual preference and assume, instead, that we all share the same fundamental set of sexual appetites, the same "sexuality." Far from being a necessary or intrinsic constituent of human life, "sexuality" seems indeed to be a uniquely modern, Western, even bourgeois production …. (pp. 258–260)

Homosexual acts are performed in many societies. However, same-sex intercourse did not qualify as "homosexuality" in Greece and Sambia, New Guinea. Nor did the individuals who practiced it regard themselves as "homosexuals." No sexual identity was conferred on sexual behavior. In Sambia, it is a rite of passage for 8-year-old boys to fellate adult men in an initiation ceremony. This is a socially enforced event, evidently traumatic for the boys. The boys go on to marry women, and neither the young boys nor the adult men who initiate them identify themselves as homosexuals although they engage in homosexual behavior (Ratner, 1997, pp. 169–171). Contemporary homosexuals have a far different sense of sexuality as being a major component of their identity. This sense of identity is

undoubtedly facilitated by having a word, *homosexuality*, which was only coined in 1869 in Europe.

Sexuality in capitalist society is less grounded in social status and more in individual attributes. Our sexuality is felt to be stimulated by our own "sexual drive," and by the personal attributes of another person such as her personality and appearance. The cultural basis to our personal sense of sexuality lies partly in the exclusion of personal issues from depersonalized public realms such as work. This leads to treating personal issues apart from social institutions, status, and criteria. Sex has become one of these personal, private issues, abstracted from social activities. This is objectified in the architecture of houses where the bedroom is isolated from other rooms, so that activities that take place there are privatized. (Medieval houses, in contrast, were not divided into separate rooms. Sleeping, sex, eating, and entertaining took place in common spaces in the presence of relatives, servants, and friends.) Modern sexuality is abstracted from social activities and is intensely personal and private.

One reason that homosexuality is such a remarkable behavior in modern society is that it violates socially prescribed gender requirements for sexual relations. Modern social norms and religious ideology strongly prescribe the appropriate gender of sexual partners as heterosexual. Challenging this norm makes homosexuality stand out as a significant act and psychological phenomenon. Ancient Greece did not prescribe appropriate genders for sex. Consequently, homosexual sex violated no norms and was not remarkable. There was nothing unusual to notice, or explain, or condemn.

Sexuality has a different character for us and for ancient Greeks. We practice it differently, regard it differently, and experience it differently. For us, sexuality is a distinctive, circumscribed, personal attribute that stands out from other activities, is a prominent object of attention, and is driven by the gender of our partner. For the Greeks, it was an integral part of social life, and it was tied to social status rather than individual attributes or gender.

CROSS-CULTURAL SIMILARITIES IN PSYCHOLOGY ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE CULTURAL NATURE OF MIND

The fact that psychological phenomena have concrete, different characteristics in different social systems does not mean there is never any similarity from society to society. Psychological similarities exist because of similarities in macro cultural factors. All societies have certain elements in common. All involve communication, education, division of labor, coordination, rule making, and administration. These general social characteristics foster gen-

eral psychological functions such as language, reasoning, planning, emotions, taking the view of other people, taking turns, abstract concepts, motivation, and self. The general features of these psychological functions are as universal as the social characteristics are.

Psychological and social similarities exist at the concrete level as well, in combination with differences. Two societies may both have formal education despite other social differences. This similarity may endow educated individuals in both nations with similar cognitive processes (Ratner, 1991, chap. 3).

PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA PROMOTE MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS

Not only do psychological phenomena originate in and embody macro factors, they reciprocally support and promulgate them. Cultural activities, concepts, and artifacts require emotions, perception, motivation, reasoning, remembering, self-concept, and learning in order to be conceived, planned, coordinated, maintained, and changed. Psychological phenomena thus function to support and facilitate macro factors. They must be congruent with them.

Bourdieu used the term *habitus* to express this point. *Habitus* is a structure of cognitive, perceptual, and emotional dispositions that is structured by social positions and conditions, and that produces and reproduces them. The psychological dispositions of *habitus* are so cultural that Bourdieu called them forms of "cultural capital." In other words, psychological dispositions are accumulated cultural resources that enable one to navigate within a cultural field—analogous to financial capital being a cultural resource that one utilizes to navigate within the economic field.[6]

The structural-functional view (in sociology and anthropology) illuminates the functional role that psychological phenomena have for culture. This perspective regards psychology from the side of culture, as fulfilling cultural needs. In other words, what kind of psychology does the culture need to maintain itself? What cultural needs does psychology satisfy? What is the social function of decontextualized memory ("free recall"), jealousy, romantic love, abstract thinking, an individualistic self, aggression, gender-specific personality attributes? Wang et al. (2004) endorsed the structural-functional view of psychology. They maintained that psychological phenomena facilitate the maintenance of macro cultural factors by adjusting/adapting to their demands.

For instance, jealousy fortifies individual control of property, products, and people. Jealousy motivates us to maintain an exclusive posses-

siveness of things and people. It energizes us to combat threats to this exclusive relationship.

In contrast, collective ownership and sharing minimize possessiveness and jealousy. Jealousy is rare among the Nyinba people of Nepal, who practice polyandry, where one woman marries all the brothers of another family (Ratner, 1997, p. 106). Jealousy is also rare among the Na people in Yunnan province, China. In chapter 2, we saw that they practice free love and have several lovers simultaneously throughout their lives. There is little jealousy among the men when they arrive at a girl's house to find her engaged with another man for the evening. One man recounted a typical evening of making the rounds of girls' houses: "At the first house, the sister of the woman I had chosen answered the door and nicely warned me: 'There is already someone here, come back tomorrow night or the day after tomorrow.'" Asked if he ever became jealous, the man said "How could I be jealous! You can ask whomever you want. You will see that in this kind of situation, we don't know how to be jealous." "Girls belong to everyone. Whoever wants to can visit them. There is nothing to be jealous about" (Hua, 2001, pp. 212–213). In another case, a man, Sola, had had a relationship with a woman for 3 years. Yet when another boy said he liked the woman, Sola told him to go ahead and sleep with her. The boy spent 2 days with her and Sola didn't mind.

At times men and women do become jealous, especially after they have decided to become a couple. This accords with our contention that social relations foster emotions: A tendency to maintain an exclusive claim on another person incites jealousy. However, few Na become couples. In addition, they continue to have outside affairs. Partners are expected to tolerate each other's affairs. Jealousy is unusual and considered a sign of weakness. If jealousy is expressed strongly, the partner will leave and villagers will mock the jealous person (Hua, 2001, pp. 257–259).

Jealousy also motivates the competitive drive to acquire more possessions. The emotion of envy changed its quality between the 19th and 20th centuries to promote consumerism. Envy of wealthy lifestyles became encouraged because it motivated people to participate in the consumer economy at the turn of the 20th century. "Envy, which thirty years earlier had been considered a grave sin, was now regarded as a beneficial force for social progress and individual advancement …. This transformation in envy's meaning and legitimacy was significant because it was part of an emerging emotional and behavioral style that supported the expansion of the consumer economy. America could sustain a full-fledged consumer economy only after men and women had overcome their religious reserva-

tions about materialism and had developed an emotional style that emphasized the value of pleasure, indulgence, and desire, and downplayed the importance of restraint and delayed gratification" (Matt, 2003, pp. 2–3; cf. Ratner, 2000a).

The individualistic self similarly supports the capitalistic economy. When adolescents struggle to become individuals and "make their own decisions" (in opposition to parents' suggestions), this gives them the freedom to demand consumer products that their parents would not voluntarily purchase. Similarly, when pharmaceutical companies encourage patients to "take the initiative" and "make choices" about their medication, this individualism has the purpose of consuming expensive drugs that will profit the corporations.

Research has demonstrated the cultural function of other psychological phenomena. According to Abu-Lughod (1990), shame among Bedouin women, especially shame about sexual matters, functions to perpetuate patriarchal, patrilineal economic and family relations. Marriages are arranged for the economic enhancement of the fathers, not for the bride and groom. Sexual modesty prevents unmarried women from personally attracting men (who might be unacceptable to the father) and it allows fathers to dictate who the husband will be. The paternal kin group of the husband remains dominant after marriage, and the marital bond between bride and groom is subordinated to it. Sexual modesty prevents married women from establishing intimate relations with their husbands, which might conflict with patriarchal control. Sexual shame thus supports a definite kind of family system.

Even "autobiographical memory serves mainly social and cultural functions" (Fivush & Nelson, 2004, p. 576). The kind of memory one has about oneself defines the kind of person one is. (The converse is also true: The kind of self that occurs in a given society also affects what the person remembers about himself and how he remembers this information.) Specifically, Western people generally have more elaborate, detailed, emotional memory of personal experiences than Asian people do. This enables Westerners to construe themselves as distinctive individuals with unique previous experiences. Western autobiographical memory thus facilitates individuals to function in an individualistic society. Asians' less detailed memory about their individual experience leads them to de-emphasize their uniqueness and regard themselves as members of a collective society in which most people recall and communicate about their past in similar terms (Fivush & Nelson, 2004, p. 576).

If psychological phenomena reflect and promote macro cultural factors, and macro cultural factors are dominated by economic institutions (as we

saw in chap. 2), then psychological phenomena reflect and promote economic institutions in many aspects, though not in all aspects. The poetics of the bedroom are related to the politics of the boardroom.

Even undesired and unexpected psychological reactions, such as mental illness, have a social function. They are fostered by normal macro factors, embody them, and allow them to persist. From society's point of view, mental illness is an acceptable vice that does nothing to challenge established power relations or social structure. Mentally ill individuals certainly have no means to understand the cultural basis of their disorders, devise an alternative social system, and struggle to implement one. When society also manages to mystify and coopt professionals in social service, social science, social policy, and medicine so that they deny cultural explanations for mental illness that could lead to proposals for social reform, mental illness is safely accepted as a natural disease that can elicit sympathy from social leaders.

The fact that psychological phenomena support a particular social system gives them a political dimension. They sustain a particular way of life, institutions, class structure, consumerism, gender and racial relations, forms of government, legal codes, standard of living, use of resources, working conditions, physical infrastructure, use of technology, environmental degradation, and military actions. People need to realize the political function that their psychologies have. They need to realize what social policies their psychologies make possible. They need to realize that their psychological reactions have broad political implications. If they are disconcerted by aspects of the status quo and wish to modify them, they need to change their psychological reactions accordingly. Being politically responsible includes this psychological component.

PSYCHOLOGY IS A MACRO CULTURAL FACTOR

Psychological phenomena have the properties of a macro cultural factor. They are socially constructed and shared; they are artifacts rather than natural phenomena; they are emergent formations that transcend individual processes, although they certainly depend on individual processes; they are usually administered by social leaders; they are socially modeled; they are internalized from models; they are socially malleable; they are fostered by other macro cultural factors; they unify people psychologically to behave in accordance with social institutions, artifacts, and concepts; and they serve as social markers to indicate a person's social position.

Fivush and Nelson (2004) observed that memory comprises a common bond with other individuals who recall the past in a similar way. The man-

ner in which people of a particular culture remember things creates a shared past that allows each individual to enter a community, or culture. Memory is thus a macro cultural factor. It is a way that people share experience and form the social bonds that comprise culture.

Similarly, as Oyserman and Markus (1998) explained, "the public representations of selfhood that characterize a given sociocultural niche function as common denominators—they provide the primary structure of the selves of those who live within these contexts. These shared ideas produce necessary, although often unseen, commonalities in the selves of people within a given context" (p. 109). "Although making a self appears to be an individual and individualizing pursuit, it is also a collective and collectivizing one" (p. 107). "From a societal perspective, self-construction is too important to be left as a personal project. Social integration and the social order require that individuals of a given group have reasonably similar answers to the 'who am I' and 'where do I belong' questions" (p. 107).

These remarks apply equally to all psychological phenomena. From a societal perspective, motivation, emotions, perception, reasoning, and memory are too important to be left as personal projects. They must all be congruent with macro factors in order to ensure the endurance of these factors.

Psychological phenomena are often initiated and regulated by powerful individuals who govern other macro factors. Earlier we saw that the individualistic self, the modern masculine personality, and romantic love were initiated, regulated, and promulgated by the rising business class. This class also fought to impose new emotional regulations, motivations, and mathematical competencies (Ratner, 1997, chap. 3; Ratner, 2002, chap. 1).

Drawing on Foucault's work, which emphasized the social control of psychological phenomena, we can see that contemporary mental illness is a macro cultural factor in this sense. The definition, explanation, and treatment of mental illness are determined by psychiatrists, psychologists, pharmaceutical companies, and insurance companies. When individuals become upset in the course of encountering difficulties in life, they invoke these official definitions, explanations, and treatments to understand and deal with their experience. They regard themselves as depressed, explain their depression in terms of psychiatric notions of biological imbalance, and believe that medication offers the best chance for treatment. Their experience of "being depressed" is a macro cultural factor because it is socially constructed, shared, and administered.

Pharmaceutical companies and physicians have similarly manufactured a cultural definition of erectile dysfunction. They have defined it

as a medical condition with physical causes that is treatable by medication. They have also defined it broadly so that it encompasses many innocuous symptoms that occur in large percentage of the male population. A medical condition of "mild erectile dysfunction" was applied to all men who believed they were not sustaining erections as long as they used to, or who reported they were not always able to achieve erections, though they usually were able to. Of course, this cultural definition of sexual dysfunction, and normal sexuality, was manufactured by the Pfizer drug company because of its commercial value in creating a market for Viagra, which Pfizer manufactures. This manufactured definition of sexual dysfunction has been disseminated by newspapers. In a study of all newspaper articles from 1970 to 2000 mentioning erectile dysfunction, the shift away from psychological explanations and toward physiological explanations is dramatic:

> Of the 18 articles written between 1970 and 1980, one-half mention psychological factors potentially contributing to erectile dysfunction. Of the 363 articles written between 1980 and 1990, one-fourth mention psychological factors contributing to erectile dysfunction. In the more than 1,000 articles written between 1990 and 2000, less than one-fifth mention psychological factors. (Loe, 2004, p. 32)

This administered cultural definition of sexual dysfunction has been widely adopted by the male population. Many men have accepted Pfizer's definition of normal sexuality as maximal rigidity and sustainability even into old age. Anything less is abnormal and dysfunctional. (Just as losing the Super Bowl is regarded as utter failure instead of indicating that the team is the second best in the entire country.) Ironically, the concern over sexuality that Viagra advertising has created may actually cause many cases of erectile dysfunction.

The administration of psychological phenomena is most clearly evident in colonial/imperialist states. Colonial administrators explicitly maneuver to mold the consciousness of the natives in order to effect appropriate behavior (Mitchell, 1988). "Whether it be in the name of a 'benign,' civilizing imperialism or in cynical pursuit of their labor power, the final objective of generations of colonizers has been to colonize [the natives'] consciousness with the axioms and aesthetics of an alien culture." "The early colonization of Tswana [South Africa] consciousness advanced at two levels." At its most tangible, it involved what the evangelists termed "direct influence"—the effort to teach particular beliefs and behaviors, such as worship-

ping a Christian god. But at a deeper level, the missionaries sought to inculcate forms of thinking, communicating, and learning. The colonists sought to organize both the form and the content of the Africans' consciousness. One way the missionaries organized the form of the natives' thinking was by controlling the terms of argumentation "whose structure bore the hegemonic form, the taken-for-granted tropes, of the colonizing culture" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991, pp. 4, 199; cf. Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997). For example, the missionaries engaged the natives over questions such as where water came from:

> In being drawn into that conversation, the Southern Tswana had no alternative but to be inducted, unwittingly and often unwillingly, into the *forms* of European discourse. [It] was to be seduced into the modes of rational debate, positivist knowledge, and empirical reason at the core of bourgeois culture. The Tswana might not have been persuaded by the substance of the claims made by the churchmen, and their world was not simply taken over by European discursive styles. Yet they could not avoid internalizing the terms through which they were being challenged. Even to respond to the arguments of the Europeans, after all, meant using some of its signs and adopting some of its practices—in short, assimilating its forms and conventions. (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991, p. 213)

Of course, the colonization of consciousness was not completely successful. The missionaries left certain psychological phenomena alone as unnecessary to subjugate. In addition, certain of the missionaries' efforts at resocializing the natives were repudiated by the natives. However, most of the important battles for the natives' mind were won by the missionaries. The natives generally succumbed to the colonial mentality.

Colonialism may be regarded as a pure case of the cultural administration of psychology that exists in all societies, in different forms. Even truly democratic societies must administer the psychology of their citizens in order to ensure appropriate (democratic) behavior. The administration may be more democratic than in despotic societies, but it is no less real.

Emotions, personality, perception, motivation, reasoning, problem solving, and memory are macro factors in that they are publicly displayed and promoted to the population via images in the media. Psychological phenomena are standardized and mass-distributed across the population. Individuals internalize the psychological macro factor just as they do other macro factors. This includes selective appropriation and individual variations that also mark the internalization of other macro factors.

As a macro cultural factor, psychology is no more a personal product than institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts are. Nor is it fashioned more democratically than other macro factors are. Where elite groups control institutions, ideology/concepts, and the physical infrastructure of society they also control its psychology. People control their psychology only in democratic societies (as opposed to nominally democratic societies).

A deviant psychology would undermine other macro factors, and leaders work to prevent this from occurring. Individuals with socially unacceptable personalities, emotions, perceptions, motivation, and cognitive competencies are ostracized as forcefully as criminals who interfere with social institutions are.

As a Macro Cultural Factor, Psychological Phenomena Bear on Other Macro Factors. Reconceptualizing psychology as a macro cultural factor places it on the same level as other macro factors with a concrete cultural form and content that they possess. This allows for an interaction between psychology and other macro cultural factors without violating the character of either. Concrete cultural psychological phenomena can function as the subjective activity of concrete cultural institutions, concepts, and artifacts. Culturally shared, concrete self-concept, emotions, logical reasoning, memory, learning, motivation, child development, perception, and sexuality are part of the reason for cultural behavior such as war, terrorism, generation gap, school performance, and political allegiance. Reconceptualizing psychological phenomena as a macro cultural factor eliminates the hiatus, or incongruity, between psychology and culture that I discussed in chapter 1.

THE RELATION OF PSYCHOLOGY TO OTHER MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS IS A UNITY OF DIFFERENCES

Psychological phenomena are dialectically related to macro cultural factors. From Fig. 3.1, we may observe that they are interpenetrating and interdependent as well as distinct. Being internally related means that cultural factors do not exist as variables external to psychological phenomena that merely affect some percentage, "strength," or degree of their character. Macro factors did not contribute a percentage of the individualistic self that arose in the 16th and 17th centuries. Nor did they merely affect peripheral aspects of self such as its outward form of expression. Nor was commercial activity separate from, and prior to, the individualistic self. This self developed along with capitalist economic relations. It was inspired by the drive to

create these economic relations. It was cultivated by these relations. Its features derived from, and recapitulated, capitalist economic relations. Moreover, the individualistic self was necessary to construct and maintain capitalist economic relations. It was organically part of them. Macro cultural factors are psychologically rich, and psychological phenomena are culturally rich (cf. Asch, 1952, pp. 418–419).

The organic interdependence of psychological phenomena and macro cultural factors is most visible from examining the historical genesis of a particular cultural-psychological phenomena. Examining the founding activities of capitalism illuminates the birth of the individualistic self within it. A historical perspective on the birth of cultural factors and their accompanying psychological phenomena reveals how the founders actively constructed both in tandem. A historical perspective prevents reifying culture and psychology.

In contrast, confining attention to an existing cultural formation and the ways it structures psychological phenomena, obscures the simultaneous, active forming of cultural factors and psychological phenomena. This often happens when the cultural socialization of psychology is emphasized. Socialization (including parenting and schooling) begins with an existing culture that is taught to new participants—children, immigrants. Culture is easily misconstrued as an inert, reified, natural factor that mechanically determines psychological phenomena as a by-product. To correct this view it is necessary to comprehend the historical genesis of culture and psychology. We must emphasize that socialization is a way of maintaining culture after it has been formed through active struggle.

Although psychology is an integral part of other macro factors, it has distinctive characteristics. Within the unity of macro factors there are differences. Hegel called this a "unity-of-differences" or "differences-in-unity". (Actually, Heraclitis, in the fifth century BC, coined this phrase, which Hegel adopted.) In the case of psychology in relation to other macro factors, perception, emotions, personality, motivation, and other psychological phenomena clearly have distinctive qualities from social institutions, artifacts, and concepts, although the content of those qualities derives from these other macros.

Consider, for example, the emotion of spectators at a boxing match. A match occurs within an international boxing system that determines which fighters can fight which others according to an objectified ranking system bestowed by boxing societies. A match occurs on a program of other matches over an evening. The early ones pit fighters of low ability, whereas the final match of the evening pits the best fighters against one another.

Spectators' emotions at a boxing match recapitulate its hierarchical arrangement, but they also introduce distinctive subjective qualities that are not in the formal social organization: "This hierarchy is lived in *tension* by the spectator whose attention grows from one fight to the next" (Sartre, 1991, p. 18). In other words, the institutionalized hierarchy of boxing matches has a subjective component, which is increasing tension, anticipation, and attention. These subjective correlates of the institutional structure are grounded in and derived from the structure; however, they have a distinctive quality that is not the structure itself.

Psychology can support other macros only if it has features that are distinct from them and that add to them. If psychology were identical to other macro cultural factors, it would add nothing to them.

Emphasizing psychology's distinctiveness from other macro factors is vital for avoiding sociological reductionism, It is also vital for avoiding psychological reductionism of macro cultural factors to psychological phenomena. We shall see in chapter 7 that many cultural psychologists collapse the distinction between psychology and other macro factors. They say that culture and psychology are one and the same thing. They try to avoid reifying society by regarding macro cultural factors as little more than psychological constructions. This obfuscates the distinctive features of social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. It obfuscates the ways in which they are devised and administered, the interests, principles, and power relations they embody, the need to study them in detail, and their powerful impact on psychological phenomena. These become highlighted only if they are recognized as distinctive from psychology. A dialectical unity of differences is far different from an "obscurantist holism."

To provide a cultural account of psychology, both sides must be preserved in their relationship. We must establish a correspondence between psychology/behavior and macro cultural factors. "The entire exercise presupposes that concepts [and other macro factors] are *analytically* external to and *theoretically* separable from the behaviors themselves" (Shweder, 2003b, p. 56). Otherwise, there will be no explanatory constructs to explain psychological phenomena.

Conceptually distinguishing factors leads to recognizing that certain ones may be more powerful than others. A unity-of-differences does not imply that all parts are all equally influential.

Of course, the distinctions among factors are never absolute. Factors are never independent of each other. Our study of particular elements always includes recognition of their concrete character, which stems from their position in the complex of factors. We never treat elements as sepa-

rate, decontextualized, or abstract. Furthermore, we eventually study complex interactions among elements. We study how psychological phenomena reciprocally influence cultural factors and also mediate our behavioral responses to them.[7]

PSYCHOLOGY MEDIATES REACTIONS TO OTHER MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS

Social experience with social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts generates distinctive psychological phenomena that then mediate the ways in which individuals experience other macro factors. Our culturally organized motivation, perception, emotions, reasoning, memory, self, and learning all affect our participation with other macro cultural factors.

For instance, discrimination and poor living conditions lead children to develop a psychology of low self-confidence, fatalism, low academic motivation, poor verbal expression, and rebellion against authority at school. As a result, even if they attend a good school, their psychology mediates their encounter with school and leads to poor academic performance.

Psychological phenomena have distinctive features that mediate and affect other macro factors. Because psychological phenomena are aspects of culture, we may say that they are a way that culture mediates itself. Psychology is one aspect of culture mediating other parts. It is one aspect of culture adding to other parts and complicating culture. Culture is internally mediated in the sense that its mediations are integral to itself. This may be schematically depicted as in Fig. 3.2. Figure 3.2 schematically separates the four

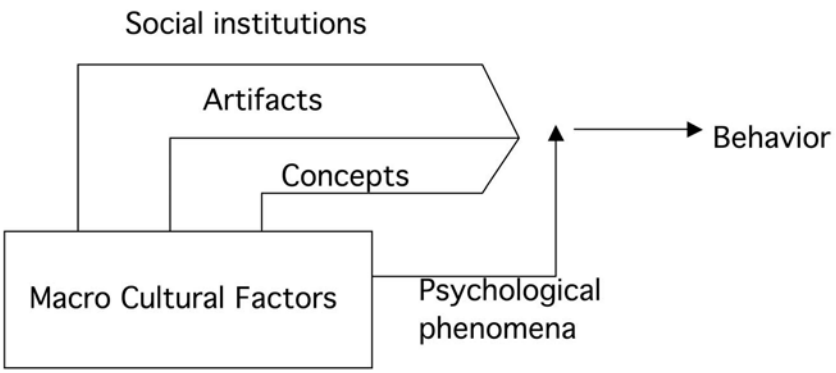

FIG. 3.2. Culturally organized psychological phenomena mediate other cultural factors.

cultural factors for the purposes of illustrating the point that psychological phenomena mediate the other three. The truth of the matter is that the four are always dialectically integrated, as in Fig. 3.1.

SOCIETY IS COMPOSED OF DIVERSE MACRO FACTORS THAT GENERATE DIVERSE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AMONG INDIVIDUALS AND WITHIN A GIVEN INDIVIDUAL

To say that psychological phenomena are structured by macro social factors does not mean that every individual will have the same psychology. Role theorists and conflict theorists have highlighted the stratified, heterogeneous character of societies, and the corresponding heterogeneity of psychological processes (Ratner, 1997, pp. 100–101, 109–111).

Society is divided "vertically" and "horizontally." "Vertical" division of labor is the hierarchy of roles within a social institution. "Horizontal" division of labor is the division among diverse institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts—for example, among the economy, family, education, religion, science, parliament, art, and entertainment. The division of labor introduces variety and complexity into psychological phenomena. This heterogeneity is not random or personal. It is demographically distributed in ways that conform to the institutional organization of macro cultural factors. Macro factors require psychological heterogeneity in order to construct and maintain the variety of social roles, concepts, and artifacts. Self-concept, for example, varies with social-class position: "If the society is to operate smoothly, the view of self that a child takes on must be realistically related to the child's likely future position. Everyone cannot have the same view of self because everyone cannot hold the same position in the occupational hierarchy" (Wilcox, 1982, p. 293).

Demographically distributed psychological phenomena are called "psychographics" by marketers of consumer products. Psychographics, which became recognized in the 1950s, have led marketers to differentiate the former "mass market" into a segmented market of disparate social-psychological groups that require different advertising appeals.

A psychographic is a given psychological phenomenon, such as intelligence, reasoning, motivation, and self-concept, that has different forms among different strata of the population. Wang et al. (2004) stated this "heterogeneity of psychological functions" strongly: "We suggest that there are no such things as invariant, core competencies universal to every human child. Instead, cognitive competence is relative to specific cultures, to the particular

cognitive spheres or domains valued in a culture, to the social and physical contexts in which the child participates in organized activities, and to the cultural and societal demands as perceived by the child him- or herself" (p. 227).

A major division within society that generates profound psychological differences is social class. Social class is a position within an economic hierarchy that entails relative degrees of social power, resources, opportunities, rights, and responsibilities. The conditions that comprise social class structure one's entire life (Hacker, 2004). They also structure the lives of succeeding generations. The obdurateness of social class over generations is expressed in the fact that of children born into the poorest quintile of the population, 42% remain there as adults. Twenty-four percent move up to the fourth quintile as adults. Only 7% of the poorest individuals rise to the wealthiest quintile. Conversely, 40% of wealthy children born into the top quintile remain there as adults. Only 6% of these wealthy children drop to the poorest quintile as adults. A person born into the top quintile is about six times as likely to end up there as an adult as a person who is born into the bottom quintile. The persistence of social class across generations is also manifested in the fact that the correlation between incomes of American fathers and sons over 15 years is 0.65 (Bowles, Gintis, & Osborne, 2005, p. 7).

The conditions of class profoundly structure psychological functions. In fact, class is the strongest predictor of psychological functioning. It is well known that intelligence and mental illness vary quantitatively and qualitatively with social class (Fryers et al., 2003). In addition, earlier we presented evidence on linguistic differences associated with class. Socioemotional adjustment is also heterogeneous in different classes, as is physical health (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Aber, 1997; Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997; Evans & English, 2002; Ratner, 2002, pp. 27–31).

The psychological correlates of class are as obdurate as class position. For instance, in a longitudinal study of 9,000 individuals, children who scored in the top quartile on cognitive competence when they were 5 had a 65% chance of remaining at that level when then were 10, if they were from the upper socioeconomic class. Only 10% of these high-SES (socioeconomic status) children fell below the median at 10 years. For-low SES children, on the other hand, only 27% of the top quartile at 5 years of age remained at that level at 10 years. Thirty-seven percent of high-scoring low-SES children fell below the mean by 10 years of age. More of these children fell below the mean than remained at their original high cognitive level.

For children who score in the bottom quartile of cognitive competence when they are 5, only 34% remain there when they are 10, if they are from high SES. However, 67% remain at the bottom if they are from the lower

class. In addition, only 3% of low cognitive achievers at 5 reach the top quartile at 10 years of age, whereas 14% of high-SES children reach the top (Feinstein & Brynner, 2004, pp. 1334–1335; cf. Ratner, 2002, p. 19). This is dramatic evidence that social class is a more powerful determinant of future cognitive competence than current cognitive achievement is.

Cultural experience increases class differences in psychology over time. Cognitive (IQ) differences between children of high and low SES are greater for 15-year-olds than for 9-year-olds. Adverse macro cultural factors produce a *cumulative deficit* over time (Evans, 2004; Jackuck & Mohanty, 1974).

Emotions are similarly structured by social division of labor. Positive (benevolent) emotions such as empathy, compassion, and love are generally muted by capitalist work practices, but are encouraged in the family and among friends. A quite different emotional organization would result from a communitarian society in which work was cooperative and designed to fulfill people. In this situation, benevolent emotions would extend into public spheres and would be integrated throughout one's daily life.

Any description of an individual's, or a people's, emotionality must specify a social domain in which it occurs. Emotionality at work is different, in our society at least, from emotionality in the family. The same is true for cognitive reasoning, motivation, and even personality.

Because psychological phenomena vary with one's position in the culture, they identify one as occupying a particular position. One's reasoning style, emotionality, linguistic style, and motives are proxies for one's social role (cf. Armon-Jones, 1986).

Because individuals occupy multiple roles and conditions, people in a given social position can have different psychologies. Students in school come from different social classes and these outside social influences affect their performance in school. A person's, or a group's, psychological phenomena depend on the set of macro cultural factors they are exposed to. A single factor does not completely determine psychology.

Accordingly, it is not surprising that socialization efforts in school fail to cultivate appropriate psychological phenomena in particular groups of students. This failure does not demonstrate that psychological phenomena are immune to socialization—or that they are based in individual mechanisms. On the contrary, it demonstrates that socialization is a complex process with roots in several macro cultural factors. Cognitive and behavioral competencies that are appropriate to school need to be complemented by family

support, neighborhood conditions, and job prospects. When these cultural factors call for different competencies, the school will have difficulties opposing them. Certain ethnic groups and lower-class children fail to develop competencies appropriate to school because other cultural factors exert a stronger influence over their psychological development. Many middle-class students also fail to develop competencies appropriate to school because television, movies, computer games, and popular music discourage intellectual development and sustained concentration that are necessary for school success.

When we find that psychological phenomena do not correspond to a particular cultural factor, we look for other cultural factors that exert stronger influence on them. In this way, macro cultural psychology contributes to understanding the relative power of macro cultural factors. It identifies their real power as manifested in the kind of psychology that people acquire. By examining the psychology of students in school, for example, we discover that it is influenced more by social class and the media than by the school itself. This tells us that in our society, these other institutions, artifacts, and concepts are more powerful than school. Macro cultural psychology thus contributes to understanding society as well as psychology.

In addition to representing diverse macro cultural factors, each individual has personal experiences he brings to a situation. Some middle-class engineers are married with children whereas others are not. Some came from poverty whereas others did not. Some are Asian whereas others are Black. Some grew up in the 1960s whereas others grew up without this social experience. Some are church members whereas others are compulsive gamblers. These different social experiences intersect with the current role of middle-class engineer and endow individuals within this group with different psychologies.

In addition, each individual encounters unique experiences *within* a social position. Being a student or bank teller is different in different institutions. These unique experiences contribute idiosyncratic features to psychology.

As macro cultural psychologists, we are interested in the social distribution of psychological phenomena. We are interested in "psychographics" rather than in psychological idiosyncracies.

Macro cultural psychology does not say that a given macro factor always produces a given psychology. It turns this around and says that any particular psychology will refract some macro social factors. Ongoing society re-

quires that most psychological phenomena support macro social factors. It does not require that every individual who is exposed to a particular macro factor develop a corresponding psychology.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ACT ON PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA IN COMPLEX WAYS

One Macro Factor May Be Composed of Several Associated Elements That Collectively Affect Psychological Phenomena

Poverty in the United States, for example, is not simply a low income or few possessions. It is associated with a host of factors such as family turmoil, violence, separation of children from their families, instability, comparatively little modeling of reading, high levels of watching television, little access to books and computers, parents little involved in their children's school activities, polluted air and water, crowded/noisy/low-quality homes, dangerous neighborhoods, poor municipal services, inferior schools and day care. The effect of poverty on psychology is the effect of this concrete complex of factors on psychology. The accumulation of multiple environmental risks rather than singular risk exposure is why childhood poverty has especially pathogenic psychological effects (Evans, 2004).

It is important to identify the full range of elements that compose a cultural factor. Otherwise, cultural factors are construed as nebulous, abstract phenomena. Without specification, poverty is simply a low standard of living. Such a general notion of poverty has a universal flavor. It fails to emphasize the concrete features of poverty in a particular society. It fails to differentiate a low standard of living that exists among hunters and gathers, for example (who lack permanent houses, schools, medicine, literature, and science), from poverty in a modern inner city.

One Macro Factor May Affect Many Psychological Phenomena

One macro cultural factor, social class, is known to affect a wide range of psychological phenomena: mental illness, cognitive processes (IQ), motivation, learning, personality, and language development. Consumerism similarly affected a wide range of psychological phenomena. As soon as consumerism appeared in early 20th-century America, it included (led

to) the following psychological effects: the creation of infinite needs, craving for sensory stimulation and hedonistic material pleasure, impulsive behavior, dissatisfaction with the traditional and familiar, craving for novelty, identifying self with commercial products, self-aggrandizement and promotion, self-expression, failure of historical memory, sense of entitlement (a right to have products), desire for making choices in the marketplace, concern with appearance/impression-management versus substance, prioritizing materialism over social relations, and deteriorating interpersonal relations, happiness, and personal fulfillment (Cross, 1993; Diener & Seligman, 2004; Henry, 1963).

Several Macro Cultural Factors May Contribute to One Psychological Phenomenon

Psychological phenomena are usually organized by a complex of macro cultural factors, not a single one. For instance, acquiring the cognitive, perceptual, emotional, linguistic, motivational, and personality competencies required by school occurs only if there is support form other macro cultural factors. These include family stimulation and encouragement, prospects of jobs that utilize these competencies, and neighborhood conditions such as noise level. When these cultural factors contradict school requirements for psychological competencies, students will have great difficulty developing them.

Additive. Shweder (2003b, p. 65) found that sleeping arrangements (i.e., whether parents sleep in the same bed, whether they sleep in the same room or bed with their children, whether male and female children sleep in the same room, etc.) among the Oriyas in India rest on four cultural concepts: incest avoidance (with children older than 13 years), protection of the vulnerable (fragile young children), female chastity, and respect for hierarchy (male social superiority is expressed in aloofness from mundane relationships such as cosleeping with children, especially sons). For middle-class Americans, sleeping arrangements rest on three cultural concepts: incest avoidance, the sacred married couple, and autonomy for the child.

Cultural concepts are so powerful that 87% of the Oriya families studied obeyed all four of them in their sleeping arrangements. Cultural differences between the Oriyas and Americas are so strong that 78% of the Oriya sleeping arrangements violated the American cultural concept of the sacred couple. Oriya mothers frequently slept with their children, whereas Ameri-

can mothers rarely did, because they valued the sacred couple and the autonomy of their children.

For the purpose of understanding the social origins and characteristics of psychological phenomena, and for the purpose of understanding which macro factors need to be reformed to enhance psychological functioning, it is necessary, where possible, to determine which macro factors have the most influence on a particular psychological phenomenon.

In the area of mental illness, parental SES is a more powerful risk factor for schizophrenia than the prevalence of schizophrenic parents (Ratner, 1991, p. 258)! IQ is similarly affected more by socioeconomic class, as measured by parents' occupation and mother's educational level, than by the mother's psychological health-anxiety, the amount of interaction (touching, smiling, and vocalizing) between mothers and children, and even the presence of stressful life events such as job loss, death in the family, or physical illness. Specifically, high versus low mother education makes a difference of 16 IQ points in children, and high versus low parental occupation produces an 18 point IQ differential in children; however, high or low mother's anxiety, on the other hand, makes only a difference of 7.5 points in IQ score; mother's interaction with children also generate only a 10-point IQ difference in the children (cf. Ratner, 2002, pp. 27–31).

Interactive. One macro factor may mediate, or modulate, the psychological effects of another macro factor. For instance, the psychological effects of level of schooling vary with the level of parents' income. Good schooling has a stronger, more positive psychological effect on wealthy students than it does on poor students (Levine, Levine, & Schnell, 2001, p. 18). In fact, enrichment programs have the ironic effect of increasing the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged individiuals (Ceci & Papierno, 2005).

The psychological effects of social risk factors are similarly mediated by social class. Lower-class children with four or more social risk factors average an IQ of 90, whereas upper-class children with the same number of risk factors average IQs of 100 (Ratner, 2002, pp. 27–28). The psychological effects of violent media also interact with other macro cultural factors. Whereas the correlation between viewing violent programs and violent behavior correlated .20–30 in the United States, there is no relation between the two among Israeli children raised on a kibbutz (Anderson et al., 2003, p. 99).

Psychological Effects That Appear in One Macro Cultural Factor May Be a Function of Other Macro Factors

In chapters 1 and 2, we discussed the fact that one macro factor may express characteristics of other more dominant macro factors. We explained the structural-functional perspective, which emphasizes that the family and schools reflect, and prepare individuals to function within, economic institutions. It follows that psychological effects of family and schools may reflect other macro factors that surround them.

Personality is an interesting case in point. Kagan discovered that a small percentage of young children are extremely inhibited or uninhibited. These two groups undergo markedly different personality trajectories. Forty percent of the inhibited children reverse course and become much more extraverted from 2 years of age to 5.5 years. But only 10% of the uninhibited children change to become introverted. Kagan explains this finding as reflecting the broad cultural demand for bold, spontaneous personalities in a competitive, individualistic economy (Ratner, 1991, pp. 153–154). Of course, class, gender, and other social factors may temper the demand for an extraverted personality. Idiosyncratic characteristics of parents and children may also contradict the cultural demand. However, the pattern of personality development testifies to the important role that economic practices and concepts play in shaping personality of diverse individuals in diverse families.

MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ARE EXPLANATORY CONSTRUCTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

We have seen that the macro cultural factors labeled social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts stimulate, incite, induce, and organize psychological phenomena. They are the reasons that psychological phenomena possess the concrete features they do. Macro cultural factors are thus explanatory constructs of psychological phenomena. They explain why people experience romantic love, perceive blue as a distinctive color, have a high level of sexuality, recall information out of context, become depressed, have an individualistic self-concept, and rebel against their parents. The more thoroughly we understand macro cultural factors, the more we can understand the form and content of psychological phenomena.

To learn that American children possess an elaborate autobiographical memory because their parents recount narratives to them that emphasize

individual action, feelings, motives, and thoughts, leaves us wondering why American parents do this. When we learn that the parents' narratives and stimulating of autobiographical memory are equipping their children to succeed in the individualistic job market and marriage market of this society, then the parents' behavior and the children's memory all make sense. It is similar to providing a conceptual framework for Fig. 1.1 that congeals all the particular details into a cohesive, intelligible pattern.

Explanatory constructs in science have specific features that (a) explain why a phenomenon exists, (b) illuminate its features that would otherwise escape recognition, and (c) predict occurrences and forms that the phenomenon will take in the future. Atoms, germs, genes, and gravity are explanatory constructs that perform these three functions. Similarly, macro cultural factors explain why psychological phenomena exist, illuminate cultural properties of psychological phenomena that would otherwise escape recognition, and predict the form that emotions, motivation, learning, thinking, memory, personality, and mental illness will take in the future.

The cultural explanatory constructs of psychological phenomena are as difficult to discern as then explanatory constructs of natural phenomena. It is just as difficult to apprehend the cultural reasons for romantic love as it is to apprehend the physical reasons that apples fall from trees, or ocean tides change. Individuals are no more intuitively aware of the cultural constructs that govern their psychological phenomena than they are of explanatory constructs that govern the natural world.

Individuals are usually aware of only the phenomenal, or phenotypical, features of their psychology. These are akin to the shadows in Plato's allegory of the cave. They are reflections of things that are beyond the awareness of most people. The cultural basis and functions of these features are hidden and must be elucidated through sophisticated philosophical and scientific inquiry.

Hegel (1956) discussed this point in his *Philosophy of History*. He said, "In a simple act, something farther may be implicated than lies in the intention and consciousness of the agent" (p. 28). People act on the basis of their needs, interests, aims, passions, and thoughts to achieve their own satisfaction. However, behind these subjective processes lies a certain logic that unwittingly patterns them in particular ways. Hegel called this "the cunning of reason" (p. 33). "Those manifestations of vitality on the part of individuals and peoples, in which they seek and satisfy their own purposes, are, at the same time, the means and instruments of a higher and broader purpose of which they know nothing" (p. 25).

Although Hegel did not comprehend the constituents of history and culture (he believed them to be manifestations of absolute reason that unfolded over time), we know they are macro cultural factors that people create. Macro cultural factors structure our consciousness whether we know it or not. This is the cunning of culture.

To scientifically understand and explain a psychological phenomenon, psychologists must identify (a) the macro cultural factors that they grow out of, reflect, and support, and (b) the processes by which they grow out of, reflect, and support concrete macro cultural factors.

MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY IS A DISTINCTIVE, UNIVERSAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

Recasting psychology as a cultural phenomenon that is explained by macro cultural factors and reciprocally supports them, recasts psychological science as a cultural discipline, integrated with social sciences. Psychological science can (and should) draw upon social sciences that explain social institutions, ideology, and artifacts. Conversely, research from macro cultural psychology can enrich other social sciences with its understanding of other macro cultural factors. The impenetrable barrier that has traditionally separated psychological science and social science will disappear once human psychology is reconceptualized as a cultural phenomenon.

Of course, this does not mean that psychological science will become reduced to sociology or anthropology or history. It will continue to exist within the social sciences in a unity-of-differences, just as human psychology exists with social institutions in a unity-of-differences. Psychology will continue to have a great deal to contribute to social science because it analyzes culture as embedded in psychological phenomena, refracted/mediated through them, and influenced by them.

Macro cultural psychology will also continue to draw upon biological sciences to understand biological correlates and underpinnings of psychological processes. Macro cultural psychology can thus be a bridge between biology and social science. It is the social science closest to biology because it deals with mental processes located in the brain. Of course, biological influences on psychology would be recast to respect their cultural features. Biological processes would be reconceptualized as a potentiating substratum rather than as determinants of specific features of psychological phenomena (cf. chap. 8, this volume; Ratner, 1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1998a, 1998b, 2000a; 2004b, 2004c).

Macro cultural psychology is a general scientific theory that explains the cultural nature of psychological phenomena. It is a universal theory in the

sense that its principles explain the psychology of all people. The psychology of the Kaluli people is cultural in the same way that the psychology of Italian people is. To understand the psychology of people from any nationality, ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, or social class, one must utilize the tenets of macro cultural psychology. To understand any psychological phenomenon—perception, emotions, memory, mental illness—one must utilize the tenets of macro cultural psychology.

Macro cultural psychology is a universal science that explains the cultural variations in human psychology. It recognizes cultural variations in psychology but explains them within a set of coherent, general, universal principles. The psychology of women and men, hunters and gatherers as well as modern New Yorkers, Brahmins and homeless, homosexuals and heterosexuals all originates in macro cultural factors, embodies them, and supports them. The psychological phenomena of all people are dialectically related to macro cultural factors, inspired and structured by them in complex ways, have concrete cultural features that are socially distributed within a group according to social position, and are macro cultural factors in their own right.

The content of psychological phenomena differs with culture. However, the psychological science that explains the content is universal. Buddhist psychology, Black psychology, psychology of women make sense when they refer to the content of psychological phenomena. Buddhists, women, American Blacks may have distinctive emotions, reasoning, self, and memory because of their culture. However, all of these need to be understood in terms of a single psychological science. As scientific disciplines, Buddhist psychology, Black psychology, and feminist psychology must all be macro cultural psychology. When Buddhists try to understand each other, Blacks try to understand each other's psychology, and women try to understand other women's psychology, they cannot use different fundamental psychological theories—although they can focus on particular psychological content or relationships that are distinctive to their particular group. The reason is that the psychological phenomena they are explaining have a common fundamental nature that follows common principles. The psychological phenomena of Black people, women, or homosexuals do not follow unique principles that require unique psychological sciences. It makes no more sense to speak of Black psychology or feminist psychology than it does to speak of Black astronomy or feminist chemistry (cf. Pinnick, 2005). All astronomers are trying to explain the same thing that obeys definite principles. They need to agree on these principles in their scientific discipline. All psychologists are also trying to explain one fundamental thing—the nature

of human psychology. The fundamental nature of human psychology is universal—all psychology originates in, embodies, varies with, and supports macro cultural factors—and all psychologists need to develop a science of psychology that describes and explains this universal fact.

To draw an analogy, local people have detailed knowledge about the content of their particular weather conditions or disease symptoms. However, they must explain these particularities in terms of general principles and universal science (molecules, germs, genes). In the same way, particular groups of people have special knowledge about the content and operations of their emotions, thinking, learning, self, motivation, mental illness, and perception. They also have insights into how to elicit psychological information from their group—for example, proper and improper kinds of questions to ask, individuals to interview, and whether individuals should be interviewed privately or in groups. However, these particular details are explainable in terms of universal, fundamental principles and explanatory constructs—of macro cultural psychology.

Of course, science is always an approximation of the nature of things. It always changes with new information and insights. Diverse cultural groups can contribute their insights into general human psychology to refine psychological science. However, they will be working toward a general understanding of human psychology that is universally applicable. They will not be working toward a feminist, Black, gay, or Asian science of psychology (cf. Epilogue). Researching psychological aspects of gender or race does not constitute feminist or Black psychological science. Drawing attention to the effects of gender and race on psychology does not comprise a scientific approach—any more than drawing attention to the disproportionately harmful health effects that pollution has on Black people comprises a black science of medicine. Black scientists and policymakers employ general theories and methods from medical science to demonstrate and explain the health effects of pollution on Black people. In the same way, feminists need to employ the general principles of macro cultural psychology to demonstrate and explain psychological aspects of gender.

For feminists to understand the psychology of women, they can utilize the broad perspective of macro cultural-psychology to elucidate the psychological effects on women of a wide range of macro cultural factors. These include the effects of competition, individualism, alienation, consumerism, religion, nationalism, militarism, and social class. Women's psychologies are shaped by the full range of social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts.

The feminist focus on sexism tends to exclude consideration of these cultural influences on women's psychology. Though sexism is an important in-

fluence, it is not the only one. The feminist focus on sexism tends to exaggerate its importance. Feminists often reduce gender issues to forms of patriarchy and sexism. They construe male behavior as primarily sexist and women's behavior as primarily antisexist, or caring, sensitive, and supportive. This conception leads many feminists to exaggerate gender differences. Gilligan's (discredited) conclusions about females being more relational than males is a case in point. She ignores the fact that women's psychology incarnates competition, materialism, individualism, classism, racism, militarism, and many other macro cultural factors. These attributes contradict a sensitivity to personal relations that may stem from certain aspects of women's social role. Likewise, men's psychology incarnates tenderness and sensitivity that are central to the institution of the family. These attributes contradict aggressiveness that is fostered by competition outside the family (cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 135–139). A comprehensive understanding of men's and women's psychologies must include their full cultural character and cultural origins. Macro cultural psychology fits this bill.

In chapter 4, we shall see that macro cultural psychology also comprises a general methodology that can be used to research the cultural psychology of all genders and ethnicities. Feminist and Black psychologists may refine these general procedures, as all scientists do. They may also adapt particular questions and interview techniques to the sensitivities of women or Black subjects—just as all researchers do when studying any particular population. Researchers from particular ethnic groups must work within general scientific principles that are usable by any researcher to study any population.

The validity of macro cultural psychology does not depend on social consensus. The fact that Americans believe that their personalities and intelligence are genetically inherited, or that Kaluli people believe in spiritual causes of psychological phenomena, does not challenge the validity of macro cultural psychology—just as meteorological science is not challenged by local beliefs that gods cause rain. Even if the majority of people believed that gods cause rain or created the universe, these beliefs are scientifically false. Even if the majority disputed meteorological science, or the germ theory of disease, or the atomic theory of matter, these would still be true. (Yes, if a tree falls in the forest and no one hears it, it still makes noise.) Science and truth are not a matter of consensus.

III

Applications of Macro Cultural Psychology to Research Methodology, Social Reform, and Personal Growth

This page intentionally left blank

4

Research Methodology for Macro Cultural Psychology

The dialectical relationship among social institutions, cultural artifacts, cultural concepts, and psychological phenomena can be apprehended only by a dialectical epistemology or methodology. Epistemology recapitulates ontology. If things dialectically interpenetrate each other (ontologically), this relationship can be known only by an epistemology that examines things-in-relation. A fragmentary epistemology that investigates elements in isolation could not apprehend the ontological, internal relationship among the components.

A dialectical epistemology, or methodology, for macro cultural psychology includes the following tenets.

THE CULTURAL CHARACTER OF PSYCHOLOGY CAN BE DISCERNED ONLY IN THE LIVED PSYCHOLOGY OF PEOPLE

Macro cultural-psychological research investigates ways that psychological phenomena recapitulate or incarnate features of macro cultural factors. It looks for ways that macro cultural factors are refracted in psychological phenomena. The psychological form of cultural features is different from their form in social institutions, artifacts, and concepts. Psychological phenomena are a distinctive macro cultural factor. They are a distinctive moment of the cultural system. They express culture in a distinctive manner. Psychology is not reducible to other macro cultural factors and cannot be assumed, or read off, from them. Figure 3.1 depicts this unity-of-differences.

Macro cultural-psychological research investigates which features of which social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts are incarnated in

psychological phenomena such as depression, eating disorders, anger, self-concept, good and bad study habits, memory, reasoning, and sexual attraction. Research investigates this issue by studying the actual psychology of individuals. It does not accept official, commercial presentations of psychological phenomena in movies, songs, advertisements, computer games, and television programs. These expressions of emotions, personality, reasoning, sexuality, motivation, perception, memory, learning, and mental illness may not represent the cultural quality of psychological phenomena as lived by people in everyday life.

People are exposed to multiple, conflicting social pressures and the only way to determine the relative influence of these on their psychology is to investigate individual psychologies. The cultural character of psychology must be scrupulously discerned through painstaking, detailed inquiry into psychological activity. It is not revealed in one or two expressions (cf. Becker, 2004; Hunter, 2003; Ratner, 1997, pp. 135–142 for excellent analyses of individuals' cultural psychology).

Say we wish to understand the cultural psychology of a business executive who seeks to expand his business. His goal is to maximize his profit, not help the community. From this goal we might conclude that he has a narrow, fragmented, individualistic cognitive and perceptual style. However, a detailed investigation into his cognitive and perceptual style reveals an entirely different quality. We find that in maximizing his own success, the executive perceives, thinks, and remembers a great deal about complex relationships of which he is a part. He will study and remember what his competitors are doing, government policies, even the culture and history of the country in which he is doing business. He will also seek to influence this social context. In other words, his perception, memory, and reasoning are sensitive to contextual relationships. They are not fragmented, compartmentalized, ignorant of contexts, only aware of himself, and unconcerned with events and people outside himself. Detailed psychological research is needed to ascertain his psychology. It cannot be assumed from a few actions.

Investigating the psychology of individuals does not mean that culture is reduced to individual psychology. Quite the contrary—whatever characteristics psychological phenomena possess by virtue of individual selection and synthesis will reflect characteristics of institutions, artifacts, and concepts. We cannot predict precisely what these will be from the macro factors themselves; we must identify them in the psychological functioning of individuals (cf. p. 63).

Investigating the psychology of individuals also reveals ways that they resist macro cultural factors. This information is crucial for identifying alternative macro factors that people are likely to endorse.

RESEARCH ON THE MACRO CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA EMPHASIZES CONCRETE QUALITIES OF MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

In order to discern the cultural features of perception, emotions, reasoning, memory, learning, self, motivation, sexuality, and mental illness, we identify specific details of these phenomena and compare them to specific macro cultural factors. Our research is guided by hypotheses about the macro cultural origins, characteristics (form and content), and function of the details of psychological phenomena.

Say we are concerned with explaining poor study habits of students. A concrete hypothesis would be that poor study habits are due to entertainment programs on television, radio, computers, and movies that habituate students to (a) concentrate for brief periods on simple, fragmentary, sensationalistic information; (b) live for present, momentary experiences rather than for traditional customs and values; (c) crave new sensations and immediate hedonic pleasure rather than hard work or sacrifice for distant goals; and (d) expend minimum effort on study yet achieve maximum returns/benefits.

Hypotheses would be generated about specific characteristics of entertainment programs that might foster these kinds of psychological processes. These include (a) the content of the programs—that is, the manner in which programs present (model) motivation, cognition, memory, interpersonal relations, violence, sex, social issues, and motivation; (b) the form of programs—for example, the noise level; the structuring of programs into short segments that are interrupted frequently by extraneous material such as advertisements; the commercial breaks often interrupt logical and emotional flows within a program; programs thus lack logical and emotional continuity and cohesion.

Hypothesis would be based on existing research. Studies on American football programming have found that an average American football game lasts about 3 hours. However, only 16 minutes of that time is occupied by actual football play! The bulk of the TV viewing time is consumed by advertisements, promotions for other programs, close-ups of coaches, players, and cheerleaders, and replays. If one considers replays part of the action, this increases the football time to 27 minutes (Sandomir, 2004). With 2 ½ hours of the 3-hour football game devoted to nonfootball material, the TV audience finds its attention constantly diverted away from the ostensible program to extraneous material (which is the real program for the corpora-

tions that own and advertise on the stations). Each event on the program—football action, replays, close-ups, and advertisements—occurs for a few seconds and is then replaced by another. The viewer is thus bombarded by a constant flux of disparate, momentary images.

We would hypothesize that the distribution of programming minutes has greater impact on cognitive skills than does the quantity of football and nonfootball minutes. The nonfootball distractions interfere with the flow of the game and with concentration. This probably habituates attention to brief episodes, and makes extended concentration feel unfamiliar and uncomfortable.

The fragmented, shifting presentation of material would also seem to affect emotional reactions. Immediately after a dramatic touchdown, the scene disappears from the screen and is replaced by an advertisement. The intense emotional experience of watching the touchdown is truncated. It is not continued, deepened, or explored. Instead, the emotionality is transferred to an entirely extraneous issue, a commercial product for sale. After the commercial break, announcers typically analyze the touchdown. However, the emotion has already dissipated from the viewer.

Macro cultural-psychological research would investigate whether emotionality among people tends to become truncated, or transferred to extraneous issues, as a result of television formatting and its underlying financial pressures.

Macro cultural-psychological research might similarly investigate the cognitive and emotional effects of—that is, the cognitive and emotional processes that are modeled, called for, and constrained by—news programs (cf. Downie & Kaiser, 2002; McChesney, 1999). Here the typical pattern is for the newscaster to announce that an important news item is going to be presented, but after a commercial break. Our anticipation is aroused but then dissipated by watching the commercial. The news item is used as bait for watching the advertisement. The ad comes first, then the news. And after a brief news blurb, more garish, nonsensical advertisements divert from the seriousness of the news event. The way news is packaged deprives it of seriousness. It's just a momentary, fleeting "sound bite" that is quickly superceded by a glitzy distraction.

Media executives have acknowledged certain adverse cognitive and emotional effects of their programming. In the days following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, media executives pulled most advertisements from television. Their remarkable reason was that the ads would take away from the gravity of the tragedy. They would dilute serious reflection and emotional bonding, which people needed to cultivate at that tragic mo-

ment. Violent and glitzy ads were deemed especially unseemly. Hedonistic shopping was also recognized as antithetical to personal intimacy and empathy for others. This remarkable admission by social leaders and media moguls forms the kernel of a fascinating hypothesis about the cognitive and emotional effects of normal television programming.

Another hypothesis about the cultural origins, features, and function of psychological phenomena would consider the effects on self-concept and interpersonal relations of the impersonal treatment people are subjected to in the public sphere. We might study how people feel about themselves, treat others, and expect others to treat them, after they repeatedly experience "pecuniary politeness"—to coin a phrase from Henry's lexicon—which is being told how important one is by mechanical messages on telephone wait cues, told to have a nice day by anonymous store clerks, and asked how one is going to spend the weekend by anonymous bank tellers who are required by their bosses to say these "personal" things and are punished if they do not.

Other concrete topics for macro cultural-psychological research are: What are the effects on self-concept of arriving at work and being told by one's supervisor that one's job has been eliminated and one should leave the premises at once? What are the psychological effects of having to change jobs every 3 years, as American workers do? What does this do to friendships, marriages, trust, security, loyalty? What are the psychological effects of supply-and-demand economic practices—that is, the fact that the more goods are needed, the more expensive they become and the more difficult they are to obtain? For instance, after a hurricane when people need building supplies, gasoline, and food, the prices are raised so that the desperately needed goods are difficult to obtain. What effect does this have on people's sense of security, community, altruism?

These topics sound foreign to psychologists. This is because they rarely consider concrete aspects of society or psychological phenomena. In contrast, concrete cultural issues are the focus of macro cultural-psychological research. This is what differentiates it from mainstream psychology.

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY IS NECESSARY FOR INVESTIGATING THE MACRO CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF PSYCHOLOGY

To thematize cultural aspects of psychological phenomena, macro cultural psychologists need to elicit broad expressions of psychological phenomena so that their cultural-psychological features can be elucidated. These fea-

tures are then compared to the features of social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. This comparison illuminates the particular ways in which psychological functions incarnate particular macro factors, and also contradict them (cf. Ratner, 1997, 2002).

The best, and perhaps only, methodology for accomplishing this is a qualitative methodology. Qualitative methodology, in essence, elicits extensive expressions of psychological phenomena in diverse circumstances. These expressions may consist of conversations, diaries, and extended behavioral acts. Extended expressions allow the researcher to see relationships among them. The researcher infers the character, or quality, of psychological phenomena from a pattern of expressions over a range of situations.

To take a simple example, if a woman tells a man she loves him, and also praises him, gives him presents, and encourages him to fulfill himself, he rightfully infers that she loves him. However, if she says she loves him but constantly criticizes him and pushes him to do things only she desires, this pattern of responses in diverse situations indicates that she does not really love him. In order to infer her psychology, it is necessary to examine a pattern of interrelated behaviors.

A single behavior is an insufficient expression of psychology. A single behavior—for example, a statement of love—can express many different psychological phenomena. Conversely, a given psychological phenomenon may be expressed by diverse behaviors. Because there is no one-to-one mapping of psychological phenomena onto behavior, psychology must be inferred, or interpreted, from a pattern of behavior.

In addition, a single situation or stimulus is insufficient for eliciting psychology. One situation or stimulus may be anomalous and the psychological reaction it elicits may be unrepresentative. A high-pressure examination in school may be so stressful that the student cannot express her true knowledge on it. Being laid off from a job may provoke extreme anger or depression that does not represent the person's normal psychology. Psychology can be known only by observing responses over a range of situations (cf. Ratner, 1997).

These tenets of qualitative methodology comprise a dialectical epistemology. They emphasize that knowledge of psychological phenomena is gained only through observing interrelated responses/expressions to a range of stimuli/situations. This epistemology follows from dialectical ontology, which construes phenomena as internally interrelated. Dialectically related phenomena can be known only by studying their interrelationships.

Dilthey developed the dialectical epistemology that informs qualitative methodology. He sought to understand the internal mental life of individu-

als from external expressions. Because internal mental lives are not directly visible, they must be reconstructed from observable expressions. This process is called *Verstehen* (Dilthey, 1900/1985, p. 236). The way we understand psychology is through a process of interpretation, or *hermeneutics*. Hermeneutics is the specific procedure for achieving *Verstehen*. The way that we understand whether someone loves us is to interpret a pattern of behavior across diverse situations. This is famously known as the hermeneutic circle. It interprets a particular behavior—for example, a statement of love, an act of kindness, or spanking a child—in relation to other behaviors in other situations.

The dialectical epistemology of macro cultural-psychological research is depicted in Fig. 4.1. The figure depicts a cluster of interrelated stimuli that elicit a cluster of interrelated responses. Both the stimuli and responses are embedded in, and represent, the cultural-psychological context of individuals. This means that the stimuli and responses are ecologically valid—the stimuli are familiar to individuals, part of their ordinary cultural context. Ecologically valid stimuli/situations elicit responses that validly represent the individual's psychology. Unfamiliar, meaningless stimuli and situations will not elicit psychologically meaningful responses.

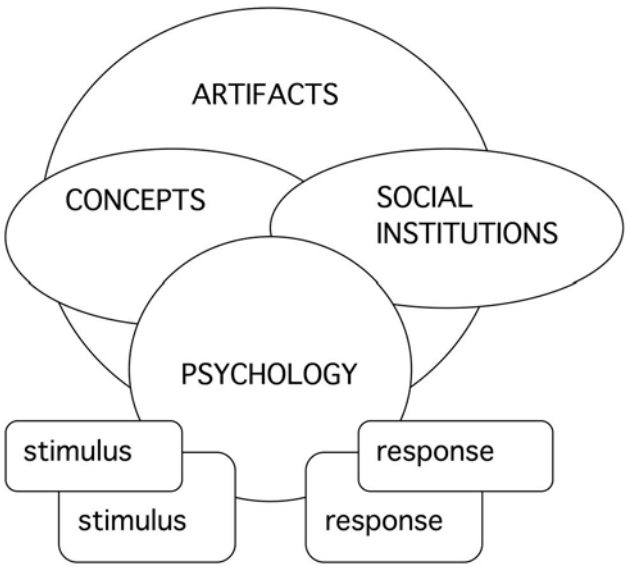

FIG. 4.1. The dialectical epistemology of macro cultural-psychological research.

Macro cultural psychology employs qualitative methodology to elucidate the concrete quality of psychological phenomena. We then inspect this quality to elucidate cultural characteristics of macro factors that are embedded within it. We compare qualities of psychological phenomena to characteristics of macro cultural factors. Psycholinguists and sociolinguists employ this kind of comparative analysis in ascertaining the relation between language and cognition. They develop a deep analysis of the semantics of a language, they employ sophisticated methods for exploring the form and content of nonlinguistic cognition, and they assess the congruence of the two (Levinson, 2003b, pp. 19–20).

Our "cultural qualitative methodology" utilizes procedures from phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and grounded theory, which were developed to elucidate personal meanings, We extend them to capture cultural themes embedded within psychological phenomena. I have explained this approach in other works (Ratner, 1997, 2002), so a brief summary of an exemplary study will therefore suffice here.

Chao investigated Chinese and American childrearing practices to ascertain the congruence between them and cultural concepts, ideology, or ethnotheories. Chao interviewed Chinese and American mothers about their practices and goals. The statements were rigorously analyzed for themes. The themes of American mothers included using love and other treatments to promote individual strength, confidence, success, independence, self-expression, and self-understanding in their children. Chau showed how these mothers' goals and practices embodied the individualistic ideology of Western society. Chinese mothers' statements about their socialization practices and goals revealed different themes. They used love and other treatments to promote strong family ties—such as contributing to the family, caring about family members, and subordinating self to the family. When strength, independence, and success were mentioned as goals for children, these attributes were construed as enhancing their contribution to the family. Chao identified homologies between these themes and a collective ideology that is prevalent in China. Chau penetrated beneath abstract phrases such as "love" and "self-esteem" to elucidate concrete cultural-psychological details of these phenomena (cf. Ratner, 2002, chap. 5, for further discussion).

Chao's study was successful because it solicited rich psychological data with concrete characteristics, it summarized the data accurately, and it systematically related psychological characteristics to macro characteristics through detailed comparison and logical argument. This analysis relies on

inference and deduction in order to apprehend phenomena that are not completely visible.

Macro cultural factors such as ideology (concepts) and institutions are not directly and completely visible. One cannot see individualistic ideology, or a free-market economy, or a medical system. Dealing with these is analogous to studying galaxies light-years away from earth. One receives glimpses of features, and one reconstructs them into meaningful patterns based on inferences and deductions from related knowledge. Psychological phenomena are similarly not directly or completely observable. They are inferred and deduced from patterns of behavior. The relationship between culture and psychology is detected in the same way. One cannot directly see advertisements forming the consciousness of individuals, ideologies forming the socialization practices of mothers, or individuals resisting influence attempts on them. The cultural basis of psychology is inferred and deduced much as paleontologists figure out the reasons that dinosaurs became extinct. They know what natural conditions dinosaurs required, and they know the state of those conditions at the time that dinosaurs died out. This enables them to deduce which necessary conditions were absent and caused the extinction. In the same way, qualitative cultural-psychological methodology involves understanding the features of cultural conditions and matching them to homologous features of psychological phenomena.

Narratives must be treated like fossils, in need of reconstruction and interpretation to detect the life-form that they incompletely represent. The researcher must detect the connection between the details of a person's narrative an macro cultural factors. We cannot simply ask the subject to identify the connection because, unfortunately, it is unknown to most people—including most psychologists. The structure and ideology of most societies obscure the macro cultural basis, characteristics, and function of psychological phenomena. The cultural organization of consciousness includes blind spots as well as affordances (Ratner, 1994). We cannot dismiss the culturally organized blind spots in consciousness and pretend that people are naturally and completely cognizant of their psychology. Research must be based on an objective assessment of people's culturally organized consciousness. Their cultural psychology makes them incapable of answering certain questions. In contemporary societies, apprehending the cultural organization of psychology requires special training in macro cultural psychology. Perhaps democratic,

cooperative societies that foster greater political involvement and understanding will afford greater appreciation of cultural psychology among the population, and reduce the need for specialized macro cultural psychologists.

POSITIVISTIC METHODOLOGY, EMPLOYED IN CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY, HAS LIMITED VALUE FOR MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Although positivistic methodology claims to be an atheoretical set of procedures that is universally usable on behalf of any theory to research any social-psychological phenomenon, it, like all methodologies, has a definite theoretical basis and bias. Positivistic epistemology recapitulates and reinforces an ontology just as all epistemologies do. Accordingly, it is not serviceable to investigate phenomena that obey different ontological principles. As I have explained elsewhere (Ratner, 1997, chap. 1), positivism rests on an ontology of atomism, physicalism, and quantification. It assumes that cultural and psychological phenomena are singular variables, reducible to quantities of overt, physical, discrete behaviors. For example, aggression is a discrete phenomenon with a homogeneous, universal, invariant, overt quality that is wholly expressed as quantities of physical acts (such as the number of blows that are delivered in a period of time).

These ontological assumptions obviate the need for comprehensive conceptual definitions of cultural and psychological phenomena. Positivists emphasize, instead, methodological procedures for operationally defining and measuring cultural and psychological phenomena as overt, simple acts in response to simple, fragmentary stimuli (such as discrete questions on a questionnaire). As a result, cross-cultural psychology has no theory of culture, psychology, or their interrelation. Practitioners have no theory about the origins of their cultural variables, or culture in general (e.g., why humans have culture, and the nature of culture as an emergent phenomenon); no conception of the organization, administration, and politics of culture, cultural dynamics, and cultural change.

Indeed, cross-cultural psychologists rarely study culture. If you review the thousands of research reports in the field, you find that the vast majority simply compare the psychology of people in different cultures (e.g., "East Asians are more sensitive to relationships in the environment than Westerners are"). No explanatory cultural factors are studied. The few reports that consider specific cultural reasons for psychological differences generally limit themselves to studying a few variables. These include individual-

ism/collectivism, Gross National Product, years in school, and simple versus complex societies. The concrete richness of culture remains foreign to cross-cultural psychology (cf. Hodgson, 2001).

This discipline also remains indifferent to formulating a coherent conception of the nature os psychological phenomena, of why psychological phenomena are organized by culture, how the cultural organization of psychology occurs, or the cultural function of psychological phenomena. Instead, cross-cultural psychologists list cultural variables and psychological variables, and ascertain which ones are associated together. They rarely elucidate the reasons for these associations. The ontological and epistemological assumption of positivism make it unsuited to appreciate particular social systems, their concrete macro cultural factors, and culturally concrete emotions, self-concept, reasoning, sexuality, motivation, learning, mental illness, and development.

Let me explain how these limitations preclude understanding the full, concrete, complex cultural organization of psychological phenomena.

Cross-Cultural Psychology Defines Cultural and Psychological Phenomena Abstractly. An example of an abstract cultural variable in cross-cultural psychology is the construct traditionalism-modernism. Traditionalism is defined by five factors: submission to authority; filial piety and ancestral worship; conservatism and endurance; fatalism and defensiveness; and male dominance. Each of these factors is abstract in the sense that no concrete cultural or psychological issue is specified. Submission to authority could express fear of the authority, respect for it, or apathy toward it. Not specifying the concrete quality of submission to authority allows it to unwittingly encompass diverse attributes. This undermines the purported homogeneity of the construct.

In an excellent critique, Hwang (2003, pp. 251–252) pointed out that Asian submission to authority derives from Confucian philosophy and embodies very specific features. Whereas Westerners conceive of submission to authority pejoratively, as a form of fear or passivity in the face of authoritarian control, the cultural significance in Confucian ideology is positive. It includes (a) fulfilling one's duty in an honorable manner, (b) respecting the wisdom of authority, and (c) respecting the benevolence of authority who is duty-bound to protect his charges and act ethically toward them, much like the father of a family. This rich, distinctive cultural significance is obscured by the abstract terminology of variables.

Male dominance in Confucianism similarly includes responsibility for women and ethical behavior toward them. This is not denoted in the ab-

stract phrase "male dominance," which is easily misconstrued as authoritarian control and disrespect for women.

The problem of abstraction also appears in Lin and Church's (2004) research into Chinese personality dimensions. The authors wondered whether these psychological dimensions are indigenous or transcultural. They tested items from the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory (CPAI) on various populations and found that the personality dimensions were generalizeable to diverse populations; they were not culture-bound. In their words, "Many indigenous and cross-cultural psychologists hope to identify personality dimensions that are truly unique or specific to particular cultures. Initially, it was thought that the Interpersonal Relatedness dimension of the CPAI might be one such dimension. However, this does not appear to be the case" (p. 600).

It is predictable that the items on the CPAI are found in diverse cultures because they are defined abstractly. One of the scales measured "emotionality"! This does not refer to particular forms of emotionality; simply whether people are emotional. Of course, Chinese and Americans are emotional. They feel and express emotions in some sense. On this abstract level they are comparable. However, this abstract level is meaningless. What psychological insight is achieved by stating that both groups manifest emotionality? What we want to find out is the cultural quality of emotionality. Yet this is precisely what abstractions obfuscate.

The same holds for other CPAI dimensions. These include "leadership," "family orientation," "optimism," "harmony," "relationship orientation," "self-orientation," and "responsibility." Leadership can take widely different forms. It can be authoritarian or democratic. To say that diverse people stress leadership is uninformative. The psychological universals that cross-cultural psychologists believe in are empty abstractions. They obscure the rich, concrete form and content of psychological phenomena that are culturally specific.

The Problem of Fragmentary, Ecologically Invalid Stimuli. Cross-cultural psychologists typically present, simple, fragmentary stimuli to subjects. They assume that this format is precise and clear. However, it is just the opposite. Such material is ambiguous and open to a variety of interpretations and confusions.

An example is McCrae's cross-cultural research on personality (McCrae, Yik, Trapnell, Bond, & Paulhus, 1998). He developed a personality inventory (the Revised NEO Personality Inventory) on which he compared individuals of European and Chinese ancestry. The inventory is composed of 240 statements.

Subjects are restricted to agreeing or disagreeing with them on 5-point Likert scales. The 240 statements were deemed by McCrae to represent 30 personality traits or facets (eight statements for each facet). The 30 facets were factor analyzed to yield five broad factors or domains (each domain included six facets). For instance, the statement "I try to be courteous to everyone I meet" was categorized by the authors as a component of the trait/facet altruism, and altruism was construed as a component of the domain agreeableness.

The problem is that terms such as *courteous* are loaded with multiple cultural significances. Courteous can range from a perfunctory smile that a cashier in a store makes to a customer because it is a job requirement demanded by her boss, to a genuine helpfulness as when a long-term resident spends time showing the neighborhood to a newly arrived neighbor, to a minimal interaction that is made out of a desire to avoid contact with someone (as in "at the dinner party she was merely courteous to him").

The subject does not know which meaning of courtesy the statement implies. Nor does McCrae know which meaning the subject had in mind. The stimulus questions are inadequate to elicit the cultural quality of personality attributes.

The Problem of Fragmentary, Superficial, Quantitative Responses. The response format of the personality inventory does not allow the researcher to know which of several cultural significances subjects have in mind when they respond. It restricts subjects to simply agreeing or disagreeing with each statement and does not allow any articulation of what was being agreed to. This procedure is based on the positivistic ontological assumption that psychological phenomena are directly and fully expressed as overt responses. This assumption of "physicalism" stipulates that the full psychological meaning is evident in an overt response; there is no "surplus meaning" behind the response. This ontological assumption leads to the epistemological assumption that psychological meaning is fully known by the degree of a response. All we have to do is measure the strength of a response and we know the person's psychology.

These assumptions are false. A single response is not a direct map of a psychological phenomenon. On the contrary, it displaces and obscures the quality of subjects' psychology.

On McCrae's questionnaire, groups (and individuals) who all strongly agree that they try to be courteous may mean very different things and act in very different ways. Agreement with statements about courtesy may not indicate a courteous personality trait at all. It may not indicate altruism either.

McCrae might argue that he designated courtesy as altruism because it was associated with seven other statements that together indicated altruism. He would say that courtesy was considered in a context of other responses, not designated as altruism on the basis of a single response. However, the other seven statements are as ambiguous as the one about courtesy. We have no idea what trait they represent. Consequently, their corelation with courtesy does not indicate that courtesy connotes altruism.

Adding additional abstract responses does nothing to clarify their concrete meaning. Multiple abstractions do not produce concreteness. No sum of abstract responses reveals whether a subject is courteous in an altruistic, perfunctory, or hostile manner. Sartre (1948) explained this error insightfully: "Psychologists do not realize that it is just as impossible to get to essence by accumulating accidents as to reach 1 by adding figures to the right of 0.99" (p. 5).

The inability of separate responses to indicate concrete quality can be illustrated with the following example. If questionnaire responses indicate that a subject is courteous *and* sympathetic to other people, this does not mean that he is sympathetic *as* he is being courteous. It does not mean that his courteousness includes sympathy. It does not mean that his courtesy is altruistic. Courtesy and sympathy may be two disparate traits that simply correlate. One might be perfunctorily courteous sometimes and genuinely sympathetic other times. In this case, it is misleading to regard his courtesy as sympathetic courtesy or as connoting altruism. Correlation is simply an association that may very well be an external one. In this case, the two elements do not affect each other or illuminate each other.

The only way to reveal the quality of courtesy is to elicit extensive elaboration of courtesy itself. The subject must be allowed to explain what he means and does when he is being courteous. The concrete quality of courteous is revealed only by apprehending other qualities that interpenetrate inside courteous so we know *what kind of courteousness* it is (Asch, 1946). Only then can we know that courtesy is altruistic. The independence of traits must be replaced by interconnection to reveal their concreteness. Yet this is impossible within the framework of positivism.

McCrae's error is recapitulated in the next stage where he categorizes traits/facets into factors/domains. He regards altruism as a component of agreeableness. However the subjects' responses do not indicate this. The positivistic personality inventory restricts subjects to indicating the extent of their agreement with a statement; it prevents them from expressing any meaning or content. Consequently, McCrae cannot know whether endorsing a statement represents agreeableness. If the subjects' endorsement of

courteousness signifies attitudes and acts of indifference to people (as when the store cashier courteously smiles at the customer) or even hostility (as when the hostess is merely courteous to her guest), then the response would not be a component of agreeableness. Designating it as such is another instance of drawing an arbitrary conclusion from inadequate data.

McCrae would argue that designating altruism as agreeable is justified. The reason is that altruism correlates with other factors that together indicate agreeableness. Agreeableness is derived from its coexistence with compliance, trust, tender-mindedness, straightforwardness, modesty. Thus, altruism is considered in the context of related factors. Factor analysis is defended as a form of contextualism.

We have already discussed the fallacy of this contention. Correlating independent, fragmentary, fixed, abstract elements does not indicate the concrete quality of any of them. We do not know whether modesty expresses agreeableness. Modesty could express insecurity or any number of other traits. Consequently, none of the traits, either singly or in concert, indicates the factor of agreeableness.

Juxtaposed traits could express any number of personality factors. McCrae's package of altruism, compliance, trust, tender-mindedness, straightforwardness, modesty could express "gullible," "insecure," "trying to please others," "controlling anger." We can perceive which of these possibilities is the true quality of the package only if we elicit extensive responses and apprehend the way they are organized.

McCrae really has no idea of what he is studying because his methodology deprives him of information about people's cultural psychology. Ironically, preventing subjects from expressing qualities of their psychology (under the misconception that these are subjectivistic and anathema to empirical scientific investigation) leads positivists to subjectively, arbitrarily, and unempirically invent psychological qualities and attribute them to people (cf. LeGrange et al., 2004 for an additional example).

This problem can be seen in a different form in Peng and Nisbett's (1999) study of the cultural character of reasoning. They were interested in whether Americans and Chinese reason differently as a result of macro cultural factors such as philosophy and social structure. The authors presented proverbs to subjects. Some proverbs implied contradictions ("dialectical proverbs") whereas others did not. The authors then asked subjects to respond to four questions about the proverbs: (a) How familiar is the proverb to you? (b) How well do you like it? (c) How often do you use it? (d) How well do you understand it? The ratings of the four questions were combined into a composite score. This procedure reflects the positivistic penchant for

operationally defining complex psychological phenomena as quantitative measures of simple, overt responses.

The first three questions do not measure reasoning at all. Liking a proverb indicates nothing about a reasoning style, or cognitive processes. I may like a statement from Hegel or Shakespeare yet I may not think like them at all. Familiarity also is no indication of reasoning style. The fact that I have often encountered a proverb does not imply anything about my thinking style. Nor does usage. I may never use certain proverbs yet I may engage in a reasoning style very similar to that which underlies them. Understanding is the only one of Peng's measures that touches on reasoning style. Understanding a proverb may indicate a reasoning style. However, the two are certainly not equivalent and a self-rating on a 7-point scale of how well one understands something is hardly an adequate measure of reasoning style. Some independent assessment of understanding is clearly necessary. Thus, Peng's composite measure of reasoning style includes three totally inappropriate measures and one highly dubious measure (cf. Ratner & Hui, 2003, for further critique of this study, including misunderstanding dialectical philosophy, and the biased interpretation of data and inappropriate conclusions that were drawn from it).

Of course, it is much easier to utilize a simplistic, superficial questionnaire about extraneous issues than it is to analyze and assess people's reasoning style. So Peng chose an expedient, but irrelevant, measure rather than a psychologically meaningful one. The proverb of looking for a lost key where the light is because it's easier to see things there, aptly describes his positivistic research.

Kitayama's research on cultural influences on perception/attention further demonstrates the inadequacy of single, superficial responses. Kitayama, Duffy, Kawamura, and Larsen (2003) sought to study context-dependent cognition and context-independent cognition. Their hypothesis was that Asian cultures organize cognition to be context-dependent, whereas Western cultures organize cognition to be context-independent. Cognition was measured as follows: Participants were presented with a square frame, within which a vertical line was drawn. Subjects were then shown another square frame of the same size or a different size. They were given one of two requests regarding the second square: Draw a line that was identical to the first line in absolute length, or draw a line that maintained the same proportional length to the height of the surrounding frame as the original line was—that is, if the original line was one third as long as the height of the frame, the second line must be one third as long as the height of the second frame.

The authors assume that in the absolute task, the participants had to ignore both the first frame (when assessing the length of the line) and the second frame (when reproducing the line). North Americans performed this task better than Asians. North Americans also performed this task better than they performed the relative task.

The authors assume that on the relative task, the participants had to incorporate the height of the surrounding frame in both encoding and reproducing the line's relative length. Japanese performed this task better than Americans did. Japanese also performed this task better than they performed the absolute task. From the performance data, the authors concluded that "Japanese are more capable of incorporating contextual information in making a judgment on a focal object, but North Americans are more capable of ignoring contextual information" (Kitayama et al., 2003, pp. 204–205).

The problem with the performance measure is that it does not reveal the actual cognitive processes involved. The authors never investigated whether the subjects actually ignored or considered the context when estimating the length of the new line. They assumed that this psychological process was responsible for the differences in response/performance; however, they never empirically substantiated this assumption. Therefore, we have no idea whether subjects incorporated or ignored the context. The authors' psychological conclusions are entirely speculative because the subjects' psychology was never investigated.

To study cognitive processes, we need to know how the two groups arrived at their judgments. It is possible that the Americans' errors on the relative task have nothing to do with incorporating contextual cues. It is possible that Americans did compare the size of the line with the height of the square to calculate the proportional length. And they may have considered the height of the second square in order to calculate the proportional length that the second line needed to be. Perhaps American subjects simply were deficient in calculating correctly. Being inaccurate in the precision of a comparison is quite different from not making a comparison. Kitayama et al. (2003) presumed that Americans did not incorporate contextual information in estimating the length of the second line. Yet they may indeed have incorporated contextual information, although their ability to quantify the information about the length of the lines was deficient. Employing simple, superficial response measures, Kitayama et al. are incapable of studying cognitive processes.

Kitayama et al. (2003) would have done well to employ qualitative methodology to ascertain the precise mental operations that subjects use.

Ericsson et al. (2004) employed this methodology to study mnenomic strategies, as we mentioned in chapter 2. Primary school teachers of mathematics do a better job of studying cognitive processes than these eminent psychological researchers do. Teachers ask their pupils to write down the entire sequence of calculations they perform in solving a problem. This gives the teachers access to the thought processes of the students. She is able to discern whether the pupil understands the mathematics and perhaps made a careless mistake, or whether he didn't know the correct concept/principle. A teacher who simply graded the results as correct or incorrect would be remiss in her job. That is just what Kitayama did.

Kitayama et al.'s (2003) failure is akin to observing that a sample of people cries a lot and then concluding they must be sad. However, they could equally be happy, frustrated, irritated, relieved, grateful, in love, in pain, empathizing with a tragic heroine in a novel, and so on. A rash judgment that they were sad, without asking them a single question about their feelings, would hardly qualify one as a psychologist. Imagine if a psychologist did make this kind of arbitrary, speculative judgment and tried to publish it in a reputable scientific journal with the proviso that further investigation is necessary to confirm the judgment. Any reputable reviewer or editor would reject this "research" out of hand, saying that the psychological investigation is essential for drawing any conclusion about the people's psychology. Without it, the assessment is unwarranted and not publishable in a scientific journal. Yet Kitayama et al. acted just like the psychologist in question, and peer reviewers and editors published it in the eminent journal *Psychological Science*.

Kitayama et al. (2003) also misinterpreted their data. The data show that Japanese subjects were not perfect on the relative task. Their average error over all conditions was 4.5 mm. This was slightly less than their error on the absolute task, which was 6 mm. This difference of 1.5 mm is a minimal effect of culture on perception. If the absolute task is so at odds with the cultural organization of perception/attention, then the subjects should have performed much more poorly than they did on the relative task. The data indicate that Japanese culture did not make the absolute task very difficult or the relative task very easy.

A careful examination of the data reveals additional inconsistencies with the authors' conclusion. In the first phase of the experiment, subjects were presented with five different-size squares, each with different-size lines. In the second phase, the new square was sometimes slightly larger than the first, sometimes much larger, sometimes the same size, sometimes slightly smaller, and sometimes much smaller than the original. Subjects performed

TABLE 4.1
Kitayama's Data

Height of First Frame	*Length of Line*	*Height of Second Frame*	*Errors on Absolute Task*		*Errors on Relative Task*	
			Japanese	*Americans*	*Japanese*	*Americans*
89 mm	62 mm	179 mm	6.8 mm	2.2 mm	6.3 mm	10.6 mm
179 mm	31 mm	89 mm	3.6 mm	3.8 mm	2.3 mm	3.7 mm

very differently in these different conditions. Table 4.1 presents data from two of the conditions:

The first row of data roughly corresponds to the authors' main conclusion. Japanese subjects made greater errors on the absolute task than Americans did, whereas American subjects made greater errors on the relative task than the Japanese did. However, even in this condition, certain data contradict the hypothesis and the conclusion. Japanese subjects made the same degree of error on the absolute and relative tasks. They should have performed much better on the latter.

The results of the second condition contradict the hypothesis and conclusion more substantially. Both groups of subjects made minimal errors on both tasks. In addition, the absolute task provoked no difference between Japanese and Americans; the Americans performed equally well on both tasks; there was only a minuscule discrepancy of 1.4 mm between Americans and Japanese on the relative task and a minuscule discrepancy of 1.3 mm between the Japanese performance on the relative task and the absolute task. These data contradict the authors' sweeping conclusions about cultural differences in perception. Yet the authors neither acknowledge these numerous discrepancies, nor attempt to explain them. Instead, they obfuscate them by insisting on the main effects.

Kitayama et al. (2003) also failed to indicate the cultural reasons for the cases in which real performance differences occurred. They simply made a claim for cognitive variations between the cultures, but they did not explain the variations. They stated that this should be a topic for further research. However, without linking the "cognitive differences" to any particular macro cultural factors, the study is simply a descriptive account of behavioral differences in people. It is uninformative about what culture has to do with psychology, which is what cultural psychology should tell us.

The Relation Between Cultural and Psychological Variables Is Obscured. Positivism obscures the concrete, complex relationship between culture and psychology by relying upon statistical tests of significance to indicate it. This is evident in Greenfield, et al.'s (2003) investigation of Mayan weavers in Chiapas, Mexico. The first generation of weavers had little contact with commerce, whereas their children had substantially more. The authors concluded that commerce generated a more independent style of apprenticeship for teaching weaving techniques. This was based on two measures: (a) The proportion of time the learner worked independently on weaving, and (b) the percentage of preventions and corrections the learner made by herself, out of all the preventions and corrections that were initiated by both learners and teachers. A compound measure of these two correlated 0.21 with participation in commerce. This correlation is statistically significant. On this basis, the authors concluded that culture had a significant impact on teaching techniques.

However, a statistically significant relationship or difference does not necessarily represent a large, meaningful "real life" association between the factors. This is evident in the fact that the percentage of preventions and corrections the learner made by herself increased from 78% to only 81% under the influence of commerce. Not only is this increase in independent learning minuscule; in addition, independent learning was extremely pronounced (78%) in the first generation, who had little exposure to commerce. Consequently, commerce had extremely little impact on making pedagogical techniques more independent. Relying on statistical tests of significance falsifies the true picture.

Greenfield et al. (2003) also studied the impact of commerce on abstract representation of weaving patterns. They showed subjects woven textile patterns and asked them to represent these using wooden sticks in frames. Subjects could represent a broad pattern of woven stripes by placing several thin sticks together, or by using one thick stick. Greenfield et al. claimed that using a thick stick represents the mental operation of combining the many thin lines in the textile into one category. They defined abstraction by the use of thick sticks.

This operational definition is questionable because we do not know whether the subjects were cognitively abstracting at all. They may have simply used a thick stick because it was more convenient or efficient than lining up several thin ones. In addition, using a single thick stick rather than several thin ones is not an abstraction. Abstraction is a process of conceptually selecting out a general common element from a set of particulars. "Human" is an abstraction from the particular individuals that exist. "Color" is

an abstraction from particular colors. Abstractions are conceptual identifications of general properties; they are not visible, definite entities. One cannot see "color," or "human." Employing a thick stick to represent a visible pattern is not an abstraction in this sense. The thick stick probably represented the aggregate visible width of several strands of wool. It did not necessarily represent any abstract feature, the way that "color" and "human" do. Vygotsky pointed out that the form of an artifact can conceal very different mental processes. Young children often use abstract words that they have heard from caretakers, however they have not learned to use them as abstract symbols. It is necessary to investigate whether words and concepts are used as abstractions or as associative complexes (Vygotsky, 1987, pp. 121–241). Again, we see how operational definitions in terms of overt, simple, quantifiable behavior are inadequate for representing psychological phenomena. Qualitative methods enable pinpointing the actual cognitive operations that the subjects were employing when they used broad sticks to represent rows of thread (cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 75–76, for a discussion of how Kurt Goldstein studied abstraction in neurological patients).

However, we leave this question aside and concentrate on Greenfield et al.'s (2003) conclusion: "Between the earlier period and the later, the rate of abstract representational strategies increased significantly" (p. 474). There is a "significant link between commerce and abstraction" (p. 475). The repeated use of the term *significant* conveys the impression that the link is robust and important. However, this is not what the numbers reveal. The correlation between participating in commerce and abstraction was a minuscule 0.12. This is an extremely weak association that shows no real impact of commerce on abstraction.

The same is true for Greenfield et al.'s (2003) conclusion that commerce fosters a skill in continuing and representing culturally novel patterns of weaving. "Historical period [i.e., commerce] had a significant main effect on the number of novel patterns that were correctly represented" (p. 477). To assess the real-life effect, we must look at the actual scores. Out of 5 test patterns, the later generation correctly completed 2.65. The first generation completed 2.19. Being exposed to commerce increases one's skill by 0.46 of a pattern, out of 5. This is only a 10% improvement. In addition, both groups manifested a mediocre skill level, near the middle of the range between 0 and 5. Commerce did not make the younger weavers terribly skillful at completing novel patterns, nor did deprivation of commerce make the older weavers terribly bad at it. A realistic look at the data reveals that commerce has little influence on this psychological process. Conclusions based on statistical tests falsify this reality.

An additional weakness with relying on statistical tests is that they indicate only the presence or absence of a relationship. They provide no information about the reasons for it (Ratner, 1997; Smith, 2003, pp. 20–23). Greenfield et al. (2003) provided only one brief sentence to explain why commerce generates abstract representation: that the exchange of money is abstract and this generates abstract cognition (p. 468). This is hardly illuminating.

Greenfield, and cross-cultural psychologists in general, and mainstream psychologists in general, overlook the fundamental question of what culture has to do with psychology. Why is it that people who engage in commerce think abstractly? This is the question that a science of psychology needs to answer. Science strives to answer "why" and "how" questions. It is not content to observe, or measure, *that* something occurs. Science looks for unobservable processes, properties, and principles that underlie overt facts. It looks to explain, not simply describe. As the eminent philosopher of science, Bunge, succinctly put it, "the hallmark of modern science is the search for lawful mechanisms behind the observed facts, rather than the mindless accumulation of data and the mindless search for statistical correlations among them" (Bunge, 2004, pp. 207–208).

Cross-cultural psychology conforms to mainstream psychology and positivist philosophy in focusing on describing facts, and eschewing underlying mechanisms, processes, principles, and reasons (Bunge, 2004, p. 206). Even controlled demonstrations and experiments that establish a relationship between an independent cultural variable and a dependent psychological variable are really descriptive despite their appearance of explanation. To say that commerce fosters abstract thinking appears to explain why the latter occurs. However, it is actually no more than a description of the factual relationship. There is no comprehension of why or how the relationship exists. Nor is there any elucidation of general, underlying principles of human psychology in a coherent, comprehensive theory that could illuminate related psychological phenomena.

In psychology, most "why" questions and answers are pseudo "why" questions and answers. They are actually "that" questions and answers in disguise. We really know only *that* commerce is associated with abstract thinking.

Conventional psychological explanations have the same status as saying that wet clothing dries because the sun is shining; people die because they have insufficient food, or they get sick because they eat bad-smelling meat; or flowers grow because it rains. These are not scientific explanations because they lack any identification of reasons or mechanisms that truly account for the result. They are only associations of overt phenomena without

comprehending why the association exists. In all the examples, the pseudo explanatory term *because* can be replaced with the descriptive term *when* with no change in meaning. When people have insufficient food, they die. When the sun shines, wet clothes dry. We have no idea why. A genuine explanation would specify reasons and mechanisms: that the clothes absorb the light, which increases the kinetic energy of the water molecules in the wet clothing to the point that they overcome the adhesive forces that bound them to the clothes (Bunge, 2004, p. 202).

To explain why commerce fosters abstract thinking, we need a thorough understanding of both. We need to comprehend that commerce treats objects and people as commodities. We need to understand what a commodity is. (We could consult Marx's *Capital* for a useful analysis.) We have to analyze the specific properties of abstract thinking; we have to precisely define what abstract thinking is. We have to identify homologies between abstract thinking and commerce—that is, in what ways is commerce abstract in the same sense that abstract thinking among the Mayas is? We need to know the functional importance of abstract thinking for commerce—that is, how can abstract thinking facilitate one's performance of commercial activity, why is abstract thinking more suitable in commerce than concrete thinking is, and how/why would concrete thinking undermine commerce? Simply noting that more contact with commerce led Mayan mothers to alter their artistic patterns is uninformative. What kind of contact did they have? How did the contact lead them to change their representations? Did they actually alter their way of thinking about, and perceiving, the world and people, or did they simply copy new patterns that were more marketable? Did they suffer particular failures from using the older patterns? In other words, how does commerce structure life to foster abstract thinking (for discussion of abstraction and commerce, cf. Linklater, 2003; Ratner, 1991, pp. 96–100)?

It is true that some important empirical relationships between macro cultural factors and psychology have been uncovered with positivistic methodology. Positivistic research has identified a relationship between gender and psychological disturbances; between socioeconomic status and cognitive deficits; between poverty and psychological dysfunction; between racism and psychological development; and between violent media and violent behavior. These findings, obtained by traditional empiricist, or positivistic, methods without the backing of grand theories, are suggestive for reforming macro factors to enhance psychological functioning.

Positivism is serviceable when the issues it addresses are clear-cut. Poverty, segregation, unemployment, violence, language and mathematical

level, reaction time, and severe psychological dysfunction have certain obvious characteristics that are known and easily identified. Their existence may be indicated by operational measures that quantify simple, singular overt responses. Amount of parental communication with children can be quantified as number of words or minutes. This measure can be correlated with scores on IQ tests to give a rough indication of the relationship between parental behavior and psychological effects on children.

However, in addition to the dubious ecological validity of many instruments, they provide little insight into the quality (nature) of phenomena or their subtle, complex interrelationships. We learn little from empiricism about the complexities of mental illness, racism, prejudice, and poverty. We also learn little about the processes by which poverty or racism organize personality, learning, motivation, cognitive processes, emotional expression, language, and mental illness (cf. Ratner, 1997; Ratner & Hui, 2003).

Positivistic methodology cannot provide the kind of information that macro cultural psychology requires. It defines cultural and psychological phenomena abstractly; it restricts data to superficial, overt, quantitative behaviors; the variables have ambiguous, uncertain significance; their application to real-life situations is limited; the relationship between variables is minimal, though it is aggrandized as significant by artificial statistical tests; the internal relation between cultural factors and psychological factors is unknown; and conclusions about the character of psychological phenomena and their relation to cultural factors are primarily speculative. Beneath the appearance of rigorous, precise, sophisticated, valid measures and data, we have only crude hints about psychological phenomena and their relation to cultural factors. The mere fact that positivism is empirically driven does not qualify it as scientific. "Empirical inquiry without a proper method ceases to be a science" (Dilthey, 1900/1985, p. 268).

The fact that positivism continues to be the hegemonic methodology for psychology and most of the social sciences, despite its numerous glaring weaknesses, proves that ideological forces, rather than scientific principles, guide the discipline of psychology. Positivism (in common with all ideology and religion) is maintained not because it scientifically describes and explains phenomena, but because it obscures them! It obfuscates the concrete, historical character of cultural and psychological phenomena. We shall see in the next two chapters that this obfuscation serves a powerful political function of legitimizing the status quo.

5

Macro Cultural Psychology, Social Reform, and Psychological Change

Systemic issues call for systemic and long-term solutions.

—Bunge (2004, p. 190)

Macro cultural-psychological theory is a reconceptualization of psychological phenomena and culture that promotes social reform. The theory explains why social reform is necessary for psychological improvement, why social reform is likely to be effective in enhancing psychological functioning, the process by which social reform effects psychological changes, what social reform must include in order to be effective, what psychological effects social reform can have, why social reform requires psychological change, and the limited psychological improvement that can occur in the absence of social reform.

THE NEED FOR SOCIAL REFORM IN ORDER TO ENHANCE PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING

Psychological phenomena originate in, embody, and support macro cultural factors. Consequently, altering psychological phenomena requires reforming the macro cultural factors that form them. Psychological phenomena cannot be modified independently of the cultural factors that form them. One cannot expect people to alter their psychology through sheer will power. That ignores the cultural basis of psychology. We have amply documented the fact that psychological phenomena arise within social institu-

tions, artifacts, and cultural concepts. They do not arise on their own through individual willpower. Furthermore, existing macro cultural factors exert power to sustain existing psychological phenomena. Accordingly, the way to enhance psychological functioning associated with macro psychological phenomena is to construct new macro cultural factors that will structure and demand new psychological functioning.

Changes in macro cultural factors are necessary, and effective, for enhancing psychological functioning because they provide social, physical, and conceptual structures that support new psychological phenomena. Consider a simple example of how changing social relations entail different psychology. If three people collectively own a farm and share its produce, each has a vested interest in helping the others improve their productivity. They will sympathize and empathize with each other, feel that their selves are interdependent, be motivated to cooperate, solve problems amicably through compromise, and generally have a "collectivistic psychology." If the farm is divided into three separate parcels, each privately owned under a competitive system of social relations, then each owner immediately has no interest in helping the others become more productive. In fact, each gains to the extent that the others fail because less competition means he can sell more of his own produce and earn more money. An "individualistic psychology" will ensue in which sympathy and empathy for the others are muted, each feels independent of the others, tries to outwit them, and takes an adversarial stance in solving problems. Social relations entail different psychologies, and changing psychology requires changing social relations.

From the perspective of macro cultural psychology, the need for widespread psychological improvement is a need for social reform. The existence of widespread psychological problems that require correction/elimination is an indication that macro cultural factors are untenable and need to be transformed. For if macro cultural factors form the basis, characteristics, and function of psychological phenomena, then widespread inadequacies in the latter must derive from central inadequacies in the former. Improvements in widespread psychological problems can be made only through improvements in macro cultural factors.

A clear example is the widespread dysfunctional psychology of American Indians. The annual average violent-crime rate among Indians is twice as high as that of Blacks and 2 ½ times that of Whites. Indian youths commit suicide at twice the rate of other young people. Compared with other groups, Indians of all ages are 670 % more likely to die from alcoholism. Twenty percent of Indian teenagers are not in school, not working, and not looking for work. The widespread prevalence of psychological dysfunction

throughout the Indian population is a social fact, or macro cultural factor. It is clearly engendered by social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts that comprise the cornerstones of Indian social and physical life. It is impossible to alter this prevalent dysfunctional psychology without transforming macro cultural factors. Attempts at altering problematical behavior without changing the cultural environment fail.

For example, attempts to teach people literacy fail unless there is a practical need for this competence in their culture—in other words, unless there is demand and support for this competence from macro cultural factors. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the cognitive competencies involved in literacy were acquired only where some practical activity (e.g., commerce) existed that required literacy. Where people did not need literacy to manage their affairs, it was difficult to persuade them to embrace a skill that was, for all practical purposes, superfluous (Ratner, 2002, pp. 24–25).

In modern times, individual attempts at overcoming obesity fail unless they are supported by the structure of macro cultural factors. The amount of weight that individuals lose through dieting is generally small. And the number of individuals who maintain weight loss is limited to those with favorable cognitive, social, and material resources. Personal change is difficult to maintain in the face of social, physical, and conceptual macro factors. One has to constantly be on guard to maintain personal vigilance about cultural structures that seduce one into poor eating and exercise habits. One has to spend time and money to find healthy food that is not readily available. One has to spend time and money in order to add exercise to your daily life that provides little opportunity for it.

It is far more conducive to lead a healthy life if the requirements, or components, are built into social institutions, physical infrastructure, and cultural concepts. The most successful programs are redesigned communities where residences are situated within walking distance to stores, restaurants, and schools. This infrastructure enables people to walk to their activities instead of driving cars to distant malls. In addition, junk food has been removed from schools and replaced by healthy food (just as cigarettes are banned from schools, banned from being advertised on television, banned from being sold to youngsters, and banned from being smoked in public places). Furthermore, teachers and other social leaders teach nutritional information in school, and schools have extended physical education classes. These changes in the social institutions, physical artifacts, and cultural concepts are effective in reducing obesity because healthy living is built into the culture. The individual does not have to maintain constant vigilance to resist the temptations of an unhealthy culture.

Another example of how difficult it is to change behavior through individual willpower apart from changes in macro cultural factors is the attempt by conservative religious groups to convince their devotees to renounce premarital sex. These groups have convinced 2.4 million adolescents to sign virginity pledges in the past 10 years. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control studied 12,000 of these people to see how effective their pledges were. Eighty-eight percent reported having had sex before they married! The incidence of venereal disease was higher among this 88% than it was among adolescents who had not signed the pledge. And the teenagers who had made the pledge were less likely to know they were infected than those who had not pledged (Altman, 2004). Willpower is evidently no match for the barrage of sexual incentives that are displayed throughout our macro cultural factors.

EVIDENCE THAT CHANGING MACRO CULTURAL FACTORS ALTERS PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING

A wide range of natural experiments, controlled observation, and artificial experiments prove the power of social relationships for altering psychological phenomena. Some examples follow.

A natural experiment occurred at Sears in the 1990s when a new compensation policy for car mechanics was introduced. For decades, mechanics were paid a standard salary for time worked. However, in the 1990s Sears management decided to reduce base pay and add a commission proportional to the monetary value of the repair. Thus, if the repair bill was high, the mechanic would receive a higher commission than if it were low. In addition, management declared that anyone who didn't bring in a certain quota of repair revenue could be fired. Within a year of this new remuneration policy, mechanics began overcharging customers for repairs. Lawsuits charged Sears with overcharging hundreds of millions of dollars. The company paid more than $2 billion in fines to settle the cases—without admitting wrongdoing! A simple change in economic practice—dictated by the managers—generated a dramatic change in the psychology and behavior of the mechanics (Callahan, 2004, pp. 28ff). The mechanics adjusted their behavior and psychology to conform to the new compensation practices because they would have suffered financially if they had refused to cheat.

Another natural experiment has occurred in biomedical science. Collegial sharing of research data has declined as corporations have privatized biomedical research by funding research and obtaining exclusive ownership of the results (Horton, 2004). Changes in social relationships

have rapidly restructured the psychology and behavior of seemingly free-thinking researchers.

A number of social psychological experiments have conclusively demonstrated the power of social relationships to alter psychology. The Stanford Prison experiment is well known. Less familiar is M. Sherif, Harvey, J. White, Hood, & C. Sherif (1954/1988) experiment. The authors matched 11-year-old boys on demographic, cognitive, and personality factors. They then assigned the boys to two groups at a camp in Oklahoma. The activities studied were competitive athletic contests and cooperative problem solving. When the two groups competed against each other, the children quickly become hostile, aggressive, self-serving, and socially distant from and prejudiced toward each other. In addition, cognitive processes such as memory were affected by the competitive activity. As a case in point, after a tug-of-war that lasted 48 minutes, the losing group overestimated its duration by 12 minutes whereas the winning group underestimated its duration by 18 minutes. The median judgment (of duration) for the losing group was twice that of the winning group's—one hour versus 30 minutes (pp. 118–119).

After competing for several days, the researchers had the two groups cooperate with each other. They had to cooperate on solving problems that affected all of them. In one case, the water tank, which supplied water to the entire camp, was turned off by the researchers, thereby confronting all the boys with a common plight. The boys joined together to find out why the water had stopped and to get it running again. After several of these cooperative problem-solving activities, "Reduction of the conflict and hostility was observed in reciprocally cooperative and helpful intergroup actions, in friendly exchanges of tools," and in increased mingling and camaraderie of children from the two groups. "The reliability of these observations is established by sociometric indices that showed increases of friendship choices from the erstwhile antagonists and also in the sharp decrease of unfavorable stereotypes toward the outgroup. Favorable conceptions of the outgroup developed" (p. 211). Specifically, at the end of the competitive stage, 53% of the ratings by one group of the other had been unfavorable; but after the series of cooperative problem-solving tasks, only 4.5% of the ratings were unfavorable and 86% were favorable (pp. 194–195).

A very important finding of the study was that overcoming the negative affects of competition required a series of cooperative activities. Mere contact with the out-group had no effect in altering behavior (pp. 152–160). Between the termination of the competitive games and the start of the cooperative phase, the boys had the opportunity to freely associate with each

other in the dining hall during meals. However, during this time, members of the two groups continued to eat in separate groups and to engage in hostile actions toward each other. The social distance and hostility broke down only after the boys engaged in cooperative activities that utilized new principles of solving problems and a new basis for distributing rewards and opportunities among the groups.

A good deal of evidence in the area of mental health demonstrates that macro cultural factors have a great affect on psychological improvement (cf. Ratner, 1991, pp. 247–282). The level of employment and general economic prosperity in the United States and Britain are clearly important for recovery from mental illness. During the Great Depression, the rate of recovery from schizophrenia was half that of the decades preceding and following the economic crisis. In contrast to a complete recovery rate of 20% during the early 1920s and 1940s, the rate was only 12% during the Depression. The fact that national prosperity and high employment reduces mental illness is demonstrated by a correlation of .80 between the national unemployment rate and admissions to mental hospitals from 1840 to 1967. Additionally, over a 3-year period, twice as many upper-class patients recovered from psychosis as did lower-class patients (11% vs. 5%).

The World Health Organization's *Follow-Up Study on Schizophrenia* provides powerful evidence that recovery differs dramatically in developing and developed countries. Psychotic symptoms terminate fairly quickly in undeveloped countries, whereas they persist much longer in developed nations. The particular psychotic episode that brought on the initial diagnosis of schizophrenia terminated in 6 months in the undeveloped countries, compared with 11 months in the developed nations. The entire course of schizophrenia was also substantially shorter in undeveloped than developed countries. For example, only 25% of the patients in Ibadan remained psychotic after 2 years, in contrast to 61% in Aarhus. During the 2 years following the initial diagnosis, patients in developed nations spent 45% of the time in psychotic episodes, whereas patients in the undeveloped spent only 27% of the time in such agony. The authors of the report conclude that "For all variables considered, the schizophrenic patients in [developing countries] tended to have a better outcome on average than the schizophrenic patients in the [developed countries]" (Ratner, 1991, p. 282).

In the same vein, compared to Britons, Mauritians suffered far less psychological disturbance after being discharged from treatment. And Mauri-

tians suffered far less chronic disability and less relapse than did Africans from similar genetic stock who were living in the U.S. Virgin islands. For example, less than 10% of Mauritians experienced any relapse of symptoms in contrast to over 50% of their counterparts in the Virgin Islands.

These studies prove that social structure exerts a powerful effect on recovery from psychosis. The difference between recovery in developing and developed countries is far greater than that obtained for different kinds of psychotherapy within a given social system (cf. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry,* 1992, vol. 16, pp. 53–106, for discussion of this).

Another indicator of the central importance of macro cultural factors for mental health is the fact that as immigrant groups climb up the socioeconomic ladder, their prevalence of mental illness drops to match their middle-class counterparts (Ratner, 1991, pp. 257–258).

A negative example of cultural change promoting psychological change is colonization. In the British colonization of South Africa, British missionaries systematically introduced capitalist macro cultural factors that called for and supported this new modern mentality. Merely preaching about Christ was insufficient to bring about this psychological change. In addition, missionaries prodded the natives to adopt British clothing, hairstyles, commercial trading, industrial work, consumerism, small family houses separated into individual rooms, laws, marriage practices, property rights, sanitation, personal hygiene, and medical practices. Natives underwent a total cultural immersion in an interlocking system of capitalist macro cultural factors. Each factor complemented the others in a functionally integrated system. The entire weight of this system was necessary to transform the consciousness of the South African natives.

Participating in new social relationships, physical artifacts, and cultural concepts called for and structured new psychological phenomena. For instance, treating the natives' diseases through modern medical treatments undermined the authority of traditional healers, broke the relationship between the people and the healers, and inculcated a new metaphysics about the nature of disease, the body, and the individual. Western medicine conceptualized disease as a physical dysfunction within the skin of the corporeal individual, which undermined the traditional African notion of disease as rooted in moral and social dysfunctions (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997, p. 343).

Enveloping people in a humane cultural system, which they construct to fulfill themselves, will have equally powerful effects on restructuring people's minds in a positive direction.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE DIRECTION FOR SOCIAL REFORM

Macro cultural psychology provides unique insights into social reform, which are based on analyzing the psychological effects of macro cultural factors. Furthermore, macro cultural psychology engages in a five-step analysis to produce policies for social reform:

1. It analyzes whether psychological phenomena are fulfilling or not for a population, not just for a few individuals. Macro cultural psychologists concentrate on widely shared psychological phenomena that are macro cultural factors. (This assessment, of course, depends on value judgments, which we cannot discuss here. For the purposes of this book, I assume that most will agree that unfulfilling psychological phenomena include irrationality, aggression, prejudice, stress, loneliness, conformity, low intelligence, learning disability, inability to concentrate, confusion, egocentrism, authoritarianism, apathy, alienation, depression, paranoia, being suicidal, and related attributes. Psychological fulfillment is the opposite of these.)
2. Each psychological phenomenon (emotion, motive, perception, memory process, reasoning process, mental disturbance, developmental process, attentional process, learning process, self-concept) is analyzed into its psychological components. Each component is a macro cultural factor.
3. Each component is traced to other macro cultural factors that organize it—that is, to its macro cultural explanatory constructs.
4. Macro cultural factors that generate components of fulfilling psychological phenomena are recommended for development.
5. Macro cultural factors that generate components of unfulfilling psychological phenomena are recommended for elimination/transformation.

Let us examine how this five-step model can reduce several prevalent psychological problems.

Personal anger is a prevalent emotional problem in the United States. Americans are prone to become extremely angry when irritated by personal behavior of other individuals. This is problematical because it leads to ill-will, retaliation, combat, stress, and associated physical symptoms. Personal anger is composed of psychological components. One of these is an individualistic self-concept. The individualistic self holds people responsible

for their actions. The individualistic self reasons that if a person is responsible for their action, and if their action harmed us, the offender intended to injure us. This conclusion generates anger. For instance, if someone walks into you on the sidewalk and you conclude he did it intentionally, you become irate. If you conclude it was an accident, you forgive him. Your reasoning about the causes of his behavior rests on your premises about the self and responsibility. Self-concept and the reasoning that follows from it are two psychological components of personal anger. Both components are prevalent psychological phenomena, or macro cultural factors.

These psychological components of anger derive from a cultural concept of personhood, that people are autonomous and willful, in control of and responsible for their actions. This complex of psychological and conceptual macro cultural factors leads us to readily interpret injurious behavior to us as deliberate, and we become angry.

In other words, (a) a macro cultural concept—belief in individual autonomy and personal responsibility for action (b) is incorporated into psychological phenomena—an individualistic self, and a reasoning process that deduces that a personal injury to oneself was deliberate. These are macro cultural-psychological phenomena. They are widely shared, publicly displayed, and rooted in other macro cultural factors. Finally, (c) these macro cultural-psychological phenomena generate the emotion of anger in response to personal injury. This personal anger is also a macro psychological phenomenon. It is widely shared, publicly displayed, and rooted in other macro cultural factors.

Societies that do not attribute misfortune to personal intentions—and instead regard these as bad luck, accidents, or fate—have low levels of anger. This is true among Mayan Indians in Mexico, Turkish people, and Buddhists in Sri Lanka (see earlier discussion on p. 78; Ratner, 1991, pp. 77–78).

In order to reduce the cultural components of anger (a and b discussed previously), a new concept of self and responsibility needs to replace the current one. A balanced view recognizes that people are only partly responsible for their action. External factors also influence behavior.[1] Injurious behavior is not necessarily intentional. If we incorporate this sense of self and responsibility into our psychological self-concept and reasoning process, we will not be so prone to blame an offender for his behavior and become angry at him.

Of course, we intellectually know that people are not really autonomous and completely responsible for their action. However, this needs to be objectified in macro cultural factors so that it becomes part of our taken-for-granted assumptions and practices. Our individualistic notion

of self and responsibility, our psychological self-concept, and our reasoning process that culminates in blaming people for injuring us, arose through privatized capitalist business practices. They were instantiated in a physical infrastructure, institutions, and cultural concepts. And they were disseminated in literary works, popular songs, paintings, political ideology, and advertisements. As long as this cultural basis exists, people will invoke the extreme notion of personal responsibility as a cognitive schema to interpret personal irritation, and they will be prone to become angry at the offender.

A new balanced sense of self and responsibility—that recognizes constraints on action in addition to intentions—needs to be inspired and supported in the same wholesale way by social institutions, cultural concepts, and an infrastructure of artifacts. Macro cultural factors need to be transformed to build in, display, and cultivate a balanced sense of self throughout social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts—in movies, television programs, novels, political ideology, advertisements, and popular songs. This is required to counterpoise the extremely individualistic sense of self that is prevalent.

This is the kind of macro cultural analysis of psychological phenomena and social reform that results from macro cultural factors comprising the explanatory constructs of psychological phenomena. We take a psychological phenomenon such as personal anger that appears to be a natural or personal psychological reaction, we regard it as a cultural phenomenon, we identify the macro cultural factors that constitute it, and we reform them where necessary. We make an analysis of personal anger relevant to social reform. We design new macro cultural factors in a way that they will specifically reduce debilitating personal anger and promote enhanced psychological functioning.[2]

The same analysis leads to cultural solutions to severe psychological dysfunction such as depression. Depression is a psychological macro factor. It afflicts a large proportion of the population, is managed by cultural institutions, is informed by cultural concepts, is treated with cultural artifacts such as medication, forms part of people's identity, and is integrated within the health care system and government budgets. Depression is also cultural in that it is precipitated by stressful cultural conditions and evoked by cultural coping mechanisms. Stressors alone do not automatically produce depression. They can equally lead to anger or resignation (acceptance, fatalism), schizophrenia, or suicide. Stressors lead to depression only when they are mediated by particular cultural conditions and coping mechanisms (cf. Ratner, 1991, chap. 6). Different coping mechanisms lead to different dysfunctions.

According to medical anthropologists, the coping mechanisms that Westerners employ to confront stressful conditions include blaming oneself for misfortune, worrying about it, and feeling there is no support for overcoming it. These coping mechanisms culminate in feeling depressed because one feels inadequate as a person to single-handedly overcome misfortune. One actually becomes depressed about oneself.

Coping mechanisms are the psychological components of depression. In other words, depression is constituted from self-blame, worry, and aloneness, just as personal anger is constituted from an individualistic self and a deductive reasoning process. We employ psychological phenomena to understand and react to stressful conditions, and these phenomena culminate in depression.

These psychological operations by which people cope with stress are macro cultural-psychological phenomena, or macro cultural factors. Self-blame, worry, and aloneness are all widely shared, publicly displayed macro cultural-psychological phenomena. In addition, they are part of, and fostered by, other macro cultural-factors. Self-blame springs from capitalist social organization and ideology, which glorify the individual as autonomous and responsible for behavior. Worry and aloneness spring from a low level of social support for people in difficulty, which, in the West, stems from greedy self-interest in one's own success, and from replacing direct social ties with financially oriented commercialized services.

This macro cultural-psychological model of depression is depicted in Fig. 5.1. Figure 5.1 shows that all the elements of depression are part of macro

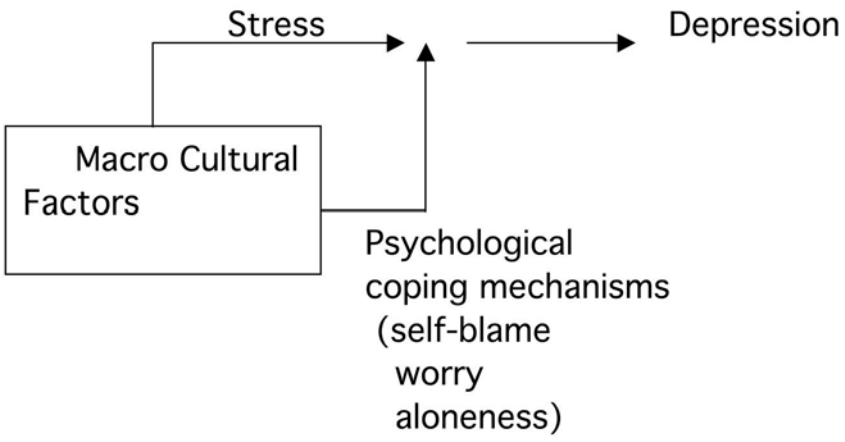

FIG. 5.1. Macro cultural components of depression.

cultural factors. Culture does not simply generate stress and leave our response up to endogenous, individual processes such as biological mechanisms. The coping mechanisms are also cultural phenomena and derive from other macro cultural factors.

Psychological dysfunction testifies to a dysfunctional culture because that culture stresses people and also provides coping skills that exacerbate the stress rather than overcoming it. The culture fails to provide large segments of the population with social and psychological resources to overcome its stress.[3] (Psychological dysfunction is not an escape from culture; it is a succumbing to debilitating aspects of culture. If coping skills led to escaping social stress, people would not become mentally ill.)

Psychological dysfunction is macro cultural factors through and through. The stress that precipitates it is a macro cultural factor that is prevalent throughout the population. The psychological coping mechanisms that cope with stress are macro cultural factors—each is widely shared and publicly displayed throughout the population. The origins of these coping mechanisms are the social institutions, cultural artifacts, and concepts of our social system. And the integration, or culmination, of these macro cultural factors in psychological dysfunction is a macro cultural factor that is widely shared. Each psychological dysfunction also becomes regulated by social authorities such as doctors, psychologists, insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, and courts. They define depression, treat it, and establish legal rights and obligations concerning it.

Then, when someone feels distressed, she defines it in terms of this cultural concept. The cultural concept becomes a model for what distress is. It is not simply a description of what people experience; it is a prescription for how to have the experience. It organizes one's sense of distress into culturally specified depression. The cultural concept of depression therefore partially accounts for the increased prevalence of psychological depression. Depression begins as the outgrowth of stress, worry, self-blame, and aloneness. It then becomes a coping mechanism in its own right that distressed people employ as a way of interpreting their misfortune.

This is characteristic of all macro cultural factors: They begin as the product of other factors and behavior, and then become entrenched as a macro factor that produces ensuing behavior (cf. Ratner, 1991, pp. 271–272). Although depression seems to be an antisocial, personal reaction to a personal crisis that occurs separately and differently in millions of scattered people, it is a common reaction based on common coping mechanisms to common untenable conditions (cf., Fig. 2.3). Culture is the uncanny basis of this seemingly individual, antisocial matter. Psychological dysfunction is

testimony to the cunning of culture to tacitly organize our personal, antisocial psychological reactions.

Because depression (and all psychological dysfunction) is macro cultural factors all the way down, it can be significantly reduced only by transforming the macro cultural factors that constitute it. New cultural factors need to be constructed that generate little stress, and also provide people with social and psychological mechanisms for successfully overcoming whatever stress exists.

Specifically, we need a new psychological self-concept that does not blame itself for misfortune. Instead, it recognizes that its resources, opportunities, and responsibilities are constrained and afforded by social, ideological, and physical conditions. It will not entirely blame itself for its misfortune and it will not become depressed over adversity. This balanced psychological self needs to become a macro cultural factor that is widely adopted and displayed throughout the population. Constructing this new psychological self requires constructing a system of social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts that call for, and support, it. A democratic system, controlled by people so that their needs, desires, and fulfillment are supported by other people, will include a social self, as opposed to an individualistic self. This social self will be objectified in cultural concepts and a macro psychological phenomenon. It will regard misfortune as a collective product that includes the self's own mistakes as well as a complex of related factors. A democratic, cooperative social system will generate far less stress than competitive, driven, materialistic capitalist society does. It will also support people during adversity. They will therefore worry less and not feel hopeless and helpless about overcoming their difficulties. When the cultural and psychological basis of depression is eliminated, depression will have little raison d'être.

Transforming macro cultural factors has been proven to be an effective remedy for depression and other psychological disorders. Societies composed of different macro cultural factors from ours have minimal rates of depression and other disorders. For instance, the Kaluli people of New Guinea do not blame themselves for misfortune. They blame fate and external events. They consequently do not experience self-blame, guilt, low self-esteem, and self-doubt about overcoming adversity. They lack the components of depression. No suicides have occurred in the past 100 years, and only one case of depression was found in a recent investigation (Ratner, 1991, pp. 265–268).

The macro cultural-psychological analysis and treatment of depression elucidates macro cultural explanatory constructs of depression, and pro-

poses to transform them. We do not concentrate on interpersonal aspects of the disorder. These are certainly important; however, they are amply explored by mainstream psychologists and therapists. Our analysis leads from the phenomenon of depression, to its psychological components (self-blame, aloneness, and worry), to macro cultural factors that cultivate these components (e.g., stress, aloneness, insecurity, and cultural concepts of an individualistic self, and worry about misfortune), to reforming these macro cultural factors.

Macro cultural psychology does not disregard psychology or reduce it to social institutions or cultural concepts. We recognize the distinctive psychological quality that depression, self-blame, worry, and aloneness possess. However, we emphasize that these are psychological qualities *of cultural life*. They are the psychological side of our institutions, concepts, and artifacts. In capitalist countries, depression (like personal anger, romantic love, hyperactivity, and an individualistic self) is a subjective quality of capitalism. As such, it not only occurs within capitalism; it is a side (or moment) *of* capitalism; it contains capitalism within itself; it is capitalism expressed *in* and *as* an emotional quality. Depression in China would embody malevolent cultural conditions and coping mechanisms particular to that country. It would be *Chinese depression,* a quality *of* Chinese society, Chinese society expressed *in* and *as* an emotional quality.[4]

We emphasize the cultural dimension of psychological phenomena rather than their personal aspects. This does not expunge psychology; it reconceptualizes it. All new scientific models reconceptualize phenomena. Galileo's heliocentric theory of the galaxy reconceptualized the earth as a revolving planet rather than the fixed center of the galaxy. The earth was not disregarded in this new formulation; it was reconceptualized, granted new properties, placed in new relationships with other astronomical phenomena, and seen to be governed by new principles and forces. Macro cultural psychology reconceptualizes psychological phenomena in the same sense.

Macro cultural psychology directs social reform to specifically address questions of psychological fulfillment. We make proposals for restructuring macro cultural factors in specific ways that directly foster psychological fulfillment. We add a unique psychological perspective to social reform.

Our proposal for social reform and psychological improvement examines the full character and implications of the cultural and psychological elements involved. It recognizes these are complex and heterogeneous; they are not singular and monolithic. Their deleterious aspects often coexist with advantageous aspects that should be retained. For instance, individu-

alism, personal responsibility, and self-blame, which lead to depression and anger, also usefully encourage self-analysis, self-improvement, strength of character, taking responsibility, admitting weaknesses, and solving problems without burdening others. Individualism and self-blame should not be entirely renounced. We should repudiate only their dysfunctional aspects—exaggerating the autonomy and responsibility of the individual, and obscuring social influences. This is why we need a balanced view of self that recognizes a person's weaknesses and responsibility for self-improvement, along with recognizing the social sources of these weaknesses. A complete rejection of individualism and self-blame would deprive us of valuable tools for psychological fulfillment. A "totally collective" self that dismisses all individuality would be one-sided and unsatisfying. This was evident in the forced collectivism and oppressive conformity of the failed attempts to implement socialism in China and Russia.

The same balanced analysis must be made of all macro cultural factors. Competition, for example, can generate quite destructive emotions, motives, self-concept, and treatment of other people. However, it can also be applied beneficially to spur performance and excitement. To utilize the good and jettison the negative, competition must take on a new form within a new social framework. Materialism, also, can take on a positive form of making the material environment beautiful, interesting, and comfortable. It can promote intimate social relationships and spiritual fulfillment. Rejecting all materialism because of the negative effects it has had would be counterproductive.

Retaining positive aspects of current macro cultural factors while negating their negative aspects cannot be brought about through an intellectual understanding on a personal level. It can come about only through restructuring our social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. New forms of competition, materialism, individualism, and self must be built into, and objectified in, institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts.

The pathological psychological phenomena and behavior we have been discussing result from the confluence of stressful conditions plus inadequate coping strategies that invoke adverse, normative macro cultural factors (such as self-blame) to deal with the stressful conditions. (Fromm called these normative inadequate coping strategies "socially patterned defects.")

Pathological psychological phenomena can also result from a somewhat different confluence of cultural factors. Individuals often cope with stressful conditions by exaggerating normative cultural practices, artifacts, and concepts that are not, in themselves, adverse. Alcoholism is a case in point. Individuals under stress may consume excessive alcohol.

But there is nothing adverse about having alcoholic drinks available in society at large. Certain individuals abuse them in order to cope with adverse conditions. There is no need to reform alcohol production and sales to adults. The solution to alcoholism lies in reforming the stressful conditions that lead people to abuse alcohol.

Eating disorders may also fit into this category. Young, White, Western women under stress exaggerate the normative ideal of feminine slimness. They contort their bodies into gross exaggerations of this norm, as a way of becoming attractive and gaining social approval. However, this does not mean that there is anything objectionable with the norm itself. The norm may not contribute to eating disorders and it may not need to be reformed. It is only when the norm is abused that it becomes implicated in psychological and behavioral disorders.

In this case, eating disorders are no more caused by cultural ideals of appearance than alcoholism is caused by beer. The solution to eating disorders is not to attack ideals of appearance, any more than the solution to alcoholism lies in prohibiting beer. The solution to these kinds problems is to attack the cultural stressors that lead to inappropriate coping behaviors.

The distinction I have made between debilitating macro cultural factors and neutral cultural factors that are abused may appear to be arcane. However, it is important for guiding social policy and reform. Reform must be limited to adverse social influences. It cannot regulate every cultural phenomenon that people may abuse. For instance, public health officials recognize that certain chemicals are widely toxic and must be controlled to protect the populace. DDT is an example. Other chemicals are not normally toxic, but they can be abused and cause harm. Aspirin is an example. We should not regulate the sale of aspirin just because people may overdose on it and become sick or die. We should educate them on how to use aspirin. It is crucial to differentiate the manner in which a chemical leads to damaging effects on people. These different roles call for different social policies.

The same distinction applies to cultural factors. Certain factors are widely toxic and should be counterpoised by policies. For instance, if we discover that in everyday life people manifest an extremely individualistic self-concept that leads them to become easily angered at personal affronts, and also to blame themselves for misfortunes that are not their fault, overlook social reasons for misfortune, and become fatalistic, we may conclude that extreme individualism is a debilitating cultural concept that generates psychological dysfunction. We would criticize it and seek to reduce its prevalence throughout the culture. Other cultural concepts, such as slim-body ideals, are not toxic to the populace at large, and actually provide health

benefits. They should not be repudiated. They should instead be the object of educational programs that caution against abusing them.

Macro cultural psychology undertakes a fine-grained analysis of psychological problems to identify just what the cultural aspects are, the role they play (how they operate) in organizing psychology, and whether they need to be reformed. It recognizes that although cultural features may be implicated in psychological problems, they may not necessarily generate the problems, and they may not need to be reformed. This analysis is far more detailed in elucidating psychological and cultural issues than the positivist approach of simply linking psychological variables to cultural variables.

One might argue that identifying and altering cultural origins of psychological problems is utopian because any psychological problem has a variety of cultural roots. Mental illness, learning disorders, aggression, passivity, and prejudice each result from a wide range of cultural factors. No single factor can be identified as responsible for a particular problem.

We can answer this objection by drawing an analogy with physical disease. Lung cancer is caused by a number of factors. Air pollution is one of them. Many (most) cases of lung cancer are caused by other factors. In addition, pollution does not cause lung cancer in everyone, or even most people. However, the fact that pollution does cause lung cancer in a significant subset of people qualifies it as dangerous and in need of control. The same is true for cultural factors that foster psychological dysfunctions. They are candidates for reform if they are injurious to a significant subset of people. They do not have to be the sole source of a psychological disorder. Nor do they have to injure all or most people.

Macro cultural psychology makes social reform directly address psychological enhancement. It pays special attention to designing macro cultural factors that specifically enhance psychological functioning. It does not assume that economic, educational, or medical reforms will automatically enhance psychological functioning. Macro cultural psychology generates psychologically based novel analyses and proposals for social reform that would not occur to economists, environmentalists, educators, or doctors who have little understanding of psychological issues.

THE POSSIBILITY OF SOCIAL REFORM

The reader may ask, "If psychology is organized by macro cultural factors, how can it criticize and reform them? If consciousness can see beyond its cultural filters, doesn't that prove that cultural filters do not constitute the mechanisms of consciousness?"

Cultural critique and reform can occur even though people's psychology has been shaped by existing cultural factors. The process is akin to critiquing one's family background. Parents inculcate their children with the idea that they are well-intentioned. Even abused children often believe in the goodwill of their parents. They blame themselves for provoking abuse, or sometimes do not even perceive their parents' behavior as abusive. Yet children can eventually come to re-cognize their parents' behavior and recognize its abusiveness. Parents' conditioning is powerful and difficult to overcome; however, children can see beyond it, especially with help from allies in a different position and viewpoint.

The same is true for cultural conditioning. Although Westerners are socialized to acquire an individualistic self-concept that functions within an individualistic society, we can understand that our individualistic self and society may generate adverse effects such as loneliness. We can realize that a collective self-concept and society are possible. It will be an intellectual understanding without the emotional, perceptual, motivational, learning, and cognitive experience that members of collective societies have. However, we can envision a different kind of self and society from the vantage point of our culturally shaped mind.

In the same way, we have a culturally organized linear sense of time; however, we can conceptually understand that other people have a cyclical sense of time, even though we cannot comprehend or experience the full psychological implications associated with it.

Likewise, we become extremely jealous when our spouse becomes romantically involved with someone else; however, we can conceive that other people can accept such affairs without becoming jealous.

Culturally organized psychology does not necessarily blind us to problems in our society or to other possible social arrangements. We can use knowledge of social deficiencies and alternatives to begin reforming our society and psychology in new directions. As new macro cultural factors become organized, corresponding psychological phenomena will become developed.

THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL REFORM

When a macro cultural factor has been deemed to be injurious to the populace, and in need of reform, basic transformations in the factor are necessary. In addition, other macro factors that interlock with it and support it must also be transformed. To change a given factor, its supportive context must be changed. Otherwise, the context will resist change in the element.

For instance, say we find that certain aspects of television programming have deleterious effects on students' study habits. In order to effectively reform the programming, we would need to know the factors that shape it. If financial interests of corporations dictate the form and content of programming, then any proposal for reforming the latter must include reforming the financial interests behind it. Otherwise, the financial interests will work to maintain the programming that is profitable to them (cf. McChesney, 1999).

Advocating social reform in order to enhance psychological functioning is not simply a plea to increase access to existing education, health care, and jobs. It is a plea to transform them. Simply enabling more people to participate in their existing forms will not necessarily enhance psychological functioning.

Nor is the call for social reform a call to alter abstract elements of social life such as the extent of social contact that people have with each other. Increasing opportunities for social contact is often advocated as a way to reduce prejudice and hostility. However, Sherif's experiment on cooperation and competition demonstrated that the structure of social relations needs to be made more cooperative in order to foster friendly relationships. Mere copresence is insufficient. People must actually be working together for common goals and sharing the fruits of their cooperative labor, in order to form truly caring relationships.

Nor is the call for social reform limited to quantitative changes in macro cultural factors. Quantitative raises in wages, taxes, number of years in school, number of homework assignments, education budgets, orderlies in mental hospitals, educational programs on television, only achieve limited benefits because they do not involve qualitative changes in the organization, principles, and administration of institutions. Adverse working conditions are not altered by simply paying higher wages. Ineffective pedagogical methods are not altered by increasing the number of teachers in schools. Ineffective treatment of mental patients is not improved by increasing the number of orderlies to care for them. A few educational programs on television will not alter the dominant barrage of senseless, sensationalistic, violent shows.

Social and political viewpoints that acknowledge only quantitative change are politically conservative because they preclude qualitative change in the structure of things. This is true of positivism. It contorts phenomena into variables that can change only quantitatively, not qualitatively.

Social reform requires structural changes in social institutions, artifacts, and cultural concepts. Superficial changes do not suffice. For instance, in order to promote good social relationships at work, Diener and Seligman

(2004) proposed that governmental and corporate organizations try to relocate employees "only when it is absolutely essential to do so …. Also, organizations should respect people's friendship patterns at work" (p. 20). The authors did not consider the wealth of factors that subvert social ties—such as alienated work, autocratic management, working conditions like noise and monotonous routines, and displacing jobs. Without changes in these fundamental aspects of work, it is naive to believe that social ties can be strengthened. The proposal is also silent about how to get executives to support workers' social relationships. It is as unrealistic to expect voluntary compliance as it is to ask executives to stop polluting, exporting jobs, automating jobs, busting unions, and rewarding themselves with multimillion-dollar bonuses.

Social reform involves changing the odds, not beating the odds. Seccombe (2002) expressed this poignantly:

> Rather than focusing exclusively on how individuals and families manage the adversity associated with poverty, we should be attuned to what causes poverty and how structural conditions and economic policies (or their absence) affect the objective and subjective experience of impoverishment. An analogy is debated in medicine: Should the focus of the U.S. health care system be on providing medical care to those who are already sick or should the priority be focused on prevention and eliminating the structural conditions that contribute to poor health in the first place? Both are needed but overall where should the priority lie? A similar debate is expressed in social work: How can a woman who is battered by her partner best be helped? Should we focus on getting her in therapy so that she can develop a greater sense of her own self-worth that eventually allows her to end the relationship? This may be an important component of resiliency but it is insufficient. Most battered women do not seek therapy because they do not have time, money, or trust in therapists. Even when therapy is helpful, it occurs after the fact when the psychological, physical, and emotional damage has already been done. Likewise, should families be taught how to beat the odds associated with poverty or should their odds be changed through preventative measures that are based on some form of redistribution of wealth? A structural approach focuses on prevention. (p. 291)

Social reform must be comprehensive in order to improve the odds of psychological fulfillment. Being comprehensive means that the full source of psychological debilitation must be challenged.

Wilcox (1982) explained that to improve the educational and psychological training of lower-class children, change must be instituted in the range of macro factors that bear on schools. Social reform is effective only

when it is applied holistically and comprehensively. Reforms in single factors will be minimally effective because the surrounding context of related factors resists it. In order to reform education, then, the workplace must be destratified. Because education prepares pupils for later work, changing the latter will lead to changing education. Increased funding on education, and changes in teacher training and classroom organization, will not be very effective as long as class-stratified jobs exert a downward pressure to stratify education and psychology (pp. 302–304).

Education is effective when it is organized in a social institution and supported by economic, political, and cultural institutions. Educational intervention programs that are less consistent or that are not supported by other institutions yield less effective results. Disadvantageous economic conditions, neighborhood environments, and family structures undermine the effectiveness of such educational interventions (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, pp. 576–579). Moreover, in poor conditions, the effects of "proximal," "local," or "microscopic" interventions to improve psychological functioning "tend to 'wash out' after intervention is terminated. The longer the follow-up the more obvious the latter trend becomes" (Bronfenbrenner, 1975, p. 299; Albee, 1986; cf. Ratner, 2002, pp. 27–31). Vygotsky (1997b) made the same point when he said, "Questions of education will be fully solved only when questions of social order have been fully solved. Every attempt at constructing educational ideals in a society with social contradictions is a utopian dream" (p. 236).

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGE IS NECESSARY TO FACILITATE SOCIAL REFORM

Changing macro factors requires changes in subjectivity and psychology. On the most basic level, for social change to occur, people must become more analytical and critical of macro cultural factors. They must cease taking them for granted as "the way things are." They must see who controls macro cultural factors and whose interests the latter serve. They must see the debilitating effects that cultural factors have on people.

Oppressed people need to cast off their apathy and fatalism; they need to become angry and energized in order to work for social change; they need to cease blaming themselves; they need to replace superstitious thinking and a preoccupation with personal issues with a critical analysis of social and political conditions.

In addition, new motives, perceptions, emotions, and personalities are necessary to enact and embrace new macro factors. This follows from the

fact that psychological phenomena are geared to (i.e., support) particular macro factors. Consequently, new macro factors require new forms of perception, emotions, reasoning, attention, personality, motivation, developmental processes, and even sexuality.

Macro cultural psychology identifies new forms that psychological phenomena must take in order to change macro cultural factors in particular directions. If, for example, we conclude that a more democratic, cooperative, egalitarian, humanitarian society is necessary for psychological improvement (as well as economic stability, ecological protection, and better health care and education), then we need to reshape our psychologies to be consistent with this kind of society. We need to feel pleasure in cooperative work roles and interpersonal relationships, which might entail losing some of the desire for privacy and independence. We need to develop a new self-concept that recognizes our social interdependence as central to our identity. We need new forms of perceiving and reasoning that consider interrelationships among things instead of regarding them as fragmented. We need new forms of memory that recall important historical events instead of superficial sensationalistic, details. We need new forms of attention that are riveted by profound issues instead of superficial, sensationalistic appearances. We also need to reevaluate our sexuality—that is, integrate sexual desire with personal feelings so that sexuality enhances our concern for people rather than being simply a desire for physical pleasure. Sexual desire would become stimulated by personal and social qualities of the other and not simply by physical features.

In short, we need to examine how our psychological and personal acts currently reflect and reinforce macro cultural factors, and we need to systematically reshape them to promote new macro cultural factors. If we maintain our existing motives, desires, emotions, reasoning, self-concept, learning strategies, childrearing practices, sexuality, and interpersonal relationships, they will undercut new behavior that is necessary to construct new macro cultural factors. A new consciousness is necessary for new social life just as the converse is true.

This dialectical relationship between social reform and changing consciousness is manifested in all social movements. For example, in the French Revolution of 1789, revolutionaries sought to bring socio-political changes into peoples' personal relations and consciousnesses, and they sought to alter the latter in order to promote socio-political change.

> As part of an all-embracing attempt to liberate individuals, recreate citizens from within, and build a more egalitarian social structure, the revolutionaries challenged long-standing domestic practices and infused politics

> into the most intimate relationships …. They asked how to bring principles of liberty, equality, and regeneration into the home …. As French sisters and brothers, wives and husbands confronted one another in the home, in court, and in print, they gradually, wrenchingly negotiated new domestic practices which balanced Old Regime customs with revolutionary innovations in law and culture ….
>
> Family members across France saw personal applications for the bold principles of revolutionary politics. As they struggled to reshape and reimagine their domestic worlds, they tapped into the social ideology of the Revolution to demand more egalitarian or affectionate relationships at home ….
>
> On the other hand, remaking the family and gender relationships was integral to forging the revolutionary state and politics. The family became a practical terrain for wrestling with the most fundamental questions of the French Revolution: how to invent the rights-bearing, legal individual within a newly secularized state; … how to remold social bonds and practices to promote equality, liberty, and unity …. The revolutionaries could not accomplish their essential legal, politico-cultural, and social goals without reforming domestic relationships …. Family members themselves influenced the generation of social policies and hammered out the practical meanings of citizenship and revolutionary principles in home, courtroom, and legislature (Desan, 2004, pp. 1–4).

Desan's nuanced description emphasizes the formative influence that socio-political practices and concepts had on personal relations and consciousness, and the reciprocal importance that culturally formed personal relations and consciousness had for facilitating and stabilizing socio-political practices and concepts. Political practices and concepts did not mechanically cause changes in consciousness, in the sense that politics became fully formed on its own and then secondarily influenced the consciousness of passive individuals. Political practices and concepts were incarnated and developed by individuals in their personal lives. And the struggle to revise consciousness and personal relations was part of, and indispensable for, political changes.

Changes in consciousness and personal relations were not personal constructions: "citizens interpreted their personal desires, customary obligations, and economic prerogatives through the prism of a new political culture and a new relationship to the state" (Desan, 2004, p. 8). Citizens negotiated and contested Old Regime practices, concepts, emotions, perceptions, reasoning, and motivation with those from the new culture. They did not contest cultural factors with internal personal factors.

This attempt at reshaping psychological phenomena to support particular macro factors may sound draconian. It asks people to modify what is deeply personal to them. It asks them to reconceptualize their psychology as a cultural phenomenon that supports a social system. It calls for psychological change in line with a scientific analysis rather than a personal, spontaneous desire. However, this analytical, cultural approach is necessary if deleterious macro cultural factors are to be reformed and people are to lead a more fulfilling life. We take seriously Chomsky's and Marcuse's argument that our perceptions, emotions, learning styles, reasoning, memory, attention, motivation, self-concept, and developmental processes support adverse macro cultural factors. We must recognize how political our psychological phenomena are (Marcuse, 1984). They are not spontaneous or natural. They are systematically cultivated to support macro cultural factors. Consequently, altering cultural factors requires carefully cultivating complementary psychological changes.

The power of existing macro cultural factors to shape psychology makes psychological change difficult. Acts that set out to contest domination often come, by subtle and diverse means, to be co-opted by it. "Even the most revolutionary consciousness may fail to call into doubt the essential trappings and entrapments of the colonizing culture" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991, p. xii). We must be vigilant that psychological changes that we believe to be liberating from the status quo truly are so. We must guard against superficial changes that actually recapitulate the status quo. For instance, many women who mutilate their bodies by extreme piercing and scarring regard this as a rejection of cultural norms of beauty and assertion of their own ability to decide how their bodies shall look. However, despite the euphoric feelings of self-empowerment that these women feel through the excruciating pain, "the radicalism of body modification is limited by social forces—sometimes the very same forces that seek to oppose.." (Pitts, 2003, p. 189). Body mutilation recapitulates in a new form the violation of the natural female body that commercial society promotes through make-up, plastic surgery, waxing legs, plucking eyebrow, dying hair, fake finger nails, tight pants, and high-heeled shoes. Body mutilation intensifies the sadistic violation of the body and the masochistic enjoyment of that pain that commercial society promotes; it does not repudiate such violation. Blinded by individualistic ideology, body mutilators do not realize that what appears to be self-determined rejection of society actually recapitulates cultural practices and values (cf. p. 63 above).

"Bodies and technologies are not ever fully authored by individual subjects, but are always experienced and understood through the historical forces that shape them" (ibid., pp. 190, 72–85).

Identity politics often fails to understand this. Identity politics glorifies ethnic distinctiveness as liberating. It applauds Blacks, women, homosexuals, and Indians for their ethnic identity. It advocates taking pride in one's ethnicity. However, identity politics does not analyze the political content of ethnic behavior. It does not critically analyze whether the values and practices of ethnic groups recapitulate those of the dominant culture (cf. the Epilogue, this volume). Identity politics rarely develops a systematic political program for improving existing macro cultural factors, or uses such a program to guide the group's psychological development. Instead, identity politics accepts existing ethnic behavior as laudatory. It often takes slogans from ethnic groups about their mutual support and equality at face value without examining the actual social relationships that ethnic members have. Identity politics sometimes replaces politics with identity. This occurs when, individuals support candidates of a particular gender or ethnicity, regardless of their politics. Consequently, identity politics is typically co-opted by the dominant culture in ways that its adherents do not recognize. The way to avoid this is to utilize a serious political and scientific analysis of what social reform should consist in, and use this to guide changes in consciousness.

Macro cultural psychology can lead the way in this kind of analysis because it emphasizes that psychological phenomena embody and support macro cultural factors. Macro cultural psychology identifies what new kinds of psychological phenomena are necessary to support new kinds of cultural factors, as well as the new kinds of cultural factors necessary to enhance psychological functioning. Macro cultural psychology encompasses the chicken-and-egg relationship that exists between culture and psychology.

Macro cultural psychology deals with an additional aspect of psychology and social reform. It analyzes what kinds of social reform people with certain kinds of cultural psychology can understand and accept. It tailors strategies for social reform to the readiness of people to understand and accept them. Macro cultural psychologists can illuminate dissatisfactions, hopes, reasoning processes, memories, and needs that may lead people to accept particular kinds of social reforms and not others. Social reform must respect these psychological states. It cannot ignore them and impose social ideals on people simply on the basis of social, political, or economic philosophy. If people have not developed the consciousness to appreciate such philosophy, they will reject social reform.

This situation has condemned many well-intentioned reforms to die. For instance, in the 1940s, social reformers and unionists sought to reduce the work week so people could have more time for leisure activities and social participation. As productivity and wages increased, work time could de-

crease. Businessmen opposed this movement because they believed it would reduce workers' commitment to work, it would keep workers' spending stagnant (increased wages would be offset by fewer hours of work), and it would reduce the amount of surplus labor time, which generates profit. Businessmen sought to keep working hours high to force more work and spending. They stimulated consumerism as a lure to increase work time. By creating unlimited needs for more products, they motivated workers to work more to buy new products.

The workers' cultural psychology inclined them to reject the reformers' proposals and accept the businessmen's proposals. The new psychology of infinite needs and consumerist desire led workers to value work time and money over leisure time. After the depression of the 1930s, workers wanted to overcome for the relative scarcity they had suffered by buying more products. Workers had also experienced extended downtime during joblessness in the Depression, and they had no desire to trade work for leisure time in the 1940s. For wage earners, money was a compensation for the increasing degradation of work. Consumerism met real needs of material well-being, social identity, and individual distinction in a society where primary groups had largely disappeared. All of these psychological issues led the populace to reject the appeal for a shorter work week (Cross, 1993, pp. 11–12).

Social reform must be comprehensible and acceptable to people who are engrained in old social and psychological habits. To be successful, reform must avoid too little change (i.e., cosmetic changes that offer no substantive change in macros) and too radical a change, which disregards and disrespects people's given psychologies and leaves them confused, threatened, and resentful. Reform must bridge the present and the future; it must touch both sides and offer a path for moving from one to the other. Reform is a dialectical process of *Aufhebung* in which elements of the present are drawn out of their current form and re-formed or trans-formed. The future is constructed *out of* the present and thus conserves part of it (cf. Marcuse , 1987).

Once people embrace macro changes, the restructuring material, social, and cognitive life will induce further psychological changes in a spiraling pattern.

6

Macro Cultural Psychology and Personal Growth

Psychological improvement on the personal level is usually regarded as a matter of understanding oneself and one's personal relationships. This is true but incomplete. Personal growth also requires understanding macro cultural factors that stultify psychological functioning, and altering one's relation to macro cultural factors.

Macro cultural psychology contends that widespread psychological problems are outcomes of social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts. Interpersonal abuses may be the obvious cause of psychological dysfunction, however they typically reflect macro cultural factors. This is why they are so widespread. Where large numbers of parents mistreat their children, they do so because they are under stress from macro cultural factors (e.g., work), and because they adopt deleterious cultural practices and concepts in dealing with their children (Henry, 1963). When children suffer mistreatment, they, in turn, adopt deleterious cultural practices (socially patterned defects) to cope. Psychological problems are rooted in normative social practices, concepts, and artifacts. This may be called the banality of psychological dysfunction. Extreme abuse from deranged perpetrators is not a necessary, or common, cause of psychological dysfunction.

In the previous chapter, we discussed the importance of reforming the adverse aspects of macro cultural factors that are stressful, and that serve as deleterious coping strategies with this stress. In this chapter, we discuss ways that individuals can cope with stressful conditions in the absence of social reform.

A macro cultural psychologist would engage in a six-stage analysis that is similar to the analysis enumerated in chapter 5:

1. Demonstrate that a psychological problem is a macro cultural factor. It must be widely held throughout a population, and rooted in other macro cultural factors (institutions, concepts, artifacts).
2. Analyze the psychological problem into its psychological components.
3. Trace each component to macro cultural factors.
4. Critique and avoid deleterious macro cultural factors that foster psychological problems.
5. Gravitate toward existing macro cultural factors that foster positive psychological functioning.
6. Encourage the patient to become politically active to alter the deleterious macro cultural factors and develop fulfilling factors. Political activity is also psychologically beneficial. It builds social support and empowerment, and lessens alienation, aloneness, self-blame, confusion, and helplessness.

If a macro cultural psychotherapist were counseling a depressed woman, he would point out that depression is a social disorder that is widespread throughout the population and more prevalent among women than men. It is generated by a confluence of stress and psychological coping mechanisms that are widespread throughout society (i.e., which are macro cultural factors) and are rooted in social institutions, cultural artifacts, and concepts (as depicted in Fig. 5.1). The therapist would help the patient analyze the psychological components of her depression—self-blame, worry, and aloneness—and their cultural origins, characteristics, and functions. The more she understands the explanatory constructs of her depression the better she will understand depression itself.

Informed by a macro cultural-psychological analysis, our patient can see how common it is that people explain behavior in terms of individual attributes. She can see children blaming themselves for their parents' divorce. She can see displaced employees blaming themselves for losing their jobs. She can see how politicians and business leaders promote self-blame by explaining poverty and unemployment as due to the victims' personal qualities—such as lack of motivation. Her cultural outlook notices that individuals are also held responsible for success. The CEO turned the company around through her own ideas and policies. The contribution of tax laws, lending institutions, and workers' sacrifices are ignored. Similarly, the quarterback is glorified as making the football team successful.

From these examples, our patient comes to see that her coping mechanisms are widely shared cultural factors that are rooted in other broad cul-

tural factors such as the cultural concept of the autonomous, responsible self. She comes to see how one-sided this is; how it overlooks important influences beyond the individual. And she realizes how her self-blame is part of this broad, defective cultural pattern.

To realize that her self-blame is a form of extreme individualism enables her to "get a handle on it," see where it comes from, what it involves. It provides the same sense of insight and closure that that comes in traditional therapy when one recognizes that one's choice of marriage partner was motivated by needs and models that were acquired from childhood family relationships: "Oh, that's why I act that way! That's what it means!" Through a macro cultural-psychological perspective, the patient's self-blame becomes concretized and reconfigured.

This deeper understanding of self-blame enables our patient to recognize its errors and repudiate it. She can see how important it is to develop a balanced self-concept (described in the previous chapter), which acknowledges ones flaws while not blaming oneself for them and becoming depressed about them.

The macro cultural psychotherapist emphasizes that psychological problems cannot be dissipated by simply willing oneself to develop a new psychology. The patient must alter her relationship with debilitating cultural factors in order to mitigate depression. She must become more aware of the cultural concepts, social institutions, and artifacts (physical infrastructure) that promulgate extreme individualism and self-blame. She must become critical of them and avoid them where possible. Changing her social, ideational, and physical position will help to weaken the cultural foundation of her self-blame and depression. Simply dealing with self-blame and depression on their own—as traditional therapists are wont to do—is far less effective because their cultural foundation will continue to promote them.

In analogous fashion, an overweight person can best solve the problem of obesity by perceiving it as a cultural, not an individual, problem. It is fostered by social institutions (the food industry, advertising industry, television and magazine industry, schools that serve junk food), cultural concepts (associating junk food with pleasure, social camaraderie, and famous people), and artifacts (magazines, soda dispensers in schools, colorful packaging).

To lose weight, one must renounce the cultural system that promotes it. One must find junk food disgusting, ignore the massive advertising that promotes it, and become indignant at the prevalence of junk food in schools, cafés, bakeries, and gas stations. One must renounce the sedentary lifestyle

that is built into the physical infrastructure of car driving, television watching, and computer games. One must see the enormity of the cultural determinations of obesity and reject their diverse forms. One must construct a new, countercultural lifestyle that opposes the culture that promotes obesity. Only this kind of restructuring of one's lifestyle, or repositioning oneself in relation to cultural factors, can provide the discipline necessary to resist the omnipresent temptations of overeating and underexercising.

Macro cultural psychotherapy therefore encourages the depressed patient to endorse, participate in, and develop social institutions, concepts, and artifacts that are minimally stressful, are socially supportive, and support a balanced self-concept—that is, one that appreciates social and individual contributions on psychological functioning. Working for social reform will itself be therapeutic because the individual will form social bonds in the process of taking positive action to improve her life.

Let us apply our macro cultural-psychological analysis to a problem in educational psychology. We consider how to help a student who has difficulty learning conceptual issues in school. Following our six-stage program, we:

1. Recognize the problem as a pervasive cultural phenomenon with concrete cultural qualities.
2. Identify its psychological components with their culturally concrete qualities. These include: (a) attention that is limited to brief segments and that focuses on sensationalistic and personal events; (b) motivation that strives for success through limited effort (gain for the least cost), aims for academic success as an instrumental means to get a well-paying job, and has little intrinsic interest in learning; ©) emotions that are excited by sensationalism and personal events rather than by profound ideas; (d) learning that focuses on superficial, fragmented facts rather than comprehensive, underlying principles and relationships; and (e) reasoning that is based on opinions and personal interests rather than logical principles.
3. Trace these psychological components to social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts that foster them. These include commercialism an d advertising, sensationalistic news and entertainment programs (popular music, computer games, movies), the pursuit and glorification of wealth as the highest achievement, pedagogical techniques that emphasize learning of facts rather than principles, business practices that maximize return on investment for the least expenditure, domestic violence in the family, and business practices

that treat people, resources, and products as expendable commodities or instrumental means for producing profit.

4. Encourage students to repudiate the macro cultural factors that foster the psychological components of poor academic performance.
5. Encourage students to participate in alternative macro cultural factors that foster the psychological components of academic success.
6. Encourage students to become politically active to reform macro cultural factors to enhance their school achievement.

In order to help students learn conceptual issues, teachers must address the concrete cultural quality of their attention, motivation, reasoning, emotions, and learning styles. They cannot presume that students have neutral attention or motivation that absorbs academic content. It is not simply a matter of making material interesting to students, or explaining its relevance, or exhorting students to study hard and pay attention, or employing psychological techniques from cognitive psychology or meditation to improve attention or concentration. Students come to class with culturally organized psychological phenomena that affect their interest in material and the way they are able to absorb it. If students' attention has been socialized by the media to absorb only brief segments of information that is sensationalistic, and if they have been rendered incapable of complex, logical reasoning and sustained attention to conceptual, impersonal issues, then teachers must deal with these concrete psychological phenomena. Students need to alter this concrete quality by altering their cultural participation. They must comprehend the enormity of these negative influences and develop a counterculture that embraces countervailing social institutions, cultural artifacts (e.g., computer games and music with low noise and speed levels), and cultural concepts.

Cultural issues must be introduced into counseling in a sensitive manner. The therapist or teacher cannot simply lecture to people and hand them a stack of books on the social origins of individualism. Macro cultural psychotherapy makes full use of therapeutic techniques that have been developed by traditional therapists. It aims to complement them, not displace them. Insights achieved by therapists into psychodynamic patterns and psychological defenses are valuable for elucidating important interpersonal aspects of psychological dysfunction. They simply need to be supplemented with a consideration of macro cultural aspects.

For example, when a wife resents her husband's behavior, it has as much to do with her cultural needs/desires and her cultural expectations of how

a husband should treat a wife (be faithful, considerate, punctual, do half the housework), as with idiosyncratic details of her personality that derive from her personal experiences. Many of the husband's motives, behaviors, and reactions to his wife are also part of macro cultural factors. It is as important for the wife and her husband to understand their cultural needs, motives, and expectations, and the cultural basis for them, as it is to understand their idiosyncracies.

The wife's desire to assert and express herself is part of women's participation in the public realm of competitive work and politics. These demand a competitive, aggressive, individualistic, calculating self. Recognizing this social fact helps the husband realize that his wife's assertive behavior is not motivated by a desire to personally attack him. Reframing her behavior in cultural rather than personal terms makes it easier for him to deal with. Cultural reframing also makes it possible for the wife to perceive certain features of her behavior that she had overlooked. Recognizing that women's assertiveness stems from public roles in a competitive economy, she may come to see that her assertiveness is tinged with extreme individualism and competition that derive from these roles. These qualities went unnoticed before she examined the cultural origins, characteristics, and function of her psychology.

Reconceptualizing her psychology may lead the wife to desire to repudiate its antisocial aspects. This cannot be done alone on the individual level. A more cooperative psychology needs to be supported by critiquing the macro cultural factors that fostered the egocentric, competitive aspects of her earlier assertiveness. They also need to be supported by gravitating toward macro cultural factors that foster a considerate quality.

Though many psychologists may regard macro cultural-psychology as distracting from psychological issues, it actually deepens our understanding of them and makes them easier to improve. Psychological defensiveness is a case in point. When a man insists on his opinion and refuses to consider contrary views, he is said to be defensive. Psychological techniques are then invoked to mitigate this psychological mechanism. Therapists encourage him to be more open, tolerant, trusting, and humble. However, this approach deals with defensiveness in a cultural vacuum. It presumes that defensiveness is a personal attribute that the man can simply will out of existence. We have seen how difficult it is to accomplish change on this level.

Macro cultural psychology construes defensiveness as a cultural phenomenon. It is called for and structured by macro cultural factors. That is why it is prevalent throughout certain societies. One of the macro cultural

factors that cultivate defensiveness in capitalist society is the individualistic self. The individualistic self prides itself on its autonomy from outside influences. Such a self resists influence attempts from others as infringements on its uniqueness and independence. Competition exacerbates defensiveness. It leads to construing discrepant viewpoints as a threat to one's intellectual accomplishments and turf. People actively resist this competitive threat by defending their own viewpoint, just as they defend their jobs and sales markets from encroachment.

Recognizing the cultural characteristics and origins of defensiveness in capitalist society gives us a handle on moderating it. We can help people become aware of these cultural-psychological constituents and repudiate them through new relations to the macro cultural factors that foster them. People can participate in a countercultural movement that is far more effective than trying to change their self in isolation.

The defensiveness that psychologists construe as a natural, or personal, psychobiological mechanism is the expression of emotions, perceptions, thoughts, deductions, motives, and expectations that are cultivated by, and embody, cultural practices and concepts. Defensiveness is a cover term that obfuscates cultural-psychological processes. It describes behavior in abstract terms of rigidity and closed-mindedness. It does not explain behavior. And it makes the behavior difficult to change.

Of course, defensiveness (rigidity, closed-mindedness) occurs in many societies. The reason is that cultures have certain features in common that account for the generality of psychological phenomena such as defensiveness. However, as we have abundantly demonstrated, these generalities are shot through with concrete cultural differences. Chinese defensiveness will be found to have quite different concrete features and origins from American defensiveness.

Macro cultural psychology holds out the possibility of creating macro cultural factors that do not cultivate defensiveness. Societies that are genuinely democratic and collective (as opposed to those that claim to be but are not) should minimize defensiveness. In such societies, people will support and respect each other. They will have no need to defend themselves against encroachment and deprivation. People will welcome the views of others and be willing to adjust their own views in the confidence that others are concerned about their welfare. When the need to protect oneself against attacks from others has no cultural basis, defensiveness will have no raison d'être.

In the absence of social change, macro cultural psychology directs individuals to change their position in relation to debilitating macro cultural

factors. The psychological change that is possible from this strategy is more limited in depth and breadth than the change that can result from reforming the macro cultural factors themselves. The depth of change within the individual will be limited because deleterious macro factors resist psychological improvement. It is difficult to avoid the stress and the coping mechanisms that current macro cultural factors generate. Individual change will also be limited to persons who have relatively more autonomy from deleterious cultural factors, and who have cognitive, social, and material resources with which to reflect on and circumvent those deleterious factors.

Although psychological improvement is limited in the absence of social reform, it is well worth striving for. Macro cultural psychology provides unique insights into issues that must be confronted, and supplements personal approaches to personal growth that are incomplete and ineffective in themselves.

7

Scientific and Political Deficiencies of Psychological Theories/Constructs That Minimize Macro Culture

Emphasizing the macro cultural basis, features, and function of psychological phenomena is fundamental to scientifically understanding psychology, and to enhancing psychological functioning through therapy and social reform. Psychological theories that misunderstand macro culture and minimize its centrality to human psychology are deficient scientifically, politically, and therapeutically. Such theories lead to inadequate descriptions and explanations of psychological phenomena. They lead to overlooking cultural factors that individuals must be aware of in their personal lives. They also lead to overlooking cultural factors that must be altered in order to enhance the psychological functioning of the population at large (Ratner, 1991, Conclusion).

In this chapter, we examine scientific and political deficiencies of traditional psychological constructs, evolutionary psychology, and individualistic cultural psychology.

TRADITIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS

We have seen that traditional psychological constructs obscure or deny concrete macro cultural features of psychological phenomena. They either focus on truly abstract aspects of psychology, or they misconstrue concrete

aspects as abstract. Psychological constructs of the first kind include collectivism, traditionalism, depression, schizophrenia, conformity, short-term memory, in-group/out-group distinction, and defensiveness. These are all genuine, abstract psychological phenomena devoid of concrete form and content. They encompass concrete details, however they are abstrations from them. Examples of false abstractions are IQ, attachment, and stages of moral development. These constructs unwittingly include culturally specific components—appropriate to a particular social class, gender, or nation—however, they are presented as universal generalities. They are insidious because they instantiate a particular cultural phenomenon as universally normative. An individual's failure to manifest normative performance on these constructs is construed as a general deficiency in intelligence, moral development, or personality; not simply as a different form of intelligence, morality, or personality.

Conventional psychological constructs divert attention from macro cultural origins of psychological phenomena. They regard psychology as having intraorganismic origins in biological mechanisms or idiosyncratic processes. They are thus incompatible with cultural-psychological constructs. This incongruence is evident when psychologists attempt to combine the two. A telling example is Moghaddam's (2005) analysis of terrorism. He thoughtfully explained some of the cultural bases of terrorism. He mentioned relative material deprivation, economic frustration, political injustice and despotism, cultural shame, and loss of identity. Moghaddam argued that terrorism results when individuals in these unpalatable conditions displace their aggression onto out-groups, particularly the United States. They form rigid us-versus-them thinking, then join fanatical movements that culminate in terrorist acts (p. 164). The psychological construct "displacement of aggression" forms the linchpin in Moghaddam's explanation of terrorism. It is what steers unhappiness and frustration into a terrorist trajectory that is abetted by later training in terrorist organizations. If unhappy individuals did not displace their aggression toward an out-group, unhappiness and frustration would find different behavioral outlets. They might culminate in political or individual efforts to improve or escape the unpalatable conditions. They might culminate in peaceful or spiritual acts.

Yet this psychological construct does not possess the explanatory power necessary to launch one on a path toward terrorism. Displacement of aggression is a general, contentless term that could generate any number of behaviors. It could lead unhappy Middle Easterners to kick their dogs or beat their wives and children. It does not necessarily lead to terrorism.

Something else must account for the specific psychology and behavior involved in terrorism. In fact, as conceived by Freud, displacement of aggression would not lead to attacking a powerful group such as the United States. According to Freud, aggression is displaced from a powerful adversary where it cannot be manifested, to a weaker one where it can be. One cannot kick one's boss so one kicks one's dog instead. But the United States is a more intimidating military and economic force than local Middle Eastern governments are. Attacking the United States would be akin to getting mad at your dog and kicking your boss.

The inadequacy of psychological constructs for explaining political, economic, and military actions is revealed in a thought experiment. Imagine explaining Bush's invasion of Iraq as due to his displacing aggression from Al Quaeda to Saddam Hussein: Bush couldn't capture Bin Laden, so an automatic defense mechanism kicked in to deal with the unresolved aggression that Bush felt toward Bin Laden. It was this psychological mechanism that motivated Bush to invade Iraq. The invasion had a psychological basis. This psychological explanation is patently wrong. It ignores the entire political process that led to the invasion. It ignores the fact that the top members of the Bush administration had intended to topple Hussein years before the invasion. It ignores the strategic geopolitical importance of Iraq in the Middle East. It ignores the vast oil supplies that the United States sought to control. It ignores the fact that Bush's policies are directed by powerful oil companies and military contractors who made fortunes from the invasion. It ignores the Bush foreign policy of preventive invasions. All of these crucial macro cultural motives are eliminated when one explains the invasion of Iraq in psychological terms. Explaining terrorism in psychological terms results in exactly the same obscuring of crucial macro cultural conditions and motives.

Middle Eastern terrorists attack the U.S. soldiers and citizens because:

1. They live under intolerable conditions that generate stress and resentment and desire to retaliate.
2. They become attracted to a political/religious ideology that (a) explains their unpalatable conditions as caused by American political, economic, military, and cultural imperialism, and (b) requires them to retaliate against the United States.

Their ideology operates like all cultural concepts to explain conditions and animate a response. The ideology contains specific values, meanings, and appropriate actions that culminate in terrorism. Ideology links directly to terrorism. Psychological constructs do not. To understand terrorism is to understand

the conditions people face and the cultural concepts they employ to remedy the conditions. Introducing psychological constructs obscures this macro cultural-psychological reality (Danner, 2004; McPhail, 1971; Ratner, 2004a, Sageman, 2004).

To combat terrorism is to combat the incendiary conditions and ideology that generate it. Moghaddam correctly advocates ameliorating incendiary conditions. His psychological proposals, however, ignore cultural-psychological issues (such as ideology) and concentrate instead on efforts to mitigate abstract psychological operations such as categorical us-versus-them thinking. Yet such thinking is not the root of terrorism. Many groups differentiate themselves from each other, yet never terrorize each other. Sports rivalries and political rivalries are examples. Conservatives and liberals sharply differentiate themselves into two camps and hate each other's politics, yet they do not kill each other. Boston Red Sox fans sharply differentiate themselves from, and resent, the New York Yankees, but they do not terrorize them. Chinese immigrants living in Chinatown, New York, differentiate themselves from Jewish New Yorkers, yet they manifest no inclination toward terrorism. Emphasizing cultural differences can lead to respecting and appreciating them—as multiculturalists advocate. There is nothing objectionable with categorizing people into distinct groups. Terrorism is not caused by such categorization.

Us–them categorizing is contentless; it cannot account for the specific content of terrorism. The problem is not that people categorize individuals into groups (which has no content), but the conception they have about the groups (the content). It is the content of thinking that other people are demons, subhumans, or expendable that leads to terrorism. When psychologists focus on us–them, categorical thinking in general, they obscure the content-rich, concrete cultural factors that are responsible for terrorism.

Conventional psychological constructs are noncultural. They consequently obscure vital cultural aspects of psychology. They have no place in cultural psychology. Psychologists such as Moghaddam, and Freudian Marxists, seek to integrate conventional psychological constructs with an appreciation of cultural conditions. They recognize the contribution made by adverse conditions such as exploitation, imperialism, and alienation. But they postulate universal, natural psychological constructs as mechanisms for dealing with these conditions and converting them into terrorism. These psychologists fail to incorporate culture into psychology. The result is that their psychological constructs undermine their cultural and political goals.

Macro cultural psychology eliminates this incongruity. It raises psychology to a cultural phenomenon and construes culture as permeating psychol-

ogy. It also makes psychology internal to culture instead of being a qualitatively different order of reality. Psychology is a part of culture that mediates other macro cultural factors (cf. Fig. 5.1). It mediates culture from within rather than as an external element with noncultural properties. Macro cultural-psychological constructs illuminate cultural origins, features, and functions of psychological phenomena. They deepen our understanding of culture. They illuminate cultural factors that need to be reformed, and also dealt with in therapy. Macro cultural-psychological constructs are therefore vital for social reform. Conversely, conventional psychological constructs (and methods) impede social reform because they obscure cultural issues. Accordingly, social reform depends on reforming the constructs and methods of the discipline of psychology—and economics, anthropology, sociology, and political science as well.

EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY

The flavor of evolutionary psychology is expressed in the following statement:

> The near universality of sex differences in spatial abilities across human cultures and their occurrence in other species indicate the feasibility of an evolutionary approach.
>
> We hold that the critical factor in selection for spatial dimorphism in humans was sexual division of labor between hunting and gathering during hominid evolution .... Across evolutionary time, males predominantly hunted and females predominantly foraged. Tracking and killing animals entail different kinds of spatial problems than does foraging for edible plants; thus, adaptation would have favored diverse spatial skills between sexes throughout much of their evolutionary history. The cognitive mechanisms of contemporary *Homo sapiens* appear to reflect these differences. (Barkow et al., 1992, pp. 533–534)

This statement proposes that human and animal spatial dimorphism are equivalent, and explainable by the same mechanisms. Both evolved by genetic mutation at the individual level. Genetic mutations produced specialized biological competencies that were adapted to ecological conditions. The sexual division of labor in prehistoric times acted as a condition that selected for different perceptual mechanisms in men and women, just as natural conditions do in animals. Human behavior in cultural contexts is governed by the same principles as animal behavior in nature (cf. Barkow et al., 1992, pp. 19–136, 142, 147).

This explanation of human psychology is false (Fracchia & Lewontin, 2005; McKinnon, 2005; McKinnon & Silverman, 2005). Psychological phenomena are qualitatively different from animal behavior. They are also formed by different processes. Psychological phenomena have historically concrete form and content, they are conscious and controlled, and they are altered in historically short time periods. All of these characteristics are inimical to the mechanisms of evolutionary psychology. They cannot be explained by specialized genetically programmed mechanisms because these mutate too slowly and operate in a rigid, mechanical, nonconscious manner. There have been few changes in the human genome or anatomy over the 40,000 year history of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, yet enormous psychological and behavioral variations have occurred (Renfrew, 1996, 2001). In addition, "it is generally accepted that, despite some degree of diversity among humans today, all human groups share broadly the same innate cognitive capacities and abilities" (Renfrew, 1996, p. 12). This fact rules out intrinsic racial and gender differences in psychology.

Evolutionary psychologists have us living in the past when our genome evolved. The foregoing quotation explains contemporary spatial ability as having evolved during prehistoric times. This genome remains intact today because it takes thousands of generations to change: "Natural selection takes hundreds or thousands of generations to fashion any complex adaptation. The brain/mind mechanisms that constitute human nature were shaped by selection over vast periods of time in environments different in many important respects from our own, and it is to these ancient environments that human nature is adapted" (Barkow et al., 1992, p. 138).

Evolutionary psychologists argue that human nature is adapted to Pleistocene conditions that existed between 1.8 million and 10,000 years ago. But because we no longer live in those Pleistocene environments, most everything about our brain and mind must be *maladaptive* to our current life in complex culture. Gender differences in spatial perception (and emotions, personality, memory, and motivation) that were adaptive to gender roles in hunting and gathering society are patently maladaptive in today's society where women serve alongside men as astronauts, prime ministers, military generals, astronomers, surveyors, neurosurgeons, and airplane pilots. As used by evolutionary psychologists, Darwinism becomes a theory of maladaptation rather than adaptation! This stands Darwin on his head!

An additional conundrum of evolutionary psychology is that genetic evolution of psychological competencies in modern times is impossible. The reason is that our cultural and physical environments are changing at a rapid pace. This precludes genetic mutations adapting to the environment.

There is no stable environment to which they could adapt. As soon as certain genes mutated and began to produce more adaptive behavior to an environment, it would change. This would render the mutations maladaptive. New mutations would occur and produce adaptive behaviors to the new environment. However, environmental changes would render these maladaptive as well. Genetic mutations could never keep up with environmental changes. Genetic evolution requires a stable environment over eons to give the slow genetic mutations a chance to accumulate and produce biological mechanisms and behavior that are adaptive to this definite environment. However, this requirement is obviated by culture.[1]

One attempt to extricate the theory from this conundrum is to claim that what is inherited today are general behavioral tendencies rather than specific abilities.

For example, social stratification, especially an enduring class structure, is a recent historical phenomenon (arising 12,000 years ago) and could not have been selected for through genetic mutation. So evolutionary psychologists explain it as an epiphenomenon of a more basic human tendency, seeking high social rank. "Human beings share the general primate tendency to seek high social rank" (Barkow et al., 1992, p. 632). This general tendency evolved in Pleistocene times. It simply takes on distinctive forms in contemporary conditions.

In particular, about 12,000 years ago, inventions in tools and social organization enabled humans to produce a surplus of goods. When this occurred, the natural tendency to seek a high social rank kicked in and led some people to appropriate that surplus for themselves. They formed themselves into a ruling class. "High relative standing automatically would tend to involve some control over the surplus" (Barkow et al., 1992, p. 634). Social stratification is thus an epiphenomenon of the universal, natural, general psychological tendency. The tendency will take on different forms in different situations; however, these different forms are essentially the same for they express the same core tendency. It is only the expression that varies.

We have debunked this line of reasoning in chapter 6. We noted that general psychological constructs cannot explain specific historical-cultural phenomena. This is certainly the case with social stratification. A general tendency toward high social status would not necessarily lead to appropriating a surplus. One could achieve high status by devising an egalitarian system for disbursing the surplus in a way that would raise the standard of living of the entire group. The group might be so appreciative that they would accord this wise person the highest social status. And they might include his entire family in this high status. There are many ways that the ten-

dency for high status could be realized in the condition of surplus wealth. There is a hiatus between the general tendency and the specific historical-cultural behavior that actually occurred. The general cannot account for the specific. A general tendency toward achieving social status certainly does not explain the notable varieties in social stratification—the differences between a tribal member who lived in a large house within a village, and an elite aristocratic class living in temples (Marcus & Flannery, 2004).

Evolutionary psychologists postulate a host of general, abstract tendencies that they claim are genetically based (selected from genetic mutation). These include a tendency for humans to plan, deceive, care for babies, guard against sexual rivals, identify plant food, avoid incest, capture animals, avoid contagious disease, select mates of the opposite gender, decide which foraging efforts have repaid the energy expenditure, avoid being bitten by venomous snakes, make tools, and jointly coordinate their actions (Barkow et al., 1992, pp. 89, 110). These are abstractions devoid of specific, overt, sensory properties. A tool can take any form; an animal can also be a wide variety of different creatures.

These tendencies are not simply capacities or potentialities. They are presumed to be endogenous, preprogrammed inclinations for definite actions. Accordingly, humans do not simply have the potential to learn to avoid contagious disease or capture animals; we have the behavioral tendency to do so. This behavioral tendency is encoded in the genes.

However, it is obvious that genes cannot encode abstractions. There cannot be a program to care for babies, without specifying how to do it. What would such a general program devoid of specifics look like? The same is true for the other general tendencies. There cannot be a tendency to construct tools apart from a specification of particular tools. What could such a general tendency consist of? How could this tendency know what a tool is, in the abstract? How could it direct us to invent "tools" devoid of any particular features or forms? Likewise, there cannot be genetic programs that encode what a foraging effort is, what energy expenditure is, what repaying energy expenditure is. It would be as absurd as a general tendency to develop a self-concept. There is no such thing as an abstract self-concept devoid of particular character. You cannot be a "self" in general. You can be only a particular kind of self. Similarly, we are really motivated to care for babies only in particular ways.

Pinker (2004) committed the same kind of sophistry as Barkow et al. He admitted that specific social psychological traits are acquired by experience and are not genetically determined. However, he insisted that "traits that reflect the underlying talents and temperaments—how proficient with lan-

guage a person it, how religious, how liberal or conservative—*are* partially heritable" (p. 14). But these traits cannot be genetic, even in part. Liberalism used to denote individualistic ideas of John Locke. Today it denotes social policies that favor government regulation of businesses for the good of the community and the earth. It is preposterous to assert a tendency toward liberalism when it can take contradictory forms. It is even more pretentious to claim that genetic tendencies are so fine-tuned that they can partly determine the degree of liberalism (how liberal one is).

Genetic programs do not produce general, abstract tendencies. They produce specific behaviors in response to specific, simple, overt, sensible properties such as color, size, shape, and smell. For example, the newborn herring gull chick is genetically programmed to peck at the red spot on the beak of an adult gull. When the adult feels this peck, it is genetically programmed to regurgitate food to the chick. These genetically programmed feeding responses are extremely specific responses to specific, sensory stimuli. This is what genes encode and program. There is no genetic tendency to "care for babies," or to "solicit attention" from the adult. Universal, general, abstract tendencies are indefinite and amorphous. There cannot be a genetic program for such things. Nor can indefinite forms such as "animal," "disease," or "tool" be the eliciting stimuli that genetic codes automatically respond to. These categories are known only conceptually, not through sense experience.

The fact that humans universally do invent tools does not imply that there is a genetic program impelling them to do so. People discover the utility of tools accidentally. We invent only particular tools. We initially have no idea of "tool" in general. It is only later when we reflect on the common features of tools that we develop such a concept. We then utilize the concept to organize behavior. We can think, "I need a tool," and then narrow down this abstraction to a particularly useful tool.

General cultural commonalities, objectified in abstract concepts such as "tool" or "social structure," are the result of concrete behaviors. The general commonality does not appear first as an entity and receive concrete variety secondarily. Quite the opposite: Concrete particulars are constructed, and they contain commonalities. The commonalities can be conceptually identified, but they cannot be construed as separate entities that are prefigured in genetic programs (Ratner, 1991, chap. 3).

In personality research, genetic influences are invoked to explain the similar personalities of separated identical twins who work at the same job, live in houses surrounded by white picket fences, and marry women with the same name. However, there can be no natural sensitivity, or inclination

to respond, to these stimuli because they are conceptual abstractions. A job, such as firefighter, is not a sensory property, like a red spot on a bird's beak. Nor is marriage a specific response that could be genetically programmed the way a chick's pecking is.

It is oxymoronic to talk about a genetic program for deciding something such as foraging. Genetic programs obviate decision making. The herring gull chick and its mother make no decisions. Likewise, birds migrate toward the equator when days shorten because changes in day length automatically trigger hormonal signals that activate migratory behavior. Birds do not perform calculations and make decisions any more than thermostats do. The genetic programs and specialized mechanisms that evolutionary psychologists invoke to explain human psychology are inadequate to the task.

Evolutionary psychologists ignore/deny the unique character of culture, psychology, and the dialectical relation between them. Psychology and culture develop in tandem; each contributes to the development of the other; the two are inseparable. In natural evolution, the environment develops according to its own laws, and genes mutate independently, according to their own principles. The environment does not directly form long necks of giraffes or wings of birds; it waits for these to form independently by genetic mutation and then afterward selects these attributes as adaptive. In contrast, culture directly molds psychological attributes. It forms our color categories, personalities, emotions, motivation, memory, sexuality, and forms of reasoning rather than simply pruning them after they have developed according to natural laws.

Culture provides an adaptive advantage that far exceeds biological modifications at the individual level. It is more efficient for individuals to formulate behaviors at the cultural level, where they are supported by masses of people who coordinate their behaviors together, than it is to evolve specific biological programs for behavior at the individual level through blind genetic mutation. It is more effective for humans to collectively organize food production than it is for individuals to independently grow long necks that can reach food in tall trees. It is more effective for people to construct the kinds of cognitive competencies, personalities, emotions, and motives on the cultural level—where they can be adapted to changing cultural and environmental needs—than to have these biologically programmed and difficult to alter.

Culture offers an adaptive advantage because it can be improved. Culturally organized ways of producing food, working, educating, governing, raising children, and treating illnesses can be modified to make life more fulfilling. To realize this advantage, psychological phenomena must be flexible.

They must be able to take on new cultural forms in order to facilitate better macro cultural factors. Culture thus exercises a selective pressure for plastic rather than rigidly formed psychological phenomena.

Culture also selects for malleable biology. Even the human genome is malleable. Each gene is capable of producing several different proteins that program different cell formation. External conditions determine which protein a gene will produce. This is why human anatomy can attain enormous complexity with a relatively small number of genes—25,000. Although we have 15,000 *fewer* genes than corn (!), we are able to do far more with our genes because they are capable of multitasking. This is also why our genetic similarity with chimps enables us to become anatomically and behaviorally quite different from them—our genes are more flexible than chimps' and can produce different physical features and feats. This is especially true of the genes that control neuroanatomy—human genes that control neuroanatomy are more flexible than chimps' genes for neuroanatomy. In other words, it is not the number of genes that is important, but rather their modus operandi (Ast, 2005).

Fewer, plastic genes are more dependent on, and responsive to, environmental cues for determining their output. Conversely, genes that have a single, predetermined function automatically produce it without requiring much input from the environment. Thus, superior adaptation to the environment and greater environmental influence on the organism are antithetical to rigid, single biological predetermination.

The human brain epitomizes this inverse relation between biological determinism and responsiveness to the environment. The human brain must be capable of reorganization to accommodate to new cultural phenomena. Culture selects for a general neural substratum that can be reorganized quickly, rather than specialized modules with a fixed function.[2]

Human evolution culminates in a new biology that is a general potentiating substratum for forming macro cultural factors. The specific features of human psychology are cultural constructs, not biological constructs (cf. Geertz, 1973, chaps. 2, 3; Weidman, 2003).

Evolutionary psychologists violate the basic principle of Darwinian evolution which is that behavior and biology are a function of the organism's particular environment. Darwinism is fundamentally an environmentalist, contextualist theory. Its fundamental tenets emphasize that all aspects of the organism depend on (are a function of) the environment. This means that the organism's features, *and the mechanisms that determine those features*, depend on and vary with environmental pressures and opportunities. Genetic mutation is a particular means by which certain aspects of certain or-

ganisms evolve in certain environments. (Darwin did not consider genetic mutation as the engine of evolution because it was not discovered until after he had developed the evolutionary theory of natural selection/survival of the fittest.) It is entirely consistent with Darwinian adaptationism-functionalism that human beings live in a unique cultural environment and therefore have different kinds of mental and behavioral processes from animals, and that the mechanism that generates these features is also different from those in animals. In fact, any other conclusion is anti-Darwinian. It is anti-Darwinian for evolutionary psychologists to insist on the particular mechanism of genetic mutation as the only mechanism by which all organisms survive in all environments. Such a view ignores the specific character of the organisms' environment, which is the essence of Darwinism.[3]

Evolutionary psychology is incapable of explaining human psychology because it denies the cultural origins, features, and functions of psychological phenomena. Evolutionary psychology opposes cultural theory. Its advocates denigrate culture as a nebulous term with no explanatory power. They never consider psychological effects of concrete social systems (such as feudalism, capitalism, or socialism), historical periods (such as the Enlightenment or the Renaissance), or cultural events (such as Buddhism, industrialization, literacy, formal education, urbanization, bureaucracy, mass media, or globalization). All of these are ignored because they are historically recent and can have had no effect on slowly evolving genes and biological mechanisms.

Evolutionary psychology recasts culture in biological terms, as reflected in the following statements by Barkow et al. (1992). "Psychology underlies culture and society, and biological evolution underlies psychology" (p. 635). "Our evolved psychology underlies even the most novel and complex of sociocultural forms. Beneath new culture is old psychology" (p. 627). "The design of the human psychological architecture structures the nature of social interactions humans can enter into, as well as the selectively contagious transmission of representations between individuals" (p. 48). And finally:

> Programs governing psychological development impose conceptual frameworks on the cultural and social worlds; choose which parts of the environment are monitored; choose how observations and interactions are categorized, represented, and interrelated; decide what entities to pursue interactions with; and, most importantly, determine what algorithms or relationships will organize environmental input into developmental change or psychological output. (p. 87)

Such statements privilege genes over environment. Genes determine how we respond to the environment, or how the environment affects us (Barkow et al., 1992, pp. 84–85). Such statements invert Darwin's fundamental principle that the environment exercises selective pressure on which genes and mechanisms survive.

Evolutionary psychology is politically conservative. Genetically formed behavioral programs, which persist for thousands of generations, dictate social relationships. This means that our social relationships will persist for thousands of generations. It is difficult to see how culture could ever change under this erroneous scheme.

Explaining social class as rooted in the natural tendency to seek high social status similarly blunts concrete social reform. It makes class an epiphenomenon of the tendency to seek high status. Social class is an accidental expression of seeking high status. It could just as well be replaced by any other expression. As we saw earlier, there is no explanation of why people created social class as a way of achieving high social status. Consequently, reforming the inequities, injuries, and obstacles of social class does not require transforming any definite conditions. Reform is simply a matter of expressing the natural tendency to seek high status in other forms besides social classes. From this perspective, we simply need to ask the executives of General Electric, or Exxon Oil, to renounce their upper-class position and their extravagant wealth and power, and realize their desire for social status in some other way—like leading a group of stamp collectors!

INDIVIDUALISTIC CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Another popular way of minimizing macro cultural aspects of psychology is to construe macro factors as the sum of micro interactions (cf. Archer, 1995; Brettell, 2002; Layder, 1987; Ratner, 2002, p. 100, fn. 3; Sawyer, 2002; Wagner, 1964, for discussion).

McDermott, an educational anthropologist, typifies this approach. He said that "the politics of everyday life are built on messages of relationship passed between two or more social actors" (1974, p. 89). "It is in the very small political arenas constituted by dyads and only slightly larger groups that social organizations are produced" (p. 92). McDermott made interpersonal relations the building blocks of macro factors.

He employed this individualistic conception of culture to analyze learning disturbances among minority groups in school: These psychological disturbances result from different linguistic and perceptual codes that minority and majority group members employ in interacting with teachers.

Differences in communication style are misinterpreted as deficits. Minorities are then labeled as stupid, lazy, or intolerant. This causes them to withdraw from active academic participation.

For McDermott, learning difficulties are to be ameliorated by reconsidering interpersonal acts. Specifically, members of different groups should better understand each other's codes. Then they won't label each other as stupid, lazy, or intolerant (cf. Ratner, 2002, p. 70).

This individualistic approach to culture and psychology ignores obvious macro influences on learning. These include pedagogical methods, educational budgets, housing and neighborhoods, job opportunities, entertainment programs, and commercial pressures that distract from learning. These are all regulated at the social level by government policies and governing boards of massive corporations. They have nothing to do with dyads. In the previous chapter, we discussed how these macro cultural factors influence the learning process. To improve learning, they need to be challenged in their psychological, social, physical, and ideational forms. None of these is considered by McDermott's individualistic approach. If dyads are the core of politics and institutions as McDermott contends, there is no way to explain how masses of people come to possess the same codes. The answer is that properties of groups are not built up from the sum of individuals or dyads. Black linguistic and perceptual codes are macro cultural factors that stem from the common participation of Black people in social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts (standard of living, housing, neighborhoods, music). Their participation is constrained by broad social policies that govern the behavior of masses of people together. Rather than culture reflecting and summarizing individual psychology/behavior, culture induces individual psychology/behavior.

According to the individualistic, microgenetic, or bottom-up approach to cultural psychology, "Individuals' thoughts, motives, and other cognitions govern how they interact with and influence one another; these interpersonal consequences in turn govern the emergence, persistence, and change of culture" (Schaller & Crandall, 2004, p. 4). One individual interacts with another individual (or with several individuals in a small group), who then interacts with yet another individual (or small group). Eventually what began with one individual spreads throughout the culture *through a series of individual encounters*. Culture is construed as a sequential process of individual communications. The dynamics of this process determine the ensuing culture.

Certain authors of this formulation claim they were inspired by Bartlett's famous research on *Remembering* (1932/1967), which utilized individuals

sequentially repeating stories in a chain of people (McIntyre, Lyons, A. Clark, & Kashima, 2004, pp. 234–244). The authors claim that this process of serial reproduction is the microgenesis of culture; it constitutes cultural dynamics. Cultural meaning systems are generated, maintained, and transformed through this process (McIntyre et al., 2004, p. 254).

This model is indefensible. Its advocates never present a real cultural event that has originated in sequential chains of individual communication. They never explain how individuals in Maine and Oregon, who have no direct personal contact, or sequential contact through common acquaintances, share common cultural values, practices, and psychological phenomena. The authors never overcome the hiatus between traditional psychological constructs and cultural-historical phenomena that we noted in chapter 1. They make it seem that individual communication occurs in a vacuum apart from schools, laws, policies, budgets, movies, television programs, books, magazines, music, newspapers, and advertisements, which disseminate culture to millions of people at a time.

We have seen that culture is predominantly composed of organized macro factors that transcend individual behavior. Cultural phenomena are distinctive and have their own principles, organization, and dynamics. In chapter 2, we saw that secularization was not a sequence of individual interactions. It was a social-political movement organized primarily by a certain class of people that systematically and rapidly transformed education, science, philosophy, law, politics, the print media, and psychological phenomena (Smith, 2003, pp. 30–32).

The transformation of free-market capitalism to corporate capitalism at the turn of the 20th century followed the same dynamic. Far from being a spontaneous chain reaction of individuals, the transformation was carried out by directly altering the control, organization, and policies of social institutions:

> The corporate-reconstruction movements sought to realize the emergent system of corporate-capitalist authority through a transformation of the legal order and the larger system of political power. In that quest, they proceeded in several spheres at once—in market and property relations, in the law and jurisprudence, in party politics, in government policy and legislation, in foreign-policy making, and in scholarly and popular modes of thought. Their efforts assumed the organizational forms of trade and civic associations. (Sklar, 1988, p. 15)

Civil rights for Black people in the United States were also achieved only through a concerted social movement. The NAACP brought legal chal-

lenges to discrimination throughout the 1930s and 1940s. These culminated in a Supreme Court decision in 1954 to integrate schools. This decision was resisted so strongly by Southerners that the National Guard accompanied some Black children to school in order to enforce it. These judicial and military actions were followed by federal legislation, the Civil Rights Act in 1964, which threatened to terminate federal funds to segregated schools. Only then did integration of public schools begin to become significant. Civil rights for Blacks were not achieved through individual interactions and personal meaning systems. Individuals did change their attitudes and meanings about discrimination; however, these changes did not compose the entirety of the cultural change toward discrimination. The cultural change required organizations, funding, propaganda, leadership, and judicial, legislative, and military authority.

Historical changes in self-concept, gender identity, memory, cognition, and emotions all testify to the central role of macro cultural factors in psychological phenomena. None of these psychological phenomena arose through the spontaneous dialogues of random individuals (Hunter, 2002).

Interestingly, Bartlett held a structural, Gestaltist, top-down view of culture, not the individualistic view that McIntyre et al. attribute to him. Bartlett's main point in *Remembering* is that individuals draw upon macro cultural factors in constructing their memories (and perceptions). He said: "Both the manner and the matter of recall are often predominantly determined by social influences. In perceiving, in imagining, in remembering proper, and in constructive work, the passing fashion of the group, the social catch-word, the prevailing approved general interest, the persistent social custom and institution set the stage and direct the action" (Bartlett, 1932/1967, p. 244). For Bartlett, culture consists of macro factors such as institutions, customs, and language, and these set the stage and direct the action of psychological processes. He said that "a persistent framework of institutions and customs acts as a schematic basis for constructive memory" (p. 255).

Bartlett (1932/1967) emphasized that the dynamics of serial reproduction *recapitulate and preserve* the integrity of macro culture. Conventionalism is one of these dynamics which he described as follows: "Conventionalism is a process by which cultural materials coming into a group from outside are gradually worked into a pattern of a relatively stable kind distinctive of that group. The new material is assimilated to the persistent past of the group to which it comes" (p. 280). Conventionalism, and other processes in serial reproduction, preserve macro culture; they do not generate or transform it, as McIntyre et al. mistakenly believe. Bartlett's method of having people tell stories was an empirical

method to study psychological processes. It was not a simulation of cultural formation.

McIntyre et al. misunderstand, misrepresent, and misuse Bartlett's work. They try to appropriate him as an intellectual linchpin in their individualistic notion of culture and psychology. However, he opposed this approach.

A much more accurate and valid use of Bartlett's social psychology is Moscovici's notion of social representations. Moscovici (2001) highlighted the conservative character of conventionalism (p. 40). He argued that individuals find it difficult to grasp changing social norms and concepts. People thus seek to maintain a sense of stability and security by appropriating new norms and concepts to traditional ones they are familiar with. These transformed concepts are called social representations. For instance, when psychoanalysis arose, it proposed novel practices that were difficult for people to accept. One was the role of a therapist who was a doctor yet did not practice medicine. Another was free association. Ordinary people sought to understand these in terms of conventional frames of reference. They likened the therapist to a priest, and free association to a confession. Ordinary people thus constructed social representations of therapy and the therapist that differed from their official, scientific presentations (Moscovici, 2001, p. 39).

There was nothing novel about these social representations. Quite the opposite—Moscovici emphasized how conventional and conservative they are. They are a way of denying novelty and converting it into familiar, comfortable themes. Nor are social representations free creations. They simply assimilate novel ideas and practices to established ideas. Of course, an active mind produces social representations; however, it does not produce novel, creative ideas. This kind of thinking "owes more to convention and memory than to reason; to traditional structures rather than to current intellectual or perceptive structures" (Moscovici, 2001, p. 39). Social representations "only bring us back to what we already knew and had long been familiar with and which therefore gives a reassuring impression of *deja vu* and *deja connu*" (p. 40). This is similar to Schutz's notion of a stock of knowledge that people draw upon to interpret current events.

Moscovici emphasized the structural, enduring character of society that encompasses individuals. He discredited the individualistic notion that society is the sum of independent individuals acting one by one.

Individualistic cultural psychologists pay no attention to such critiques. They continue to claim that individual psychological constructions are the wellspring of culture. They often shroud their individualism in cloaks of cultural affirmations. They state that individual psychology and culture are inseparable. However, what they mean is that individual

psychological constructions create culture. They do not believe that cultural structures such as institutions, systems of artifacts, and cultural concepts organize psychology.

For instance, Rogoff (2003) said, "Culture is not an entity that *influences* individuals. Instead, … as people develop through their shared use of cultural tools and practices, they simultaneously contribute to the transformation of cultural tools, practices, and institutions" (pp. 51–52). Human development is "a dynamic process involving individuals actively, creatively participating in and contributing to powerful and changing cultural traditions" (p. 95).

Rogoff (2003) claimed to be integrating cultural factors with individual activity in a dynamic interaction rather than mechanical cultural determinism. However, she privileged the individual side. She emphasized individuals developing themselves and creatively transforming culture. Cultural tools and institutions are means that individuals employ to develop themselves. Tools and institutions are expressly not structures that influence people.

Rogoff (2003) said that culture comprises the context of behavior and that individual acts are inseparable from culture. However, culture for her has nothing to do with a system of emergent, administered, objectified, and obdurate macro cultural factors that stimulate and structure psychological phenomena. Rogoff reduced culture to interpersonal acts: The individual is cultural insofar as he uses culture in conjunction with other individuals for their development. Culture is omnipresent and constantly transformable because it is interpersonal relations.

For instance, when Rogoff (2003) acknowledged that cultural communities include governments, legal systems, gender roles, conflicts, and oppression, she regarded these as interpersonal relations in a *Gemeinschaft*. Speaking of participants in a cultural community of practices, she said that "their relations involve personal connections and procedures for resolving inevitable conflicts in ways that attempt to maintain the relationships and the community. Participants in a community may provide each other with support and are familiar with aspects of each other's lives. They also engage in conflicts, disputes, and intrigues, as seems inevitable when people's lives are connected" (pp. 80–81).

Rogoff's community is really an aggregate of individuals interacting. There is no structure, ruling class, transnational corporation, or military to speak of. Social problems are all handled on an interpersonal level (cf. Harre, 1984, for an excellent discussion of the difference between an aggregate group and a structured group). Individualistic cultural psychology depoliticizes culture and psychology.

The individualistic view of culture is fictitious. It exaggerates the role of subjective, microlevel processes, such as meaning making, in the formation and transformation of culture. It denies the obvious fact that cultural factors are emergent, objectified structures that are far more than the sum of individual subjectivities that comprise them.

The individualistic view of culture is really a wish to overcome the alienation of social life by endowing individuals with the power to be creative and active in controlling their social life. However, this power cannot be granted by wishful proclamation. Proclamations of human agency do not alter the stark reality of alienation that disenfranchises people from social control, imposes conformity on them, and deprives them of significant agency. This condition can change only through concerted political action to reform the structure of macro cultural factors.

Cultural psychologists mistakenly assume that people naturally possess agency, and that it simply must be acknowledged ("given a voice"). This denies the fundamental tenet of cultural psychology, which is that consciousness/subjectivity is culturally organized. Where macro factors are undemocratically controlled by a powerful elite, the subjectivity of most people is limited to conforming, dealing with personal mundane issues, and seeking to evade macro pressures in small ways—through escapist leisure activities, and through psychological strategies such as displacement, sublimation, projection, regression, and compensation. Fulfilling subjectivity and agency must be cultivated. They must be called for and supported by macro cultural factors. Only when subjectivity and agency are actively involved in planning, directing, and revising macro cultural factors will they be fulfilling.

Individualistic cultural psychologists never acknowledge the historically concrete character of subjectivity. They never mention its truncated form in conditions of alienation. They never mention the need to transform macro cultural factors *in order to bring about true agency*. Quite the opposite, they insist that human subjectivity is intrinsically agentive and creative. Rogoff says agency is intrinsic to human development. All human development involves creatively transforming culture.

Their position is only true abstractly. All people do possess some subjectivity. We are all active in the general sense that we think, assess, predict, and have desires and intentions. However, this abstract subjectivity (devoid of any particular form or content) has no power to accomplish anything specific. It is not necessarily creative. It rarely transforms culture, as Rogoff (2003) claimed. People who are thoroughly subjugated to social conditions

and alienated from controlling them—such as slaves and prisoners—possess subjectivity. They think, feel, hope, imagine, and understand intentions of others. Yet they are hardly agents who control their lives or transform the institutions that imprison them.

The fact that people possess some subjectivity and negotiate meanings does not mean they are agents, creative, or subversive of the power structure. Many students contest a teacher's standards because they are looking to study less and party more. They may be adopting prevalent social values that school is no fun and should be exploited as much as possible. They may be conforming to peer pressure rather than teacher pressure. It is a mistake to glorify students' negotiations as a manifestation of agency, creativity, or liberation, in the absence of scrutinizing the cultural values and motives they express. Subjectivity, per se, does not contradict cultural determinism or alienation.

Subjectivity is always potentially capable of fulfillment and liberation. But it must take a certain form in certain conditions in order for fulfillment and liberation to occur.

Emphasizing agency and intentionality, per se, deflects attention from macro factors. It glorifies the ability to act rather than the conditions under which the action occurs, and the cultural content that the action has. "If the important thing about people—the thing that makes them human—is that they are agents, then the specific political and cultural contexts [and characteristics] of their actions are less important than the fact that they are actions, *per se* (W. Johnson, 2003, pp. 114–115).

From the standpoint of individual, abstract subjectivity, all behavior is equally creative because all behavior entails active subjectivity. If agency and creativity are defined in terms of active subjectivity, then going shopping and composing a symphony are equally creative because they both involve subjectivity, decision making, and so on. With everyone being active and creative (by virtue of expressing their subjectivity and agency—in any form), every individual constructs a meaningful life for himself. This eliminates any notion of oppression, and it nullifies any need for social reform of macro cultural factors (cf., Ratner, 2002, pp. 59–67, chap. 2).

For individualistic cultural psychologists, cultural change is individual change. "What is most intriguing about the microgenesis of culture is its possibility for a cultural change. If a culture as a meaning system is formed and maintained by microlevel meaning-making activities, an existing culture may be transformed by micro-level activities too" (McIntyre et al., 2004, p. 255). This obviates any need for political action and social reform.

The individualistic view of culture and psychology echoes the ideology of capitalist corporations. Executives of cigarette companies, fast food companies, and media companies deny that their industries induce people to consume products—although they spend billions of dollars to do just that. Corporate leaders claim that people voluntarily choose to consume their products. Resulting lung cancer, obesity, heart disease, violence, and cognitive stultification are thus due to individuals' choices about life style. Blame should be directed at individual choices not at corporate policies. Individualistic cultural psychology leads to the same conclusion. It claims that culture is not an entity that influences individuals, but rather that individuals use culture for their own ends. In both cases, individuals, rather than macro cultural factors, are held responsible for behavioral problems. Exempting culture as an influence on behavior is politically conservative and socially irresponsible as well as scientifically fallacious.

Individualistic cultural psychologists claim that their view allows for more cultural and psychological change than do structural views of culture and psychology. The reason is that individuals can make psychological and cultural changes readily (continuously), whereas cultural structures are immutable. As we noted in chapter 1, these psychologists believe that macro cultural psychology reifies society as an impersonal set of monolithic social forces and structures that mechanically determine the psychology of passive individuals.

However, this conception of structuralism's errors is a caraciture. We have amply demonstrated that the emergent, transcendent, enduring, objectified nature of macro cultural factors is very much a human undertaking. The fact that culture is an emergent phenomenon consisting of macro factors that are more than a sum of individuals does not mean that it is independent of humans. Humans are more than individuals. They are social creatures. Therefore, a cultural structure is human even though it is not individual. Culture is subjectivity on a collective level that is objectified and enduring, and structures the psychology of individuals (cf. Brumann, 1999).

Durkheim, who is regarded as the main representative of structuralism, and is often denounced for reifying society, said "Everything in man has been made by mankind in the course of time" (Durkheim, 1983, p. 67). Durkheim acknowledged that individuals introduce idiosyncratic variations into cultural systems (Durkheim, 1900/1960, pp. 367–368). Marx was another social theorist who emphasized social laws and conditions, yet also emphasized that society is shot through with divisions and contradictions (e.g., social class), which humans utilize to transform society in revolutionary acts. In fact, a structural view of society allows for maximal social change

because it brings the fundamental cornerstones of society into relief where they can be evaluated and transformed.

The individualistic caricature of structuralism stems from its individualistic notion of culture. It is because individualistic cultural psychologists presume that the individual is what makes culture dynamic and heterogeneous that anything beyond the individual appears to be reified, static, monolithic, and mechanical. Individualism blinds them to the possibility that humans can be active within cultural structures, or that cultural structures are prerequisite to individual activity.

Far from encouraging cultural and psychological change, the individualistic ignoring of macro cultural factors condemns people to living within their framework and suffering the ill effects that they generate. Individual activity is confined to "dynamic maintenance" or "active homeostasis" of the status quo, as Adams and Markus (2004) acknowledged: "The constructive process is dynamic, not because it results in change of cultural patterns, but because it entails active re-creation (rather than passive replication) of cultural patterns" (p. 355).

Truncated agency that is limited to re-creating the status quo does not constitute fulfillment or liberation. On the contrary, it attests to the conservative politics of individualism. Glorifying individual acts of meaning construction, or resistance to the status quo, is not a model of liberation because it obfuscates the need to transform social structures. Liberating models of behavior need to emphasize collective forms of resistance in unions, consumer groups, political parties, and environmental organizations.

Agency is realized only when people control their social system. This requires democratizing and humanizing macro culture. As Vygotsky (1997b) said, "Life becomes creation only when it is finally freed of all the social forms that distort an disfigure it" (p. 350).

Psychological theories that minimize or misunderstand the centrality of macro cultural factors for psychology are of limited scientific, political, and therapeutic value. They fail to comprehend essential origins, features, and functions of psychological phenomena. (Such theories either deal with abstract, universal properties of human perception, emotions, language, memory, development, and mental illness, or they deal with culturally concrete features but misconstrue them as natural or personal and do not comprehend their cultural origins, characteristics, and functions.) They fail to help individuals alter their personal relations to the cultural origins and features of their psychology. And they fail to direct individuals to work politically to improve the cultural origins and features of their psychology.

Macro cultural psychology has greater scientific, political, and therapeutic value than other psychological theories. This is a confluence of advantages that is not inevitable. It could have turned out that the science of psychology discovered origins, features, and functions of psychological phenomena that were not amenable to social reform. It is hypothetically possible that, say, gender or ethnic differences in psychological functioning were strongly genetically determined in ways that did not allow them to be ameliorated by changing the social environment. It could also have turned out that therapeutic practices discovered that psychological phenomena could be substantially enhanced through individual therapeutic changes, or through medication. In these cases, psychology and social reform would have little impact on each.

However, this is not the case. Scientific evidence demonstrates that psychological phenomena originate in macro cultural factors, embody the form and content of macro cultural features in their features, and function to support macro cultural factors. Consequently, psychological functioning can be substantially enhanced only by reforming these factors through concerted political action. Individual therapy must also help individuals alter their personal relationships to these factors. Psychological science, therapy, and social reform complement each other. They need to advance conjointly. Only macro cultural-psychological theory and methodology recognize, explain, welcome, and promote this synergy. Advancing this theory and methodology is the urgent task of our discipline.

Epilogue: A Philosophy of Science and a Social Philosophy for Macro Cultural Psychology

This book has sought to articulate the theoretical and methodological principles of macro cultural psychology. This focus on principles has been guided by the belief that the more deeply we understand basic principles, the better we can evaluate and pursue them for greater gain. Accordingly, we have continually moved from factual details to broader phenomena and relationships, and from there to even broader principles. We have treated facts about culture and psychology as stemming from the nature of such as social institutions, cultural concepts, artifacts, and psychological phenomena, and the relationships among these cultural factors. For instance, we have identified ways that social institutions, cultural concepts, and artifacts induce and structure psychological phenomena. These relationships, in turn, stem from broader principles such as functionalism and dialectics. This pyramidal system comprises macro cultural psychology.

The pyramidal system enumerated thus far is not complete. An additional general principle remains to be added. This is the relationship between the knower and the object of knowledge. This relationship determines the scientific approach that researchers take. It determines how we define scientific knowledge and how we acquire it. There are basically two contrasting philosophies of the relationship between the knower and

the known. Critical realism maintains that there is a world (reality) outside the knower that must be discovered. Social constructionism maintains that reality is only a mental construct invented by the knower. We must decide which of these philosophies of science is most suitable to guide the scientific (theoretical and methodological) branch of macro cultural psychology.

Although it is not often recognized, philosophies of science entail social philosophies. If we assume that natural, cultural, or psychological phenomena comprise a definite reality that all observers confront, we will work toward a socially shared understanding of this reality. If we believe that each observer or group of observers concocts their own view of things, we will accept balkanized, conflicting viewpoints as inevitable. This reduces the possibility of shared understandings, communication, and social integration. Critical realism and social constructionism thus lead to very different patterns of social interaction. We must decide which one is most compatible with the political objectives of macro cultural psychology.

Deciding on a philosophy of science and a social philosophy for macro cultural psychology will solidify its foundational principles. Social scientists often assume that macro cultural psychology is a form of social constructionism. Consequently, we analyze it first.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Ontological and Epistemological Principles

Social constructionism claims the following:

1. It is agnostic about the existence of a real world.
2. Knowledge is actively constructed, not a passive reflection of things received via immediate visual or auditory sensations.
3. Knowledge is the product of a social consensus of several consciousnesses.
4. Knowledge is colored by the social process that produces it; it is socially variable and relative.
5. Knowledge reflects and denotes the social-conscious process more than it reflects the properties of things *an-sich*.
6. Knowledge is neither true not false in the sense of corresponding to real features of real things.
7. There can be no criteria for assessing truth or falsity.

Tenet (1) concerns ontology; Tenets 2–6 are epistemological in nature.

These tenets are expressed in the work of Ken Gergen, who represents social constructionism herein (cf. Mirchandani, 2005, for other representatives). Gergen (2001) said: "For modernists, the world simply is out there, available for observation. Within the texts of postmodernism, however, there are no grounds for such a presumption. There is no means of declaring that the world is either out there or reflected objectively by an 'in here'" (p. 805). Furthermore, according to Gergen (2004):

> The constructionist is not, then, interested in truth as a scientific outcome—or at least truth with a capital "T"—a universal or transcendent propositional network. There may be local truths, established within various scientific fields, within the various communities of humankind, and these must surely be honored from within the traditions of these communities. However, the future well-being of the world community depends on facilitating dialogue among these local traditions. Declarations of truth beyond tradition are, in this sense, a step toward tyranny and, ultimately, the end of communication.
>
> To tell the truth, on this account, is not to furnish an accurate picture of what actually happened but to participate in a set of social conventions …. To be objective is to play by the rules within a given tradition of social practices …. To do science is not to hold a mirror to nature but to participate actively in the interpretive conventions and practices of a particular culture. The major question that must be asked of scientific accounts, then, is not whether they are true to nature but what these accounts … offer to the culture more generally. (p. 806) And finally, Gergen (2001) asserted that "a postmodern empiricism would replace the 'truth game' with a search for culturally useful theories and findings with significant cultural meaning" (p. 808). "Arguments about what is really real are futile." (p. 806)

These statements dovetail the premises I outlined earlier. They emphasize local knowledge coined by local communities who share a history and social consciousness. Truth is whatever knowledge a group constructs. It does not reflect a real world. Gergen said that local knowledge must be honored within the traditions of these communities. This ambiguous sentence cannot simply mean that indigenous people honor their own knowledge. For that is a truism. To be more than a truism, the statement must mean that outsiders should respect a people's belief system. We may not agree with it but we honor it for the role it plays in that culture. We find it interesting that the culture chooses to believe in that particular system. The belief fulfills a cultural need and performs a cultural function.

Furthermore, local truths cannot be understood by outsiders because they do not share the cultural background or the language that informs them. (Kuhn termed this notion "incommensurability of paradigms.") Consequently, outsiders cannot criticize local truths that they do not understand. The point is not to dispute which local knowledge is True, or superior, but to simply dialogue among various viewpoints. Presuming some Truth beyond the local viewpoint is totalitarian and inhibits communication (for further discussion, see the special issue of *Theory and Psychology*, 2001, vol. 11; Hibberd, 2002).

Gergen utilized this perspective in his discussion of positivism: "The major problem with the positivist program as practiced in psychology is its lack of critical reflexivity. It is not that positivistic psychology is inherently or transcendentally bad; it is simply limited" (Gergen, 2004). Gergen did not criticize positivism for producing faulty information. (Information cannot be faulty without a notion of Truth or reality.) Positivism's problem is that it doesn't realize it is merely local knowledge favored by a particular community. It is not reflexive about its limited foundation. It oversteps its boundary and pretends to be general knowledge. Because there is nothing really wrong with positivism, it is quite acceptable as a viewpoint that particular people may use for their particular purposes: "My purpose is not at all to eradicate the positivist program, but to eradicate the grounds by which it is claimed superior to all others." "This does not mean abandoning all (or any) preceding modes of study or research. But it does mean an increased reflexivity about why we proceed as we do, and it raises questions about possible alternatives."

Gergen consistently applied this argument to social constructionism. He said, "Constructionism itself should not be considered a universal truth; it too is a view that emerges from social process" (2004). He cannot appeal to any truth value of constructionism because he doesn't believe in such a thing. Constructionism doesn't provide a better understanding of people, because there is no reality to understand and therefore no better or worse way to understand it. Social constructionism is simply a viewpoint that Gergen finds appealing to his own interests.

Social constructionism properly emphasizes that knowledge is socially constructed. It is not a natural product of our sense organs. We do not acquire knowledge by simply opening our eyes and sensing reality before us. Rather, we actively apprehend knowledge by mentally organizing sense experience, and making deductions and inferences from it. Social constructionism correctly emphasizes that there can be different ways to approach reality. Any given way is one way, not the only way. Moreover,

principles, concepts, constructs, definitions, and terminology all reflect a socially constructed paradigm. They are valid within the framework of that paradigm. A different paradigm would entail different principles, concepts, constructs, definitions, and terminology.

Social constructionism denaturalizes knowledge. It also democractizes knowledge and removes it from authoritarian control by a monarch or religious figure. Kings and priests cannot claim a monopoly on wisdom. Their views have no greater status than any other belief system. Social constructionism opens the playing field of knowledge to multiple formulations. Everyone's opinion counts as a local truth.

According to social constructionism, the scientific theory of evolution is no more intellectually respectable than the religious dogma of creationism. Modern astrophysics is no more advanced than cave man knowledge of astronomy. Ancient medicine men and faith healers had as much medical wisdom as modern doctors. Shoppers in a supermarket employ mathematics as efficiently as mathematicians do. In the arts, contemporary composers are accorded equal status with Mozart; they are simply different. Culture with a capital C (i.e., the classical Greek conception of high culture of exquisite, exceptional composition that approximates an ideal of beauty) is replaced by multiple mundane cultures.

Social constructionism is intellectual anarchism. It tears down all authority, expertise, and dominance. It does not seek to improve the basis and operation of these. It does not seek a more objective, profound, or useful expertise (or dominant paradigm). Social constructionism rejects all dominant paradigms simply because they are dominant, not because they are erroneous. Diversity of opinion, not correctness, is its goal.

Social constructionism fails to distinguish the reasons a paradigm can achieve dominance. A paradigm may achieve dominance through authoritarian proclamation. Its dominance deserves to be discredited as just a social construction with no superior wisdom. However, a paradigm may achieve dominance because it is objective and profound, as in the case of scientific theories such as evolution or relativity physics. Such dominance is warranted. Reducing it to a local truth, with no higher intellectual status or practical value than any other belief system, denies the wisdom it contains. This deprives us of its vast usefulness. It collapses the distinction between science, mysticism, and superstition.

Social constructionism is person centered (including groups of people). It regards belief as all about the people who hold it, not about the world outside the belief holders. It is far more interested in the intentions, thoughts, and feelings of the observers than in the object of observation or whether

the belief accurately reflects the object. (Sociologists of science, such as Bloor, term this the strong program to denote the fact that social and personal forces strongly determine our scientific beliefs.)

Social Philosophy

Social constructionism is appealing because it espouses tolerance and empathy with different viewpoints. It fosters modesty about one's beliefs because they are no more valid than others'. Social constructionism levels the field of ideas to equals. It reduces criticism, conflicts, and defensiveness. It affirms all people and all ideas.

However, this universal affirmation of people and ideas is impersonal and abstract. It has nothing to do with the content, truth, or usefulness of the ideas. Everyone is praised equally and indiscriminately. Questions about validity or usefulness of ideas are rebuffed as judgmental and hubristic ("Who's to say?" "How can you make that judgment?"), or irrelevant ("It doesn't matter whether it's true. That's not the point."). People are urged to take pride in their beliefs just because they have created them, not for their truth value. This glorification of people and their ideas sounds humanistic; however, it is really a facile, vacuous affirmation.

Abstract, indiscriminate glorification of people and ideas denies progress and improvement. If all ideas are locally true and honorable, there is nothing beyond what people already are that can serve as an objective to achieve. People may fancy some new idea behavior, but this is mere caprice. It is not motivated by an assessment that their old behaviors or beliefs are lacing and require a change in particular directions. Indeed, social constructionists deny the idea that people can by mistaken or deficient. If every belief is a local truth, there is no such thing as delusions, illusions, irrationality, superficiality, dogmatism, solipsisms, and lies. Abolishing objective truth abolishes any standard by which these could be identified or corrected. If there is no such thing as being correct, and no way to know if one is or is not, then there is no way to tell if one is wrong either. Errors are thus given free reign.

Social constructionism is pure tolerance, however it is a tolerance of estrangement and irreconcilable differences. Social constructionism promotes estrangement and divergence through its claim that beliefs are arbitrary and subjective. Any group of people constructs their own view of things. There is no reason for you to adopt my beliefs because they are just my way of seeing things. You have different interests and can invent your own outlook. The result is isolated cults of believers with little to say to out-

siders. Of course, you may take an interest in my viewpoint if you feel like it. But there is little impetus for doing so (cf. Capaldi & Proctor, 1999, pp. 127–154). My view reflects my own needs and interests. It contains no information value about the world, per se. Consequently, it will not help you understand things better or solve problems.[1]

Social constructionism leads to replacing questions of truth with social labels. Views are not scrutinized for truth value (which is not an issue for constructionists); they are identified as expressing a social perspective. They depend on one's preference for the social perspective of the speaker. Statements are applauded simply because one feels sympathetic to the social identity (ethnic, gender, political) of the speaker. Statements are also impugned because one dislikes the social identity of the speaker ("she's just a liberal," "he's just a White man"). Identity politics is a form of social constructionism.

Social constructionism is a kind of cultism. People within a group create their own worlds. Nobody outside a group can criticize a belief. There are no grounds for criticizing a belief because truth is not an issue. Beliefs express only people's consciousness so how can they be criticized? "It's just what we think." "It reflects who we are." Criticizing a belief is criticizing the person, according to social constructionism. The reason is that beliefs reflect only the person, not the world beyond.

Critics would also be accused of imposing their own local truth onto others. They would be accused of intolerance and lacking in reflexivity—that is, not recognizing the limits of their own ideas, that their ideas are simply what they have agreed upon and have no truth value, per se, that can supplant the cult's ideas.

Rejecting criticism and standards is a form of intolerance, not tolerance. Other views are dismissed as not relevant to the interests of the cult members. This insularity makes beliefs unfalsifiable and dogmatic.

Cultism of arbitrary beliefs is a license for demagoguery, dogmatism, and mindlessness. It forestalls critical thinking, logical reasoning, and an appreciation of empirical evidence. Anything is true and acceptable within a cult that believes it. And there are no grounds for evaluating or rejecting a belief, except for personal preference. Piaget observed that intellectual debate and social conflict sharpen logical thinking and critical reasoning. Under the pressure of argument, one scrutinizes his mode of thought and validates it because he must justify it to others. Cultism eliminates this pressure to examine and justify one's belief system (cf. Sokal & Bricmont, 2003).

Paradoxically, Gergen's endeavor to avoid conflict by endorsing cultism and uncritical tolerance denies any way to resolve differences, achieve harmony, overcome mistakes, and advance our understanding of things. There is no standard for acquiring evidence, drawing conclusions from it, assessing conflicting claims about things, or resolving them. There is no way to communicate across divergent frames of reference. There is not much point in communicating because communicating simply displays belief systems that have no truth value. There is no need or desire to leave the safety net of one's own cult and learn from others because there is no truth value to what they are saying. The doctrine of local truths denies there is a common reality to be understood, and also denies a common way to understand it.

With estrangement and disinterest built into his social philosophy, Gergen is reduced to haplessly pleading for people to try to somehow get along with each other: "The challenge for the social scientist (and for us all) is to generate means by which conflicting and mutually destructive realities can be brought into a state of mutual viability and productive interchange. This does not necessarily mean seeking harmony or resolution among these realities, but we are challenged to think through these issues and to work toward ameliorating practices that may be integrated into the global society" (Gergen, 2004).

Here Gergen pleads for viable coexistence and productive interchange without destructive conflict. However, he cannot imagine or achieve real harmony or resolution because local truths preclude them. He can offer only platitudes: that we should "think through these issues" (how? in what terms, utilizing what concepts?) and "work toward ameliorating practices" (what could these possibly be?).

Social constructionism offers no alternative to the estrangement of modern life. Quite the contrary, it reflects estrangement and rationalizes it as a necessary consequence of human subjectivity. Social constructionism appears to be a critical perspective because it rejects hegemonic paradigms. However, we have seen that it rejects them because they are hegemonic, not because of invalid content. Constructionism actually precludes criticizing any paradigm because it rejects any objective world or standard beyond the paradigm itself that could be used to assess it.

Rejecting all hegemony, even the kind based on wisdom and usefulness, destroys social cohesion. Hegemonic ideas unify a people in a common system of beliefs, understandings, expectations, and communication.

Privileging local truths over grand hegemonic ideas precludes these unifying attributes. It unwittingly fosters social fragmentation under the appellation of diversity.

Social constructionism appears to be a progressive, liberating philosophy of science and social philosophy because it deconstructs all authority and bestows intellectual and social legitimacy on underrepresented ideas and groups. However, social constructionism actually supports the status quo of capitalism. Social constructionism justifies social disintegration and self-centeredness, which are normative in capitalist society. The social constructionist doctrine that any group can construct the world as it wishes, that local truths must be honored and cannot be challenged by general social principles or empirical evidence, allows political leaders to make self-serving, dishonest statements with impunity; it condones voting along party lines according to ideology instead of on the basis of scientific evidence; it dovetails and justifies the corporate credo of doing business as one wishes with no regulation from outsiders, no concern for the community, and in utter disregard of factual consequences for health, the natural environment, or psychological security.

Rather than posing a threat to capitalist ideology, social constructionism reflects the ideology of consumerism. Consumerism promotes impulse buying on the basis of subjective desire rather than rational calculation of goals and the means for achieving them. The value of products is defined in terms of subjective desire. The more an object is desired, the more value it has. Value is no longer defined as an objective property, such as the amount of time required to produce the product (Cross, 1993, pp. 25–27). This ideology is recapitulated in social constructionism that similarly defines the value and nature of things in purely subjective terms (cf. also Horkheimer, 1974 for related discussion).

Social constructionism is additionally harmless to the status quo because it cannot present analyses and alternatives with any claim of being more objective and fulfilling than the status quo. Its analysis and alternative would be mere opinion. Of course, others could agree with this view; however, there is no reason to, and certainly no compunction to. Constructionists cannot critique other viewpoints because that would deny their legitimacy as local truths. Similarly, social constructionists could not seek to transform macro cultural factors because this would alter broad patterns of life for many people. Constructionists could create only their own enclaves of practices, concepts, and artifacts that would be acceptable to themselves. If others volunteered to participate, they would be welcome. However, the structure of factors beyond these en-

claves would remain unchallenged (cf. Wolin, 2004). These principles of social constructionism are unsuitable to guide the political and scientific branches of macro cultural psychology.

CRITICAL REALISM

Ontological and Epistemological Principles

Critical realism maintains that:

1. A world exists independently of the observer.
2. It is vital to understand this real world as much as possible because our satisfaction depends on effectively using its resources.
3. Humans can understand the world by devising rules of scientific thinking, theory construction, procuring and analyzing evidence.
4. Scientific rules are a social product. They are not natural or universal. However, once they are called into existence by social formations and historical needs, they have the capacity to apprehend the real world of things and people (Ratner, 1997, pp. 199–201).
5. Objectivity is not an immediate, passive, complete and absolute reflection of nature in sense impressions. Creative thinking and logic are necessary to achieve it. But creative thinking is directed at discovering the complex world outside us.

Critical realism thus agrees with Tenets 2–4 of social constructionism regarding the active generation of knowledge and the social structuring of knowledge. However, critical realism rejects the solipsistic tenets of constructionism. Critical realism emphasizes that active consciousness is dialectically related to the world (which it increasingly apprehends). Consciousness does not exclusively express the person apart from the world.

Einstein (1954) championed the realist tenets just enumerated. He insisted that:

> The belief in an external world independent of the perceiving subject is the basis of all natural science. Since, however, sense perception only gives information of this external world or of "physical reality" indirectly, we can only grasp the latter by speculative means. It follows from this that our notions of physical reality can never be final. We must always be ready to change these notions in order to do justice to perceived facts in the most perfect way logically. (p. 266)

Furthermore, he said the following: "Can we ever hope to find the right way? Nay, more, has the right way any existence outside our illusions? … I answer without hesitation that there is, in my opinion, a right way and that we are capable of finding it" (p. 274). "The development of physics has shown that at any given moment, out of all conceivable constructions, a single one has always proved itself decidedly superior to all the rest. Nobody who has really gone deeply into the matter will deny that in practice the world of phenomena uniquely determines the theoretical system, in spite of the fact that there is no logical bridge between phenomena and their theoretical principles" (p. 226).

Einstein is saying that there is one definite world and there can be only one correct understanding of it. Of course, this is a distant and difficult process of discovery because reality is vast and complex. We cannot simply see it through sense impressions. We must use sense impressions to infer and deduce unobservable properties of reality. We apprehend reality gradually and incompletely and from different angles. But the objective is clear: All partial understandings need to eventually coalesce into a "right way" that corresponds to the real features of the world, which have one definite nature. Einstein clearly rejects the pluralism that Gergen, Shweder, and others believe is central to science.

Bhaskar, Donald Campbell, and Bunge have articulated additional principles of critical realism (cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 191–194; Bunge, 2001, pp. 28–30):

> Critical realism keeps the seventeenth-century distinction, exploited by Kant and denied by empiricism, between the thing in itself and the thing for us (as known by us). But critical realism drops Kant's theses that the former is unknowable and that the thing for us is identical with the phenomenal object, i.e., with appearance. Indeed, critical realism maintains: a) that the thing in itself can be known (in a gradual fashion), and b) that the thing for us is not the one presented to the senses but the one characterized by the scientific theories. (Bunge, 2001, p. 28)

Critical realism is a compromise between extreme realism and idealism: "It is to recognize both mental states and independent things, to concede the gap between them, and then to show how, in knowing, we cross this gap" (Blanshard, 1978, p. 416).

Critical realism is a form of dialectics. It recognizes the unity and distinctiveness of consciousness and objects of study. Consciousness is part of the world that it studies. It is not trapped in itself and isolated from its object of study. At the same time, consciousness is distinct from what it studies. It is not an immediate reflection of the phenomena it studies. Consciousness

struggles to apprehend the world of which it is a part. It makes mistakes and requires a methodology for improving its accuracy. These are the ontological and epistemological presuppositions of all scientific research. There would be no point in conducting research about things if we could invent knowledge about them, or if they were unknowable, or if they could be known at a stroke through our sense organs.

Critical realism pertains to social and psychological phenomena as well as natural ones. These also have a definite nature that must be universally understood through a commonly agreed-upon set of scientific procedures. Social institutions have definite characteristics, origins, and dynamics. These must be known objectively. The same is true for psychological phenomena. They have real origins and characteristics that must be known as they exist. There can be only one right way of describing and explaining them. Either hysteria was caused by a floating uterus or it was not. Either Black people have as much native intellectual potential as White people or they do not. Either remedial reading programs enhance learning for a significant number of pupils or they do not. Either memories can be suppressed and surreptitiously influence our current behavior or they cannot. Either genes influence a tendency to homosexuality or they do not. There is a reality to psychological phenomena that must be reflected in a universal understanding. There cannot be different, equally valid views.

On a personal level, there is also a single psychological reality that we must understand. When Ken's action provokes a psychological reaction in Mary, this reaction has a definite nature to it. Ken and Mary had better understand it. Of different views, only one will accurately depict her psychological state. Her reaction may be complex (she may be angry and curious and amused), but it is real and definite. Through a process of winnowing (discussion, therapy), it will become clear which view of Mary is more accurate. If one says she is elated and the other says she is depressed, they are not both true and will not amicably coexist in the same bedroom.

Initially, there may be different hypotheses and different studies that uncover incomplete, or mistaken, aspects of these real phenomena. However, through a process of winnowing, true aspects of different approaches must be integrated into a universally agreed-to conclusion that reflects the definite nature of the phenomena.

Such an objective, universal conclusion is possible because we are struck by obdurate events that force us to evaluate the correctness of our knowledge. A behavior occurs in a situation where it is unexpected, or fails to occur in a situation where it is expected, and this leads to refining our understanding of why it occurred and why our prior understanding did not

predict it. We may believe that humans are capable of extrasensory perception. But if we carefully design a situation to test it and find no evidence for it, we have to change our theory about human mental capacity. Or, we may believe our spouse loves us. But if they run off with a lover, this obdurate event forces us to reconsider our prior understanding of that person.

The given reality to things means that beliefs about them are true or false. We may want to understand the cultural reasons that led people to believe in various ideas. But that is far different from honoring them as possessing equal truth value. However interesting and important the social-psychological reasons and motives for ideas are, they are distinct from the truth value of ideas and should not supplant questions of objectivity.

It is counterproductive to accept diverse opinions about the nature of reality and not seek out one that most accurately reflects its nature. There can be only one truth because there is only one reality. The notion of local truth is oxymoronic. It is nothing more than a disingenuous cover term for "opinion." For instance, nobody could seriously maintain that we should accept "local truths" such as: Hysteria is caused by a floating uterus, cigarette smoke is harmless, the Holocaust did not occur, global warming is not occurring, the sun revolves around the earth, or Blacks are intrinsically less intelligent than Whites.

We should not dignify these beliefs as local truths that are as plausible as their opposites and that deserve to be honored within their own frameworks. Rather, we need to explain that they are wrong and why such errors were believed.[2] False beliefs deserve to be criticized and rejected. We need to debunk the claim that hysteria was caused by a floating uterus, that Blacks are inherently intellectually inferior to Whites, that the Holocaust never occurred, that IQ cannot be changed, or that pesticides are harmless to health.

Pure tolerance of fallacious beliefs is not benevolent humanism. Pluralism is pernicious if it harbors dangerous myths. On the contrary, exposing and repudiating dangerous errors is a vital way to improve the human condition (cf. Bunge, 1999). Objectivity is true humanism because it reveals reality and necessity that people have to deal with in order to fulfill themselves. Objectivity is a commitment to the best truth that we can discover. It is not tolerance of all viewpoints, nor is it neutrality toward competing viewpoints, nor is it the midpoint between competing viewpoints, or some compromise among them. Objectivity is the single best knowledge of the single reality that confronts us.

It is imperative to be objective because the way we understand and deal with the world has life-and-death consequences. Life-and-death conse-

quences follow from whether there really is global warming; whether cholesterol heightens the risk of heart attacks; whether poverty leads to impaired cognitive functioning; whether Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction in 2003; if a certain medicine prevents or cures a disease; whether psychosis is due to social stress; whether an elderly person is incompetent to make medical and financial decisions about/by herself; and whether your spouse loves you. The momentous practical consequences of knowledge make it imperative that we get it right. We desperately need Truth with a capital *T*.

Even Gergen occasionally and implicitly recognizes the need for Truth. He asserts that certain psychological phenomena have a particular nature, and he criticizes viewpoints that claim otherwise. He unwittingly contradicts his theoretical tolerance and eclecticism.

This occurs in his discussion of the self. He criticizes the individualistic notion of self as wrongheaded, and also as having disastrous social implications. He doesn't accept it as a valid, honorable form of local knowledge:

> Now, my work on the Self has attempted to generate a sense of the reality of relationship. The aim is to undermine the taken for granted reality of individual, private Selves so dear to the Western tradition. This traditional view is ideologically devastating, I would argue, in that it paints a picture of the world in which we are fundamentally alienated—alone, separate, and self-serving. The challenge is thus to create an alternative reality, one that binds us together, renders us inseparable. (Gergen, 2004)

Gergen says he wants to articulate how real and important social relationships are for humans ("the *reality* of relationship"). He wants to show that humans are social creatures who need to support one another. This makes sense only if he believes that this is the true nature of human beings, and if he believes that it is important to realize this nature in our thinking about self and in our social practice. Otherwise, why bother to correct the individualistic view?

Gergen cannot help but endorse realism when push comes to shove. He, like everyone, believes in real things that have real impacts on people. And he believes that certain understandings of these issues are more valid than others. Despite ideological denials, all of us are realists:

> When we engage in any form of thinking, we are not playing with fancies merely, but on the contrary are trying to submit our thought to the control of something beyond it, or order that it may reveal the features of an outer world more fully and more exactly. This even holds in those relatively rare

> cases in which we are thinking of our own thoughts, for the idea we make our object seems always to be distinguishable from the ideas through which we think of it. It is impossible to find an instance of thinking or knowing that does not go beyond its own machinery so far as to intend and claim the disclosure of an ulterior order to which it is in some sense adjusting itself …. The transcendent end of knowing is the direct revelation in experience of what is also beyond it. (Blanshard, 1978, pp. 488–489)

If definite phenomena can be comprehended objectively (in a single, most valid understanding at a particular time), then a methodology to guide this quest for objective understanding is both viable and necessary. A valid methodology develops historically through a series of improvements. At any time, there is a historically best way methodology for attaining knowledge, just as there is a historically best way of understanding things that Einstein championed. Dilthey (1900/1985, p. 258) applied this view to the human sciences as well as the natural sciences. He said that reflection on historically delimited scientific rules culminates in a universally valid methodology.

Of course, not everyone accepts this methodology. Religious devotees simply deny that science applies to religious matters. They believe that Jesus was born from a virgin birth and that his body ascended into the sky in defiance of any scientific thinking, empirical evidence, or logic. But the fact that people choose to ignore science does not challenge the validity of scientific thinking.

Valid methodology consists of meta-rules for generating and evaluating theories, data, and conclusions. These meta-rules are general, agreed-upon standards against which particular theories, research designs, data, and conclusions can be assessed. They are difficult to completely codify. However, rules of deductive and inductive reasoning, experimental controls, and logically deriving conclusions from data are clearly recognizable and indispensable.

The general validity of meta-rules of science enables them to adjudicate among particular theoretical perspectives to determine which one is the most objective at a given time. In psychology, scientific canons enabled psychologists to prove that rats and apes form cognitive maps and do not simply respond on the basis of operant conditioning parameters. Tolman employed canons of research design to set up crucial experiments that required rats to perform in ways that contradicted conditioning principles. The rats' successful performance could be explained only in terms of a cognitive map and not conditioning (Taylor, 1964).

The general validity of scientific rules contradicts the social constructionist notion that all rules are socially delimited, and irrelevant to other

groups holding other beliefs. Scientific rules are not arbitrary social conventions that serve only the cultural purpose of a single group. Although they are socialized ways of thinking, they enable us to apprehend the world and to assess divergent understandings about it.

There is no necessary antagonism between social constructions and valid methods and conclusions. A certain kind of society may have certain needs and conditions that foster a kind of thinking that is able to profoundly understand the world. Not all societies foster this kind of scientific thinking, but capitalist society does. The meta-rules of science were formulated by a historically delimited cadre of White Western men during the Enlightenment, yet they have transcendent, enduring validity (Ratner, 1997, pp. 199–201).[3]

The fact that consciousness is housed in an individual mind and brain within a particular social group, is operated by the individual (under social influences), and filters and guides our experience with things, does not insulate us from the world or other people. Consciousness can be socially organized in a manner that enables it to be profoundly objective. A particular kind of socially organized consciousness has extended our reach into the past and the future, down to the most minute particles, and up to the vastest phenomena such as the expansion of the universe. It has enabled us to understand people who are quite different from ourselves. It has created meta-rules that enable everyone to apprehend the real world better than they have previously done. Consciousness is a set of lenses that sharpens and extends our perception of the world. It is not a set of blinders that locks us into ourselves as social constructionists assume.

Social constructionists confuse the process of constructing knowledge with the content of knowledge. They assume that because knowledge is socially constructed, it reflects only the consciousness of the social group and has no truth value about anything else. This is a non-sequitur. Socially constructed knowledge can be knowledge about real phenomena beyond the individual constructors of knowledge. Socially constructed knowledge has produced factual information that the earth revolves around the sun, germs cause disease, water molecules are composed of two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen, eye color is determined by genes, and childbirth depends on the union of a sperm and an egg. This knowledge is not only an expression of social consensus and social history, it is also an expression of the nature of things. Of course, socially constructed knowledge may be mistaken and ideologically driven. However, this is not intrinsic to knowledge.

Social groups have distinct experience and insights that may illuminate novel aspects of reality. Critical realism encourages diverse inputs into sci-

ence in the hope that underrepresented concepts will add to our knowledge of psychological, social, and physical phenomena. However, these diverse concepts must all pass through scientific screening to ascertain their validity. The value of local, socially constructed concepts lies in explaining the single, common reality that all people confront. A particular perspective is valuable for its general, unifying insights. In science, particular perspectives lose their parochialness and become incorporated into a general body of shared knowledge about the world that can be used by everyone. A female perspective or a Black perspective is valuable for what it tells us about the world we all live in. This knowledge has general validity and general benefit. Even if a cultural group's perspective addresses only the psychological, social, or physical reality of that group, it is useful only if it provides valid knowledge of the group that is generally understandable and usable by anybody, and if it partakes of general scientific criteria—if it describes and explains this reality in terms that are logically related, clearly defined, have empirical referents, and are falsifiable. In these ways, knowledge from a circumscribed group is incorporated into general knowledge. (The political use of socially constructed knowledge should not be confused with its scientific utility. Esoteric knowledge from an ethnic group may be politically important to hear in order to empower the group politically and psychologically. However, this does not make the viewpoint scientifically valid.)

Social constructionists exaggerate some aspects of epistemology as the entire process. They illuminate the active, subjective, social aspects of epistemology but at the cost of obscuring a real world of natural, social, and psychological phenomena that serve as the telos for knowledge and the standard against which knowledge is evaluated. Constructionism is partly useful but ultimately misleading.

Social constructionists will retort that endorsing realism is tantamount to endorsing mainstream psychology (modernism, or the natural science model). Yet modernism is deemed a flawed philosophy of science that must be repudiated. This requires repudiating realism, which is one of its cornerstones.

This argument is indiscriminate. It assumes that all of mainstream psychology's tenets should be eschewed. However, any doctrine may contain some valuable tenets that then must be rescued. This is the case with mainstream psychology. Its realism is invaluable and must not be discarded with its other flawed tenets. One may accept realism without accepting the natural science model en toto.[4]

There is a strong scientific, realist tradition in qualitative methodology that avoids the errors of modernist psychology. Dilthey, one of the founders

of qualitative social research, articulated this. He believed that psychological phenomena such as meanings could be, and should be, objectively ascertained through a rigorous, scientific procedure of *Verstehen*. This was no mere social convention that simply expressed the researcher's consciousness; it was a systematic analysis of other people's meaning (cf. Ratner, 1997, chaps. 4 and 5; Ratner, 2002). Dilthey emphasized that hermeneutic interpretation of meaning could/should have *Allgemeingültigkeit*, or general validity, because it was objectively apprehended and could be demonstrated to all interested parties.

Dilthey explained that hermeneutics had this objective from its beginning. It arose in the Greek enlightenment as a method for interpreting and critiquing Homer. Hermeneutics became more sophisticated during the second and third centuries BC. The literary heritage of Greece was gathered in libraries, and the Alexandrian philologists sought to identify and discard inauthentic texts. They developed strict rules for identifying style, content, inner coherence, and meanings. These rules had to facilitate objective interpretation of the texts to determine which were authentic and which were not. This strict application of hermeneutics led to excising the last book of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* because they could not have been authored by Homer. Dilthey observed that hermeneutical methods were strengthened through a struggle over different interpretations. The struggle made it more imperative to develop rigorous rules to justify one's conclusions as valid (Dilthey, 1900/1985, pp. 239–241).

Hermeneutics took another leap during the 16th and 17th centuries in order to provide an accurate/correct interpretation of classical religious texts, and the Bible. Protestant theologians sought to invalidate the Catholic interpretation. To do so they elaborated essential rules for interpretation. The rules had to culminate in convincing arguments that would validate the Protestant viewpoint and undermine the credibility of Catholicism. It is worth quoting Dilthey (1900/1985) to catch his meaning:

> The ultimate constitution of hermeneutics stems from Biblical interpretation. The first important work of this kind … was the *Clavis* of Facius (1567). Here for the first time the essential rules for interpretation that had already been worked out were connected with a systematic doctrine, and this was done by means of the postulate that a universally valid understanding (*Allgemeingültigkeit*) was to be reached through the orderly and skillful application of such rules …. [Flacius sought] a univocal determination of individual passages …. This systematic view dominates hermeneutics …. The most urgent mission of Lutheran scholars of that day was to refute the Catholic doctrine of tradition. (pp. 243–244)

Hermeneutics sought an objective, valid interpretation of texts in order to disprove alternative interpretations. It sought univocal, unequivocal, Truthful interpretations, with a capital *T*. It never accepted all views as local truths, immune from external criticism. Dilthey called for a new Bacon in the human sciences who would develop distinctive means for attaining positive results and avoiding error in the human sciences just as the natural scientist does in his realm (p. 268).

Social Philosophy

A realist ontology contends that there is one reality, which has a definite (though complex) nature. This leads to a realist epistemology that a broadly shared set of principles can be (has been) compiled that helps us arrive at a shared understanding of the single reality that confronts us. This ontology and epistemology lead to a social philosophy that emphasizes social communication and agreement.

A single, definite, universal world acts as a central focus that draws people together intellectually and socially. It demands that they develop shared procedures and criteria for knowing it and dealing with it. They must reach agreement on whether anyone's belief corresponds to the world.

Dilthey explained the social integration that a universalist epistemology promotes. He insisted that the crisis of relative (historicist) knowledge can be overcome by science that transcends cultural boundaries. The unifying element in his *Critique of Historical Reason* is always to establish universally valid knowledge. According to Dilthey, although *Weltanschauungen* are relative, *Wissenschaft* is universally true. Science is universally true in the sense that anyone employing an appropriate scientific approach could comprehend a particular people's psychology. Though different ethnic groups have different psychologies, a universal science is able to elucidate any of them. Science does not deny cultural differences in psychology. It says that the particular cultural features of any group's psychology can be universally comprehended by a particular methodology that is employable by anybody who understands the rules.

Science was Dilthey's means for overcoming the relativity of values that block people from understanding each other. People do not naturally understand one another (contrary to claims for universal archetypes). But they can do so by devising and adopting scientific rules for acquiring and assessing knowledge about things.

Scientific rules have united natural scientists into a unified republic of science. Natural scientists speak the same scientific language, and there is

widespread agreement about how to collect and assess data, and about substantive facts, processes, and principles of the natural world.

Science is democratic thinking that allows for all to participate in a common dialogue. Without science, opinions are a matter of preference or loyalty. That was the state of affairs that reigned during the Middle Ages when religious dogma stifled scientific inquiry. It epitomized the social constructionist notion that beliefs about the world are arbitrary social constructions. Beliefs were arbitrary and authoritarian. There were no grounds for contradicting the authority of received opinion. It was only the establishment of science that established objective knowledge and standards for assessing it. These standards allowed anyone to challenge received opinions.

Science is open to improvement. New data, conclusions, theories, and methods are continuously incorporated as they aid in comprehending reality. If one can demonstrate that a meta-rule or procedure more accurately apprehends reality, then it must be accepted.

Scientific realism is genuine critique. It critiques the content of ideas and pushes them toward greater validity and usefulness. Notions of objectivity and validity presuppose that the world matters, that it is important for people to learn about the world and the ways it affects them. Objectivity and validity presuppose that human knowledge is fallible and should be perfected. They call for humility and self-criticism. This is far different from the social constructionist notion of indiscriminate diversity of arbitrary beliefs without criteria, critique, or improvement.

Critical realism promotes a universal, shared understanding that emerges on the basis of sound, publicly accessible and agreed-to criteria. Harmony is achieved by challenging differences and overcoming them. This is a dialectical conception of harmony. Harmony occurs through its "otherness," which is difference. Critical realism leads to genuine agreement on difficult, contentious issues about what is real, good, and important. It overcomes the divisiveness and estrangement that plague contemporary life.

Of course, I am not advocating that people agree on everything. Diversity of opinion in many areas enriches life. However, diversity has run amok in modern society, at least in the United States. Every issue has become a contentious battleground of diverse opinions. The social fabric has disintegrated. There is no unity, and not even dialogue among diverse groups. People form intuitive opinions on the basis of how they see things and what they believe is good for themselves.

Critical realism can help mitigate this social crisis. It directs people to emphasize that we all confront a single, definite, common world that can be

known by established principles of reasoning and research, if people put aside their personal interests. We can arrive at a common understanding and agreement of such contentious matters of opinion as: Does the Bible accurately describe and explain the origin of the universe, or the human species? Will privatizing social security provide better financial security for retirees than maintaining a government run system? Is the war in Iraq improving the lives of the Iraqi people? Does god exist? Does teaching birth control in public schools promote promiscuous sex? Does globalization impoverish American working-class people? Does pollution create global warming? Is an embryo a human being? Does abortion have negative psychological effects on women? Is depression caused by biological defects? Does human psychology have a cultural basis? Is social reform the most effective way to enhance psychological functioning? Did President Bush lie to the American people about the reasons for invading Iraq? Critical realism maintains that there is a single correct answer to all of these contentious questions. The answer can be discovered through well-defined principles of logical reasoning and empirical inquiry. Arriving at common agreement will generate a unity and common purpose that is necessary for society to survive.

Ontological and epistemological concepts regarding truth and reality can contribute to social harmony. They also vindicate social reform. Facts prove that many existing policies regarding the environment, taxation, health care, foreign affairs, education, the media, governmental procedures, working conditions, and corporate compensation and accounting are noxious to large segments of the population. Social progress depends on utilizing a scientific perspective that objectively discloses these problems and solutions to them. Social theorists who impugn science, truth, objectivity, and facts impede social progress. They condone the use of ideology, distortion, sophistry, and pseudo-science, which cover up existing problems and make alternatives appear inconceivable.

Of course, critical realism cannot by itself generate social integration. Changes toward communitarian social practices, artifacts, and cultural concepts are necessary for social unity to occur. Critical realism offers only an aid to intellectual agreement, on the basis of *Allgemeingültigkeit* knowledge. It emphasizes the necessity and possibility of an objective analysis of society, accepted by the majority of the population, that culminates in informed conclusions about how to reform social practices, artifacts, and cultural concepts in order to make them more fulfilling to the majority of people.

Some people will resist these analyses and conclusions. Some people have a vested interest in maintaining the social status quo regardless of its

costs. Some are too confused and frightened, others too habituated to superficial, sensationalistic, self-centered activities, to pursue a serious analysis and reform of society. This opposition to a scientific macro cultural analysis does not invalidate its truth—just as religious opposition to Galileo's and Darwin's scientific conclusions did not invalidate their truth.

Ultimately, the future will be decided through political and possibly military struggle. This is how almost all contemporary societies arose. It is also how future societies will arise. We can only hope that the victors in the struggle for the future will have reason on their side. If the reactionary forces are better organized politically and militarily, they will control the future in defiance of reason and at the expense of the majority of people. This has happened before and it will happen again unless people adopt a macro cultural analysis of society that leads to political action to reform macro cultural factors.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. (1990). Shifting politics in Bedouin love poetry. In C. Lutz & L. Abu-Lughod (Eds.), *Language and the politics of emotion* (pp. 24–45). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Adams, G., & Markus, H. (2004). Toward a conception of culture suitable for a social psychology of culture. In M. Shaller & C. Crandall (Eds.), *The psychological foundations of culture* (pp. 335–360). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Albee, G. (1986). Toward a just society: Lessons from observations on the primary prevention of psychopathology. *American Psychologist, 41,* 891–898.

Alexander, R. (1989). Evolution of the human psyche. In P. Mellars & C. Stringer (Eds.), *The human revolution* (pp. 455–513). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Altman, L. K. (2004, March 10). Study finds that teenage virginity pledges are rarely kept. *The New York Times,* p. A20.

Anderson, C., Berkowitz, L., Donnerstien, E., Huesmann, R. L., Johnson, J., Linz, D., Malamuth, N., & Wartella, E. (2003). The influence of media violence on youth. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 4,* 81–110.

Archer, M. (1995). *Realist social theory: The morphogenetic approach.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Armon-Jones, C. (1986). The social functions of emotion. In R. Harre (Ed.), *The social construction of emotions* (pp. 57–82). New York: Blackwell.

Aronson, R. (1987). *Sartre's second critique.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Asch, S. (1946). Forming impressions of personality. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 41,* 258–290.

Asch, S. (1952). *Social psychology.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Ast, G. (2005). The alternative genome. *Scientific American, 292*(4), 58–65.

Barkow, J., Cosmides, L., & Tooby, J. (1992). *The adapted mind: Evolutionary psychology and the generation of culture.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Bartlett, F. C. (1967). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology.* New York: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1932)

Baumeister, R., Campbell, J., Krueger, J., & Vohs, K. (2003). Does high self-esteem cause better performance, interpersonal success, happiness, or healthier lifestyles? *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 4*(1), 1–44.

Becker, (2004). Television, disordered eating, and young women in Fiji: Negotiating body image and identity during rapid social change. *Culture, Medicine, Psychiatry, 28,* 533–559.

Blanshard, B. (1978) *The nature of thought* (Vol. 1). New York: Humanities Press. (Original work published 1939)

Bloch, R. (2003). *Gender and morality in Anglo-American culture, 1650–1800.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Block, J. (2002). *A nation of agents: The American path to a modern self and society.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Boggs, J. (2004). The culture concept as theory, in context. *Current Anthropology, 45,* 187–209.

Bohm, D., & Peat, F. (1987). *Science, order, and creativity.* New York: Bantam.

Bond, M. (2004). Culture and aggression—from context to coercion. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 8,* 62–78.

Bowles, S., Gintis, H., & Osborne, M. (2005). *Unequal chances: Family background and economic success.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Brettell, C. (2002). The individual/agent and culture/structure in the history of the social sciences. *Social Science History, 26,* 429–445.

Brison, K. (1998). Giving sorrow new words: Shifting politics of bereavement in a Papua new Guinea village. *Ethos, 26,* 363–386.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1975). Is early intervention effective? Some studies of early education in familial and extra-familial settings. In A. Montagu (Ed.), *Race and IQ* (pp. 287–322). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological systems theory. *Annals of Child Development, 6,* 187–249.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Ceci, S. (1994). Nature–nurture reconceptualized in developmental perspective: A bioecological model. *Psychological Review, 101,* 568–586.

Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G., & Aber, J. (1997). *Neighborhood poverty: Context and consequences for children* (Vol. 1). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.

Brumann, C. (1999). Writing for culture: Why a successful concept should not be discarded. *Current Anthropology, 40*(Suppl.), S1–27.

Bunge, M. (1999). *The sociology-philosophy connection.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Bunge, M. (2001). *Scientific realism.* Amherst, NY: Prometheus.

Bunge, M. (2004). How does it work? The search for explanatory mechanisms. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 34,* 182–210.

Bushman, B. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (1998). Threatened egotism, narcissism, self-esteem, and direct and displaced aggression: Does self-love or self-hate lead to violence? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75,* 219–229.

Cabeza, R., & Nyberg, L. (2000). Imaging cognition II: An empirical review of 275 PET and fMRI studies. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 12,* 1–47.

Callahan, D. (2004). *The cheating culture: Why more Americans are doing wrong to get ahead.* New York: Harcourt.

Capaldi, E., & Proctor, R. (1999). *Contextualism in psychological research? A critical review.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ceci, S., & Papierno, P. (2005). The rhetoric and reality of gap closing: When the "have-nots" gain but the "haves" gain even more. *American Psychologist, 60,* 149–160.

Clark, K., & Clark, M. (1939). The development of consciousness of self and the emergence of racial identification in Negro preschool children. *Journal of Social Psychology, 10,* 591–599.

Clark, K., & Clark, M. (1940). Skin color as a factor in racial identification of Negro preschool children. *Journal of Social Psychology, 11,* 159–169.

Clark, K., & Clark, M. (1947). Racial identification and preference in Negro children. In T. Newcomb & E. Hartley (Eds.), *Readings in social psychology* (pp. 169–178). New York: Holt.
Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. (1991). *Of revelation and revolution: Christianity, colonialism, and consciousness in South Africa.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. (1997). *Of revelation and revolution: The dialectics of modernity on a South African frontier.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Cook, D. (2004). *The commodification of childhood.* Durham: Duke University Press.
Coser, L. (1960). Durkheiim's conservatism and its implications for his sociological theory. In P. Wolff (Ed.), *Emile Durkheim* (pp. 211–232). Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
Cott, N. (2000). *Public vows.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Cross, G. (1993). *Time and money: The making of consumer culture.* New York: Routledge.
Cushman, P. (1991). Ideology obscured: Political uses of self in Daniel Stern's infant. *American Psychologist, 46,* 206–219.
Danner, M. (2004, June 10). Torture and truth. *New York Review of Books,* pp. 46–50.
Deacon, T. (1997). *The symbolic species: The co-evolution of language and the brain.* New York: Norton.
Dennett, D. (1991). *Consciousness explained.* Boston: Little, Brown.
Derne, S. (1994). Hindu men talk about controlling women: Cultural ideas as a tool of the powerful. *Sociological Perspectives, 37,* 203–227.
Desan, S. (2004). *The family on trial in revolutionary France.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Dewey, J. (1902). Interpretation of the savage mind. *Psychological Review, 9,* 217–230.
Diener, E., & Seligman, M. (2004). Beyond money: Toward an economy of well-being. *Psychological Science in The Public Interest, 5,* 1–31.
Dilthey, W. (1985). The rise of hermeneutics. In W. Dilthey, *Hermeneutics and the study of history* (pp. 235–258). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1900)
Dilthey, W. (1989). *Introduction to the human sciences, vol. 1.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Doise, W., & Mugny, G. (1984). *The social development of the intellect.* New York: Pergamon.
Donald, M. (1998). Hominid enculturation and cognitive evolution. In C. Renfrew & C. Scarre (Eds.), *Cognition and material culture: The archaeology of symbolic storage* (pp. 7–18). Cambridge, England: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.
Donald, M. (2000). The central role of culture in cognitive evolution: A reflection on the myth of the "isolated mind." In L. Nucci, G. Saxe, & E. Turiel (Eds.), *Culture, thought, and development* (pp. 19–38). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Downie, L., & Kaiser, R. (2002). *News about the news: American journalism in peril.* New York: Knopf.
Dunbar, R. (1998). Theory of mind and the evolution of language. In J. Huford, M. Studdert-Kennedy, & C. Knight (Eds.), *Approaches to the evolution of language: Social and cognitive bases* (pp. 92–110). New York: Cambridge University Press.
Dunbar, R. (2003). The social brain: Mind, language, and society in evolutionary perspective. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 32,* 163–181.
Duncan , G., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1997). *Consequences of growing up poor.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
Durkheim, E. (1951). *Suicide.* New York: The Free Press. (Original work published 1897)
Durkheim, E. (1960). Sociology and its scientific field. In P. Wolff (Ed.), *Emile Durkheim* (pp. 354–375). Columbus: Ohio State University Press. (Original work published 1900)
Durkheim, E. (1983). *Pragmatism and sociology.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Ehrenreich, B. (1997). *Blood rites: Origins and history of the passions of war.* New York: Holt.

Einstein, A. (1954). *Ideas and opinions.* New York: Bonanza Books.
Emler, N. (2001). *Self-esteem: The costs and causes of low self-worth.* York, England: York Publishing Services.
Engels, F. (1964). *Dialectics of nature.* Moscow: Progress.
Ericsson, K., Delaney, P., Weaver, G., & Mahadevan, R. (2004). Uncovering the structure of a memorist's superior "basic" memory capacity. *Cognitive Psychology, 49,* 191–237.
Evans, G. (2004). The environment of childhood poverty. *American Psychologist, 59,* 77–92.
Evans, G., & English, K. (2002). The environment of poverty: Multiple stressor exposure, psychophysiological stress, and socioemotional adjustment. *Child Development, 73,* 1238–1248.
Feinstein, L., & Bynner, J. (2004). The importance of cognitive development in middle childhood for adult socioeconomic status, mental health, and problem behavior. *Child Development, 75,* 1329–1339.
Fivush, R., & Nelson, K. (2004). Culture and language in the emergence of autobiographical memory. *Psychological Science, 15,* 573–577.
Flannery, K., & Marcus, J. (2003). The origin of war: New 14C dates from ancient Mexico. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 100, 20,* 11801–11805.
Fracchia, J., & Lewontin, R. (2005). The price of metaphor. *History and Theory, 44,* 14–29.
Fromm, E. (1973). *The anatomy of human destructiveness.* Greenwich, CT: Fawcett.
Fryers, T., Melzer, D., & Jenkins, R. (2003). Social inequalities and the common mental disorders. *Social Psychiatry & Psychiatric Epidemiology, 38,* 229–237.
Furedi, F. (2004). *Therapy culture: Cultivating vulnerability in an uncertain age.* New York: Routledge.
Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures.* New York: Basic Books.
Gergen, K. (2001). Psychological science in a postmodern context. *American Psychologist, 56,* 803–813.
Gergen, K. (2004, September). 'Old-Stream' Psychology Will Disappear With the Dinosaurs! *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [Online journal], 5(3), article 27.
Gerth, H., & Mills, C. W. (1953). *Character and social structure: The psychology of social institutions.* New York: Harcourt Brace.
Greenfield, P., Keller, H., Fuligni, A., Maynard, A. (2003). Cultural pathways through universal development. *Annual Review of Psychology, 54,* 461–490.
Greenfield, P., Maynard, E., & Childs, C. (2003). Historical change, cultural learning, and cognitive representation in Zinacantec Maya children. *Cognitive Development, 18,* 455–487.
Haas, J. (2001). *From leaders to rulers.* New York: Plenum/Kluwer.
Hacker, A. (2004, February 12). The underworld of work. *New York Review of Books,* pp. 38–40.
Halperin, D. (1998). Is there a history of sexuality? In B. Fay, P. Pomper, & R. Vann (Eds.), *History and theory* (pp. 253–267). Oxford, England: Blackwell.
Hamilton, R., & Pascual-Leone, A. (1998). *Cortical plasticity associated with Braille learning. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 2,* 168–174.
Hanson, N. R. (1965). *Patterns of discovery.* New York: Cambridge University Press.
Harkness, S. (2002). Culture and social develoment: Explanations and evidence. In P. Smith & C. Hart (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of childhood social development* (pp. 60–77). Oxford, England: Blackwell.
Harre, R. (1984). Some reflections on the concept of "social representation." *Social Research, 51,* 927–938.
Hart, B., & Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children.* Baltimore: Brookes.
Heath, S. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hegel, G. W. F. (1956). *The philosophy of history.* New York: Dover. (Original work published 1830)
Henry, J. (1963). *Culture against man.* New York: Vintage.
Hibberd, F. (2002). Reply to Gergen. *Theory and Psychology, 12,* 685–694.
Hodges, H. (1952). *The philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey.* London: Routledge.
Hodgson, G. (2001). *How economics forgot history: The problem of historical specificity in social science.* New York: Routledge.
Hoff, E. (2003). The specificity of environmental influence: Socioeconomic status affects early vocabulary development via maternal speech. *Child Development, 74,* 1368–1378.
Horkheimer, M. (1974). *Eclipse of reason.* New York: Seabury Press. (Original work 1946)
Horton, R. (2004, March 11). The dawn of McScience. *New York Review of Books,* pp. 7–9.
Hua, C. (2001). *A society without fathers or husbands.* New York: Zone Books.
Hunter, J. (2002). *How young ladies became girls: The Victorian origins of American girlhood.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press. (Original work published 1937)
Hutton, P. (1981). The history of mentalities: The new map of cultural history. *History and Theory, 20,* 237–259
Hwang, K. K. (2003). Critique of the methodology of empirical research on individual modernity in Taiwan. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 6,* 241–262.
Iverson, J., & Goldin-Meadow, S. (2005). Gesture paves the way for language development. *Psychological Science, 16,* 367–371.
Jachuck, D., & Mohanty, A. (1974). Low economic status and progressive retardation in cognitive skills: A test of cumulative deficit hypothesis. *Indian Journal of Mental Retardation, 7,* 36–45.
Ji, L., Peng, K., & Nisbett, R. (2000). Culture, control, and perception of relationships in the environment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78,* 943–955.
Johnson, A., Johnson, O., Baksh, M. (1986). The colors of emotions in Machiguenga. *American Anthropologist, 88,* 674–681.
Johnson, W. (2003). On agency. *Journal of Social History, 37,* 113–124.
Kalberg, S. (1994). *Max Weber's comparative-historical sociology.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Kandyoti, D. (1988). Bargaining with patriarchy. *Gender and Society, 2,* 274–290.
Kasson, J. (1990). *Rudeness and civility: Manners in nineteenth-century urban America.* New York: Hill & Wang.
Katzman, M., Hermans, K., Van Hoeken, D., & Hoek, H. (2004). Not your "typical island woman": Anorexia nervosa is reported only in subcultures of Curacao. *Culture, Medicine, Psychiatry, 28,* 463–492.
Kitayama, S., Duffy, S., Kawamura, T., & Larsen, J. (2003). Perceiving an object and its context in different cultures: A cultural look at New Look. *Psychological Science, 14,* 201–206.
Knight, C., Studdert-Kennedy, M., & Hurford, J. (2000). *The evolutionary emergence of language: Social function and the origins of linguistic form.* New York: Cambridge University Press.
Kuhl, P. (2000). Language, mind, and brain: Experience alters perception. In M. Gazzaniga (Ed.), *The new cognitive neurosciences* (pp. 99–115). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Layder, D. (1987). Key issues in structuration theory: Some critical remarks. *Current Perspectives in Social Theory, 8,* 25–46.
Lee, D. (1963). Discrepancies in the teaching of American culture. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Education and culture: Anthropological approaches* (pp. 173–191). New York: Rinehart & Winston.
Le Grange, Louw, J., Breen, A., Katzman, M. (2004). The meaning of "self-starvation" in impoverished black adolescents in South Africa. *Culture, Medicine, Psychiatry, 28,* 439–461.

Levine, R., Levine, S., & Schnell, B. (2001). "Improve the women": Mass schooling, female literacy, and worldwide social change. *Harvard Educational Review, 71,* 1–50.

Levinson, S. (2003a). Language and mind: Let's get them straight. In D. Gentner & S. Goldin-Meadow (Eds.), *Language in mind: Advances in the study of language and thought* (pp. 25–46). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Levinson, S. (2003b). *Space in language and cognition: Explorations in cognitive diversity.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Liebman, R., & Wuthnow, R. (1983). *The new Christian right.* New York: Aldine.

Lin, E., & Church, A. (2004). Are indigenous Chinese personality dimensions culture-specific?: An investigation of the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory in Chinese American and European American samples. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 35,* 586–605.

Lindly, J., & Clark, G. (1990). Symbolism and modern human origins. *Current Anthropology, 31,* 233–261.

Linklater, A. (2003). *Measuring America: How the United States was shaped by the greatest land sale in history.* New York: Penguin.

Loe, M. (2004). *The rise of Viagra: How the little blue pill changed sex in America.* New York: New York University Press.

Loeber, R., & Hay, D. (1997). Key issues in the development of aggression and violence from childhood to early adulthood. In J. Spence, J. Darley, & D. Floss (Eds.), *Annual review of psychology* (Vol. 48, pp. 371–410). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews.

Lombard, A. (2003). *Making manhood: Growing up male in colonial New England.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lowe, E. J. (1998). Personal experience and belief: The significance of external symbolic storage for the emergence of modern human cognition. In C. Renfrew & C. Scarre (Eds.), *Cognition and material culture: The archaeology of symbolic storage* (pp. 89–96). Cambridge, England: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.

Luria, A. (1971). Towards the problem of the historical nature of psychological processes. *International Journal of Psychology, 6,* 259–272.

Luria, A. (1976). *Cognitive development: Its cultural and social foundations.* Boston: Harvard University Press.

Lurie, A. (2003, July 3). God's houses. *New York Review of Books,* pp. 30–32.

Marcus, J., & Flannery, K. (2004). The coevolution of ritual and society: New 14C dates from ancient Mexico. *Proceedings of The National Academy of Sciences, 101,* 18257–18261.

Marcuse, H. (1984). *One-dimensional man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society.* Boston: Beacon.

Marcuse, H. (1987). *Hegel's ontology and the theory of historicity.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Original work published 1932)

Martin-Baro, I. (1994). *Writings for a liberation psychology.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1964). *The German ideology.* Moscow: Progress Publishers. (Original work written 1845)

Matt, S. (2003). *Keeping up with the Jones: Envy in American consumer society, 1890–1930.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

McChesney, R. (1999). *Rich media, poor democracy: Communication politics in dubious times.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

McCrae, R., Yik, M., Trapnell, P., Bond, M., & Paulhus, D. (1998). Interpreting personality profiles across cultures: Bilingual, acculturation, and peer rating studies of Chinese undergraduates. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74,* 1041–1055.

McDermott, R. (1974). Achieving school failure: An anthropological approach to illiteracy and social stratification. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Education and cultural process: Toward an anthropology of education* (pp. 82–137). New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston.

McIntyre, A., Lyons, A., Clark, A., & Kashima, Y. (2004). The microgenesis of culture: Serial reproduction as an experimental simulation of cultural dynamics. In M. Schaller & C. Crandall (Eds.), *The psychological foundations of culture* (pp. 227–258). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

McKinnon, S. (2005). *Neo-liberal genetics: The myths and moral tales of evolutionary psychology.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McKinnon, S., & Silverman, S (2005). *Complexities: Beyond nature and nurture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McPhail, C. (1971). Civil disorder-participation: A critical analysis of recent research. *American Sociological Review, 36,* 1059–1073.

Merton, R. (1968). *Social theory and social structure.* New York: Free Press.

Michell, J. (2003). The quantitative imperative: Positivism, naïve realism, and the place of qualitative methods in psychology. *Theory and Psychology, 13,* 5–31.

Michell, J. (2004). The place of qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Researaach in Psychology, 1,* 307–319.

Mirchandani, R. (2005). Postmodernism and sociology: From the epistemological to the empirical. *Sociological Theory, 23,* 86–115.

Mitchell, T. (1988). *Colonising Egypt.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mithen, S. (1999). Symbolism and the supernatural. In R. Dunbar, C. Knight, & C. Power (Eds.). *The evolution of culture* (pp. 147–169). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Moen, P., Elder, G., & Luscher, K. (1995). *Lives in context: Perspectives on the ecology of human development.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Moghaddam, F. (2005). The staircase to terrorism: A psychological exploration. *American Psychologist, 60,* 161–169

Moscovici, S. (2001). *Social representations: Explorations in social psychology.* New York: New York University Press.

Mosier, C., & Rogoff, B. (2003). Privileged treatment of toddlers: Cultural aspects of individual choice and responsibility. *Developmental Psychology, 39,* 1047–1060.

Neville, H., & Bavelier, D. (2000). Specificity and plasticity in neurocognitive development in humans. In M. Gazzaniga (Ed.), *The new cognitive neurosciences* (pp. 83–98). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Nisbett, R., & Cohen, D. (1996). *Culture of honor: The psychology of violence in the South.* New York: Westview.

Ogbu, J., & Stern, P. (2001). Class status and intellectual development. In R. Sternberg & E. Grigorenko (Eds.), *Environmental effects on cognitive abilities* (pp. 3–37). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Olson, E. (1981). Socioeconomic and psycho-cultural contexts of child abuse and neglect in Turkey. In J. Kobin (Ed.), *Child abuse and neglect: Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 96–119) Berkeley: University of California Press.

Oyserman, D., & Markus, H. (1998). Self as social representation. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The psychology of the social* (pp. 107–125). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ozgen, E. (2004). Language, learning, and color perception. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 13,* 95–98.

Pascual-Leone, A., & Hamilton, R. (2001). The metamodal organization of the brain. In Casanova, C., & Ptito, *Vision: from neurons to cognition* (pp. 427–446).

Pascual-Leone, A., Amedi, A., Fregni, F., & Merabet, L. (2005). The plastic human brain cortex. *Annual Review of Neurosciences, 28*, 377–401.

Pelton, L. (1994). The role of material factors in child abuse and neglect. In G. Melton & F. Barry (Eds.), *Protecting children from abuse and neglect* (pp. 131–181). New York: Guilford.

Pendergast, T. (2000). *Creating the modern man: American magazines and consumer culture 1900–1950.* Columbia: University of Missouri Press.

Peng, K., & Nisbett, R. (1999). Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction. *American Psychologist, 54,* 741–754.

Piaget, J. (1932). *The moral judgment of the child.* Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

Pike, K., & Borovoy, A. (2004). The rise of eating disorders in Japan: Issues of culture and limitations of the model of "Westernization." *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry, 28,* 493–531.

Pinker, S. (2004). Why nature and nurture won't go away. *Daedalus, 133*(4), 5–17.

Pinnick, C. (2005). The failed feminist challenge to "fundamental epistemology." *Science and Education, 14,* 103–116.

Pitts, V. (2003). *In the flesh: The cultural politics of body modification*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Polivy, J., & Herman, P. (2002). Causes of eating disorders. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53,* 187–213.

Porter, R. (1995). *Trust in numbers.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Price, D. (2003). Subtle means and enticing carrots: The impact of funding on American cold war anthropology. *Critique of Anthropology, 23,* 373–340.

Ratner, C. (1989a). A social constructionist critique of naturalistic theories of emotion. *Journal of Mind and Behavior, 10,* 211–230.

Ratner, C. (1989b). A sociohistorical critique of naturalistic theories of color perception. *Journal of Mind and Behavior, 10,* 361–372.

Ratner, C. (1991). *Vygotsky's sociohistorical psychology and its contemporary applications.* New York: Plenum.

Ratner, C. (1992). Review of J. Hamill, "Ethno-logic: The anthropology of human reasoning." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 23,* 267–268.

Ratner, C. (1993). Review of D'Andrade and Strauss, "Human motives and cultural models." *Journal of Mind and Behavior, 14,* 89–94.

Ratner, C. (1994). The unconscious: A perspective from sociohistorical psychology. *Journal of Mind and Behavior, 15,* 323–342.

Ratner, C. (1997). *Cultural psychology and qualitative methodology: Theoretical and empirical considerations.* New York: Plenum.

Ratner, C. (1998a). The historical and contemporary significance of Vygotsky's sociohistorical psychology. In R. Rieber & K. Salzinger (Eds.), *Psychology: Theoretical-historical perspectives* (pp. 455–474). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Ratner, C. (1998b). Prologue to *Vygotsky's Collected Works* (Vol. 5). New York: Plenum.

Ratner, C. (1999). Three approaches to cultural psychology: A critique. *Cultural Dynamics, 11,* 7–31.

Ratner, C. (2000a). A cultural-psychological analysis of emotions. *Culture and Psychology, 6,* 5–39.

Ratner, C. (2000b). Outline of a coherent, comprehensive concept of culture. *Cross-Cultural Psychology Bulletin, 34*(1 & 2), 5–11.

Ratner, C. (2002). *Cultural psychology: Theory and method.* New York: Plenum.

Ratner, C. (2004a). A cultural critique of psychological explanations of terrorism. *Cross-Cultural Psychology Bulletin, 38*(1 & 2), 18–24.

Ratner, C. (2004b). Genes and psychology in the news. *New Ideas in Psychology, 22,* 29–47.

Ratner, C. (2004c). Vygotsky's conception of psychological development. In R. Rieber & D. Robinson (Eds.), *The essential Vygotsky* (pp. 401–413). New York: Kluwer/Plenum.

Ratner, C., & Hui, L. (2003). Theoretical and methodological problems in cross-cultural psychology. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, 33,* 67–94.

Ratner, C., & McCarthy, J. (1990). Ecologically relevant stimuli and color memory, *Journal of General Psychology, 117,* 369–377.

Renfrew, C. (1996). The sapient behavior paradox. In P. Mellars & K. Gibson (Eds.), *Modelling the early human mind* (pp. 11–14). Cambridge, England: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.

Renfrew, C. (2001). Commodification and institution in group-oriented and individualizing societies. In W. G. Runciman (Ed.), *The origin of human social institutions* (pp. 93–117). New York: Oxford University Press.

Robarchek, C. (1977). Frustration, aggression, and the nonviolent Semai. *American Ethnology, 4,* 762–779.
Roberson, D. (2005). Color categories are culturally diverse in cognition as well as in language. *Cross-Cultural Research, 39,* 56–71.
Roberson, D., Davidoff, J., Davies, Shapiro, L. (2005). Color categories in Himba: Evidence for the cultural relativity hypothesis. *Cognitive Psychology, 50,* 378–411.
Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development.* New York: Oxford University Press.
Rogoff, B., & Angelillo, C. (2002). Investigating the coordinated functioning of multifaceted cultural practices in human development. *Human Development, 45,* 211–225.
Rothbaum, F., Weisz, J., Pott, M., Miyake, K., & Morelli, G. (2000). Attachment and culture. *American Psychologist, 55,* 1093–1104.
Sageman, M. (2004). *Understanding terror networks.* Philadelphia: University Pennsylvania Press.
Saloma, J. (1984). *Ominous politics: The new conservative labyrinth.* New York: Hill & Wang.
Sandomir, R. (2004, January 7). TV Sports; By the Numbers, the College Bowl Games Have Less Action. *The New York Times,* p. C14.
Sartre, J. P. (1948). *The emotions: Outline of a theory.* New York: Philosophical Library.
Sartre, J. P. (1991). *Critique of dialectical reason* (Vol. 2). New York: Verso.
Sawyer, K. (2002). Unresolved tensions in sociocultural theory: Analogies with contemporary sociological debates. *Culture and Psychology, 8,* 283–305.
Sawyer, K. (2004). The mechanisms of emergence. *Philosophy of the Social Scieinces, 34,* 260–282.
Schaller, M., & Crandall, C. (2004). *The psychological foundations of culture.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Schmitz, M., Filippone, P., & Edelman, E. (2003). Social representations of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, 1988–1997. *Culture & Psychology, 9,* 383–407.
Seccombe, K. (2002). "Beating the odds" versus "changing the odds": Poverty, resilience, and family policy. *Journal of Marriage & Family, 64,* 2, 384–394.
Shattuck, R. (2004, February 26). A world of words. *New York Review of Books,* pp. 21–24.
Sherif, M., Harvey, O., White, J., Hood, W., & Sherif, C. (1988). *The Robber's Cave experiment: Intergroup conflict and cooperation.* Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. (Original work published 1954)
Shweder, R. (1990). Cultural psychology: What is it? In J. Stigler, R. Shweder, & G. Herdt (Eds.), *Cultural psychology: Essays on comparative human development* (pp. 1–43). New York: Cambridge University Press.
Shweder, R. (2003a). Toward a deep cultural psychology of shame. *Social Research, 70,* 1109–1130.
Shweder, R. (2003b). *Why do men barbeque? Recipes for cultural psychology.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Siok, W., Perfetti, C., Jin, A., & Tan, L. (2004). Biologically abnormality of impaired reading is constrained by culture. *Nature, 431,* 71–76.
Sklar, M. (1988). *The corporate reconstruction of American capitalism, 1890–1916.* New York: Cambridge University Press.
Smith, C. (2003). *The secular revolution: Power, interests, and conflict in the secularization of American public life.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Snow, C. (1999). Social perspectives on the emergence of language. In B. MacWhinney (Ed.), *The emergence of language* (pp. 257–276). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Sokal, A., & Bricmont, J. (2003). *Intellectual impostures: Postmodern philosophers' abuse of science.* London: Profile Books.
Spindler, G. (1974). The transmission of culture. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Education and cultural process* (pp. 279–309). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Stetsenko, A., & Arievitch, I. (2004). The self in cultural-historical activity theory. *Theory and Psychology, 14,* 475–503.
Taylor, C. (1964). *The explanation of behavior.* New York: Humanities.
Tomasello, M. (1999). *The cultural origins of human cognition.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Tomasello, M. (2001). Cultural transmission: A view from chimpanzees and human infants. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 32,* 135–146.
Tuttle, J. (1969). *Wilhelm Dilthey's philosophy of historical understanding: A critical analysis.* Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
Van der Veer, R., & Valsiner, J. (1991). *Understanding Vygotsky: A quest for synthesis.* Oxford, England: Blackwell.
Van Overschelde, J., Rawson, K., Dunlosky, J., & Hunt, R. (2005). Distinctive processing underlies skilled memory. *Psychological Science, 16,* 358–361.
Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Vygotsky, L. (1987). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 1). New York: Plenum.
Vygotsky, L. (1994). The socialist alteration of man. In R. van der Veer & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Vygotsky reader* (pp. 175–184). Oxford, England: Blackwell. (Original work published 1930)
Vygotsky, L. (1997a). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 3). New York: Plenum.
Vygotsky, L. (1997b). *Educational psychology.* Boca Raton, FL: St. Lucie Press. (Original work published 1926)
Vygotsky, L. (1998). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 5). New York: Plenum/Kluwer.
Wagner, H. (1964). Displacement of scope: A problem of the relationship between small-scale and large-scale sociological theories. *American Journal of Sociology, 69,* 571–584.
Wang, Q., Ceci, S., Williams, W., & Kopko, K. (2004). Culturally situated cognitive competence: A functional framework. In R. Sternberg & E. Grigorenko (Eds.). *Culture and competence: Contexts of life success* (pp. 225–250). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
Weidman, N. (2003). Review of Steven Pinker, "The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature." *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences, 39,* 383–386.
Weissberg, R., Kumpfer, K., & Seligman, M. (2003). Prevention that works for children and youth: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 58,* 425–432.
White, L. (1949). *The science of culture: A study of man and civilization.* New York: Farrar, Strauss.
Whitrow, G. (1973). Time and measurement. In P. Wiener (Ed.), *Dictionary of the history of ideas* (pp. 398–406). New York: Scribner's.
Wilcox, K. (1982). Differential socialization in the classroom: Implications for equal opportunity. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Doing the ethnography of schooling* (pp. 268–309). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Williams, E. (1966). *Capitalism and slavery.* New York: Capricorn Books. (Original work published 1944)
Wolin, R. (2004). *The seduction of unreason: The intellectual romance with fascism from Nietzsche to postmodernism.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Worden, R. (1998). The evolution of language from social intelligence. In J. Huford, M. Studdert-Kennedy, & C. Knight (Eds.), *Approaches to the evolution of language: Social and cognitive bases* (pp. 148–166). New York: Cambridge University Press.
Wright, J. (1979). *On a clear day you can see General Motors.* New York: Avon.

Endnotes

Chapter 2:

1. Macro factors are ideal types. Weber formulated the notion of ideal type as a heuristic aid that "facilitates the researcher's grasp upon and comprehension of an amorphous and ceaselessly flowing reality and assist the clear conceptualization of the particular case or development under investigation" (Kalberg, 1994, p. 93). The free market, a religion, a bureaucrat, are all ideal types in this sense. (In the field of psychology, intelligence, motivation, emotion, mental illness, and personality are ideal types in the same sense.) Demarcated ideal types "offer delimited hypotheses that can be tested against specific empirical cases and developments, thereby isolating discrete and significant causal regularities of action" (Kalberg, 1994, p. 93). Weber made famous the relation of Protestant religion to the capitalist market.

   Furthermore, according to Kalberg (1994):

   > By no means should the ideal type be understood as an "average type." Not simply a summarization of elements common to empirical phenomena is involved, nor merely a classification of events. Rather, and although its construction is rooted thoroughly in empirical reality, it is formulated on the one hand through a conscious exaggeration of *essential* features … and on the other hand through a synthesis of these diffuse characteristic action-orientations into an internally unified and logically rigorous concept. (p. 86; cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 79–83, 207)

2. Durkheim extended this analogy to the relation between brain and mind. The mind is composed of neurons; however, neurons organized together have a special property of being able to produce thoughts. Thoughts have their own properties and dynamics, just as life has distinctive properties and dynamics that are different from carbon and hydrogen. Just as biology is distinct from chemistry, so psychology is distinct from biology. This analysis avoids the errors of dualism and reductionism.
3. Secularization had a powerful influence on people's psychology and the discipline of psychology. It led to replacing the notion of a soul with psychological

notions such as the self. It also inspired the profession of psychology to work on psychological issues in place of ministers' work on the soul and salvation.

4. The emergence of conservative religious beliefs in the 1970s was also not a spontaneous upsurge by individuals. It was fomented by a national organization of religious leaders who funded an organized movement. It was also fomented by organized conservative politicians who contributed huge funds to organize a conservative religious movement with political power (Liebman & Wuthnow, 1983; Saloma, 1984, chap. 5).
5. This, of course, is a historical fact, not due to human nature:

> The record of the first modern humans illuminates a global-wide pattern of relative social equality and decentralized decision-making processes. Prior to about 10,000 years ago, there are no indications of clear social, political, or economic hierarchies. In these early millennia archaeological markers of social ranking are lacking and there is similar absence of evidence pointing to the presence of leaders, chiefs, or rulers …. In every culture area, the origins and development of politically centralized social systems and the emergence of leaders and rulers followed a unique evolutionary trajectory depending on local history and environment. At the same time, there are broad patterns of similarity in the evolution of politically centralized polities that cut across cultures and across time. (Haas, 2001, p. v)

6. Most cultural psychologists are averse to studying political issues as part of culture. This is especially true of cultural psychologists who focus on cultural concepts and meanings (Ratner, 1993, 1999). Geertz, for example, conducted field work in Indonesia in the 1960s and 1970s without considering the effects on the populace of American neo-colonial Cold War social, economic, and military policies. These resulted in the murder of approximately 1 million Indonesians, the undermining of Indonesian political structures, and the removal of President Sukarno. Nor did Geertz consider the effect on his own thinking and research of prominent political issues. These included the fact that his funding agency, the Ford Foundation, was involved in subverting Sukarno, and that the MIT Center for International Studies, which provided organizational support for Geertz's research, was funded by the CIA and staffed with prominent Cold War economists such as Rostow who were involved in transforming the political and economic structure of Indonesia in order to help American corporations gain access to oil (Price, 2003, pp. 388–392). The limitations of (and on) Geertz's cultural thinking thin the thickness of his anthropological descriptions.

Chapter 3:

1. The adaptive value of psychological phenomena is indicated by the fact that the first specimen of *Homo sapiens sapiens* was Cro-magnon man, who was less powerful than his ancestor, Neanderthal man. Yet Cro-magnon man replaced his more powerful ancestor rather quickly, over a 5,000-year time span.

Cro-magnon's superior adaptability was due to superior social organization, artifacts, symbolic representations (concepts), communication, planning, thinking, and memory.

2. It is fair to say that the human language faculty (Language, with a capital *L*) has changed through cultural life, not simply that individual languages (language with a lowercase *l*) have changed. Language has advanced from a simple stringing of words together in protolanguages to syntactic intricacies of modern languages.
3. Culture exercised a distinctive selective pressure that led to the unique human brain. This is known as the "social brain hypothesis." It treats culture as an ecological pressure that shaped the phylogenetic evolution of the brain. Social life seems to have been a more powerful pressure on neocortical development than the physical environment is. This is the reason that the size/volume of the neocortex correlates highly with group size in primates (Dunbar, 1998, p. 94; Dunbar, 2003, p. 169). It is also the reason that the human cortex evolved quickly over the 2 million years since our genus *Homo* emerged. A consistent, stimulating ecological niche of social interactions and primitive artifacts must have acted as the selective pressure for such development. This view challenges conventional thinking in cognitive psychology and neuroscience. The latter assumes that brain and cognitive functioning deal primarily with perceptual processing skills. But the social brain hypothesis suggests that our skills in these domains are all by-products of the fact that the brain evolved to handle social problems (Dunbar, 1998, p. 106).

   Engels (1964) anticipated the social brain hypothesis by a century when he stated that "First labor, after it and then with it speech—these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man" (p. 176). The goal and need for communication also acted as a selective pressure for developing the organ of speech, the larynx. "Necessity created the organ" (p. 175).
4. To say that beliefs structure psychological experience does not mean that reality is only what we think. We may believe that personality is caused by genes and hormones but this does not make it so. However, if we believe this, we may act and experience differently than if we attribute personality to other factors such as social experience.
5. Within Western culture, sadness has different qualities. A young woman in love will feel a hurtful kind of sadness if her lover breaks up with her. She will feel bitter, humiliated, lonely, and unappreciated. However, if her lover has to move away in order to get a job or go to school, her sadness has none of those qualities. Instead, it is a sadness tinged with love that she still feels for him. It may be a beautiful sadness associated with having had a wonderful experience that had to end because of insuperable circumstances.
6. Situating psychology within culture (and situating the discipline of psychology within the social, or cultural, sciences) does not deny biological processes. Humans' unique biological substratum, which includes a unique neocortex and

anatomy, must function normally if psychological phenomena are to occur. It also sets outer limits to the kinds of psychological phenomena we can cultivate—for example, an infant cannot learn advanced mathematics, and adults cannot perceive and recall a hundred discrete bits of information at once. In addition, sensory processes register physical characteristics of things that psychological functions take account of.

We may say that the biological substratum establishes the human *capacity* for psychological functions. However, the concrete form and content of emotions, memory, perception, learning, motivation, personality, sexuality, self-concept, body image, illusions, and mental distress (i.e., our psychological *competencies*) are culturally organized and embody cultural concepts and practices (cf. Ratner, 1991, 2004c).

7. Physicists Bohm and Peat (1987) explained that conceptual distinctions that reflect the distinctiveness of things are not tantamount to fragmenting things and obscuring their interrelationships:

> Fragmentation should not be confused with the act of division of an area of knowledge into particular fields of specialization or with the abstraction of specific problems for study. These divisions may be perfectly legitimate, and in fact, they are an essential feature of science .... Fragmentation arises when an attempt is made to impose divisions in an arbitrary fashion, without any regard for a wider context, even to the point of ignoring essential conditions to the rest of the world. (p. 15)

Chapter 5:

1. Personal responsibility depends on how much social responsibility one has for directing social life. If society is controlled by a powerful elite who systematically exclude people from decision making and knowledge, it is illogical to hold the people responsible for their behavior. Those who hold no social power cannot be held responsible for behavior. It is disengenuous and illogical for the social elite to insist on the power to make economic and political decisions that affect the live of millions, and then claim that the populace is responsible for their behavior. *Responsibility for behavior requires control over behavior. Responsibility is not a personal attribute divorced from social life*. One cannot be responsible for his personal behavior if he has no responsibility for the social relations and policies that affect his personal life.
2. Fromm took this approach to personality. He identified personality types that were composed of cultural features from particular socioeconomic systems. A receptive personality type was characteristic of peasant societies. An exploitive personality type was characteristic of aristocracies and colonial elites. A hoarding personality type was characteristic of the petty-bourgeoisie such as Puritans. A marketing personality type is characteristic of modern industrial society. Fromm believed these personality types were stultified because they reflected oppressive aspects of class society. He advocated a new type of cultural personality called the productive personality. A new social system is necessary to organ-

ize this type of personality. Fromm called that system humanistic communitarian socialism.

Though Fromm was correct to link personality attributes to cultural features, his notion of personality type was too categorical. Any society, or subculture, is not marked by a single, global, homogeneous personality type. Rather, particular components of personality, perception, emotions, reasoning, memory, learning, motivation, and mental illness are drawn from the culture. The unit of analysis should be these cultural-psychological components rather than gross typifications such as personality types. The notion of personal responsibility-intentionality that is used to interpret injurious behavior and generate anger is an example. Dealing with psychological components acknowledges diverse combinations within a culture. Diverse personality types composed of different cultural elements replace global personality types composed of single cultural elements.

3. Defenders of the status quo counter that the reasons people succumb to stress is because of their endogenous weaknesses, or diatheses. This argument fails on logical and empirical grounds. It does not explain why one third of the American population are so deficient as to suffer psychological disturbance, or why depression is escalating 1000% each generation. Nor is the argument supported by empirical data. There is no reliable, valid evidence for biological deficits that contribute to mental illness (cf. Ratner, 1997, pp. 282–302; Ratner, 2000b, pp. 24–33; and Ratner, 2004b for related data).
4. Research would compare the quality of depression, and the conditions and coping mechanisms that generate depression in various countries.

Chapter 7:

1. Evolutionary psychologists erroneously assume that evolutionary principles promote universal psychological tendencies in humans. A representative statement is: "If specialized adaptations are responsible for human perceptions of sexual attractiveness, then fundamental cross-cultural regularities in standards of sexual attractiveness would exist" (Barkow et. al., 1992, p. 143, cf. p. 64). This statement is false. Even if human perception of sexual attractiveness were a specialized genetic adaptation akin to animal perception, it would vary significantly in different ecological niches according to Darwinian adaptationist theory. Darwin emphasized that the same animal species behaves quite differently in different niches. The assumption of universality has no basis in Darwinian theory.
2. Evidence demonstrates that there is no single, circumscribed cortical area (module) for language. Language is localized in diverse parts of the brain depending on its particular properties. For example, "closed-class" words—prepositions and conjunctions—are processed in different cortical areas depending on whether the speaker can hear and speak English, or whether he is deaf and uses American Sign Language (ASL). Electrical activity (event-related potentials, or ERPs) associated with closed-class words is great in anterior regions of

the left hemisphere in native English speakers; but ERPs in response to closed-class words are bilaterally distributed to include both right and left parietal areas in native sign users of ASL. (Open-class words—nouns and verbs—are processed in the same areas for English and ASL users.) Furthermore, when hearing individuals learn ASL in their late teens, closed-class words remain localized in the left parietal area; but when ASL is learned as the native language in early childhood, closed-class words are bilaterally localized.

When hearing adults read English, there is robust activation within the left, but not the right, hemisphere, especially Broca's region. When deaf people read English, the right parietal area is activated, not the left. And when deaf people read their native ASL, both hemispheres are activated (Neville & Bavelier, 2000, pp. 91–96).

These cortical differences are not innate. Brains of deaf people are not "hard-wired" to process English texts in different areas from those of hearing people. Rather, the properties of sign language utilize different regions of the cortex and in the process alter the brain's neuroanatomy.

A related example is that reading Chinese characters is processed in the left middle frontal gyrus (LMFG) of the cortex. Reading a Western alphabet is processed in the left temperoparietal region of the cortex. As a result, the LMFG of Chinese-speaking people is anatomically larger than the LMFG of English-speaking people. Reading disorders such as dyslexia are manifested in disturbances in these different cortical areas depending on whether the subjects are Chinese-speaking or English-speaking. There is no single, universal reading center that becomes impaired during dyslexia. Furthermore, behavioral remediation of reading ameliorates the dysfunctional neural mechanisms in the respective cortical areas of English-speaking and Chinese-speaking patients. Remediation of reading does not have a single, universal neurological effect (Siok, Perfetti, Jin, & Tan, 2004).

Of course, there can be no innate reading center because reading is a recent skill and the brain has not had sufficient time to evolve a special center for it. In the same way, there is no cortical center for knitting, computer programming, or mathematics.

The notion that particular aspects of language are naturally localized in predesignated cortical areas (modules) is further refuted by the fact that lip-reading activates the auditory cortex in the absence of auditory speech sounds. In other words, the auditory cortex is not only receptive to, and stimulated by sounds, but by silent lip-reading as well. Another complication is that the auditory center is activated by silent speech as well as pseudospeech, but not by nonlinguistic facial movements. Thus, the subject must *interpret* the lip movements as expressing language in order for the auditory center to activate. When the movements do not express real language but are interpreted as a form of language, the auditory center is activated. But when the movements do not express real language and the subject interprets them as nonlinguistic, the auditory center is not activated (Cabeza & Nyberg, 2000).

The visual cortex is similarly reorganized when people are deprived of sight. This cortex which normally receives visual input in sighted individuals, processes tactile and auditory input in blind subjects. There is activation of both primary and secondary occipital cortical areas (V1 and V2; Brodmann areas 17, 18, and possibly 19) during tactile tasks, whereas sighted controls showed deactivation in these regions. (Hamilton & Pascual-Leone, 1998, p. 170). Interestingly, passive sweeping of the hand over a homogeneous pattern of Braille dots (devoid of symbolic meaning) does not result in activation of the visual cortex (Pascual-Leone, et al., 2005, p. 388). The visual cortex is thus finely tuned to meaningful information. It is not mechanically activated by sensory information in general. The cortical activation depends upon the subject bestowing psychological significance on sensory information. We have seen that activation of the auditory cortex similarly depends upon the subject interpreting visual information (such as lip movements) as meaningful.

Interfering with the occipital cortex, by repeated transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS), disrupts the tactile reading of Braille letters and embossed Roman characters in early-blind subjects. "rTMS induces errors and distorts the tactile perceptions of blind subjects in both tasks. In the case of the Braille task, subjects knew that they were touching Braille symbols, but were unable to discriminate them, reporting instead that the Braille dots felt 'different', 'flatter', 'less sharp and less well-defined'…In contrast, occipital stimulation had no effect on tactile performance in normal sighted subjects, whereas similar stimulation is known to disrupt their visual performance" (Hamilton & Pascual-Leone, 1998, p. 170).

This reorganization of the occipital cortex occurs very quickly, within hours. It suggests that the cortex is always capable of processing visual, tactile, and auditory input. Afferent connections from many sense organs reside int eh occipital cortex. Which modality the occipital cortex processes depends upon what sensory information is presented to it. Contrary to popular impression, the occipital cortex, and other brain areas may not be specifically devoted to one modality or function (ibid., Pascual-Leone & Hamilton, 2001; Pascual-Leone, et al., 2005).

The notion of specialized cortical modules for particular cognitive tasks is further impugned by the fact that functional neuroimaging results across different domains reveal that some brain regions are engaged in a wide variety of tasks across different cognitive domains. The prefrontal cortex is involved in almost all high-level cognitive tasks. Activations in parietal area 7 are found in studies of attention, space perception, imagery, working memory, episodic memory, and procedural memory. This picture is obscured by compartmentalized researchers who report only the localization pattern for a single cognitive task. Area 7 activations, for instance, are usually attributed to attentional processes in attention studies, to perceptual processes in perception studies, to working memory processes in working memory studies, and so on (Cabeza & Nyberg, 2000; cf. Ratner, 2004b, pp. 42–43).

In the same vein, a psychological function such as perception is processed in numerous cortical areas, refuting the notion of a single localization for a particular function. This follows from the fact that a psychological function is dialectically related to others. Perception includes cognition (expectations, interpretations, implicit logical relations), and memory.

Human neurons are widely interrelated which further undermines the notion of specialized, independent modules. The adult brain has 100 billion neurons, each of which has 1500 synapses, and each synapse has 1 million receptor molecules to receive information. The image of circumscribed brain center that receives singular, specialized information has no neurological basis.

3. Unfortunately, Darwin himself failed to realize this point. He never acknowledged the distinctiveness of humans' cultural environment and that it requires unique capacities, competencies, behavioral mechanisms, and transmission mechanisms. Darwin insisted that cultural behavior is a function of individual traits. Advanced cultures exist because they have a high proportion of psychologically advanced individuals. And these individuals are the result of biological mechanisms. Darwin never explained why these mechanisms happened to occur in a certain place and time. He thus had no adequate explanation for cultural differences. Darwin did not realize that the full implications of his theory for human culture and psychology culminate in macro cultural psychology.

Epilogue:

1. Shweder's "postmodern humanism" is a form of social constructionism. "Postmodern humanism is suspicious of all totalizing or unitary worldviews and appreciative of variety, diversity, and difference" (Shweder, 2003b, p. 2). This statement clearly counterpoises diversity to agreement and objectivity.

   Shweder further contends that: "The knowable world is incomplete if seen from any one point of view, incoherent if seen from all points of view at once, and empty is seen from nowhere in particular. Per this maxim, one should stay on the move, seeking out and engaging alternative points of view" (Shweder, 2003b, p. 2). This version of social constructionism, as catchy as it sounds, deprives us of any coherent direction. We can't adopt one viewpoint because that is incomplete and sterile. We can't adopt many views because that is incoherent. And we can't adopt no viewpoint because that is empty. Shweder's proposal to "stay on the move" is as incoherent as seeing the world from all points of view. It still rejects definite reality and objective knowledge, as well as social agreement.
2. It is actually vital to know whether a belief is true or false as we try to explain its raison d'être. Say we wish to understand Bush's belief that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction in 2003. Knowing that Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction in 2003 means Bush's belief was false. This directs us to comprehend the reasons for his mistake. We would look for lapses in intelligence, bias in reporting, illogical conclusions, dogmatic rejection of evidence about the absence of these weapons, and political interests that superceded and distorted objective evaluation of evidence. If, on the other hand, Hussein in fact pos-

sessed weapons of mass destruction, we would applaud Bush's belief for its objectivity, and we would comprehend his belief in terms of the rigorous way he solicited evidence, his openness to evidence, and the logical way that he drew conclusions from the data. Explaining the social psychology of a belief requires knowing the extent to which it reflects the world.

3. These meta-rules are so brilliant that they have enabled scientists to correct their own errors and accumulate more valid information. They enable revolutions to occur within the parameters of science! One can be heretical within the conventions of science. One needs no extrascientific percepts to challenge conventional scientific doctrines. (Democratic rules of government are similarly brilliant in providing for changing governments, legal, and economic relations within those rules. Of course, vested interests try to circumvent or suspend these rules to prevent change, but the rules, themselves, allow for peaceful change.)
4. Like most psychologists, both mainstream and constructivists, Gergen erroneously believes that realism and quantification in mainstream psychology was imported from logical positivism. This is not true. Logical positivism was actually close to constructionism in regarding theories and methodologies as fairly arbitrary. It accepted diversity in theory and methodology (Michell, 2003, 2004). Mainstream psychology emphasizes realism and quantification, but these derive from intellectual origins other than logical positivism.

Author Index

Subject Index