



New York state of mind: culture, history, and psychology in New York City

Wade Pickren
Pace University - New York
United States



Abstract

Place is important for understanding knowledge and scientific practices. In turn, knowledge and practice influence the place they occur. Place is not simply the stage where the real action happens, but it is itself constitutive of systems of human interaction, thus ideas are produced and shaped in resonance with their environments. Here the author argues that New York City was an important site for the growth and diversification of application of psychology during the decade of the 1920s. The city both shaped the science and practice that grew there and was shaped by it.

Keywords: place; geography of knowledge; construction of scientific practice; applied psychology; New York City

Over the last decade, historians of science have shown how knowledge and practice have to become local knowledge and local practice in order to find an enduring place in a



society (e.g. Livingstone, 2003; Raj, 2007; Safier, 2008). Psychology, like others sciences and professional practices, has been changed by its movement across national and cultural boundaries. This transformation is not a luxury or optional. That is, for psychology or any science to become an integral or important part of a culture's knowledge and practice base, it must be indigenized to that place.

The late Indian psychologist, Durganand Sinha, argued that there are two related processes whereby a local culture or region develops its own forms of knowledge and practice: indigenization from within and indigenization from without (Sinha, 1998). In the former, the process occurs primarily within the culture, while in the latter, there is an importation of knowledge and practices developed elsewhere that are often combined with local concepts. Typically, these processes occur together. In broad historical perspective these processes have presumably been at work throughout human as history as humans have engaged in trade, populations have been on the move, technologies have been developed and shared, and knowledge has been transformed to fit time and place. These historical processes indicate that it is perhaps a human impulse to cross boundaries to establish contacts and make exchanges across cultures. Histories of trade, commerce, and civilizations provide support for this thesis.

This is a timely topic, as evidenced by the conference program theme of the European Society of the History of Science in Barcelona in November 2010. Recent issues of the English language history of science journals, *Osiris* and *Isis*, have also addressed the topic. An international, interdisciplinary conference held in Halle, Germany in 2009 was devoted to the topic of the transmission of indigenous knowledge (e.g., Pickren, 2009, September) and there have been many other conferences and workshops on this and related topics over the last several years. We whose scholarship is in the history of psychology are beginning to pay attention, as well. As we do so, I believe that we will see that the transmission of psychological knowledge and practice is more complex than we have previously understood and continues to have relevance today in a globalizing world.

But, how do scientific knowledge and practices become "naturalized" in a society? To answer this, we have to ask about culture. What role does culture play? Or perhaps it would be best to use the plural, what roles do cultures play? In many instances of knowledge/practice transmission, there is a culture of export and a culture of import. The dynamics of knowledge transformation are embedded in changing cultural conditions. These conditions include the political, the economic, and the inextricable relationship of knowledge and power.

If we focus on psychology, this means that we have to ask to what do the new psychologies owe their origins and influences? To what extent are they a product of local or cultural beliefs about human nature or human behavior? What is their relation to knowledge and practices that originated elsewhere? Are they, as Sinha proposed, hybrids of thought and



practice of multiple origins? Whatever the origin, psychology in any society must draw on the cultural resources of a time and place in order to create a demand for its practices. Thus, understanding the cultural conditions is crucial.

Brazilian cultural historian of psychology, Marina Massimi, has provided insights in the need to understand the cultural context and the deep role of culture in shaping our psychologies (e.g., Massimi, 2006; Campos, Jacó-Vilela, & Massimi, 2010; Mahfoud & Massimi, 2009). With her colleagues, Massimi wrote about Brazilian psychology “seen in the light of the history of culture” (Campos, Jacó-Vilela, & Massimi, 2010, p. 265) in which she made an important argument for the necessity of cultural knowledge in crafting an accurate and living history of psychology in Brazil.

In an earlier article, Massimi (2010) argued that “the possibility of connection between different cultures can only be recognized if we learn the central core of each one” (p. 7, English translation of Portuguese article). Thus, for Brazil, she notes the dualities of communication, oral and written, and the duality of experiential time, diachronic and synchronic. These dualities, she argues, are of essential importance for understanding the psychic life and thus the history of psychology in Brazil. These dualities point to the inherent dissonance of the Brazilian cultural universe, and paradoxically point, as well, to the deep harmonic unity of Brazilian life. Such understanding is crucial to understanding the history of psychology in Brazil. Thus, as she writes, “we understand the relationship between psychology and culture, found through history, is not important just for understanding the past, but also the present” (Massimi, 2006, p. 185). Thus the need for a historiography that can, and I quote, “conceive the inclusion of plural pluralities in the same space complex” (p. 185). This is a similar point made by the Mexican theorist, Nestor Canclini (2005), in his book, *Hybrid Cultures*. In this article, I argue that the relationship between psychology and history, which can only be understood in historical time, is crucial for grasping the history of psychology anywhere, including the United States, where I situate my example.

Massimi’s cultural historiography is conceptually linked, I believe, to what Neil Safier calls deep histories. Safier (2010) posits the necessity of accepting the histories of local people as sources of knowledge equally legitimate with traditional textual sources. Safier suggests two sources or tools for understanding such histories: material culture and narratives/ethnographies. Material culture can give us rich insights into the deep histories of people in place and time (Cohen, 2011; Smail, 2008), as archeologists and paleoanthropologists have convincingly shown. The narrative/ethnographic approach is also rich. For example, the African American anthropologist, Zora Neale Hurston traveled the American South in the 1920s and 1930s collecting stories from African Americans, many of whom related tales and wisdom handed down from Africa and maintained in the slave populations and their offspring. Her collected narratives show us not only that knowledge systems work according to different criteria, but the deep connection of histories to time,



place, and locality. These connections are crucial for the indigenization process and form the basis for the historical example I offer in this article, psychology in New York City between 1920-1960.

I first offer an overview of the indigenization of psychology in the United States, before turning to New York City as a specific example. While I will not be able to do full justice to the example, I trust that it will prove to be a useful exemplar of the important and necessary linkages between culture and history. For a more complete treatment, I refer readers to Chapter 4 of Pickren & Rutherford (2010) and Pickren (2010).

Cultivating the Conditions for Psychology in the United States

Psychology in the United States drew upon many sources for its growth. The usual textbook account typically recounts the establishment of a laboratory based psychological science in Germany in the late 19th century is often cited as the key moment in the history of psychology (Boring, 1929). Yet, even in Germany, the success of the new science was directly due to its role in the service of the German ideals of *Kultur*. That is, psychological science was part of the program to provide empirical support for the foundations of rational knowledge and thus to provide a suitable education for the sons and a few daughters of the German middle and upper classes (Ash, 1995; Ringer 1969). Wundt was the first person to successfully institutionalize psychology as a laboratory based science where he and his students sought to understand the normal adult human mind. At least 16 Americans studied with Wundt and then followed his example of how to institutionalize psychology as a science in the rapidly expanding higher education system of the United States (O'Donnell, 1985).

The New Psychology, as the laboratory-based science was often called in the United States, developed rapidly. However, it was not the first psychology in the country. Historian Deborah Coon has shown how the New Psychologists struggled to establish themselves as scientists who could authoritatively address matters of the mind (1992). This was necessary because the general public at the beginning of the 20th century did not make fine distinctions about psychological matters, giving credence to spiritualists, practitioners of New Thought, mesmerists, phrenologists, philosophers, and Christian ministers (Pickren, 2000). All of these professionals represented schools of thought about human mentality that had experienced great success during the 19th century in America. Why was this the case?

Briefly, during the 19th century, Americans became sensitized to many new phenomena that indicated the great and somewhat mysterious powers of the mind. As a result, by the end of the century Americans had developed a strong psychological sensibility and there existed what might best be termed an “everyday” psychology. The historical contexts for these developments are quite complex and a full explanation is beyond the scope of this brief



article. Here, I offer a brief sketch of these contexts in order to suggest the processes of transformation and hybridization that were at work in creating American psychology.

Population growth and changing demographics were important for the creation of the possibility of a new kind of psychological sensibility. The United States began the 19th century as a mostly rural society primarily occupied by a relatively homogeneous population of Anglo-Saxon and Northern European descent. By the end of the century that had changed, as millions of immigrants from both Europe and Asia arrived in the country. The country also became much more urbanized and industrialized and better educated, with a growing appetite for information and new knowledge, especially that knowledge that promised self-improvement.

A populist approach to truth, in which every person decides what counts as true, whether the domain was religion, medicine, politics and or any other facet of life. The result was an anti-authoritarian environment in which social hierarchies were challenged, along with the received authorities of religion, science, and the professions. In this populist atmosphere, there was a tremendous growth of new ideas about human nature and human behavior. New ideas and practices emerged in health, religion, marriage, etc (e.g., Albanese, 2007; Whorton, 1982). Mesmerism, phrenology, and spiritualism were all part of this growth, as well as metaphysical religions and philosophies such as New Thought (Albanese, 2007). These new ideas held appeal across American society, regardless of class, educational level, or race. These new ideas and practices became part of American culture and were crucial in forging a psychological sensibility or “everyday” psychology.

By the last decades of the 19th century, all of these new ideas and practices had helped create among Americans a psychological-mindedness. One could visit almost any American city and find various psychological practitioners, from mesmerists to spiritualists to phrenologists doing steady business. Of course, their psychology was not the psychology of the laboratory or the questionnaire. However, the new disciplinary Psychologists had their way made easier for them by those who had preceded them in mesmerism, religion, spiritualism, and so on. Perhaps this was the most remarkable feature of psychology in America, the ability to somehow blend so many different elements, all representing a different aspect of human mentality, into something distinctively American. That is, what happened in the United States was a hybridization of ideas and practices of an everyday psychology with the scientific laboratory based approach of the New Psychology imported from Germany.

In summary, it was the emergence of everyday psychologies that was instrumental in creating a psychological sensitivity in American culture and formed the cultural and popular foundation on which the scientific discipline of Psychology so successfully built in the 20th century. As a result, during the 20th century, American psychology moved to the very center of American social life. What we think of as American Psychology, then, is actually a hybrid



of a variety of practices and metaphysical belief systems, mixed with an array of practices and ideologies drawn from natural science. Truly, psychology is an excellent example of the transformation of knowledge and practice.

I turn in the next section to an examination of how this knowledge was deployed in a particular location, New York City. In doing so, I hope to delineate the power of place in shaping a science or profession, as well as the reciprocal influence of that science and profession on the place.

A New York State of Mind

During an earlier time in my career, I served as the editor for history and obituaries for the APA journal, *American Psychologist*. While editing the various obituaries, I began to notice the range of activities and positions that New York City psychologists held. These positions varied widely and included service in such locations as the New York Domestic Relations Court, the Intake Project for New York City Child Court, the Bureau of Mental Health Services, the Educational Alliance, the Ethical Culture School, as well as the usual academic and private practice settings.

As I reflected on this, I began to wonder if there was something about New York City as a place that may have contributed to psychology's development. That is, I asked about the power of place. As I mused on this, an idea for a different kind of history began to take root in my thinking. A history of how a place, a location, has shaped psychology and, in turn, been shaped by psychology as science and profession.

Sociologist Thomas Gieryn proposed the idea of truth-spots, places where knowledge/truth is born and which, paradoxically, allow knowledge/truth to move from local to universal (Gieryn, 2002). Place allows us to say it happened there, or it began there, and that there, that place, helps us believe or embrace the knowledge/truth.

David Livingstone (2003), in his recent book, *Putting Science in its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge*, asks the questions,

Scientific knowledge is made in a lot of different places. Does it matter where? Can the location of scientific endeavor make any difference to the conduct of science? And even more important, can it affect the content of science? In my view the answer to these questions is yes (p. 1).

I want to extend his questions to knowledge or truth practices beyond science, since North American psychology has long been as linked to various practices or applications as to scientific laboratories. Psychological truth/knowledge, science or practice, to put it another way, is both local and global; both particular and universal; both provincial and universal. This is not a new idea in the history of psychology, as those of you familiar with E. G. Boring's *History of Experimental Psychology* know. Boring makes much of the particular



locale in the work of Wundt. To ask what role specific locations have in the making of knowledge and to try to figure out how local experience is transformed into shared generalization is of fundamental importance. To paraphrase David Livingstone paraphrased: Cultivating a geography of psychology will disclose how science and science based practices bear the imprint of their locations.

New York City

For millennia, but especially since the Industrial Revolution, the inexorable trend of humanity has been toward urbanization. George Simmel addressed the psychological aspects of this about a century ago in his essay, "Mental Life and the Metropolis", when he wrote that the intensification of emotional life in the modern metropolis is its defining psychological characteristic. New York City, although not the largest metropolis, represents humanity writ both large and small. All the hopes and fears of humanity are expressed here on a daily basis. The history of psychology is certainly rich in NYC.

Here, I take up three themes in the history of psychology in New York City:

- The city as intellectual center
- The city as site for the diversification of psychology
- The city as a place of social activism.

My argument centers around the idea that places provide possibilities or opportunities. New York City has been and is a matrix of such possibilities and what has happened there has often set the direction or even anticipated what happened in psychology in the rest of the country. Key to the argument and to my particular example is this:

Space is not simply the stage on which the real action takes place. It is itself constitutive of systems of human interaction. Ideas are produced in, and shaped by, settings. They must resonate with their environments or they could not find expression, secure agreement, or mobilize followers (Livingstone, 2003, p. 7).

The city has long had a fascination with psychology. Let me give you an example from the late 1920s and early 1930s, from the archives of New York's most famous publication, *The New Yorker*.

According to the prospectus for the New Yorker,

The New Yorker will be the magazine which is not edited for the old lady in Dubuque. It will not be concerned with what she is thinking about. This is not meant in disrespect, but *The New Yorker* is a magazine avowedly published for a metropolitan audience and thereby will escape an influence



which hampers most national publications (Ross, 1924, privately printed and circulated document).

The magazine has always treated its city with a certain humor and with deep affection. In the late 20s, early 30s, a number of pieces, mostly humorous, but a few serious, were concerned with the phenomenal growth of psychology in the city. Serious profiles on Alfred Adler, A. A. Brill, and John Watson were published. But, the best view of the new psychology was in the humor pieces on the application of psychology by psychologists both real and feigned. A scan of the pages of the New Yorker from this early period reveals this everyday psychology in numerous advertisements and a few feature articles. Ads appeared frequently for improving personality. In one article a socialite bemoans the ubiquitous presence of psychology by saying, "It's ruined my parties for good. Now they talk about nothing else. From what they say, they've all been in love with the strangest things: their mothers, and sisters, and brothers, and the funniest looking objects, and what not; there's no keeping track." An "open letter to Dr. John B. Watson" in 1931 humorously excoriates Watson and other psychological scientists who profess expertise in raising children. Pieces by the acerbic James Thurber and others portrayed psychologists real and feigned offering a range of psychological services. The New Yorker coverage gives us an indication that psychology had found a place in the heart of the city.

New York City as Intellectual Center: Émigré Psychologists

Let me turn to a more serious theme and briefly depict another aspect of the variety of NYC. In 1937, a young psychologist named Molly Harrower was granted a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to study with Kurt Goldstein at Montefiore Hospital in New York City. She wanted to engage in psychological research with hospital patients and knew Goldstein's reputation of excellent rapport with his patients. Harrower also knew that Goldstein had a long history of collaborating with psychologists and was very open to the use of experimental psychology in medical settings. During her fellowship with Goldstein, Harrower met and collaborated with several psychologists who were in close proximity to Goldstein, including Joseph Zubin, Bruno Klopfer, Zygmunt Piotrowski, and Martin Scheerer. What Harrower found was that this remarkable neurologist, who had been in the United States for only two years, attracted talented people from a wide range of professions into his professional and personal circle (Harrower, 1991).

Kurt Goldstein's reputation preceded him to this country and expanded once he was here. He was an astute clinician who was also a philosopher of human nature. Goldstein was among a large number of psychologists and psychoanalysts who fled National Socialism in Germany and Austria and other parts of Europe in the 1930s and many of them ended up in New York, with the New School for Social Research being a primary, if temporary, home.



Others included Max Wertheimer, Paul Bergmann, Heinz Hartmann, George Katona, Rudolf Arnheim, Martin Scheerer. Goldstein found that opportunities were present here to continue his clinical and experimental work. But, he also found that New York City can be a hard place to make a living, even for a famous clinical scientist.

By the time Goldstein came to New York, he had built a reputation as a clinical scientist of the first rank. He saw in his research deeper principles about the human condition. For example, clinical results led Goldstein to characterize behavior as abstract or concrete. The “abstract attitude” or categorical thinking is what allows humans to move beyond the merely actual to the symbolic, to what is possible, it is what allows us to grasp what is essential about a concept and apply that concept to new situations. Concrete thinking, on the other hand, is directed at what is, at what currently exists, and excludes the ability to imagine alternatives or sort individual items into conceptual groups. An impressive body of work supported his theory (e.g., Goldstein & Scheerer, 1941). According to Goldstein, when the brain-damaged patient realizes his or her inability to perform at the usual or normal level a deep sense of failure results, which Goldstein called the catastrophic condition (Goldstein, 1959). The patient experiences a severe anxiety brought on by the deeper realization that self-realization at former levels will now be impossible. The movement to functioning at the concrete level allows the person to stabilize by producing a new set of possibilities for self-actualization. In this view, movement to concrete functioning is adaptive and reflects the necessity for taking a holistic perspective that takes the total environment into account. In Goldstein’s words,

It is of the utmost importance that one evaluate any aspect of the human organism in relation to the condition of the organism in its totality. On this understanding is based what I have called self-realization. The trend toward self-realization is not merely a stimulus but a driving force that puts the organism into action. What one usually calls the influence of the environment is the coming to terms between the organism and the world in “adequacy” (Goldstein, 1967, pp. 150-151).

When Goldstein arrived in New York in 1935, he was in the odd position of being a world-renown scientist without a job and with few financial resources. His English was not good when he arrived and although it improved, he was never fully comfortable when communicating in English (Simmel, 1968). Nevertheless, Goldstein began a private practice, seeing patients in the afternoon. Goldstein also secured an appointment as a clinical professor of neurology at Columbia University. Goldstein was given an office and a well-equipped laboratory at Columbia’s affiliate, Montefiore Hospital. He worked at the hospital each day from 9-2 with twice weekly visits to the New York Psychiatric Institute. Between January 1936 and June 1941, the Rockefeller Foundation provided him with \$9,800 in research support, almost all of which was used to pay for research assistants.



During his first 5 years in New York, Goldstein was highly productive. Two Columbia students completed their doctoral dissertation under his supervision, Marjorie Bolles (d. 1962) in 1937 and Aaron Nadel (1911-1992) in 1938. From 1936 to 1937, Nadel was his first paid assistant. In 1937, Goldstein was able to hire another German émigré psychologist, Martin Scheerer (1900-1961) as his assistant. The collaboration he began in 1937 with Goldstein proved fruitful for both of them. Perhaps their most salient joint publication was the 1941 monograph, "Abstract and concrete behavior: An experimental study with special tests."

It was during this period that Molly Harrower worked with Goldstein. She and Scheerer assisted Goldstein with the translation of *Der Aufbau des Organismus*. Harrower had sought out Goldstein because of his reputation with patients and his insistence that a psychological understanding of neurological patients was necessary for therapeutic success. While work with Goldstein was meant to prepare her for work with the neurosurgeon Wilder Penfield (1891-1976), Harrower made the most of her time with Goldstein. From data drawn from Goldstein's clinical cases, she published on the perceptual differences between normal and brain-injured patients, assisted Goldstein in the assessment of alexia and aphasia on New York's Welfare Island, and learned about the Rorschach Projective Technique from Bruno Klopfer (1900-1971) during his weekly visits to Goldstein's laboratory (Harrower, 1991).

Goldstein's research in this period was rich and diverse. He collaborated with Klopfer and Zygmunt Piotrowski (1904-1985), both expert in the research use of the then-new Rorschach technique, to corroborate the neurological findings with the Rorschach results from the same patients. With the help of Carney Landis (1897-1962) chief psychologist at the Psychiatric Institute, Goldstein developed an extensive program of research on the degree of mental deterioration of schizophrenics and their prognosis at Montefiore Hospital and the Psychiatric Institute.

Electroencephalographic studies, research on reflexive behavior, on speech disturbances, and a large scale comparative study on pathological changes in personality were all part of Goldstein's professional work during this time. With his wife, psychiatrist Eva Rothmann (d. 1960), he studied an idiot savant, a retarded young man with a perfect calendar memory. In addition to all his research, he also taught a course in advanced abnormal psychology for Columbia undergraduates.

What role did the city play in all this? First, there is Goldstein's incredible variety of research and clinical practice. Some was, no doubt, driven by his need for income. But, he could have made more money by focusing on just his clinical work. I suggest that it was the richness of opportunity present in the City that helped shape Goldstein's response. We know that the five years he spent in Boston were not as productive and when the chance came, he returned to New York in 1945 and remained there until his death.



Lastly, his home in New York was a center of intellectual richness. Goldstein's circle of friends included Karen Horney, his cousin Ernst Cassirer, Rollo May, Aron Gurwitsch, Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, and Gardner Murphy, just to name a few. It was in New York that Abraham Maslow, then at Brooklyn College, met Goldstein. He was immensely impressed with Goldstein's insight and human kindness. Maslow found Goldstein's concept of self-actualization or self-realization intriguing and borrowed it as he developed his own theories of human motivation (e.g., Maslow, 1943). In New York, Goldstein found, if not a home, then a place where his ideas and work resonated with others and where he could find expression as a clinician and philosopher of human nature.

New York as a site for diversification

I turn now to New York City as a site for the diversification of psychology in the 1920s-1930s. Here, I mean the expansion of the range of psychological practices, but there is also an underlay of diversity of people, but I take that up more explicitly in my last section.

I borrow a phrase from David Livingstone here, "Practices of Place," to interrogate New York City psychology. What were the practices of this place, how did that range expand? Although I can only provide a partial answer, I want to emphasize that what happened in New York psychology in the 1920s and 1930s anticipated the expansion of American psychology after World War Two.

In the first half of the last century, American psychology proper was a small, narrowly-focused discipline more concerned with its status as a legitimate science vis-à-vis biology or physics than with its role in the wider world. However, as the community psychologist Jim Kelly has pointed out, events both within and outside the discipline/profession of psychology had unanticipated consequences for the field (Kelly, 2006). There is a strong suggestion in the humor pieces of the *New Yorker* I noted earlier that psychology and psychologists, both real and feigned, were near ubiquitous in NY in the 1920s and 1930s. If for now, we exclude the charlatans, and examine the data on psychologists who were members or associates of APA in the 1920s and 1930s then a picture of the growing complexity of psychology begins to come into focus.

The American Psychological Association found itself in a difficult position in early 1923. The possibility of purchasing the Psychological Review Company and its four journals from Howard Warren arose in 1922. The Association did not have the money to make the purchase. A new committee was formed by President Lewis Terman to explore the possibility of a new class of affiliate, that of Associate. In correspondence found in the E. G. Boring papers at Harvard, it is clear that at least one of the aims of this move was to use the Associate dues to help pay for the cost of the purchase of the journals. Correspondence among Boring, Samuel Fernberger, John Anderson, Walter Hunter and Fred Wells reveals



that mainstream experimental psychologists held a very low opinion of applied psychologists, with the possible exception of Fred Wells. Fernberger wrote, for example, "Here are a lot of untrained and half-baked applied psychologists wanting to get in" (Fernberger to Boring, Feb 5, 1923, Boring Papers, Harvard University Archives). John O'Donnell in his fine article on E. G. Boring and the Crisis of Experimental Psychology (1979) explained how Boring and others were worried about the rapid growth of applied psychology after WWI and how this led to his writing his *History of Experimental Psychology*.

Ludy Benjamin describes an important extension of psychological practice into new areas in the 1930s. The number of psychologists increased steadily throughout the 1920s and 1930s, with the most significant growth in applied/professional fields. During this period, the number of psychologists engaged in various professional practices dramatically increased. Among APA members alone, the percentage grew from 9.3 percent in 1916 to 39 percent in 1940 (Finch & Odoroff, 1939, 1941). Four semi-distinct areas of practice emerged: clinical, consulting, educational, and industrial/business. The employment settings for applied psychologists included schools, clinics (of various kinds), homes for the mentally retarded, courts, prisons, police departments, psychiatric hospitals, guidance offices in educational settings, psychotherapy offices, social agencies, state and federal agencies, film and radio studios, personnel offices, advertising and marketing firms, life insurance companies, and private consulting firms (Napoli, 1981). This rapid growth of applied psychology was nowhere more evident than in NY.

By way of example, I briefly mention a few of the people involved. Clairette Armstrong, a NYU PhD (1931), who worked in the Children's Court in NY as a clinical psychologist and studied developmental psychopathology. Emily Burr, a Columbia PhD (1922), Director of Psychological Services at the Vocational Adjustment Bureau for Girls, and a specialist in clinical assessment. Etta Gillman at the NY Board Education PsychoEducational Clinic. Elizabeth Hagman at the Habit Clinic of Bellevue Hospital. Mary Hayes, a Chicago PhD, and the Director of the Vocational Service for Juniors, an industrial psychologist. Elaine Kinder, a Johns Hopkins PhD (1925), of Bellevue Hospital, a clinical psychologist. Elizabeth Marston, a child psychologist and editor at McCall's Magazine [wife of William M]. Katharine Maxfield, a clinical psychologist at the American Foundation for the Blind. Zena O'Connor, psychologist at the Guidance Clinic of the Girl's Service League, and a vocational specialist. Lorine Pruette, Columbia PhD (1924, a consulting psychologist, and first wife of Douglas Fryer. What do all these folks have in common? They are all women. Only two were APA members, and the rest were all Associates of APA. As Napoli pointed out 25 years ago in his excellent history of applied psychology, *Architects of Adjustment*, the growth in the APA from 1926 to 1941 was predominately in the number of Associates, and Associates were primarily doing applied work: in clinics, hospitals,



businesses, film, radio, and on and on. The other point here that is an adumbration of post WWII psychology is that the majority of the psychologists in these areas were women and Jews (male or female). As Andrew Winston and others have shown there was a pronounced anti-semitism in many of the mainstream experimental psychology programs and there was an active effort to push women, Jews, and people of color into applied work, which was considered second class psychology or even psychotechnology.

No psychologist in New York was more important to this expansion than Douglas H. Fryer. Fryer was a Clark University PhD who had come to NY and got involved in various applications of psychology to business and industry and also held a position at NYU, which eventually became a full-time position. Fryer was the key person in the formation of the first attempt to make a national psychological organization of applied psychologists, the Association of Consulting Psychologists. The ACP morphed into the American Association for Applied Psychology, which so threatened the leaders of APA that it led to the reorganization of APA during WWII. Out of that reorganization the divisional structure of the APA was modeled on the sections of the AAAP. And the divisions that quickly became the largest divisions were those related to application. Fryer, then, was at the center of what became a profound shift in American psychology. As with most of the others who were part of this, he has remained largely unsung and marginalized.

New York city, Psychology, and Social Activism

New York has also been the site of significant activism by psychologists since at least the 1930s. During the Depression, a large number of the younger cohort of psychologists, both applied and academic, were either underemployed or unemployed. However, the American Psychological Association (APA), led by psychologists who were already well-established in their careers, paid insufficient attention to the dire circumstances of these psychologists. When it became obvious that the APA was not going to work actively to increase the employment of psychologists, a number of psychologists who were involved in politically leftist or socialist groups, such as New America, formed two major groups to work for improving psychologists' career opportunities. Larry Finison has written about The Psychologists' League, centered in New York City, organized to work for full employment of psychologists, especially in such government programs as the Works Progress Administration. The League along with fellow activist group, SPSSI formed about the same time, worked to force the APA to become more actively involved in expanding employment opportunities for psychologists, but did not have much success. The Psychologists' League eventually disbanded with the advent of World War II.



Kenneth and Mamie Phipps Clark

Perhaps one of the most remarkable couples in all of 20th century American life, Kenneth and Mamie Phipps Clark found New York to be both a place of dreams come true and of the harsh realities of discrimination and hatred. Kenneth came to New York City as a child with his mother from Panama. Mamie came here to earn her doctorate and to be with Kenneth. Together, they changed American society with their work on racial identity and the deleterious effects of racial discrimination. But, their work also was shaped by the city.

The Northside Center for Child Development, begun by Mamie Clark in 1946, was a pioneering place for multiracial counseling and family assistance. But, it struggled financially, in part, because of its multiracial approach. Later, the Harlem Youth Opportunities program (HARYOU) was both a success and a heartbreak for Kenneth as he saw the work that he and others undone by the greed of then U. S. Congressman, Adam Clayton Powell. As documented by Ben Keppel and others, Kenneth Clark became more and more pessimistic about race relations and the possibility of a fair and equitable American society. Yet his work and that of Mamie's has given hope to many and inspired many other psychologists to work on making a more just society.

The Clark's work on racial identity, led by Mamie, was crucial in the U. S. Supreme Court decision of 1954, *Brown v Board*, which declared that segregation by race in public schools was illegal. So much has followed from that decision, but I want to focus on one aspect that is part of the history of psychology in New York City. To do so, I need to start in Canada, move to California, then end in Harlem.

Learning theory dominated experimental psychology for about 30 or so years, beginning in the late 1920s. One of the scientists whose work began to move the field in a different direction was the McGill University (Montreal, Canada) psychologist, Donald Hebb.

In the summer of 1948, Hebb taught a course at Harvard. Among his colleagues also teaching at Harvard that summer was David Krech, a social psychologist with strong biological leanings who had recently taken a position at UC Berkeley. One of Hebb's students was the very young Mark Rosenzweig. Hebb had the typescript manuscript of his landmark book, *Organization of Behavior* with him and used it in his course at Harvard. Hebb reported that he allowed lab rats to explore his home for several weeks as pets of his children and then put them back in the laboratory. They then showed better problem-solving ability than rats that had remained in the lab and maintained their superiority or even improved it during a series of tests.

Not long after this Rosenzweig joined Krech at the University of California, Berkeley. The encounter with Hebb and his account of the home-exposed rats prompted Krech to propose a research program on the question of differential environments on learning in rats.



With a large grant from NIMH and with the help of the biochemist, Edward Bennett, Krech and Rosenzweig launched a technically sophisticated research program that examined the effects of exposure to differential environments on neural connections. Using both neural and chemical assays, they found that those rats exposed to an enriched environment had a richer network of neural connections than those rats raised in a standard laboratory environment. This work was extremely well-known at the time, but, Krech et al did not attempt to apply it in real world settings.

Others did apply this work. In the 1950s, the Civil Rights movement was gaining the attention of the nation, especially after the U. S. Supreme Court ruling that segregation in schools by race was unconstitutional. In New York City, disparities in educational opportunities and classroom performance between poor Black and White children and those children who were middle class were widely known. Psychologists Martin and Cynthia Deutsch sought ways to remediate these differences. The work of Krech et al on enriched environments gave them an insight in to how this might happen. With approval from the Board of Education, in 1958 the Deutsch's recruited 4 year old children from 3 Harlem school districts, to attend a special class several mornings a week. These classrooms were enriched environments, that is, there were materials there for the children to stimulate them on several domains. When the children began school the following year, they showed greater gains than similar children who had not had this enriched experience. What followed from this was a change in educational policy and the beginning of a national program that continues, Head Start.

Conclusion

New York City has provided an amazing range of opportunities for psychologists to apply their knowledge. In this sense, New York has led the rest of the country. Only in relatively recent times has a similar, though not equal, variety of opportunities developed elsewhere.

The power of place, especially in New York City, has demonstrated that where knowledge circulates, it is transformed so that it becomes local knowledge, local truth. In New York, the transformation of knowledge has become the exemplar of a larger truth of American society and American psychology.

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Note on the author

Wade Pickren. PhD. Professor & Chair, Psychology NYC. Pace University New York, NY 10038. Contact: wadepickren@gmail.com

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