

Is Psychology Losing Its Foundations?¹

Donald A. Dewsbury
University of Florida

I contend that, together with increasing diversity of subject matter, there is a contraction of methods and approaches in psychology today. There is decreasing room for small, but critical, parts of the field—particularly those in cultural-scientific aspects of psychology, such as the history, philosophy, and theory of psychology and general psychology. These areas provide the foundations of entire discipline. These changes occur in the context of growing anti-intellectualism in society at large and changing pressures in universities. I explore these trends at these three levels: society, universities, and psychology, and suggest some remedies for psychology.

Keywords: education, cultural sciences, psychology departments, society, universities

Much has been written about the increasing diversity of psychology, with greater attention given to such perspectives as racial, gender, sexual preference, and international matters, as well as the proliferation of specialties in psychology. Although these trends are important and beneficial to psychology, I also see a homogenization of the field. The focus on psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting health, education, and human welfare, as promulgated by the American Psychological Association (APA) appears to me to be incomplete. There are parts of psychology that do not fit readily into any of these cubbyholes and they are being squeezed out. These are the academic, non-scientific parts that provide the basic foundation for all of psychology's other efforts. Neglected parts of psychology concern issues related to the humanities including philosophy, theory, history, literature, the arts, and religions.

It is difficult to provide a name for these approaches. Earlier, I called these the “Academic, Non-Science Psychologists” (Dewsbury, 2000), a term is both cumbersome and negative. The terms “human sciences” and “humanistic psychology” have been co-opted elsewhere. Perhaps the German *Geisteswissenschaften*, that refers to inquiry in the human or social sciences and that are different in kind from the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) fits best. For convenience, here I will use the term “cultural sciences” to refer to the fields of interest, although, according to many definitions of science, these may not be sciences at all.

In no way do I wish to disparage psychology as a science, practice, and service to humanity. I merely suggest that there is an important, albeit small, part of psychology that is left out with such conceptualizations; it is these other parts of psychology that I address here.

Whatever they are called, I believe that these fields have been an integral part of psychology at least from its beginning as an independent discipline and that they have an important foundational role in today's psychology. I explore recent developments at the levels of society in general, universities, and psychology itself

because one needs to understand that they occur in the context of broader cultural influences. I am surely not the first to write about these issues. Indeed, I may be late to the game. Nevertheless, I hope to provide a useful overview of the current situation as I view it.

In Society

Many authors have bemoaned the anti-intellectualism, or dumbing down, of American culture during the 20th century. It seems as though every generation bemoans the state of contemporary culture and disturbing trends therein. That noted, at least by some measures, there appear to be some disturbing trends in today's culture that do not bode well for the future of values of traditional learning.

Dumbing Down American Culture

One can take one's choice among the many voices reflecting upon the decline of American culture. Hofstadter (1962), for example, traced the history of anti-intellectualism in America. He saw patterns of cyclical fluctuation over time under the influence of such factors as evangelical religion, exaggerated egalitarianism, American practical pragmatism, and the McCarthy era. In *BAD or, the Dumbing of America*, Fussell (1991) addressed the manner in which today's American culture is becoming increasingly dumb or “bad.” He documented the trends in virtually all aspects of society from advertising to the arts:

Instead of the Greening of America, we can now speak of the Dumbing of America—or, as Christopher Lasch has put it, the Spread of Stupefaction. It is hardly news anymore that the schools have failed to produce even a half-educated population. Only 42% of 17-year-old students in American high schools can understand a newspaper editorial, even in our dumbest papers (p. 194).

As the collective attention span is decreasing, in part because of the immediacy of modern technology in TV and the Internet,

Donald A. Dewsbury, Department of Psychology, University of Florida.
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Donald A. Dewsbury, Department of Psychology, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250. E-mail: dewsbury@ufl.edu

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detailed analyses are replaced by sound bites. The art of conversation is getting lost. The penetrating analyses that used to characterize the intermission features of Saturday Metropolitan Opera broadcasts have been replaced by the cult of personality. My local public radio station is moving from classical music to an all-talk format. The *New York Times* is selling WQXR. The *Ann Arbor News* has folded.

Jacoby (2008) analyzed a trend toward “junk thought,” an uncritical acceptance of pseudoscience and pronouncements about phenomena without adequate critical evaluation. Berman (2006) pointed to “the dramatic drop in levels of literacy and overall intellectual awareness” (p. xi). He summarized these factors as internal barbarism of the sort he believes “were crucial to the collapse of Rome and . . . lie at the heart of the American crisis as well” (p. xi).

The mass media have been dumbed down. “In short, the politicized tabloid-news style of Rupert Murdoch has gained ascendancy and the traditional news media is in eclipse” (Welch, 2008, p. 195). This may be termed the “USATodayification” of culture after the shift from newspapers emphasizing text to the dumbed-down visuals and simplicity of *U.S.A. Today*. Jacoby (2008) saw a loss of “middlebrow culture” when there was a belief in self-education, effort, books, and aspiration to the classics in the arts and literature. The Book-of the Month Club, Great Books, and other sources were valued even by those not a part of high-brow culture.

Causes

According to Jacoby (2008), the three main spurs to anti-intellectualism in the past 40 years have been the mass media, the failure of the American school system, and fundamentalist religion. Media present sound bites, rapid visual images, and photographs emphasizing graphics instead of detailed text. She (Jacoby, 2008, p. 260) noted that “all newspapers have aging, declining readerships, and de-emphasizing arts coverage while beefing up coverage of popular video and digital culture—both in print and online editions—is seen as a strategy for attracting younger readers.”

Regarding school systems, Jacoby added that demands have been lowered. The teaching of the arts has been reduced. Children’s videos indoctrinate them to mass culture at an early age and the schools do little to counteract this. Parents are relieved of parental duties to pursue adult interests, such as they are, while the children are amused.

Fundamentalist religion provides a strong anti-intellectual current, as it provides an escape from rational, secular analysis into the supernatural and from empiricism to faith-based belief. This leads to support for abstinence only in sex education, banning of stem-cell research, prayer in the schools, rejection of abortion on religious grounds, creationism and intelligent design theories, and objections to gay marriage. There are many devout Americans who adopt centrist positions and see little or no conflict between religion and science. It is the extreme fundamentalists whose values impair secular analysis on the bases of reason, not faith. Jacoby (2008, p. 206) summarized a 2003 survey by *The Economist* concluding that “Europeans consider religion. the strangest and most disturbing feature of American exceptionalism. They worry that fundamentalists are hijacking the country. They find it ex-

traordinary that three times as many Americans believe in the virgin birth as in evolution.” One can only hope that some progress has been made since this survey was completed.

Possible Solutions

Although some progress is possible, and may indeed be in its early stages, these broad trends may be nearly irreversible. Fusell (1991) presented a pessimistic picture. He saw little hope of redemption. To escape would require that we should, among other things,

make C, not B, the average grade again, reinstall Latin in the high schools . . . teach a generation to sneer at advertising and to treat astrology with contempt . . . persuade educated people that criticism is their main business; speak and write English and other languages with some taste and subtlety . . . produce intelligent movies . . . start a few sophisticated newspapers . . . improve the literacy of public signs and the taste of public sculpture; . . . and develop public TV into a medium free of all commerce (pp. 200–201).

Such changes would not come easily.

In Universities

Universities are subject to pressures from financial and other considerations. They often institute business-like models of administration.

Goals and Purposes

An important goal of universities is the instruction of students but one can question what kind of instruction is appropriate. For a traditionalist, “the job of higher education is not to instruct students in popular culture but to expose them to something better” (Jacoby, 2008, p. 314).

The primary *intellectual* goals of universities are “the fundamental search to discover and to order knowledge and ideas” (Engell & Dangerfield, 2005, p. 24) and the ethical application of knowledge. The former pair may be the definitive ones in colleges of arts and sciences. Many academics view the “fundamental search to discover and order knowledge and ideas” to be the main noninstructional purpose of the university and the primary goal of their professional lives. I will argue that, at least in psychology, discovery has been emphasized at the expense of the ordering of knowledge and ideas.

Many state legislatures and university boards are controlled by lawyers and businessmen used to running organizations according to efficient, bottom-line models. Many faculty members, by contrast, regard the demands of an efficient business as fundamentally at odds with provision of a balanced liberal education. In the words of Moore (2006),

I wonder if a university in a business mode truly understands the values and motivation of ordinary faculty who conduct research for its own sake . . . it’s time for us to shove the pendulum of history in the other direction for a while, from quantitative to qualitative considerations, from top-down management to bottom-up organization, and toward the recognition of The Academy as an ideal (p. 3G).

To take one example, on December 7, 2007 the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida approved a measure that would require universities to set goals and sign compacts for performance in meeting them, including the improvement of graduation rates (Stripling, 2007). "If a university failed to produce an agreed upon number of graduates in a master's program, for instance, the board would reserve the right to kill the program or strip the university of its authority to approve new master's programs." Neither the intellectual goals nor the quality of education was mentioned. The message is clear: the objective was to produce graduates. One might imagine passing students to meet a quota. The university becomes like a factory working at a piece rate. The goal is production, not education.

The Impact of Financial Pressures

Universities have changed in ways that reflect these values and pressures. Regrettably, this is not an entirely new phenomenon. In 1918 sociologist and economist Thorstein Veblen (Veblen, 1918, p. 190) wrote in *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Business Men* that "the ideals of scholarship are yielding ground, in an uncertain and varying degree, before the pressure of businesslike exigencies." However, the pace seems to be accelerating.

The Bayh-Dole act passed in by the U. S. Congress (1980) allowed inventions developed in universities to be licensed to private firms, thereby bringing in substantial cash infusions to the universities. Administrators and scientists have been placed in situations of a conflict of interest between dispassionate research and the pursuit of funding and thus in ethically untenable situations that have endangered the pursuit of truth (Washburn, 2005). Past-president of Harvard University, Derek Bok (Bok, 2003) saw both benefits (profits and incentives) and costs (undermining academic standards, damaging the academic community, and risks to reputation) to such commercialization.

Mark Rudd, a protest leader in 1968 at Columbia University was quoted as writing of "expecting the Ivy Tower on the hill,—a place where committed scholars would search for truth in a world that desperately needed help. Instead I found a huge corporation that made money from real estate, government research contracts, and student fees; teachers who cared only for advancement in their narrow areas of study" (Jacoby, 2008, p. 143). Greenberg (2007b) wrote that "the ivory tower is papered with contracts, patents, and business plans, and the pathways to academic laboratories, if not paved with gold, are strewn with stock options—and ethical pitfalls" (p. 257). Elsewhere, he (Greenberg, 2007a) nicely satirized the power of greed in the administrative career of his fictional character, Grant Swinger.

In an effort to train students for jobs, educational breadth erodes in favor of specialization. Many traditional academic requirements have been abandoned (Jacoby, 2008; Kaufmann, 1995). Material that might engender broad perspectives of the world and the student's place therein is discouraged as not pertaining to an economic payoff. Why then are so many seeking higher education? Higher education has, at least traditionally, entailed the life of the mind. Today, although some (e.g., Engell & Dangerfield, 2005) would question the evidence, a university education is viewed by many, perhaps most, students, as a path to higher income. According to a survey from the Higher Education Research Institute at

UCLA, from the late 1960s to the late 1990s there was a total reversal in reasons freshman had entered college. Making more money and getting a better job became dominant; such goals as developing values and a broad social vision decreased comparably (Engell & Dangerfield, 2005). Students demand entertainment as much as education. Today's textbooks are beautifully illustrated but dumbed down compared to the books of a few decades ago.

The function of the university is shifting from education to training:

... in an educational world now subsumed under business values, students show up—with administrative blessing—believing that they are consumers buying a product. Within this context, a faculty member who actually attempts to enforce the tradition of the humanities as an uplifting and transformative experience, who challenges his charges to think hard about complex issues, will provoke negative evaluations (Berman, 2006, p. 122).

Prestige

Administrators want to get their universities ranked high in the media's annual published ratings. Many seek a finish in the "top 10." These rankings are based substantially on such factors as research publications and grants. Greenberg (2007b) put it well:

The academic arms race giddily accelerates. In Ponzi-scheme fashion, it inflames the pursuit of money for constructing research facilities needed to attract high-salaried scientific superstars who can win government grants to perform research that will bring glory and more money to the university. Academe's pernicious enthrallment by the rating system of *U. S. News & World Report* is a disgrace of modern higher education (p. 278).

University administrators become highly sensitive to financial concerns, filling seats, and recruitment data, which in turn affect prestige ratings.

Twenty-five percent of a university's ranking reflects the ratings of university presidents. There is a temptation to inflate the rating of one's own institution. For the 2010 rankings the University of Florida president placed his institution among just nine schools rated as "distinguished." Few others would rank it that high. Surely, he was not the only president to inflate the rankings of his or her school. On the other hand, a group of university presidents has agreed not to provide any such ratings (Crabbe, 2009).

The Reward Systems

It should be no surprise that administrators selectively reward those who are productive on their chosen metrics. A typical job advertisement might state that the successful candidate is expected to establish a research program, attract talented students, and attract extramural funding.

Perhaps in response, there has been a great increase in reports of academic cheating and fraud in recent years (e.g., Broad & Wade, 1982; Greenberg, 2007b; Swazey, Anderson, & Louis, 1993; Woodward & Goodstein, 1996). It is not completely clear whether this is real or a result of better monitoring and reporting. Given the pressures on faculty members it would not be surprising if this favored increased fraud and corruption.

The Humanities in a Corporate-Driven University

Power among university programs can be viewed as distributed according to three economic criteria: the promise of money, knowledge of money, and as a source of money (Engell & Dangerfield, 2005). The humanities do not rank high on any of these. This has created pressures to favor those programs with visible payoffs over those that might be even more significant in fostering understanding of the world around us. With the introduction of business-like metrics departments are placed in competition with one another for finite resources whose distribution is, at least in part, a function of money and related payoffs relevant to business (Donoghue, 2008, p. 134).

Economic hard times have been difficult for universities and especially so for humanities programs in universities (Cohen, 2009; Jaschik, 2009a). "Across the country, schools looking to trim their budgets are targeting programs in history, foreign languages, and journalism or are combining disciplines like philosophy, religion, and political science into one pared-down department" (Washburn, 2005, p. 215). As a result the percentage of faculty positions devoted to the humanities relative to the natural and social sciences, has decreased during the 20th century (Jaschik, 2006). From 1970 to 1994 the proportions of undergraduate majors in such fields as health professions, public administration, and business grew rapidly as English, foreign languages, philosophy, and history declined. Faculty salaries are lower for the humanities than other fields. Scores on the SAT tests tend to be lower for humanities students than for other disciplines (Engell & Dangerfield, 2005).

Solutions?

Many authors simply bemoan the loss of breadth that comes from a liberal education. We might ask if something can be done. Donoghue (2008) noted that many accept the implicit assumption that specialized education provides the best basis for graduates to obtain jobs and perform well; that might be challenged. Are there data to support this conclusion? Perhaps a broader education will, in the long-run, actually produce better and more productive workers as they gain a broader perspective on the world and become better prepared for the changes that will occur during their careers. Although it may be difficult, this question may be open to empirical study. To take one example, according to Pinello (2009):

some years ago, a survey was sent to law-school deans (the "presidents" of law schools). One of the questions on the survey was what majors the deans recommended students have in college in order to prepare effectively for law school. The four majors most frequently recommended by law-school deans were (in alphabetical order) English (sometimes called literature), history, philosophy, and political science (sometimes called government).

Donoghue's other suggestion was that humanistically oriented academicians learn more about how universities actually work and embed themselves in the process. This goes counter to the approach of many who prefer to remain in our ivory towers and not become soiled by the dirty activities below. However, this may be an unrealistic approach. It may be necessary to become more knowledgeable and more active in minimizing corporate driven trends.

Bok (2006) recognized that we could not retrace the whole history of commercialization. Rather, we need to set limits and draw lines. University leaders are responsible for this and Bok outlined roles for trustees, the faculty, and government. He wrote that

universities are approaching a critical juncture. They can try hard to create and enforce more effective limits on commercialization. Or, they can temporize, compromise, rationalize, and continue the gradual slide into habits that could alter their character in ways detrimental to their teaching, research, and standing in the community (p. 206).

Psychology

The pressures that prevail in society at large, and in universities in particular, trickle down to affect academic psychology departments as well. Just as purely intellectual efforts are being downplayed in society and universities are being increasingly run like businesses, so psychology and psychology departments are undergoing related changes. We live in an age of specialists with regard to the topics of interest but the specialties, at least in much of academic psychology, have coalesced around a narrow range of approaches.

Psychology has become incredibly diversified with regard to subdisciplines and content matter. Today it is viewed not as a unified discipline but as a collection of psychological sciences (e.g., Koch, 1993). In another sense psychology is becoming less diverse. Some psychologists are engaged in worthwhile practice and serving the public interest. I am not concerned with these worthy attempts here. The rest of psychology is becoming focused on application of a set of relatively narrow research principles that bind them methodologically if not in the subject matter of concern. Cronbach (1957) characterized two disciplines of psychology, correlational and experimental, but saw a common labor. I suggest that, in today's context, such commonalities are worth emphasizing. One can argue that we have two cultures (e.g., Kimble, 1984) but, overall a strong empiricism rules both. Thus, there appears to be some degree of unification of goals and approaches even as the approaches are applied in different ways to different subject matter. Psychologists have produced some research that has enlightened our understanding of many specific problems. I have no problem with empiricism per se; only with nondirected and seemingly goalless empiricism.

Psychology was not always divorced from its foundations. Consider the putative founders of psychology as a discipline, Wilhelm Wundt and William James. Wundt is generally regarded as the first to establish experimental psychology as a discipline. However, he did not believe that all problems of concern to psychologists could be dealt with in the laboratory. He saw two main branches (e.g., Blumenthal, 1975). Wundt viewed laboratory methods as appropriate for addressing problems of basic processes and cultural methods for other aspects. In essence, some problems, he thought, required the methods of his *Völkerpsychologie*, which included such fields as the arts, mythologies, and legal and moral systems. William James, who is generally credited with introducing experimental methods to American psychology, also believed that they had limitations. It was the exploration of mental states, especially his own, that most fascinated James and he saw no way to explore

these effectively in the laboratory (Bjork, 1988; Evans, 1990; Taylor, 1991).

Psychological Literature

There seems to be a dissatisfaction for many with the character of the published scientific literature produced in psychology journals. Bevan (1991) expressed a general dissatisfaction with the output and invoked the forest-trees sentiment, noting that

the character of psychology is increasingly manifest in the rapid proliferation of narrowly focused and compulsively insular camps, a proliferation that seemingly knows no limits. We persevere in looking at small questions instead of large ones and our view of the forest is forever obscured by the trees (p. 475).

Seminara and Peters (1958) writing of perceptions of psychology from abroad provided a comment from an unnamed Canadian psychologist that

There is a tendency to be lacking in ideas. Large scale, carefully controlled, and excellently designed studies often seem to lack a purpose in that no clear hypotheses are being tested. One has the feeling that having erected the ‘research machinery,’ the psychologists sometimes do not know what to do with it (p. 239).

A German psychologist commented that “American psychologists spend a lot of time and money and discover many empirical facts. Most of these facts are not very interesting or significant” (p. 239). The authors added that “on the whole, we are seen as being open-minded, congenial, and enthusiastic, but lacking in general culture and seeming ‘too much like businessmen’” (p. 239).

In essence, much of psychological writing seems to reflect what Koch (1981) called “ameaningful thought.” The approach “regards knowledge as the result of “processing” rather than discovery. It presumes that knowledge is an almost automatic result of a gimmickry, an assembly line, a ‘methodology’” (p. 259).

Fragmentation and the Unification of Psychology

Many bemoan the fragmentation and lack of unification of psychology (e.g., Henriques, 2003; Staats, 1981, 1983, 1999; Sternberg, 2005; Yanchar & Slife, 1997). This has been an issue in psychology for many years (e.g., Dunlap, 1938; Samelson, 1988). Altman (1987) wrote of the entrepreneurial pressures that have affected universities and psychology in recent years and stressed the centrifugal aspects of psychology’s development since 1960. Increasingly, psychologists have a primary identification not with the broad organization of the APA but with smaller, specialized societies.

Arthur Staats has been a leader in the efforts toward unification. According to Staats (1981, p. 239),

Our field is constructed of small islands of knowledge organized in ways that make no connections with the many other existing islands of knowledge. Moreover, separatism involves the absence of expectation or demand that such connections should occur. (p. 239)

Staats added that “the growth of unrelated knowledge is such that without the benefit of organizing principles, we are being inundated and drowned by our own scientific products” (Staats, 1981, p. 254).

Some (e.g., Bower, 1993) disagree with both Staats’s historical analyses and his goal; they see the fragmentation of psychology as a healthy sign. Of course, Koch (e.g., 1993) long argued that psychology is not a coherent discipline at all; he preferred the term “*the psychological studies*” (p. 902, italics in the original).

I tend to side with those who believe that psychology probably never will be truly unified but nevertheless I think that may be possible to develop at least a few integrative principles underlying the diverse aspects of psychology. Research needs to be conducted with attention to broader and more significant questions than is often the case. If there is any chance of effecting these changes, it is likely to be, at least in part, through those who step back from the grind of research papers and grant applications to attempt some kind of overview—precisely the kind of psychologists who are being squeezed out of today’s psychology.

Our Reward Structure

The reward structure in psychology, as elsewhere in universities, is such as to foster narrow specialization and a lack of integration (see also Yanchar & Slife, 1997). If one peruses advertisements for academic positions, one finds many for the specialty areas of psychology such as cognitive psychology, social psychology, and behavioral neuroscience. What are rare are jobs for general psychologists, historians of psychology, philosophers of psychology, and the like. When there is an opening in my department, for example, the debate centers about which of our specialty areas will get the line, not about whether there should be a truly integrative choice.

Annual evaluations and considerations for promotion and tenure, at least at major universities, consider teaching and service but are largely based on research accomplishments. In general that means publications, which are more often counted than read albeit with some attention to journal impact factors, and grant support. The newest guidelines and procedures for tenure and promotion in my department state that because the department is scientifically oriented, research and scholarship are the most important of the three areas of evaluation. This is typical (see Jaschik, 2009b). I have chaired my college’s tenure and promotion committee and I can confirm that these pressures come, at least in part, from above the department level and operate across a range of departments. Psychology departments, like others in the natural and social sciences, tend to go along for the ride without protest. In the humanities, in contrast to psychology and the various sciences, faculties are generally rewarded for their books more than grants and articles. There appears to be little tolerance for such faculty members in psychology.

Let me provide a personal example. The first part of my faculty career was devoted to comparative psychology. I ran an active laboratory with numerous graduate students, published many papers, and had 25 consecutive years of grant support, although with relatively small grants, from the National Science Foundation. I was generally ranked at or near the top of the departmental faculty. Later, with the concurrence of my department chair, I decided to switch my efforts to work in the history of psychology. I believe that my work in this field made me more visible and had greater impact than that of my earlier phase. Of course, that is debatable. However, my rankings fell to the middle of the pack. In 1 year I published two books; a statement in my annual letter of evaluation

indicated that I had not published enough. At that stage of my career, this was a frustration, rather than a devastating blow, although it had some impact on merit raises.

The messages are clear for younger faculty seeking jobs, tenure, and promotion: stay in your laboratory, do not try to integrate findings, publish research reports, get grants, produce students, do not contribute to service, and keep your students in the laboratory rather than in course work. Is it any wonder that we are producing the kind of psychology that we have today? Yanchar and Slife (1997) reviewed various proposals for dealing with this situation. I offer my own, modest suggestion near the end of this article.

Today, it is difficult to organize a psychology colloquium series. Most faculty and students have little interest in learning more about areas other than those with direct, short-term interest to their own career objectives. If it does not help them in writing grants and papers, what good is it? The result is that we have area seminars in a series of small fiefdoms that, together are called departments but which, in reality are, at best, federations of semi-independent states.

Graduate Education

These pressures spill over to affect patterns of graduate education in psychology. It is no accident that, in many departments, the only common core courses shared widely among students in different areas are those in statistics and methodology. It is issues of methodology that characterize our infatuation with experimentation to the detriment of integration.

Altman (1987) noted that graduate students no longer are required to obtain the breadth of coursework required of their predecessors. Rather,

research became more central to graduate education, and coursework outside of a student's specialty area became less valued and simply more of a hurdle to overcome. And, with the increasing sophistication of specialty areas, students were less and less *educated*; instead they were vocationally and technically *trained* in a narrow band of research and methodology (p. 1065, italics in original).

Benjamin (2001) provided a historical survey of the issue of a core curriculum in graduate education in psychology. The core courses rarely have been designed to question the prevailing methods and searching for change. Rather, they are training courses indoctrinating the novices into how research is to be done.

Even these substantive core courses have been disappearing. This was not always the case. As a graduate student at Michigan in the 1960s I was required to take core courses in 10 different areas of psychology; the requirements are much looser today. At the University of Florida we used to have six required fields for coursework. Over the years, this requirement has eroded under pressure from faculty members to get their graduate students into the laboratory as early and as much as possible. These changes are not atypical. Many other universities have loosened requirements for course breadth in graduate education in favor of early specialization, increased numbers of publications by the students and, yes, increased research productivity in the laboratory of the faculty mentor.

It is discouraging, however, that, in a survey of graduate catalogs and the National Research Council rankings, Benjamin (2001) found an inverse relationship between departments' research rep-

utations and the breadth of courses required. Perhaps it is not surprising that, at least in the short run, those students presumably spending the most time in the laboratory rather than in courses, attain the best research reputations. The deck was stacked.

The psychologists trained in today's programs will, in later years, teach introductory psychology, evaluate candidates from a variety of areas for hiring, promotion, and tenure, serve on grant review boards, and become involved in organizations like the APA. However, many will lack any substantive background whatsoever that prepares them for understanding the broad range of psychological approaches.

Benjamin and Baker (2009, p. 98) put it well:

Losing the common core, as loosely defined as it was, was part of the philosophy of specialization that focused entirely on the trees while losing sight of the importance of the forest. Psychological science does not seem to have a big-picture view of the world. The entire philosophy of reductionism stakes its belief in a future in which all of the minutiae from myriad studies will somehow coalesce into a meaningful whole that ultimately answers the bigger questions. Yet history shows that science doesn't work that way.

In a classic article, historian Stephen Brush (1974) asked "Should the History of Science be Rated X?" Essentially, Brush argued that the indoctrination of students in preparation for careers as traditional scientists might actually be hindered by exposing them to recent scholarship in the history of science. This scholarship challenges some of the dogmas concerning the nature of science. Brush wrote tongue-in-cheek but his article contains a lesson for psychology. If the goal of graduate training in psychology is to produce graduates with strong publication records, good fellowship prospects, and high placement potential in today's competitive job market, perhaps the present trends make sense. However, this may be short-sighted and work, in the long-run, to the detriment of the field. The narrowly trained psychologist typically mines a narrow vein exploiting it with publications in a field related to that of the student's mentor. However, if there is one thing we know about the field, it is that psychology will change in a few years. Each vein currently being mined will dry up and new approaches will be necessary. Who will be better prepared to deal with the new realities—the narrow specialist or the student who sacrificed some productivity in the interest of breadth of perspective? It would be foolish to fully neglect the realities of the marketplace so that graduates go jobless. However, I believe that if we retain some of the breadth that has traditionally been included in graduate programs we can foster scientific productivity, albeit slightly reduced, while graduating more broadly competent psychologists.

How Cultural Scientific Approaches Might Help

If we are to provide some general principles of psychology we will need both researchers who understand the broad contexts of their work and those specializing in synthesis and integration. Integration and perspective can be achieved in a number of ways including, for example, the history of the field (e.g., Benjamin & Baker, 2009) and theoretical psychology (Kukla, 1989; Slife & Williams, 1997). Lacking this effort, psychology will continue to both explode in diverse directions and remain mired in its methodological morass.

Psychologists have been accused of “physics envy” in their rush to imitate the methodology of that science. However, physics departments are staffed with both experimental and theoretical physicists; there is little that is parallel in today’s psychology departments. As noted by Staats (1999, p. 7), “in the unified sciences, resources are also provided for the tasks of weaving diverse and unrelated findings into a generally meaningful, compact parsimonious interrelated, systematic, and substantially consensual body.”

The kind of effort required to search for general principles is most likely to succeed if knowledge from outside of psychology, including the humanities, is brought to bear and to help focus psychologists on questions that really matter. As noted by Perloff (2004), “research and theorizing in psychology, as well as in other behavioral and social sciences, will be enhanced, enriched, and made more practical and useful if the variables and constructs therein are broadened and deepened by the words, the expressions, and the observations found in poetry, literature, plays, narratives, and in the arts broadly speaking, media which are more sensitive to the nuances and subtleties in behavior than are those contained more conventionally in psychology” (p. 411). Perloff then went on to provide 16 examples of such benefits.

The American Psychological Association

The parts of psychology that are most endangered in the present environment are precisely those most closely tied to the humanities. Using the APA division structure as a guide, one might identify general psychology (Division 1), aesthetics, creativity, and the arts (10), theoretical and philosophical psychology (24), history of psychology (26), and the psychology of religion (36) as fields that fall within the category of cultural sciences (see Dewsbury, 2000). One could quibble with inclusion or exclusion of some divisions but they would seem to have a common thread. Perhaps Division 2 (Teaching) fits in some, though surely not all, of the matters I discuss. I intend this list to be useful mainly in defining the areas to which I refer and that I believe are especially endangered. I hope that it conveys the kind of work I am including as the cultural sciences.

The APA bylaws begin by stating that “The objects of the American Psychological Association shall be to advance psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting health, education and human welfare by the encouragement of psychology.” They go on to provide a liberal interpretation of this statement in supporting “encouragement of psychology in all its branches in the broadest and most liberal manner.” However, in practice, the effects of this orientation are clear. There is no obvious home for these divisions within the APA. The APA is organized into four directorates: Education, Practice, Public Interest, and Science. Although there are some overlaps of the orphan fields with all of these, no directorate is really responsible for the welfare of the cultural science approaches. The Association for Psychological Sciences (APS) is no better in this respect (Dewsbury, 2000).

In the opening scene of the classic comedy movie *Animal House*, Omega house, the leading fraternity on campus hosts a pledge drive. Two less-than-promising freshman, at least by Omega values, enter. Within a few minutes they are ushered into a separate room with foreign students, handicapped, and other freshman

regarded as inconsistent with Omega ideals. One can’t help that the cultural science divisions in APA are regarded in a somewhat similar manner.

The problem for these cultural science approaches within the APA is that they are both a small and shrinking part of the larger organization. All five of the primary divisions named have lost membership in recent years. The five divisions combined represented about 11% of the memberships held in 1989 compared to 4.6% today. The bulk of the loss has been in Division 1, which is now just 35% of its 1989 self. These are not the only divisions to suffer losses but the impact may be greater where divisions are already small.

The future is not bright. As is true throughout much of the APA, the age structure of these divisions is discouraging. The mean age of members in all five divisions is over 60; that of Division 26 is 69.6. Forty-five percent of the members of Division 26 are age 70 or older! The APA in general shows a similar trend but the fact is that younger psychologists are not being attracted to the APA in general and these areas of psychology in particular. I believe that there are a number of reasons for this, chief among them are the reward structure for faculty members in our colleges and universities. The problems within the APA are indicative of what is happening in psychology at large. However, the organization could be made more hospitable to these groups.

Proposed Actions

At this point I have three possible actions to suggest. They concern the APA, graduate education, and interaction between departments and higher administrations.

The APA

The APA should provide some kind of representation for the cultural-scientific part of psychology. Given the size of these divisions, it would be difficult to justify a full directorate comparable to the four already in place. However, some smaller unit, either within or outside of the current directorates, should be established. This would provide a voice for these smaller, but important, parts of psychology.

Graduate Education

If some integration of psychological principles is to be achieved we will need appropriate infrastructure, personnel, and support systems for those working to develop them. If we are to have psychologists with the breadth of vision to accomplish this, we will need to reverse the current trend and broaden again the requirements for graduate education in psychology. Students will need to be educated as to why this is being done. Faculty members will need to see its importance. Further, we will need to encourage those few students who want to follow a path to concentrate on the cultural scientific approach. Of course, that can only happen if there is some prospect of jobs for such graduates.

We should restore some breadth to a core curricula in graduate programs in psychology even for those students who wish to work primarily in specialty areas. We should challenge assumptions that specialized training provides better preparation for future psychologists than broader psychological education. We might even be

able to collect data test this assumption with respect to prominence in the field beyond the first few years following graduate school.

The Reward Structure

I believe that psychology departments need to make a sacrifice to maintain the character of the field. My proposal is consistent with the approach taken by Halpern et al. (1998) and Myers and Waller (1999). Halpern et al. proposed a multidimensional definition of scholarship in psychology. One of the five parts in their definition is the integration of knowledge, including “review articles and books, meta-analyses, and well crafted texts that bring diverse findings together to enhance knowledge” (p. 1295). They noted that “new knowledge, represented in the category of original research, is of limited usefulness if not integrated into a larger body of concepts and facts” (p. 1295). Not all faculty members will excel in all categories and faculty ought to emphasize what they do best. Myers and Waller (1999) also supported the proposal of “flexible loads” and noted that the field “needs people who will help us see the contours of the whole forest by integrating research findings into a big picture story and perhaps challenging our preconceptions” (p. 358).

Departments need to hire some psychologists who concentrate on history, theory, teaching, cultural ties, and the like. This ought to be easy for liberal arts colleges and those where the departments are evaluated based on effective teaching. In addition, however, I propose that each research department in universities with about 20 or more full-time positions hire at least 1–3 psychologists who will be evaluated differently than the rest of the department. Their job descriptions and the bases for their promotion and tenure will be clear, but different from those for the rest of the department. If they are designated teachers, they will be evaluated on their teaching. If they work in general psychology, the history of psychology, the philosophy of psychology, and related fields, they will be evaluated on their work in those fields. They will not be expected to get grants, publish in journals that are regarded as “high-impact,” or even have the most graduate students working with them. They will, however, be expected to work as hard and be as effective in their fields as their colleagues do in grant getting, publishing in more visible journals, and filling their laboratories with graduate student who will find difficulty in getting jobs similar to those of their mentors. These accomplishments will need to be demonstrated. The teachers may have to teach more courses, have lines of students outside their doors, supervise the local chapter of Psi Chi, and so forth. These colleagues may write books rather than scores of journal articles. I am not proposing a privileged class to ride on the backs of their hardworking researchers. Rather, I suggest a group to be evaluated as strictly as their colleagues but using a different metric.

The problem, of course, is that this proposal will, in all likelihood, not be popular with university administrators; this is the sacrifice. Consistent with the first two sections of this article, they have pressures put upon them and, in turn, put pressure on departments to maximize grants getting and the overhead money that comes with the grants. They control the purse strings. They want to see high publication rates in prestigious journals so that their college and university can rise in the annual ratings published in the media.

I believe that it is the responsibility of departments to educate these administrators to realize that, while psychology is a field of science, practice, and service, it is more than that. If we lose the cultural-scientific foundation of the field, we lose the heart and soul of the field. Departments will have to be evaluated based on their whole output, not just the ones presently used. Tenure-and-promotion committees will need to be educated to the multiple dimensions of psychology. Some of these criteria are already in force for departments in the humanities. The committees need to be told that evaluating psychologists requires a set of flexible criteria to reflect the complexity of psychology as a discipline. Psychology as a field cannot be pigeon holed into one or the other divisions of the college, such as natural science, social science, and humanities. We are all of those things. Psychology is a wonderfully complex discipline in need of rebuilding its basic foundations.

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