

## INTRODUCTION

## TEACHING DIVERSITY: What Can History Offer?

Alexandra Rutherford  
York University

To highlight how historical scholarship can be used to teach students about a range of topics in psychology, I have chosen three sample articles from the journal *History of Psychology* that address gender, race/ethnicity, and the intersection of sexuality and disability in historical perspective. I outline how these articles can be incorporated into courses across the curriculum to deepen students' understanding of how psychology and psychologists have grappled with these issues and how historical analyses can inform contemporary topics and debates. I suggest that historical scholarship offers a rich and often untapped resource for instructors who wish to engage students in critical conversations about diversity issues across the psychology curriculum.

*Keywords:* diversity, race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability

Psychology instructors are increasingly acknowledging the importance of incorporating diversity into their teaching. Gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality, and ability status are all sources of human diversity and topics of psychological inquiry. But what can the history of psychology offer those teaching about these topics? Just as psychologists study all of these aspects of human diversity, so historians have analyzed the ways psychologists have studied gender, race, sexuality, and disability over the course of psychology's disciplinary history. The body of scholarship they have produced can be a rich resource for instructors hoping to develop students' critical engagement with contemporary research. This scholarship can be used as a springboard for sophisticated discussions in the classroom around power, difference, social responsibility, and the politics of knowledge. Although many textbooks offer a cursory, and

often celebratory, introductory chapter that recounts the origins of the particular subfield addressed by the book, there is now a large body of contextual, critical, historical work that is often overlooked when instructors sit down to develop their course materials.

In this introduction to a selection of articles from the journal *History of Psychology* that have been made freely available at the journal's website, my aim is to show how historical scholarship can be used in all kinds of courses (not just history of psychology!) to deepen students' consideration of gender, race/ethnicity, and the intersection of sexuality and disability. To do this, I have chosen three articles that I think are well suited to creating critical engagement with these topics that could be assigned at either the senior undergraduate or graduate levels in a variety of courses. I offer a general summary of each article, provide discussion and essay questions, and make suggestions for further reading. These suggestions highlight the content of the Society for the History of Psychology's journal, *History of Psychology*. My hope is that instructors will see that psychology's historiography offers rich and relatively untapped potential for creating productive dialogues about diversity.

### Engaging Critically With Gender

The sample article I have chosen to deepen students' understanding of gender is Stephanie

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The author is the 2013 President of the Society for the History of Psychology. This commentary is part of a presidential initiative to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mary Whiton Calkins, who was denied her Harvard PhD because of her sex. Many thanks to Andrew Winston and Wade Pickren for their comments on this article.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Alexandra Rutherford, Department of Psychology, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M3J 1P3. E-mail: alexr@yorku.ca

Shields's "Passionate men, emotional women: Psychology constructs gender difference in the late 19th century" (Shields, 2007). In this article, Shields analyzes British and American psychology's late 19th-century representations of emotionality in men and women. She argues that gendered interpretations of ideal emotionality in men and women served to keep women relegated to the domestic sphere and highlighted men's suitability for public and political life, thus serving an important power function. This article could be assigned in a variety of courses, including a range of gender studies courses, the psychology of women/gender, personality, individual differences, even introductory psychology.

Shields begins her article by outlining the commonly held popular and scientific belief in the complementarity of the sexes. This view held that the characteristic strengths and weaknesses of one sex (which were believed to be biologically based, selected through an evolutionary process) are compensated for or enhanced by the strengths and weaknesses of the other sex. For example, men's characteristic reasoning abilities, to be objective and abstract, were complemented by women's abilities to be intuitive, practical, and detail-focused. Thus, any differences in the treatment of men and women could be justified with respect to these supposed "complementary" strengths. But as Shields points out, "separate capacities did not mean equal capacities: The more valued cognitive capabilities were a male prerogative" (Shields, 2007, p. 97). If women were to evince interest and ability in science, for example, they were generally funneled toward the more passive observational sciences, such as astronomy and botany.

Shields then shows how the complementarity of the sexes served to validate male emotionality and devalue female emotionality. Feminine emotion was portrayed as an unstable sensitivity of feelings toward oneself and others. Women were portrayed as victims of sentimentality, a sentimentality which could at times overtake their rational capacities resulting in "out of control" emotion. Masculine emotion, however, was described as a passionate drive to achieve, create, and dominate and was not incompatible with rationality if it were well controlled. Arguments about men's and women's

suitability for various roles in society were once again based on these views.

When psychologists entered the scientific arena in the late 1800s, these beliefs, buttressed by evolutionary theory, were taken up wholeheartedly. When female psychologists challenged essentialist explanations of women's traits and abilities and pushed for a reexamination of the empirical evidence, they were met with considerable opposition. Shields concludes, "As in the 19th century, even today popular culture notions of gender and emotion creep uncritically into the scientific psychology of emotion" (p. 105). In the last section of her article, she considers the politics of emotion, and gives further examples of the way the discourse of "out of control" emotion has been used throughout history by ruling classes to subdue and dominate the less powerful.

Shields' arguments, based on a historical case study and period, can be used to help students examine contemporary assumptions about the differences between women and men and how they operate to maintain power structures. Here are some examples of discussion questions/topics that flow from her analysis:

(1) At the beginning of her article, Shields states "Criteria for the "right" kind and quantity of emotion . . . are not inherent to the emotion displayed, but reflect cultural conventions and norms that are situationally negotiated and applied" (p. 93). What are some 21st-century cultural norms about emotional display? Do these norms differ for women and men? What function do these norms serve? How are they gendered? (Additional recommended reading: Held & Rutherford, 2012.)

(2) Although Shields focuses on *gender* and emotion, she alludes several times to the ways that emotion is also constructed through the lens of race and class. Can you think of examples, either contemporary or historical, where the discourse of "out-of-control emotion" has been used to control or subordinate members of different racial/ethnic and socioeconomic groups? (Additional recommended reading: Bhatia, 2002.)

(3) Shields' analysis highlights the process whereby "science borrows popular beliefs about gender to develop an explanation of the psychology of gender difference . . . and then uses that explanation to confirm the validity of the popular beliefs" (p. 104). Can you find contem-

porary examples of this process? Because psychologists, by virtue of their subject matter, often draw on common experiences and beliefs as the basis for their research questions, how can they guard against uncritically reinforcing these beliefs? (Contemporary example: Kret & De Gelder, 2012.)

### Engaging Critically With Race/Ethnicity

Here I have chosen Layli Phillips' article "Recontextualizing Kenneth B. Clark: An Afrocentric perspective on the paradoxical legacy of a model psychologist-activist" (Phillips, 2000). Kenneth B. Clark is an important figure not only in the history of psychology, but in the social and political history of the 20th-century United States. His work with his wife psychologist Mamie Phipps Clark on racial identification and self-concept in Black children, and their citation of this research in the Supreme Court case of *Brown v. Board* in 1954, stand as landmarks in the history of social science. Material about the Clarks and their work could be incorporated across a range of courses, including but not limited to social psychology, developmental psychology, psychology of race/ethnicity, political psychology, and even research methods.

In this article, Phillips positions Clark as an exemplar of an Afrocentric scholar, namely a scholar who places the highest priority on the development of positive interpersonal and intergroup relations, who begins his or her research from a place of personal experience and/or collective consciousness, who rejects the separation of scholarship from activism, and who aims for understanding rather than prediction and control. She uses this framework to reinterpret some of the controversy that accrued around Clark's personal and political stands on integration, Black Nationalism, and other issues. In doing so, Phillips provokes a number of important questions around the essentialization of identity and the (artificial) tension between scientific objectivity and engaged scholarship. Using Clark and his career as her example, she also exposes the deep challenges that a true multiculturalism brings to how we conceptualize—and diversify—the epistemological and methodological bases of psychology.

A number of discussion questions and topics emerge from Phillips' presentation. Here is a

sample that might be used to productive effect in the classroom or as essay questions:

(1) How does Phillips define an Afrocentric scientist/scholar? What does she see as the pros and cons of invoking this framework and applying it to Clark? How is Afrocentrism—as a concept that links particular practices and scientific values to a social identity (being African American)—similar to or different from the idea, introduced by feminist scholars, that women have unique "ways of knowing" that allow them to practice science in different ways? (Additional recommended reading: Wentworth, 1999.)

(2) Why is it important to be historically informed when evaluating critiques of the methods the Clarks used in their racial identification studies? What can we learn from Clark's commitment to engaged scholarship as we try to make psychology an effective force for positive social change in the present? (Additional recommended reading: Jackson, 2000.)

(3) Phillips uses a personal-historical approach to understand the evolution of Clark's own racial identity. Specifically, she applies Cross's nigrescence model of identity development to Clark's life. What is Cross's nigrescence model? What was the historical and political context in which African American psychologists began developing psychological theories based on the experiences of Black people? (Additional recommended reading: Pickren, 2004.)

(4) Clark attended Howard University for his undergraduate degree. There, he encountered many of the era's most prominent Black intellectuals, as well as the first African American to earn a PhD in psychology, Francis Cecil Sumner. Sumner held very different views on education than the ones Clark would come to hold. What were Sumner's views? (Additional recommended reading: Sawyer, 2000.)

(5) Phillips uses both interviews with Clark and an examination of his published writings to reconstruct him in an Afrocentric framework. Interviews are important data sources for both psychologists and historians. In 2010, a friend and City College colleague of Kenneth Clark, Lawrence Nyman, published an oral history he did with Clark in *History of Psychology*. What does it add to Phillips' interpretation? To your understanding of Clark and his work? (Additional recommended reading: Nyman, 2010.)

### Engaging Critically With the Intersections of Sexuality and Disability

In his article, “Carney Landis and the psychosexual landscape of touch in mid 20th-century America” (Serlin, 2012), American studies scholar David Serlin approaches the intersection of sexuality and disability by examining the data provided by psychologist Carney Landis and Mary Marjorie Bolles in their 1942 book *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman* (Landis & Bolles, 1942). In this book, Landis and Bolles reported findings from their interviews with 100 institutionalized women between the ages of 18 and 35 who identified as physically disabled. Landis and Bolles asked these women about their sex lives, sexual identities, and relationship to their bodies. Serlin then compares the interpretations and conclusions drawn by Landis and Bolles in their published study with their research notes on the interviews with the women themselves that are available in the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction. What he discovers is that Landis and Bolles’ published report was heavily imbued with the era’s widely held social and scientific beliefs about the impoverishment of physically disabled women’s sexual subjectivities despite the multiple allusions women themselves made to their own sexual agencies and the importance of erotic and sensual touch. He argues that preexisting assumptions about the nature of sexuality and disability made it difficult, if not impossible, for Landis and Bolles to discern the many nuances of disabled women’s sexual experiences.

As he reminds us, “Women with disabilities, and people with disabilities more generally, have been characteristically excluded from those populations studied explicitly as sexual subjects in their own right and denied—out of fear or ignorance—the opportunity to be seen as agents of their own sexual subjectivities” (Serlin, 2012, p. 210). Although the Landis and Bolles study stands as a notable exception to this outright exclusion, the document nonetheless provides an important window on the inability of psychologists to grapple with the complexity of their subject matter, namely, the sex lives of disabled women. Serlin demonstrates with specific examples how experiences that involved touch and other sensual pleasures that

did not conform to the era’s standard scripts for heterosexual practice were simply ignored or effaced by the researchers in the published study. He concludes by noting the power relations that are highlighted by histories of sexuality and disability: the researcher has the power to dictate not only the design of the study but also the reporting and interpretation of the results. In the case of Landis and Bolles’ research, the subjects speak for themselves only if one carefully retrieves their voices from the archives. Only then do their sexual subjectivities emerge.

This article could be used in courses on human sexuality, disability studies, the psychology of gender, and even research methods. Here are some examples of questions that might be used to stimulate discussion in the classroom or assigned as test or essay topics:

(1) Serlin notes that the sexualities of disabled people have not, in the past, been given much research attention by psychologists. Is this still the case? What research literature can you find on this topic since the 1940s? How do psychologists approach this topic now? Can you discern any preexisting assumptions that may guide their work? What were Landis and Bolles’ preexisting assumptions?

(2) Why might disability and sexuality have been regarded as incompatible, or even dangerous, in earlier times? What oppressive and inhumane practices were used to control disabled peoples’ sexualities? Do any remnants of these practices remain today? (Additional recommended reading: Barnes, 1997; Harris, 2011.)

(3) Serlin suggests that Landis and Bolles ignored or did not even perceive aspects of the sexual subjectivities of their interview participants because these aspects did not fit into the heteronormative scientific/social/sexual scripts available to the researchers in that time and place. This suggests that scientists more generally always bring a set of capacities for “seeing” data that are socially, culturally, politically, and historically contingent. What implications might this insight have for how you read the contemporary psychological literature on the topic of sexuality and disability, considered separately or together? (Additional recommended reading: Spurlock, 2002.)

(4) Serlin points out that methodologically, the Landis and Bolles study was innovative (although not original) in its use of interviews.

He also notes, however, that the potential richness of the interview data was masked by the researchers' professional convictions that cast disabled women as an "experiment in nature." What does Serlin mean by this? How might experimental and survey methods employed by today's researchers unwittingly "objectify" their research participants? What are some other ways of structuring the research relationship so as to minimize or avoid such objectification? (Additional recommended reading: Torre & Fine, 2011.)

### Conclusion

The articles featured here to encourage the use of historical scholarship across the psychology curriculum demonstrate how history can facilitate forms of critical thinking that have the potential to make students better scholars and better psychologists. By encountering historical analyses that provoke critical questions about the relationship between science and culture, science and politics, and science and society, students develop the capacity to examine the preexisting assumptions that may creep uncritically into contemporary research. They develop the capacity to examine the role that psychology, as a powerful scientific and social institution, plays in our everyday lives. There is no reason that the development of these skills should be undertaken only in the history of psychology course. I hope this introduction has provided some ideas about how to use history to achieve critical learning objectives across the curriculum.

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## PASSIONATE MEN, EMOTIONAL WOMEN: Psychology Constructs Gender Difference in the Late 19th Century

Stephanie A. Shields  
Pennsylvania State University

The author examines British and American scientific psychology's portrayal of natural and ideal masculinity and femininity in the late 19th century to show how purported differences in emotion and reason were critical to explaining the evolutionary foundation of existing social hierarchies. Strong emotion was identified with heterosexual manliness and men's purportedly better capacity to harness the power of emotion in the service of reason. "Feminine" emotion was portrayed as a comparatively ineffectual emotionality, a by-product of female reproductive physiology and evolutionary need to be attractive to men. The author argues that constructions of emotion by psychology served an important power maintenance function. A concluding section addresses the relevance of this history to the politics of emotion in everyday life, especially assertions of emotional legitimacy.

*Keywords:* emotion, gender, 19th century, American psychology, British psychology, history of psychology, Herbert Spencer, evolutionary theory

In Western societies, beliefs about emotion have historically served an important role in characterizing gender difference. I have previously argued that this long-standing legacy of beliefs about emotion as gender specific is significant both in the individual's gender practice and in the maintenance of the ideology of gender difference (Shields, 2002). In this article, I focus on a significant moment in the development of modern psychology in the late 19th century to show how the ideology of psychological gender difference was critical to the imagined role of psychology in explaining the evolutionary foundation of existing social hierarchies.

I develop the idea that emotion is a powerful currency for setting gender boundaries because emotion can be construed as both embodied and ineffable. *Embodied emotion*, as in expressive behavior, has a material reality that lends it to being the object of scientific study, which can thus be offered in evidence of dispositional and behavioral group differences. The scientific approach to human

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Stephanie A. Shields works at the intersection of the psychology of emotion, the psychology of gender, and feminist psychology. Her research focuses on the politics of emotion in everyday life, particularly evaluation of others' emotional behavior and experience. She also studies the social context of psychological research, primarily the history of the psychology of women and gender, and women's participation in American psychology. Her book *Speaking From the Heart: Gender and the Social Meaning of Emotion* (Shields, 2002) received the Association for Women in Psychology's 2003 Distinguished Publication Award.

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Stephanie A. Shields, Department of Psychology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802. E-mail: sashields@psu.edu

emotion is founded on the belief that cognitive, physiological, and expressive behaviors can serve as reliable indices of emotion processes and outcomes. In 19th-century British and, later, American scientific thinking, speculation regarding the nature of emotion and emotion regulation was used to describe and thereby define the difference between women and men and between races and social classes. *Ineffable emotion*, as a quality of conscious experience or motivating force, apparently eludes exact quantification. Thus, the nature of emotional experience, as a distinctively human quality, can be claimed or contested as a property of status and power. In the 19th century, emotion's ineffability left it to the expert to describe emotion's embodied dimensions and content and to connect emotion to particular functions and effects.

The paradox of embodiment and ineffability produces ambiguity that exposes emotion to observers' differing and even conflicting evaluation. Criteria for the "right" kind and quantity of emotion, for example, are not inherent to the emotion displayed, but reflect cultural conventions and norms that are situationally negotiated and applied. In Western culture, those relatively more powerful and those relatively powerless share a fundamental assumption about emotion, namely that it has the potential to induce unreasoned and uncontrolled behavior. That said, only the expert has the authority to say when and by whom unreasoned and uncontrolled emotion happens. The polarity of reason and emotion and the threat that emotion poses to emasculate reason are long-standing Western notions, even though dichotomizing these qualities is itself not logically based (Midgley, 1995).

In this article, I am specifically concerned with gender divisions. I focus on how women's traits, especially emotion, were described as complementary to men's and how, through this maneuver, unequal distribution of social and economic power and status hierarchies was justified and perpetuated. The idea of complementarity—that is, the belief that the traits, strengths, and weaknesses of one group are compensated for or enhanced by the traits, strengths and weaknesses of another—is an exceptionally powerful way to maintain power inequities between groups, as it implies that any perception of inequity is illusory and that the actual basis for discriminating between groups is based on each group's relative strengths and weaknesses. I focus on British scientific writing relevant to gender because of the significance of two important threads of inquiry that characterized British psychology from the mid- to late 19th century, namely concern with mind–body relations and evolutionary theory. The creation of gender hierarchy on the basis of hypothesized complementarity of traits and abilities must also be read as part of a larger pattern of then-dominant views on race and class that fostered practices that maintained and legitimated systems of subordination.

I begin with an overview of the interpretation of complementarity as it relates to gender in 19th-century scientific thinking. I then turn to the application of the complementarity principle to gendered emotion, drawing examples from Herbert Spencer's (1820–1903) paradigmatic views on gender and emotion. Spencer, the man, was himself by no means conventional, yet as a scientist his self-assured treatment of gender and emotion, as I show, exemplifies prevailing scientific views on each subject. I conclude with a brief discussion of the relevance of this history to contemporary politics of emotion in everyday life.

## Complementarity of the Sexes

Elsewhere I have outlined the post-Enlightenment transition from the intellectual class's belief in the general inferiority of females in nearly all capacities (intellectual, perceptual, and moral) to a notion that the mental and moral faculties of each sex are complementary (Shields, 1975, 1982; see also Lloyd, 1984). The idea of complementarity is that each sex has an innate and distinctive intellect and character with its own strengths and limitations and that the weaknesses in each sex are compensated for by corresponding strengths in the other. With the advent of evolutionary theory in the mid-19th century, variation came to be seen as the source of evolutionary progress, and the principle of complementarity came into its own as a useful explanatory device. Complementarity could account for how it can be that evolutionary advancement occurs without upsetting the stability and continuity of the species. In turn-of-the-century American and British psychology, for example, the concept of complementarity was the basis for the hypothesis that females were more likely to be nearer the average in physical and mental attributes, whereas the distribution of males on these dimensions was wider. Differences in variability were seen as an evolutionary adaptation that ultimately could account for differences in social achievement and status of women and men. Evidence of differences in variability was asserted even at the level of capacity for complex or abstract thinking. G. Stanley Hall, for example, tested young children's familiarity with a variety of ideas and objects, reporting that "the easy and widely diffused concepts are commonest among girls, the harder and more special or exceptional ones are commonest among boys" (Hall, 1891, p. 143). (See Shields, 1982, for an extended discussion of the variability hypothesis as applied to gender differences.) The complementarity model was believed to be applicable at the level of the individual, as in the operation of instinct (e.g., Sutherland, 1898), as well as at the broader social level, as in the private sphere/public sphere dichotomization of woman/man, family/work, and consumption/production (Erskine, 1995; E. Richards, 1997; Russett, 1989).<sup>1</sup>

It goes without saying that the lists of traits assigned to each sex were not derived from systematic empirical research but drew heavily on what was already believed to be true about women and men. That is, the attributes assigned to each sex were essentially variations on popular images already evidenced in popular culture. Although most scientists probably drew on their own experience of "common knowledge," the proximal source that justified doing so was likely to have been popular science writing, which was itself fed by unexamined assumptions about women's and men's nature. (See G. Richards, 2002, regarding the repeating circulation of "folk" knowledge to scientific psychology and back again.) Beetham (1996), for example, showed how cultural tensions and contradictions about women and beliefs about femininity were enacted in the pages of periodicals from the early 18th century to Victorian domestic magazines and new journalism.

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<sup>1</sup> The paradoxes of this dichotomization are explored in Homan's (1998) study of Queen Victoria as monarch and wife.

### *The Formation of Psychology in Public Discourse*

At midcentury, evolutionary theory and the mind–body question were two themes much in evidence in public discourse concerning philosophy and physiology. Separately, they would contribute in important ways to the character of the new discipline of psychology. The growing influence of evolutionary thinking on public and scientific discourse, however, did not converge with and inform thinking about mind–body issues until the last quarter of the century (Smith, 2004). Each of these themes drew on truisms regarding female nature. Evolutionary theory is important for its emphasis on complementarity as an explanatory principle; the mind–body question is relevant to the focus on emotion as late-century focus of theorizing in the newly established academic discipline of psychology.

There was no science of mind and human behavior at midcentury, and psychology as a scientific practice was fed by popular discourse concerning fundamental psychological questions of human agency, mind, and relationships (see also White, 2002). Smith (2004) argued that psychology in Britain became institutionalized as a science not because of its establishment as an academic specialization, but through a preexisting scientific discourse of nonacademic writers and readers. He argued that psychology “was shaped *in a public arena*, not through the specialization or differentiation of academic life” (p. 83). Periodicals for the broad, educated readership, Smith further suggested, played a major role in this public discourse. That public arena was part of a larger community in which scientific and philosophical themes of all kinds were reviewed and debated. For example, *Mind* was established by Alexander Bain (with George Croom Robertson) in 1876 as “the first English journal devoted to Psychology and Philosophy” to make philosophy a more academic field and to connect with the new physiological psychology of Helmholtz and others.

The public and popular forum within which mind–body issues were debated allowed popular culture notions of women’s nature and gender difference (as well as race and class) to be imported seamlessly into the formation of scientific ideas. Lorimer’s (1997) analysis of scientific representations of race illustrates this idea. Lorimer observed that from the 1830s through the 1870s, racial discourse was not specialized and “scientific papers presented at learned societies were indistinguishable from the books and articles seeking to address an educated public” (p. 213). He argued that scientific discourse drew on what we would identify today as racial stereotypes with the goal of differentiating attributes that were matters of objective knowledge from those that were simply projections of sentimentality onto non-White races. By the end of the century, Lorimer concluded, the application of “the ideology of scientific naturalism” (p. 228) to race and race relations had circulated widely and, in treating humans as natural objects, precluded conversation about the possibility of change in either and erased the roles of human will and agency from explanations of both the oppression and the liberation of colonized peoples. Positive images of aboriginal and colonized peoples were therefore dismissed as the products of antisentimentality. I am not suggesting that the impetus or values behind scientific

representations of race, class, and gender were equivalent, or that the social consequences of each played out in the same or even analogous ways. The point is that in this period, public discourse and lay beliefs about group characteristics and differences were an important source for science and, in turn, scientific legitimization of these constructs further naturalized and reified them.

### *Complementarity of the Sexes*

According to American and British psychologists/biologists, the psychological traits of each sex were a direct consequence of biology (Shields, 1975, 1982). Sexual dimorphism was believed to be greater as one advanced up the racial ladder, and sex differences in “lower” races, if noted, were described as less distinctive than those of more “advanced” races (Gould, 1981; Laqueur, 1990). The full physiological explanation for the mental and personality features that distinguished the female from the male was restricted to discussions of women of privileged classes. No strong distinction was made between gender and its connection to class and race because class and race on their own seemed to explain the position and deficiencies of both women and men. Laqueur (1990, p. 205) persuasively argued that over the course of the 19th century there came to be compelling political needs for redefining males and females as biologically distinct sexes to replace the earlier construal of female as deficient or lesser male. In the postrevolutionary new order, the argument that man was rightfully the central authority in public and private domains could only be convincingly made if there were natural qualities that set him apart from the other sex. As it was, it was woman’s nature—as deviation from the standard—that needed explanation.

Female reproductive physiology was at the heart of most explanations of the development of women’s distinctive cognitive and emotional character (Vertinsky, 1988). The specifics of individual accounts varied, but they were invariably fraught with logical inconsistencies and physiological inaccuracies. (See, e.g., Shields’s [1975] summary of Geddes and Thomson’s [1890] metabolic theory of sex differences.) The account generally followed this line: The human female’s nervous system was limited (or prevented from its full development) either because of earlier achievement of full maturity and/or because of the biological demands of development and maturation of the female reproductive system. At maturity, women’s brain and nervous system were limited in their capacity to support the higher mental processes, specifically objective rationality and true creativity. The lower mental processes (emotion and certain perceptual skills) thus appeared to be or were comparatively stronger. Then, at menarche, the female’s mental future was sealed: Blood that might have promoted further brain development was diverted to the uterus and sustaining fertility. The result of this abbreviated course of development and the demands of female reproductive physiology were limited intellectual capacity in comparison to men and a triad of interlocking traits: sensitivity, perceptual acumen, and, more important, emotionality. Henry Maudsley’s (1879, as cited in Beer, 2000) views on mental disorder provide just one example of how these disparate and internally inconsistent elements were woven into an explanation of the form that the female psyche must inevitably take. In describing the greater susceptibility of the young woman to certain mental disorders Maudsley argued that “the affective life is more

developed in proportion to the intellect in the female than in the male sex, and the influence of the reproductive organs upon mind more powerful” (p. 450) and that one manifestation of this is that menstruation:

brings with it periodical disturbances of the mental tone which border closely on disease in some cases, while the irregularities and suppressions to which it is liable from a variety of mental and bodily causes may affect the mind seriously at any time. (p. 450)

Women’s healthy bodies and normal emotional state are thus described as disordered sites exemplifying the opposition of nature and orderly society (Pateman, 1989).

Reason and emotion were believed to be expressed differently for each sex because of underlying “natural” differences.<sup>2</sup> Consistent with the complementarity framework, the strengths of one sex with respect to reason and emotion compensated for the weaknesses of the other, with both ostensibly forming a perfect whole. Female/feminine reasoning capacities were described as intuitive, practical, concerned with specifics, and thus well suited to domesticity and nurturance. Male/masculine reason, in contrast, was more likely to be described in terms of a capacity for objectivity and abstraction, thus better suiting men for broader projects in which either creative thought or impartiality was needed. Rationality and intelligence were thus attributes of both sexes, but separate capacities did not mean equal capacities: The more valued cognitive capabilities were a male prerogative. For example, women were considered essentially unfit for scientific work, but observational science (astronomy and especially botany) were regarded as physically and intellectually within their grasp (Meadows, 2004).<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, the masculine version of emotion stands in contrast to the feminine. In its feminine form, emotion was portrayed as a somewhat unstable sensitivity of feelings toward oneself and others. Masculine emotion, in contrast, was described as a passionate force evident in the drive to achieve, to create, and to dominate.<sup>4</sup> Male/masculine reason was believed to be powered by a distinctively masculine

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<sup>2</sup> In Laqueur’s (1990) analysis, the purported difference in passion is defined more specifically in terms of sexual interest; he did not consider emotion more generally. The difference in my interpretation and Laqueur’s is likely to stem from the span of time on which we focus. Laqueur considered the late 18th through the 19th centuries and drew heavily on studies of comparative anatomy. My analysis focuses on the mid- to late 19th century and the influence of evolutionary theory on the formalization of psychological science.

<sup>3</sup> Shteir (2004, p. 18) reported that in England in the early 19th century, botany was widely promoted for, practiced by, and identified with women. Magazines directed to a female readership, however, contained articles on botany with simpler introductory knowledge, whereas articles on botany in magazines for a male or mixed audience gave more complex and advanced information. Shteir further noted that by the 1830s, new views on female intellectual learning did not support women’s delving into systematic science: “The higher the intellectual aspiration of a women’s magazine, the less likely that it would be the location for actual [scientific] instruction” (p. 33).

<sup>4</sup> Schnog (1997, p. 105) described how American women’s fiction writing in the latter part of the 19th century began to draw on the language of “emotional power, spontaneity, and depth” that had been the province of male writers, replacing sentimentality and the idealized image of female cheerfulness and sweet nature. She argued that these writers were asserting a claim to a level of personhood that had excluded the possibility that women had the capacity for such depth of feeling.

emotion. Although passion could overwhelm reasoned behavior, well-controlled masculine passion is energy focused on “the battle of life.” Passion was not simply equated with sexual drive, but as all strong feeling that powered creative thinking, social action, and physical prowess. Manly emotion was distinguished by its capacity to be put in the service of reason (Shields, 2002) and with a broader political definition of heterosexual manhood that emphasized Christian values of autonomy and self-regulation (Alderson, 1998). (See also Smith, 1992, on a more generalized 19th-century concern with threats to self-control.) Identification of men with appropriate emotion was evident in the political arena on both sides of the Atlantic as early as the late 17th century (Ellison, 1999). Mid-19th century Christian businessmen in the United States viewed strongly felt, controlled emotion as a manly prerogative (Corrigan, 2002). Women’s emotion, feminine emotion, was portrayed as lacking the power and energy ascribed to masculine passion, identified with an inferior and ineffectual emotionality. Women’s emotion was more likely to be described as sentimentality, which was itself rendered as a degraded, pale version of normal emotional impulse that, in any event, women were not well equipped to regulate.

The noted physiologist W. B. Carpenter (1894) provided an elegant summary of the complementarity of the sexes in its ideal form. Note how he highlighted both the reason–emotion axis and the public–domestic axis:

There is nowhere, perhaps, a more beautiful instance of complementary adjustment between the Male and Female character, than that which consists in the predominance of the Intellect and Will, which is required to make a man successful in the “battle of life,” and of the lively Sensibility, the quick Sympathy, the unselfish Kindliness, which give to woman the power of making the happiness of the home, and of promoting the purest pleasures of social existence. (p. 417)

The definition of women’s ideal emotion evolved contemporaneously with the identification of women as the center of the household. This domestic image of woman featured emotional temperance and equanimity as its defining themes. Emotionally, the successful household manager was portrayed as expressing calm mother-love and unruffled housewifeliness. Emotional temperance was not an automatic by-product of domestication, but a goal to strive for in and of itself, as is clear in books written for and about the proper education of young women (Armstrong, 1987). Of course, the reality of late 19th-century women’s lives bore little resemblance to the sheltered and comfortable ideal portrayed in scientific publications and popular tracts (Draznin, 2001).

The identification of the domestic sphere as one in which woman is the emotion expert (by virtue of natural qualities of attention to detail and emotional influences on judgment) undergirds a domestic structure of benevolent paternalism. As the putative “emotion experts,” the burden was on women to define healthy emotional home life. Nevertheless, women’s tendency for “mere emotionality” calls into question the soundness of their judgment. The legitimacy of women’s authority on emotional matters in the home was undermined by beliefs regarding the inherent weakness of feminine emotional nature. The intervention of someone with greater skills in self-regulation would be needed in matters of any importance.

## Emotion in Gender, Gender in Emotion

In this section, I consider one example of how the use of “complementarity” to preserve existing status and power relations was manifested in the emerging science of psychology. Psychological sex differences were of interest primarily in connection with the growing influence of evolutionary theory in explaining, and in some cases justifying, existing social relations (e.g., G. Richards, 1997). But it was one on which many prominent psychologists weighed in. It is important to point out that the emotional and intellectual attributes of women were not themselves of much consequence to men of science. Rather, discussion of the feminine character was of interest to the extent that it made possible the identification of those qualities that distinguished the highest human form of evolution. Gender comparisons were added as an example, a truism rather than a hypothesis to be tested or a point that deserved argument.

At the same time another topic, human emotion, was one of the premier issues in scientific psychology by the late 19th century. Dixon (2001, 2003) demonstrated how the 19th-century concept of “emotions” in psychology was developed in opposition to, and ultimately replaced, prevailing religious constructs of passions and affections of the soul. This move to emotion, he argued, was motivated by hostility to traditional religious beliefs. If Dixon was correct, we may interpret the rise of the psychology of emotion in the early years of scientific psychology as an indicator of psychologists’ assertion that psychology is a science of the natural world, that is, one in which the object of investigation is separable from the investigator and knowledge can be pursued objectively with a bright line separating the role of the psychologist–investigator from that of the research participant (see Morawski, 1992). Embodied emotion thus assists the move of psychological inquiry from the realm of moral philosophy to natural science. A key point to keep in mind is that the formation of psychology, with its treatment of emotion as an aspect of mind that is utterly natural, occurred at a time of significant social transitions (Mendus & Rendall, 1989). Thus, psychology provided scientific justification that the political and social hierarchies of family, society, and empire reflected the true nature of human relations.

The study of emotion in psychology initially concerned the nature of consciousness, bodily experience, and brain function. Later in the century, evolutionary theory’s concern with continuities and discontinuities with other animals began to have a discernible influence. Many who were involved in the disciplinary formation of scientific psychology in the United States, Britain, and Germany were concerned with emotion. Charles Darwin, William James, and Wilhelm Wundt are, of course, identified with the theories of emotion that burgeoned in the last quarter of the century (Gardiner, Metcalf, & Beebe-Center, 1937).

The way in which gender and emotion were treated within the same text depends on whether emotion or gender (more accurately, women’s divergence from the masculine standard) was the focus (Shields, 2002). Tracts on emotion rarely mentioned gender differences or women specifically. Illustrations of problematic emotion or sentimentality (in contrast to genuine emotion) would sometimes describe a woman’s reaction or “feminine” emotion. Nor was race considered unless it was in the course of illustrating a point regarding mature or advanced emotion in contrast to immature or primitive emotion. Description and

explanation of human emotion meant the White European male. When the topic was gender difference, however, emotion, in the form of female emotionality, was a predominant theme.

### *Herbert Spencer on Emotion and Gender*

I use Herbert Spencer's (e.g., 1897, 1902) extensive writings on each of these subjects to show how popular concepts of gender difference were imported into scientific discussion at critical moments to establish a scientific basis for the legitimacy of sexist ideologies. Spencer, a noted philosopher and social theorist, is most widely known today as the originator of the "survival of the fittest" doctrine. Spencer's Lamarckian views have made him less significant as a scientific forebear of evolutionary theory as it is understood today, but his writing and his ideas were enormously influential at the time, both among scientists and in popularizing evolutionary theory (Paxton, 1991; Hawkins, 1997). His interest in the social implications of evolutionary theory was founded, one biographer has contended, in his search for "a scientific basis for a doctrine of inevitable progress which would justify his belief in an extreme of laissez-faire economics and social theory" (p. 383, cited in Paxton, 1991). It is noteworthy that early in his career, Spencer endorsed feminist causes, but by the late 1850s he had shifted his position to be deeply antifeminist, to the point that he edited his earlier writings to conform to his new position. Paxton (1991, p. 7), for example, observed that by the 1880s Spencer had:

obliterated or distorted the record of his early position on feminism by erasing most of the chapter on "*The Rights of Women*" [in *Social Statics*] and rewriting many other passages about women in his *Social Statics* and in the first editions of the earlier volumes of his *Synthetic Philosophy*.

Intending to apply his theory of social evolution, his system of synthetic philosophy, to major fields of study in a series of 10 books, Spencer completed his monumental task over 36 years. The number of pages he devoted to the questions of emotion and sex differences in his vast writings and the breadth of his influence in the spread and longevity of social Darwinism make him an especially useful example. As important is Spencer's place in setting an agenda for how gender should be incorporated into discussions of the social aspects of human evolution.<sup>5</sup>

Spencer's version of sex differences agreed with the prevailing view that women, because they reached maturity earlier than men, were disadvantaged relative to men. Spencer, as Shuttleworth (2004, p. 200) described him in another context, "speaks with his usual dogmatic authority" on matters of gender. In enumerating female characteristics, he explicitly identified the specific limitations of female intellect as "falling-short in those two faculties, intellectual and emotional, which are the latest products of human evolution" (Spencer, 1902, p. 341). Much of his discussion of sex differences centered on the comparative emotional

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<sup>5</sup> Spencerian views on race, ontogeny, and gender were further popularized by the influential sexologist Havelock Ellis (see, e.g., Shields, 1975; Turner, 2002). Ellis was particularly influential in promoting the idea that men were more variable than women in psychological traits, including intelligence (Shields, 1982).

and intellectual weakness of women and the consequences of comparative female deficiency for social relationships and society more generally.

Spencer's account of emotion—like other evolution-based accounts of the time—was, in contrast, ostensibly sex neutral (Shields, 2005). He did not compare men and women in his analysis of emotion; still, he noticeably placed masculine competition at the center of emotion theory. Male emotional attributes were asserted to have evolved in response to men's competition with other men:

Those tribes survived in which the men were not only powerful and courageous, but aggressive, unscrupulous, intensely egoistic. Necessarily, then, the men of the conquering races which gave origin to the civilized races, were men in whom the brutal characteristics were dominant; and necessarily the women of such races, having to deal with brutal men, prospered in proportion as they possessed, or acquired, fit adjustments of nature. (Spencer, 1902, p. 342)

In Spencer's (1902) view, passion, even brute passion, when under the control of reason, makes advances in civilization and thought possible. The female role in promoting evolution was to adapt to the force of male passion. Thus, female emotional attributes evolved insofar as they could serve to promote safe and peaceful relations with men, and this adaptation had both an evolutionary impulse and one arising out of the proximate need for the female to yield to male dominance. It is interesting, too, that Spencer emphasized that these powerful emotional impulses of courage, aggression, and egotism gave origin to "the civilized races." One could ask how males of the less-civilized races conducted themselves.

Spencer's (1902) account placed masculine competition at the center of emotion theory. Male emotional attributes were described as evolving because of men's competition with other men for resources and the power to control them. When passion takes the form of commitment, it is the quality that enables men (and not women) to transcend the world of pedestrian ideas and experience.<sup>6</sup>

In 19th-century thinking, female emotion is ineffectual because feminine rationality is not competent to use emotion's services. The embodiedness of emotion reveals the source of this deficiency. Spencer (1902) asserted that women's emotional deficiency is evident in "the most abstract of the emotions, the sentiment of justice—the sentiment which regulates conduct irrespective of personal attachments and the likes or dislikes felt for individuals" (pp. 341–342). Spencer believed that because women were doomed by a limited intellect, lower level emotion skills were more developed in them, such as the ability to disguise one's feelings or "to distinguish quickly the passing feelings of those around" (p. 342). These were the result of a power differential—literally. A difference in physical power encouraged the weaker woman to hone perceptual skills as a survival strategy: "The weaker sex has naturally acquired certain mental traits by

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<sup>6</sup> The self-servingness of this image should be noted. The image of science in much of the 19th century was of the individual (presumptively male) conducting scientific work on his own. By end of century, the emphasis in laboratory science was increasingly on groups working together in laboratories, but the scientific and popular image of advancement as the result of lonely efforts of individual scientists persisted (Meadows, 2004, p. 183).

its dealings with the stronger” (p. 342). Spencer is quite specific in describing the acquisition of this skill:

In barbarous times a woman who could from a movement, tone of voice, or expression of face, instantly detect in her savage husband the passion that was rising, would be likely to escape dangers run into by a woman less skilled in interpreting the natural language of feeling. Hence, from the perpetual exercise of this power, and the survival of those having most of it, we may infer its establishment as a feminine faculty. (p. 343)

There is little to show for this skill, however: “Ordinarily, this feminine faculty, showing itself in an aptitude for guessing the state of mind through the external signs, ends simply in intuitions formed without assignable reasons” (Spencer, p. 343). Two conclusions can be drawn from Spencer’s (1902) description. First, it is clear that female emotion seems to serve the purpose of compensating for weakness and is not applicable to achieving other ends. Second, women really do not understand what they are doing anyway. Here, the construction of emotion as embodied and ineffable serves both as a vehicle for making the argument and as the data on which the argument is deemed proven.

In his extensive treatment of emotion, Spencer (1897) did not explicitly concern himself with women or gender difference. He did, however, distinguish between the emotional capacities of “civilized” and “uncivilized” human races, attributing racial differences in intellect and personality to adaptation to environmental conditions. The very few instances in which gender slips into Spencer’s text on emotion reveal again his belief in the ineffectuality of women’s emotion even in the domestic sphere. In *The Study of Sociology*, for example, Spencer (1902) dedicated an entire chapter to discussion of emotions that exert an effect on sociological beliefs. He described how sentiments (to be differentiated from sentimentality) such as “loyalty” and “awe of power” can impair and impede clear rational thought. Spencer focused his discussion on the political and military levels of social organization. Despite his primary focus on macro-level effects of emotion, his illustrative example is drawn from home life and the debilitating effects of emotion as a feminine condition. He likened the way in which awe of power blinds reason in society to the effects of maternal instinct that evokes a mother’s idealization of her children, making her unable to recognize their actual flaws (p. 144). As in his writing on gender, Spencer equated female emotion with ineffectual emotion. His point was not that offspring are powerful, but rather that maternal emotion (like awe of power) is simultaneously natural (making mothering possible) and the enemy of true rationality. It is not mothering itself that explains women’s emotional ineffectiveness, but their brains and their bodies. Spencer was not unique in his portrayal of women’s psyche as defined and limited by their bodily selves. As Hurley (1996) observed, a long-standing belief evident in Victorian society identified women “as entities defined by and entrapped within their bodies,” in contrast to men, who are “governed by rationality and capable of transcending the fact of . . . embodiment” (p. 119). This view of gender difference, of course, is one applied to “advanced” races, as brute force, rather than reason, was the embodied method of control used by more primitive men.

The notion of complementarity worked well for Spencer (and others) in explaining and justifying male–female relations, but was less usefully applied to

race. The problem of race was explaining shared humanness without yielding rigid status differences or suggesting that they could, in any way, be flexible. A different strategy was needed to explain gender relations that came with the necessity of intimacy and mutual dependence required by sexual selection. One explanatory dilemma that Spencer faced was how to account for women's evolutionary progress—after all, the demands of relationships in “barbarous” societies were different from those at the human evolutionary apex. If women were restricted by their arrested mental development, how could they be fit mates for civilized men? Spencer (1902) addressed the problem with reference again to the distinctive emotional qualities of each sex. Here is the problem as he saw it: “It is to be anticipated that the higher culture of women, carried on within such limits as shall not unduly tax the *physique*. . . will in other ways reduce the contrast [between women and men],” and this “will entail a less-early arrest of individual evolution, and a diminution of those mental differences between men and women, which the early arrest produces” (p. 346). Spencer assured the reader that the distinctive female character will be retained, however, because of the emotional qualities that mark her: love of the helpless (especially manifested in mothering) and “a less-developed sentiment of abstract justice” (p. 346). So, even as women may intellectually grow, their particular emotional traits will remain comparatively less tractable and less useful for constructive social purposes.<sup>7</sup>

### The Science of Emotion in the Service of Existing Power Relations

Given that differences in gender were largely understood to be fundamentally expressed in emotion and emotion-related traits, why was so much made of emotion in discussions of the sexes and so little made of the sexes in discussions of emotion? The experts in 19th-century streams of science and philosophy that gave rise to psychological science were male and of the more comfortable classes. They were invested in maintaining power and privilege by virtue of that position. Nonexperts' everyday familiarity with emotion makes them experts of a sort, too. But *real* experts understand the importance, complexity, and power of emotion and interpret it for the expert-in-everyday-life. It is left to the scientific experts to take the measure of emotion and to demonstrate the place of this animal/primitive quality in the larger order.

Budding psychological science was concerned with generating explanations of the generalized adult human mind, which, by definition, was White, privileged, and male, unless otherwise specified. Emotion theories explained a nominally desexed human capacity that was identified with the natural, typical, and ideal masculine. Furthermore, ideal masculinity was northern European masculinity.

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<sup>7</sup> Spencer did acknowledge the powerful intellect of some women, most particularly George Eliot (Mary Anne Evans), a close friend. Friendship did not bloom to romance, however, at least on his part. Spencer believed that Eliot could be his intellectual equal, but ultimately rejected her as a mate because she did not have beauty—a feature that he felt essential to successful human pair bonding and a trait essential to the pair's offspring's quest for a mate (Paxton, 1991). Hrdy (2000, p. 144) quoted a letter that Spencer wrote to Eliot in 1904 that (perhaps ruefully) sums up his earlier rejection of her: “Physical beauty is a *sine qua non* with me; as was once unhappily proved where the intellectual traits and the emotional traits were of the highest.” By this time Eliot was already in her years-long relationship with George Henry Lewes. Spencer remained a life-long bachelor.

The rules are most apparent when they are broken or are about to be. The racial and social class limits of ideal masculinity were rendered explicit only when there was pressure at the boundaries, as during periods of colonialist expansion (Bhatia, 2002). By analogy, one would expect that impulses toward greater social and political equality of women would have similarly been met with explicit recognition of limits between masculine and feminine spheres. For example, G. Stanley Hall (1906, p. 590) believed that coeducation during adolescence would impair “normalizing [of] the lunar month,” jeopardizing whether there would even be future generations.

Evolutionary theory was appropriated to explain, and thereby legitimize, existing gender arrangements and their intersection with race and class categories.<sup>8</sup> The identification of emotion with manliness centered on men’s purportedly better capacity to harness the power of emotion in the service of reason, and so drive evolution and civilization forward. “Feminine” emotion, in contrast, was portrayed as a comparatively inferior and ineffectual emotionality, a by-product of female reproductive physiology and evolutionary need to be attractive to men.

The late 19th century witnessed the first self-consciously scientific attempts to explain gender differences at a time when, on both sides of the Atlantic, women’s rights were increasingly becoming a public issue. Gender as difference is a consistent theme in today’s mass culture. In both periods, science borrows popular beliefs about gender to develop an explanation of the psychology of gender difference, especially emphasizing differences between them, and then uses that explanation to confirm the validity of the popular beliefs. Women exist by virtue of their difference from men, but psychological categories are generically male. Difference always implies a reference to a standard, and maleness is the unmarked category that serves as the standard in gender comparisons (Bacchi, 1990).

The contrast between images of emotion and emotionality at these two points in time shows how they rest uneasily on a changing, often paradoxical set of beliefs about gendered emotion that shift from one historical period to the next (Shields, 2002). No matter in what way these beliefs about gendered emotion change, a constant core remains. The core is the identification of “emotionality”—ineffectual, misdirected, or trivial emotion—as distinctively “feminine.”

Evolutionary theory and social Darwinism evoked much debate and analysis among female intellectuals from its first incursion into public discourse (Deutscher, 2004; Hawkins, 1997; E. Richards, 1997). Within the new discipline of psychology, however, the response was more focused on arguing that nurture (learning and environment) should be seriously considered in explaining gender differences. It is noteworthy that a number of the first generation of American female psychologists recognized the sexism of the complementarity model and

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<sup>8</sup> Alexander Sutherland’s (1898) treatment of parental instinct in humans offers a good example. After making much of the human infant’s comparatively extended period of helplessness as an indicator of humans’ extraordinary capacity for intellectual development, he observed that although the “savage of Negrito, Bushman, or Adaman type” has a brain, “much above that of the highest apes, [it] is by no means the wondrous organ it is subsequently to become” in advanced races (Vol. 1, p. 97). “Accordingly,” he observed, “babes of these races are not nearly so tender or so delicate to nurture as those of civilised man” and they “come unhurt through an ordeal that would be certain death to the infant of a civilised race” (p. 97). Despite these differences in intellect and hardiness, maternal instinct, Sutherland asserted, is fully developed across all races.

openly challenged it, on logical and empirical grounds (e.g., Calkins, 1896; Tanner, 1896; Thompson, 1903). Their challenge was particularly strong against the variability hypothesis (Shields, 1982). The same level of challenge was not raised in Britain, for two possible reasons. Women were even scarcer in British psychology of the 1890s and beyond, a period when American women were entering psychology in noticeable numbers. Creese (1998) suggested that this is because British psychology was in “a period of doldrums” (p. 356) as leadership in experimental psychology had passed to Germany and the United States, although others have disputed the notion of a late 19th-century decline. It is as likely that the absence of challenge may be traced to the more general exclusion of women from doctoral study at Cambridge and Oxford Universities.<sup>9</sup> The American situation was also something of a coincidence in that women were first admitted to graduate schools in the 1880s, a period when the new science of psychology was rapidly establishing itself as a legitimate discipline. A new discipline needs disciples, and the population of women who could now seek postgraduate degrees and careers in education and science were welcomed into the field of psychology, if not with equal opportunity and enthusiasm as male students, then at least more openly than they were in other scientific disciplines. Psychology was avidly promoted as promising to yield significant contributions to the practical welfare of humankind (e.g., Ladd, 1894). G. Stanley Hall (1894) advocated the “new psychology” as “the very heart and marrow of the higher as well as of the lower pedagogy” and, more important:

Its study is now indispensable, not only for all who would aid in making education. . . but for all who wish to approach politics, social or religious questions, or even science, from a higher standpoint, or deal with them in the large way they now demand. (p. 300)

In any event, female psychologists, a fair proportion of whom identified explicitly as feminists, argued against the essentialist explanation for women’s traits, abilities, and social position and urged serious consideration of social and contextual constraints as explanatory. In early 20th-century U.S. psychology, questioning the idea of a distinctly maternal instinct was as close as psychologists came to challenging the assumptions regarding women’s emotional “nature” (Shields, 1984). After the complementarity model had long ceased to be a major influence in experimental psychology’s construal of gender difference, implicit beliefs about connections between gender and emotionality persisted. As in the 19th century, even today popular culture notions of gender and emotion creep uncritically into the scientific psychology of emotion.

### The Politics of Emotion

To conclude, I would like to consider the relevance of the 19th-century scientific perspective to present-day concerns with the practical and political dimensions of emotion, especially what is at stake in the give-and-take of

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<sup>9</sup> If British psychology was no longer dominant, it was nonetheless active and influential. For example, the British Psychological Society was founded in 1901, psychological laboratories continued to be established, and the Torres Strait Expedition took place (Herle & Rouse, 1998).

assertion of emotional legitimacy. Historical explorations of early psychological expounding on emotion can help us extend current social psychological views on emotion to a broader view of how beliefs about emotion function in creating, maintaining, and sometimes challenging status relationships, such as those of gender and intergroup relations. Indeed, recent research has shown that in-groups attribute more “advanced” emotions to their own members than to out-group members (Leyens et al., 2000, 2001).

The paradoxical construal of emotion as simultaneously embodied and inef-fable is central to understanding how the politics of emotion operate in everyday life. Two points should be made explicit. First, constructions of emotion out-of-control are used to disempower people. In this article, I focused on the way in which the portrayal of women’s emotion was paradoxically described as weak emotionality and as dangerously unregulated. Although ostensibly valuing women’s emotional sensitivity as valuable in maintenance of the home, useful for child rearing, and promoting positive relations with men, the very same attributes were portrayed as a central defect in female character. The combined effects of mere emotionality and comparative lack of intellectual competence (and concomitant diminished power of will) were believed inevitably to handicap women, both in terms of exercising “mastery” of the home and in achieving in the public sphere outside it. Second, this construal of women’s emotional and intellectual capacities—at every point viewed as deficit in comparison to men’s—provides a warrant for psychology to deal with social disorder. Psychology’s business as a science was to explain when and why the natural could pose a threat to the (civilized) social and to validate restriction of encroachment of the natural onto the social. Omission of gender from theorizing emotion “tames” emotion, a potentially disruptive but inarguably human attribute. Invoking emotion in theorizing gender difference “tames” emotion, too, and through its identification with masculinity, reveals its importance in the service of reason.

The links between gender and concepts of emotionality are most prominent when emotion is construed as out of control. The 19th-century scientists’ portrayal of ideal feminine emotion focused on the supposed refined sensibilities of women of the comfortable classes and built on a notion of greater gender dimorphism in more advanced races compared with those more “primitive.” The portrayal of women’s emotional and intellectual limitations resembled to a remarkable degree the childish and childlike character attributed to aboriginal peoples. “Problem emotion” was portrayed somewhat differently for women than men in popular media and scientific literature. For women, the problem was emotion itself as well as limited capacity for self-regulation. Men’s “out-of-control” emotion was conceived as a failure to exercise existing capacities of intellect and will. Thus, emotion per se was not the problem, but the consequences of emotional acting out.

The politics of emotion are centrally concerned with claims to selfhood. Social Darwinists interpreted extant social organization—whether animal or human—as the most advanced chapter in the evolutionary story. As the last chapter, it was accorded right, even if not seen as equally benefiting all. That said, privilege was accompanied by obligation. Class privilege that was perceived to be the natural outcome of genetic superiority came with the obligation to be benevolent to those below, although the perceived obligation was limited (e.g., Weiner, 1994).

Reddy (2001) pointed out that if we posit a politics of emotion, we must be able to explain in what way the individual submits and why it matters. Emotions associated with paternalism, such as love and sympathy, can be effective means for convincing others to oblige, and may even be more effective than coercion. According to Jackman (1994), the dominant group's success is a reflection of the extent to which it can persuade, rather than force, subordinates to accept positions of low power or status. Through the use of coercive emotions, the dominant group can exert social control by maintaining close, seemingly positive relations with subordinates (Jackman, 1994).

The use of emotion ideation to justify and enforce group status is not an invention of the 19th century. In fact, many examples, whether relevant to gender or class, can be traced throughout Western history. Freedman (1998), for example, described the status of anger in Europe in the late Middle Ages. Anger was a prerogative of class. Writers from the 13th through 16th centuries portrayed peasant anger as unthinkable for individuals and, when expressed by the group, as nothing more than uncontained and destructive irrationality. Peasant uprisings were viewed not as responses to perceived injustice or aiming to effect social change, but as an unchecked overflow of crude natural emotionality. Freedman observed that "cold, calculated anger, either for revenge or in defense of honor, was considered generally impossible for peasants" because their anger was simply "an instinct opposed to thought, the most dramatic expression of baseness more commonly evidenced by [their] mere boorishness" (p. 179). As in the 19th century, where defining a group's emotion as suspect or not legitimate obviated challenges to the "right" social order, identifying peasant uprising as irrational behavior provided the ruling class with justification for quashing peasant unrest. Maintaining a rational front against irrational and possibly dangerous animal-like impulses could be nothing less. The double standard of entitlement reduces the anger of those with lower status to mere emotionality and preserves the self-serving belief that anger serves the social good when exercised by the right people. Interrogating the political meanings of emotion as those meanings intersect with dimensions of social identity thus reveals how the regulation of subjective experience is accomplished through authorizing who is and who is not permitted to "speak from the heart."

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# RECONTEXTUALIZING KENNETH B. CLARK: An Afrocentric Perspective on the Paradoxical Legacy of a Model Psychologist-Activist

Layli Phillips  
University of Georgia

Kenneth B. Clark, whose scientific and political legacy has been the subject of controversy over the years, is presented as an important model of Afrocentric scientific praxis. Key characteristics of the Afrocentric scholar are outlined. Using Clark's academic and nonacademic writings as evidence, it is argued that Clark, though complex, exemplifies these characteristics. Clark's profound yet at times obscure vision of integration and his views on the role of empathy and respect in education are presented in detail. Clark's life and work are then reexamined and recast through the lens of W. E. Cross's (1971, 1991) nigrescence model and the political-historical lens of the 2-phase Black social movement. It is concluded that academicians interested in promoting diversity, particularly within the social sciences, as well as psychologists looking for models of activist praxis, examine and learn from the life and work of Clark.

I look back and I shudder at how naive we all were in our belief in the steady progress racial minorities would make through programs of litigation and education, and while I very much hope for the emergence of a revived civil

rights movement with innovative programs and dedicated leaders, I am forced to recognize that my life has, in fact, been a series of glorious defeats. (K. B. Clark, 1989, p. 18)

Kenneth B. Clark is a scientist with whose role in history I have long been fascinated.<sup>1</sup> Best known for his research on racial self-concept in Black children and also for his important contributions to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense Fund's (NAACP-LDF) battle for an end to legalized racial segregation in the United States in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), Clark was also the first and only Black president of the American Psychological Association (APA) and has been the author of numerous books on race-related topics.<sup>2</sup> He is considered one of the most important early figures in both social psychology and Black psychology (Guthrie, 1998; see photograph).

Although Clark has been regarded as a hero of the civil rights movement for his role in *Brown v. Board of Education*, his reputation declined, particularly among Black social scientists, with the rise of the Black Power movement, and it has continued to be controversial ever since (Martin,

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Layli Phillips, Department of Psychology and Institute for African American Studies, University of Georgia, 501 Psychology Building, Athens, Georgia 30602-3013. E-mail: layli@arches.uga.edu.

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<sup>1</sup> In keeping with the womanist scientific principle of locating oneself and one's perspective at the center of inquiry and acknowledging and highlighting one's own biases, I use the first-person voice in this article. Furthermore, in keeping with the womanist principle that people should be allowed to speak for themselves, Clark will be quoted rather than paraphrased whenever possible in this article.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that many of Clark's professional activities, such as the racial self-concept studies and the founding of the Northside Center for Child Development in New York City, were carried out with his fellow psychologist and wife, Mamie Phipps Clark. Indeed, it was Mamie who devised the well-known doll technique used by the Clarks (Kluger, 1976). Although Mamie Clark is not the topic of this article, her contributions to psychology and U. S. society strongly warrant their own historiographic examination.

1992). There appear to be five reasons for this: (a) His overtly expressed devotion to “integration”; (b) the relationship between his book *Dark Ghetto* and Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s report *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action* (1965); (c) his direct criticism of the Black Power movement; (d) his failure to join the “Black strengths” bandwagon within the social sciences, as exemplified by books such as Andrew Billingsley’s *Black Families in White America* (1968) and Robert Staples’s *The Black Family* (1971), and his insistence on instead maintaining a within-race critical stance; and (e) his perceived progenitorship of and association with notable Black conservatives, such as William Julius Wilson and Michael Mayer. All in all, these points of contention add up to an often-unstated perception that Clark has failed to live up to the promise of the early stance he demonstrated in *Brown*; there are disappointment and chagrin that he has failed to identify or align himself with later incarnations of the very same struggle that he was fighting in 1954—the struggle to obtain quality, and equality of, education for Black children and youths and, by extension, to overcome all vestiges of the inequalities generated by 350 years of slavery and a half century of legally sanctioned segregation for all Black Americans.

My purpose in this article is to present Kenneth B. Clark, now 85, as an exemplary Afrocentric scientist-activist through a recontextualization and rehistoricization of his actions and statements across 65 years of public and scholarly life. I argue that close inspection of Clark’s life, including careful consideration of its patterned complexities and curious inconsistencies, yields important insights about the effects of personal background on the conduct of science and the effects of historical and political contingencies on the extrapolation of scientific findings to other contexts.

### What Defines an Afrocentric Scholar?

I take my insights about what defines an Afrocentric<sup>3</sup> scholar primarily from the writings of two contemporary social scientists with influential writings on the philosophy of science from an Afrocentric view: Linda James Myers and Patricia Hill Collins. Although I agree with Mama (1995) that “there is no single set of principles that can be defined as the essential African philosophy” (p. 57), I do believe it is useful to imagine alternate epistemological bases for social scientific praxis,

as Myers (1991) and Hill Collins (1991) have skillfully and provocatively done.

According to Myers (1991), the Afrocentric worldview places the highest value on positive interpersonal relations between individuals as well as groups.

Thus, all scientific praxis ideally contributes toward this aim. The scientist begins her or his approach to discovery or knowledge production from a place of self-knowledge that is rooted in personal experience, collective consciousness, or both. Such a scientist enters into scientific activity with an openness to the interconnection between material and spiritual planes of existence and their reciprocal causality with regard to events of interest. Furthermore, according to Myers (1991; but see also C. Clark, 1972), the Afrocentrically inclined scientist is more interested in “understanding and unification” than in “prediction and control” (p. 23). Borrowing from Cruse (1967), she ultimately argues that, within the traditional Western, positivist scientific context, Afrocentric scientists have a special responsibility to redeem humanity—particularly Blacks and other oppressed peoples of the world—from the inhumanities levied by the scientific community’s endorsement of prediction and control of humans by other humans. Thus, an Afrocentric scientist is, by default, a scientist-activist.

Hill Collins (1991) rejected the dichotomy between scholarship and activism, thinking and doing, for Afrocentric<sup>4</sup> researchers. In addition, she has included empowerment as a step in the scientific process; that is, she claimed that an Afrocentric scientist cannot rest on her or his scientific production but rather must somehow apply it toward the betterment of humankind before the scientific process can be considered complete or one’s role as a scientist can be considered fulfilled. The notions of scientific objectivity and subject-object distance lose validity for Afrocentric scholars precisely because of their contributions to op-

<sup>3</sup> *Afrocentric* is used in this article as a general term that refers to people of African descent who have retained psychocultural remnants of their African heritage, in this case, as modified by their passage through the Caribbean and America. The term is not being used to reference or connect to any specific individual or position within what has been referred to as the *Afrocentricity Movement*.

<sup>4</sup> Although Hill Collins (1991) focused on Black feminist epistemology, it is my position that the specific points being discussed herein apply equally well to Afrocentric male and female scholars.

pression and exploitation of Black people and others (see also Phillips, 1994a). Afrocentric science demands the explication of each researcher's own assumptions, biases, and objectives, particularly as they pertain to such essentialized categories as race, class, and gender, and also requires that scholarly productions be historicized.<sup>5</sup>

Although neither Myers (1991) nor Hill Collins (1991) argued that all people of African descent identify with or operate within Afrocentric frames, both offered Afrocentric perspectives as culturally situated alternatives to traditional scientific positivism. It must be acknowledged, however, that the idea of an Afrocentric perspective has been challenged on the grounds that it essentializes Blackness or, alternatively, Africanness, and that it oversimplifies and, in some respects, mocks Black subjectivity (e.g., see Gilroy, 1993; Richards, 1997; and Mama, 1995). I argue that Afrocentric perspectives, however problematic and imperfectly devised they may appear from certain angles, offer a succinct yet comprehensive counterpoint to traditional positivist social scientific perspectives. These Afrocentric perspectives are important not only because they represent the phenomenology of a segment of people whose experience has been summarily dismissed or selectively distorted within social science but also because they challenge the cultural exclusivity of social science as an endeavor altogether. Without forcefully stated alternatives to the metatheoretical status quo, one cannot step outside or beyond the lenses that currently frame and constrain her or his vision. Nevertheless, one must remain cognizant that there are Afrocentricities within Afrocentricities, so to speak—that is, many ways to relate to Blackness as a Black person. Perhaps nowhere else in psychology is there a better illustration of these complexities than in the person of Kenneth B. Clark.

### **Kenneth B. Clark: Afrocentric Scholar**

Given the basic tenets of Afrocentric science, it can be argued that Clark did in fact conduct science from an Afrocentric standpoint, although he did so before a language of Afrocentric science had been explicitly developed. A rehistoricizing of Clark's scholarly and activist productions suggests that a large part of his personal struggle, and a major cause of the inconsistencies associated with some of his statements and actions, can be

linked to an attempt to conduct science without an articulated Afrocentric scientific position from which to draw. The fact that Clark still surfaced as a pioneer, both in terms of his science and his activism, can be considered a major credit to his legacy.

Perhaps most emblematic of Clark's Afrocentric scholarship was his participation in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). In 1951, while an assistant professor at the City College of New York (CCNY), he was approached by NAACP lawyer Robert Carter about helping the NAACP-LDF team, headed by Thurgood Marshall, prove to the federal courts that segregation caused psychological harm to children. Kluger (1976) recounted:

Robert Carter read Dr. Kenneth Clark's White House Conference monograph [Clark, 1950] and saw in it an Aladdin's lamp. [He came back to Clark and said,] "It's just what we're looking for. It's almost as if it were written for us." (p. 321)

Clark, Quoted in Kluger (1976), stated:

Within a few days, he came to my office with a blueprint of what they wanted me to do—and he was clear as a bell about it: (1) be a witness in the *Briggs* case, (2) enlist other social scientists, as prestigious as possible, to testify, and (3) work directly with the NAACP lawyers in going over the briefs as they dealt with the social-science material. And he wanted me to get started yesterday. (p. 321)

Quoting Kluger (1976) again:

Clark did not hesitate. He had met Thurgood Marshall socially and occasionally visited the NAACP offices. "I both admired their work and was critical of it, much as the young people today may feel about the establishment people," Clark recounted 20 years later. "I had some doubts about the effectiveness of the legal approach in curing the basic problems, but I guess I was envious that they were actually doing something to improve things while I was off in the scholarly area, vaguely wishing to be a part of what they were doing." When the chance came, he took it. (p. 321)

Shortly after the *Brown* decision was handed down by the Supreme Court in 1954, Clark's participation in the entire process was criticized by a number of legal scholars and

<sup>5</sup> These insights were further confirmed by cross-cultural psychologist Robert Serpell (1994), who reported his discovery from research in Zaire on intelligence that "[t]he ideal endpoint of personal development in [indigenous African cultures] is construed as someone who can preside effectively over the settlement of a dispute, whose judgement can be trusted in questions of character, [and] who can and will take on social responsibility" (p. 160).



Kenneth Bancroft Clark and Mamie Phipps Clark, circa 1960 (photo by Ken Heyman). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

social scientists (Cahn, 1955; Schwartz, 1959; van den Haag, 1960). Cahn, a law professor, suggested that Clark had exaggerated his scientific findings (Cahn, 1955). He argued that Clark had failed to sample enough children; although more than 300 were sampled, only 16 were reported on directly in the South Carolina legal testimony. Perhaps more significant, Cahn argued that Clark had failed to investigate “abnormal or eccentric backgrounds” (p. 163) in the children he studied—implying that the children’s putative negative reactions to segregation might be attributable to personal idiosyncracies. Regarding the amicus brief submitted to the Supreme Court by Clark and others (Clark, Cook, & Chein, 1952<sup>6</sup>), Cahn wrote that he found the scientific evidence presented, Clark’s in particular, to represent no innovation over “literary psychology” (by which I mean such psychologi-

cal insights as one finds continually in the works of poets, novelists, essayists, journalists, and religious prophets)” (p. 161). Schwartz, a professor of sociology and law, argued that, on close inspection, Clark’s racial preference studies (Clark & Clark, 1939a, 1939b, 1940, 1947, 1950) revealed less positive outcomes for children in Northern, mixed-race schools than for children in Southern, segregated schools—the opposite of what the courts seemed to be promoting (Schwartz, 1959). Van den Haag, then adjunct professor of social philosophy at New York University, echoed similar concerns; he questioned how Clark could advance the notion that segregation hurt Black children when the

<sup>6</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all Clark references are to be K. B. Clark.

children in the segregated schools showed “better” outcomes than the children in the integrated schools. In what was perhaps the most scathing remark of all, van den Haag asserted that “From the Clarks’ experiments, his testimony and, finally, the essay to which I am replying, the best conclusion that can be drawn is that he did not know what he was doing; and the worst, that he did” (p. 79).<sup>7</sup>

Clark vociferously defended the scholarly quality of his work as well as the innocence of his participation in the *Brown* proceedings on more than one occasion (Clark, 1955/1963, 1959–1960), in particular insisting that the original studies used as the basis of his court testimony had been conducted “ten years before the authors had any knowledge that these findings could have any specific practical use” (Clark, 1959–1960, p. 239; see also Clark, 1974). I argue, however, not only that Clark knew what he was doing but also that his knowledge and his resultant actions fall squarely within the parameters of Afrocentric science, which rejects a neutral engagement with one’s subject matter and places a high value on activity that will advance the welfare of one’s fellows. Hermeneutic writers such as Martin Heidegger (1962); Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975), and Charles Taylor (1985) have explained how this historiographic stance is different from the Machiavellian “end justifies the means” credo.

Kluger (1976) reported that even the NAACP-LDF was not unaware of the “inconsistencies” in Clark’s racial preference studies—in particular the finding that youngsters in Northern schools often showed evidence of less positive psychological outcomes than youngsters in Southern schools. Nevertheless, Kluger also reported that “the [NAACP-LDF] lawyers coached [David Krech], Kenneth Clark, and the other social psychologists on how to respond in the event their competence as experts was challenged by the lawyers for the state” (p. 338). The fact that Clark assented to such coaching is evidence of his feeling of solidarity with the cause that the NAACP-LDF lawyers represented. I argue that Clark’s act of assent represented not a crafty act of deception but rather a calculated act of sacrifice. As I have stated elsewhere (Phillips, 1994b, 1994d), Clark had the opportunity to set the stage for the realization of

his ideal vision (in this case, of education), but circumstances—in this case, the intersection of his value system with an acute historical situation, that is, the palpable yet limited opportunity presented by *Brown*—caused him to sacrifice the vision itself—at least visibly—that it might reemerge later in fuller form. In the balance, the Afrocentric value of achieving justice and harmony among people

<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the “science” of the Clarks’s studies (Clark & Clark, 1939a, 1939b, 1940, 1947, 1950) was criticized much later during a period of resurgence in racial self-concept studies (Baldwin, Brown, & Hopkins, 1991; Banks, 1976; Brand, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974). Several features of the studies were argued to be problematic: (a) the Clarks’s choice of materials—line drawings in the first three studies and dolls that were identical in all respects except skin and hair color in the last two—which, in all probability, were not physiognomically realistic; (b) the Clarks’s use of projective, rather than objective, methodology, because it assumed that young children’s feelings about themselves could be inferred from stimuli that were not literal depictions (e.g., photos) of them; (c) failure to vary the order of questions during the doll study interview protocol, producing a higher likelihood of a situation in which a child might feel ambivalent about self-identifying with a doll to which she or he had attributed negative attributes previously; (d) tacit endorsement of the ethnocentric model of racial preference, in which it is considered normal to prefer one’s own group over others (as opposed to a no-choice or chance pattern of responding); and (d) failure to consider the possible orthogonality of racial self-identification and racial self-esteem. These criticisms, while valid, were unforgivingly ahistorical, insofar as few realistic Black stimuli were available prior to 1960 (Baldwin et al., 1991), and ethnocentric perspectives on group identification were normalized by the pervasiveness of enforced racial segregation in the United States prior to 1954. Furthermore, it should be noted that, in their use of projective methodology, the Clarks were challenging an earlier study by Horowitz (1939), in which she argued, on the basis of similar projective tests, that young Black children’s identification with White stimuli demonstrated “wishful thinking.” The charge of possible order effects, however, is more difficult to dismiss. Careful critics, even contemporaneous ones, could have argued that the Clarks likely oversampled children who identified themselves with the White doll by setting up an artificially stressful choice situation and thus increased the probability of Type I error. The Clarks’s contention that the fact that a “substantial proportion” of Black children chose the White doll meant that racial segregation hurt children’s self-concept was undermined by their failure to present the request “Show me the doll that looks like you” before, during, and after the requests pertaining to racial preference (“Show me the doll that looks bad,” “Show me the doll that you would like to play with,” etc.), and the racial understanding (“Show me the Negro doll,” “Show me the White doll,” and so forth). Clark explained his decision to use the single, unvarying interview protocol during South Carolina court testimony (reprinted in Cahn, 1955, p. 162): “I wanted to get the child’s free expression of his opinions and feelings before I had him identified with one of these two dolls.”

outweighed the unseemliness of distorting an “objective” representation of a fact that he intuitively knew to be true: Racism harms Black children.<sup>8</sup> In fact, to present “just the facts,” divorced as they were from lived experience, would itself have been a grosser distortion from an Afrocentric perspective.

My argument is supported in Clark’s book *Pathos of Power* (1974), a collection of various essays and speeches authored by him between 1947 and 1973. In a particularly illuminating essay titled “Social Critic or Social Apologist?” he asserted that “the primary concern and loyalty that social scientists must **have** [is] in the Search for Truth *and* [italics Added] justice” (p. 131). Later, He noted:

Even with a methodology which seeks to assure a higher degree of objectivity in arriving at an understanding of social dynamics, social scientists cannot justifiably claim to be immune from class and racial biases which distort their interpretations. . . . Like other human beings, they may be receptive to the same influences— both explicit and subtle—of the groups with which they identify or those groups or individuals whom they perceive as having determinative power. (1974, p. 132)

Finally, He Stated,

Not infrequently a social system confronted with persistent social diagnosticians and dissenters seeks to protect itself from these threats by blaming the diagnosticians for the undeniable symptoms and the increased severity of the illness of the social system. But, despite persistent hostility and even repression, throughout American history there have been dissenters . . . [who] have played a major role in balancing the more pragmatic, realistic, negative symptoms of the American illness. Unlike the majority of their fellow citizens, they do not seem to have lost the capacity for outrage—they do not seem to be easily intimidated and it does not seem to be easy to silence or destroy them. They have contributed to the functional stabilization of the American society and they have *bargained for and obtained the needed time in which progression toward the health of the society could be achieved* [italics added]. (1974, p. 136)

Although one cannot be certain, it is reasonable to assume that Clark was thinking about his own inclusion in this category of individuals, as he has made his general views plain. The Afrocentrisms peel clearly through the fog of his verbiage: The quest for truth and justice is inseparable; class and race inform one’s “objectivity”; and bargaining for time in the interest of progress toward social welfare is acceptable, if not laudable.

Clark’s commitment to Afrocentric scientific principles is more explicit in *Dark Ghetto* (1965/1989), however. In a section titled “Moral Objectivity,” he stated:

Objectivity, without question essential to the scientific perspective when it warns of the dangers of bias and prejudgement in interfering with the search for truth and in contaminating the understanding of truth, too often becomes a kind of a fetish which serves to block the view of truth itself, particularly when painful and difficult moral insights are involved. . . . When carried to its extreme, this type of objectivity could be equated with ignorance. . . . It may be that where essential human psychological and moral issues are at stake, noninvolvement and noncommitment and the exclusion of feeling are neither sophisticated nor objective, but naive and violative of the scientific spirit at its best. . . . Feeling may twist judgment, but the lack of feeling may twist it even more. (pp. 78–80)

In the Introduction to the Same Book, He wrote:

An important part of my creed as a social scientist is that on the grounds of absolute objectivity or on a posture of scientific detachment and indifference, a truly relevant and serious social science cannot ask to be taken seriously by a society desperately in need of moral and empirical guidance in human affairs. (p. xxxv)

On the Subject of “truth”—a Term That Appears Frequently in His Writings, He stated:

A few years ago a highly respected friend . . . interrupted a humorous but somewhat serious discussion by observing that I would not permit “the facts to interfere with the truth”. . . . To obtain the truth of Harlem, one must *interpret* the facts. . . . Fact is empirical while truth is interpretive. (pp. xxxvii–xxxviii)

Clearly, Clark’s Thinking Processes Reflected Afrocentric Beliefs About Science.

Evidence of such Afrocentric beliefs can be found in action as far back as Clark’s tenure as an undergraduate at Howard University in the early 1930s. According to his autobiographical essay “Racial Progress and Retreat: A Personal

<sup>8</sup> The fact that this was more clearly illustrated in his Northern than his Southern data did not undermine the basic truth. In fact, it created a paradoxical syllogism: Racism hurts children (as seen, arguably, in the Northern children); segregation is the legal residue of racism; children in the South are segregated; therefore, children in the South are hurt by racism. Between 1939 and 1954, at least in his published writings, Clark elided this paradox, subtly shifting back and forth between a discourse on the effects of segregation on children’s self-concept (e.g., Clark & Clark, 1939b, 1940) and a discourse on the effects of racism on children’s self-concept (e.g., Clark, 1950, 1955/1963; Clark et al., 1952).

Memoir” (1989), Clark indicated that, as a New York City high school student who had attended overwhelmingly White schools, he became fascinated when introduced to the possibility of attending an all-Black educational institution. He enrolled at Howard University, which at that time was considered the “Black Harvard” and boasted a faculty of such luminaries as Ralph Bunche, Alain Locke, Sterling Brown, Abraham Harris, Allison Davis, Francis Cecil Sumner, Charles Hamilton Houston, and Mordecai Johnson—a concentration that, although in some respects wonderful, was primarily due to segregation (see also Baker, 1998; Guthrie, 1998).

While at Howard, Clark, who was a psychology major, first gained notoriety as the controversial editor of the campus paper, the *Hilltop* (Kluger, 1976). A short time later, greater notoriety came when he orchestrated a demonstration against segregation in the Capitol building. He and his fellow students were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct. Although the municipal charges were eventually dismissed, the story was mentioned in *The New York Times* (“Students to Fight Evils,” 1934), compelling Howard University officials to discipline the students, primarily to prevent a reaction in Congress, from whom Howard, the nation’s only federal university, received its funds. Thus began Clark’s scientist-activist career.

Other incidents demonstrating the inseparability of science and activism for Clark abound. In the 1940s he was the first African American to join, and thus integrate, the faculty of CCNY (Hentoff, 1982). During this same period he worked with Ralph Bunche and Gunnar Myrdal on the study that would eventually become *An American Dilemma* (Myrdal, 1944) and founded, with his wife Mamie, the Northside Center for Child Development, a child guidance center specializing in Black children. In a brief, second junior faculty position at the Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia, during 1941, Clark resigned when reproached by the university’s White president for trying to “stimulate [his] students by combining social psychology concepts with American racial attitudes and realities” (Clark, 1989, p. 11). Next, he joined the Office of War Information to direct a study on the morale of Black civilians; the fact that he, a Black man, had been placed in charge of a mixed-race, mixed-gender research team, how-

ever, caused logistical problems that mortally impeded the research. Clark ultimately resigned from this post and returned to CCNY, where he stated that he was “surprised that [his] racial hostility did not spill over into [his] relationship with [his] colleagues” (p. 13). Clark was also active in the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI)—a relatively politically active professional organization composed of such other noted psychologists as Otto Klineberg, Gardner Murphy, and Gordon Allport. The associations and activities of this period culminated first in Clark’s paper for the Mid-Century White House Conference (which can be considered activist because it resulted from Clark’s being informed by Alain Locke and Otto Klineberg that no minority interests were being represented at the large-scale, federally sponsored event) and second in Clark’s production (with Thomas Cook and Isidor Chein) of “The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation: A Social Science Statement” (1952), also known as the famous social science brief submitted to the Supreme Court in *Brown*.

Few people dispute Clark’s activism in the period prior to the time the *Brown* (1954) decision was handed down. After *Brown*, Clark published the popular book *Prejudice and Your Child* (1955/1963), loosely based on the Mid-Century Conference report (Clark et al., 1952), then the book *Dark Ghetto* (1965/1989), after which much controversy ensued. Between these years, Clark participated in other activities that fall under the rubric of scientist-activist. Most notably, during the early 1960s he served as chief consultant, chairman of the board of directors, and “informed observer” of the Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited Project (HARYOU), on the basis of which *Dark Ghetto* was ultimately written. *Dark Ghetto* represents a turning point in Clark’s reputation, particularly with African American social scientists.

As noted by Nicholas Lemann (1988), *Dark Ghetto* was considered a liberal text at the time it came out. This quickly changed, however, when its terminology, in particular the phrase *tangle of pathology*, was appropriated by Daniel Patrick Moynihan in his notorious government report, *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action* (1965). In this report, Moynihan, who was once Clark’s student, advanced the thesis that the “matriarchal structure” of the Black

family was responsible for several of the social and economic problems associated with Blacks in America, including juvenile delinquency, higher rates of joblessness and poverty, poorer performance on mental tests, and the general failure of Blacks to assimilate fully into the American mainstream. The situation was exacerbated by the burgeoning Black Power movement, which spawned both a number of new social science perspectives (e.g., Cross, 1971; White, 1970) and a separatist backlash against the ideal of integration, to which Clark was clearly and explicitly wedded. I argue that it is at this point that a rift of misunderstanding arose between Clark and both the Black and the White general public, as Clark was placed on the defensive with regard to his (a) connection to the Moynihan agenda and the Black conservative positions it spawned and (b) deceptively radical conceptualization of the meaning and proper operationalization of the term *integration*. In the next section I explore Clark's views on integration. Following this, I attempt to locate Clark within the debate that is framed by Black conservatives and Black radicals.

### Clark's Vision of Integration

Clark's vision of integration is clearly discernible from his earliest scholarly productions, and his views on the subject have come into clearer focus over the years. His various statements suggest that the debate over his true views is more emblematic of the consuming public's readiness to react to red flags and red herrings than it is of any shifts of perspective on his part. I would further suggest that Clark has not been unaffected by the public's reaction to him and that the sometimes-cryptic and seemingly ambiguous nature of his various pronouncements has been the result of the interaction among his own background characteristics, traits, and goals; the historical contingencies to which he has been subjected; and the effects of the general public's reaction to him. That Clark has been so extraordinarily human—replete with the contradictions inherent in a life that has comprised both giant steps and missteps—is why his life is particularly worthy of examination.

Perhaps the best early statements giving some indication of Kenneth (and quite possibly Mamie) Clark's views on integration occurred

in 1939 and 1950. First, in the article "Segregation as a Factor in the Racial Identification of Negro Pre-School Children: A Preliminary Report" (1939b), the Clarks distinguished between the semisegregated school ("all Negro children, some Negro teachers, one White teacher and a White cook," p. 161) and the mixed school ("both White and Negro children and White personnel," p. 161)—a distinction that indicated they were sensitive to the idea that "not all integration is created equal"—and found that the children in the Northern semisegregated school fared about the same as the children in the Southern segregated school, both sets of which fared better than the children in the Northern mixed school.<sup>9</sup> At the end of the article the Clarks remarked:

The most obvious factor seemingly responsible for [the Northern children's confusion with regard to racial self-identification] . . . is the presence of White children of their own age in the same nursery school. . . . This suggests the possibility that the racial identifications of children in the mixed group were to a large extent determined by the physical characteristics of those in their immediate environment. It is a question, to be settled by further work, whether this social factor has not gained priority over the factor of their own skin color as a determinant of the racial identifications of Negro children. (p. 163)

At this time, only racial self-identification behavior from drawings and pictures had been studied. By the time of the later study (Clark & Clark, 1950; but see also Clark & Clark, 1947), however, both racial self-identification and racial preference had been studied, and the doll-and-coloring techniques had been added. Although a majority of Black children preferred White dolls and a large (but nonmajority) proportion of Black children identified themselves as White in the later studies that used the doll-and-coloring techniques, the most alarming psychological conditions were witnessed in Northern children rather than Southern children. The Clarks concluded:

It is clear that the Negro child, by the age of five is aware of the fact that to be colored in contemporary American society is a mark of inferior status. . . . These results seem most significant from the point of view of

<sup>9</sup> Because this report is being discussed in its historical context, the Clarks's implied suggestion that in-group racial self-identification behavior constitutes positive adjustment is not being questioned at this time (but see Banks [1976] and Cross [1985] for another perspective).

what is involved in the development of a positive, constructive program for more wholesome education of Negro children in the realities of race in the American culture. They would seem to point strongly to the need for a definite mental hygiene and educational program that would relieve children of the tremendous burden of feelings of inadequacy and inferiority which seem to become integrated into the very structure of the personality as it is developing. (1950, p. 350)

That Clark was concerned and chagrined by his findings is evident in the fact that he waited several years to publish the data (Kluger, 1976). Nevertheless, both passages presage an implementation of integration that cannot be described as color blind or assimilatory.

The first explicit passages reflecting Clark's views on integration appeared in the amicus curiae brief submitted during *Brown* (1954), also known as the social science statement, and in *Prejudice and Your Child* (1955/1963, which, as indicated earlier, derived from the Mid-Century Conference report). In the social science statement one finds, the following passage:

*Segregation* refers to that restriction of opportunities for different types of associations between the members of one racial, religious, national or geographic origin, or linguistic group and those of other groups, which results from or is supported by the action of any official body or agency representing some branch of government. We are not here concerned with such segregation as arises from the free movements of individuals which are neither enforced nor supported by official bodies. (Clark et al., 1952, p. 2)

I suspect that the lack of concern "here" with "unofficial" segregation was probably a reflection of the very focused, official nature of the social science brief rather than a true reflection of Clark's views because, as I show below, he has never condoned segregation of any kind and has explicitly discussed unofficial segregation elsewhere. Nevertheless, it demonstrates Clark's conviction that the government has a responsibility to moderate, and at times mediate, the relations among the various groups that society comprises. In the social science statement, Clark et al. (1952) went on to imply, and at times explicitly state, that segregation cannot be separated from the social context in which it exists—a context that is characterized by prejudice and discrimination, which themselves have such deplorable sequelae as "high disease and mortality rates, crime and delinquency, poor housing, disrupted family life and general

substandard living conditions" (p. 3). These authors later stated that the ill effects of segregation are essentially founded on the facts that "enforced segregation results from the decision of the majority group without the consent of the segregated" and "historically segregation patterns in the United States were developed on the assumption of inferiority of the segregated" (p. 9). These statements underscored the social scientists' concern with inequality of power and representation among different groups in society, that is, with oppression, rather than with social assortment per se. Such themes were later further developed in Clark's writings.

Although the assumption was that the removal of barriers to free association was a necessary precondition for the removal of oppression, Clark et al. (1952) clearly believed that school integration in the absence of other corrective measures would not effect much change. Note their language in the conclusion of the social science statement:

The available evidence . . . suggests the importance of consistent and firm enforcement of the new policy by those in authority. It indicates also the importance of such factors as: the absence of competition for a limited number of facilities or benefits; the possibility of contacts which permit individuals to learn about one another as individuals; and the possibility of equivalence of positions and functions among all of the participants within the unsegregated situation. These conditions can generally be satisfied in a number of situations, as in the armed services, public housing developments, and public schools. (p. 17)

Clark Echoed These Sentiments in *Prejudice and Your Child* (1955/1963):

If teachers and administrators recognize their responsibility in the area of racial practices and procedures, including a concern for the control of prejudiced behavior on the part of those in authority; if they are concerned with the constructive role of textbooks and class discussions; if they are sensitive to the many subtle human problems that may be expected in the transitional stages [of desegregation]; if they realize that the overall atmosphere of the school, including the assignment of personnel, inevitably communicates either democratic or undemocratic racial patterns—then one can expect that in a surprisingly short time Negro and White children will gain a respect for one another based on the intelligence and personality of each individual. Such an atmosphere will produce a setting where it will be possible to provide all children with the foundations of democratic education. (p. 94)

Furthermore, He stated:

In such a school, there will be no need for the self-conscious and often ineffectual procedure of an isolated "intergroup relations" program, with a specified duration of a day or a week. In such a school, children will not be required to attend an assembly program on a given day of the year when it is emphasized that Negroes too are considered to be Americans—thus implying that on other days they may be considered less "American" than other children. Concern for all children, every day of the school year, means that an "intergroup relations" program is an integral part of the atmosphere. This is the achievement of a truly nonsegregated school. (p. 94)

Thus, several key tenets of Clark's view of integration could be discerned by 1955. First, it is clear that Clark viewed integration as a responsibility of the state geared toward the moderation of the interpersonal relations and balance of power among the various groups in a multiracial-multiethnic society. Second, it is clear that he believed that integration is to be neither an assimilatory process nor one that maintains pluralism; rather, it is to be a radical reorganization of American public education that incorporates the life experiences of all American subpopulations. In other words, he envisioned the desegregation of the ideological and symbolic climate and not just the desegregation of bodies. These notions are quite at variance with both the way Clark's views on integration typically have been represented and the way the framers of *Brown* (1954), the implementers of *Brown*, and the critics of the framers and implementers of *Brown* had conceptualized integration.

Clark's explication of his views did not cease in 1955. Many more statements emblematic of his radical conception of integration can be identified in later writings, most notably those collected in *Pathos of Power* (Clark, 1974). Some examples:

Initially, the attempt was to use the *Brown* decision as a form of therapy, to free American Whites and Negroes from the depths of the disease. It became apparent, however, that the extent of the metastasis had been underestimated and misunderstood, that the pattern of resistance, evasion, and tokenism that followed *Brown* could be explained only by a racism that had rotted the roots of American life North and South. (p. 100–101)

Racial integration in America must mean more than the right of the Negro to share equally in the moral emptiness, hypocrisy, conformity, and despair that characterize so much of American life. To be truly meaningful, integration must provide the Negro with the opportunity, the right, and the obligation to contribute to

our society a resurgence of ethical substance, moral strength, and general integrity. (p. 28)

Pluralism, if indeed it is desirable, must follow not precede integration, for it is meaningful only in a context of limited voluntary separation under conditions where all share in the necessarily integrated economic and educational system. Therefore, to argue for pluralism—when the status of the Negro is unequal—is to obscure injustice. Pluralism without equality would best be described by the caste model. (p. 109)

Our colleges must transfer the monies, the brains, and the prestige previously associated with space and war research to research on how man can live in peace and justice with his fellow man, how the urban environment can be transformed into beauty and tranquillity, and how the masses of human beings can come to understand that love and kindness and justice and empathy are the necessary parameters of human intelligence. (p. 48)<sup>10</sup>

In addition to illustrating in greater detail Clark's views on integration, these passages highlight his Afrocentric bearing and demonstrate that he remained Afrocentric in orientation well past the *Brown* (1954) and *Dark Ghetto* (1965/ 1989) periods. His central concern remained with positive relations between people (in this case, Blacks and Whites), and he advocated the application of scientific resources toward the solution of social problems.

### Effects of Segregation on Whites: A Neglected Aspect of Clark's Views on Integration

One of the most overlooked aspects of Clark's views on integration is his insistence that White people must also change before any true social or educational progress can be made. This theme is most emphatically stated in the social science statement (Clark et al., 1952):

Confusion, conflict, moral cynicism, and disrespect for authority may arise in majority group children as a consequence of being taught the moral, religious and democratic principles of the brotherhood of man and the importance of justice and fair play by the same persons and institutions who, in their support of racial segregation and related practices, seem to be acting in a prejudiced and discriminatory manner. Some individuals may attempt to resolve this conflict by intensifying their hostility toward the minority group. Others may react by guilt feelings which are not necessarily reflected in more humane attitudes toward the minority group. Still others react by developing an unwhole-

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Serpell (1994), cited in footnote 5.

some, rigid, and uncritical idealization of all authority figures—their parents, strong political and economic leaders. As described in *The Authoritarian Personality* [Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950] they despise the weak, while they obsequiously and unquestioningly conform to the demands of the strong whom they also, paradoxically, subconsciously hate. (p. 6–7)

The Supreme Court, however, ignored this particular aspect of the social science statement (Clark, 1988), choosing instead to focus only on the effects of segregation on minority children:

We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal, deprive the children of the *minority* [italics added] group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does. (Warren, 1954, cited in Clark, 1955/1963, p. 158)

To separate [the colored children] from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone. . . . Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. (*Brown v. Board of Education* [1954], cited in Clark, 1965/1989, p. 76–77)

Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to retard the educational and moral development of Negro children. (Warren [1954], citing *Brown v. Board of Education* [1954], cited in Clark, 1955/1963, p. 159)

In *Prejudice and Your Child* (1955/1963), Clark revisited the theme of majority children, titling one of his chapters "The White Child and Race Prejudice." In *Pathos of Power* (1974), he remarked:

Special programs must be developed to help white students from less privileged backgrounds and from more privileged affluent families grow beyond the constricted racist view of their parents and peers. Colleges and universities must assume the specific task of educating these young people so that they will be free of such moral and ethical disadvantage. (p. 47)

One theme that Clark has explored in his revisitations of *Brown* (1954; e.g., 1965/1989, 1979, 1988) is that if the framers and implementers of *Brown* had incorporated the notion that the psychology of White people as a group is not altogether without problems and that Whites, not just Blacks must also be educated differently, the success of school desegregation might have been greater, and the relation between school desegregation and the reduction of prej-

udice and discrimination in society might have been better accomplished. Although this belief has still been evident in recent years, Clark has changed his emphasis somewhat.

### Education for Empathy and Respect

The themes of empathy and, later, respect, have surfaced repeatedly in statements and articles by and about Clark. His most recent activities and statements, from the years 1986–1999, graphically illustrate the above themes:

Teachers—and society in general—should stress that no person can be called educated if he lacks respect for people because of race or ethnicity. . . . Education in America has been woefully deficient in teaching people mutual respect. Since the Supreme Court's decision forced the integration of public schools . . . there has been some change for the better, but it's minimal. (Browning, 1991, quoting Kenneth Clark)

I'm now concerned not only with basic education, but also with education in terms of human sensitivity. I think that should start in the elementary grades . . . where White children and Black children can help each other. . . . Multicultural education that says . . . individuals of this color make a contribution that people of another color can't make; to me, that doesn't make sense. I'm in favor of teaching youngsters that human beings under proper circumstances can help their fellow human beings make contributions across cultural lines. That's how, if I were younger, I would teach multicultural education—education across the stupidity of racial isolation. (Feeney, 1992, quoting Kenneth Clark)

Unfortunately, in the years since [*Brown*] we have not significantly modified the structure, function or substance of American education. Beyond the failures to desegregate, we have not yet developed a technique by which reading, writing, mathematics and the arts are seen as skills for fostering cooperation and for identifying with others. We have not yet made education a process whereby students are taught to respect the inalienable dignity of other human beings. . . . By encouraging and rewarding empathetic behavior in all of our children—both minority and majority youth—we will be protecting them from ignorance and cruelty. . . . We will be educating them. (Clark, 1993)

Despite this thematic continuity with regard to the teaching of empathy and respect, one of the most controversial events that occurred during the recent period was Clark's outspoken criticism of the Ujamaa and Latino Leadership Schools of the New York City school system under the chancellorship of Joseph A. Fernandez. The Ujamaa and Latino Leadership Schools were originally designed to respond specifically to the educational and psychologi-

cal needs of African American and Latino American males by providing all-male, all-ethnic environments in which ethnically centered curricula were taught by ethnic male teachers. These schools, which were based on accumulated research showing how ethnic male children in particular are subjected to lower expectations and higher rates of academic neglect (e.g., Hare & Castenell, 1985; Kunjufu, 1984, 1988; Rubovitz & Maehr, 1973), were intended to be demonstration projects. Clark, however, was quoted as saying,

For adults to impose this nonsense on children is academic child abuse. . . . It's outrageous. It's absurd. It's a continuation of the whole segregation nonsense. . . . I didn't expect that anybody would come up with anything like this. This is what I was fighting against. (Roberts, 1990, quoting Kenneth Clark)

In a Letter to the Editor of *The New York Times*, Clark Himself wrote:

To the Editor:

Your report that the Board of Education of New York City is seriously contemplating the establishment of an experimental high school for minority men . . . is shocking. . . . This proposal and its rationalizations are a flagrant, not even subtle, violation of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954. . . . The Board of Education is shamefully proposing racial and gender segregation of its public schools. If this plan is accepted and put into practice, it would make our public schools important institutions for the perpetuation of racism. The use of public schools for isolating racial and ethnic groups in schools and classes is not only unconstitutional but also results in inescapable stigma and feelings of inferiority on the part of the students who are so rejected. It is of social and psychological significance that the children of other ethnic groups—for example, Italians, Irish, Jews, Poles and Asians—are not being so isolated. The argument that black and Hispanic males are for the most part responsible for crime and personal and widespread social instability is a perpetuation of the negative stereotypes that permeate our society. In establishing separate public schools and classes for minority males, educators and educational decision makers reinforce these stereotypes. They are also suggesting that these schools become prep schools for correctional institutions—or become indistinguishable from correctional schools and thus block the upward-mobility educational goal for these students. A truly serious social, psychological and educational approach to the children who are now being neglected and rejected in our society is not to turn our public schools into stigmatized correctional institutions. Parallel to a comprehensive and human educational program we must raise the social and educational standards for all children. And we must turn our present correctional institutions into educational insti-

tutions, with appropriate methods and goals of high social and educational standards. (1991, p. A18)

With this latest pronouncement Clark's views pose something of a quandary, because a progressive and experimental educational strategy grounded in part in research spawned by his own early research is being rejected by him as reactionary, while he is being rejected as reactionary by its proponents. Perhaps the missing link can be found in the Black Power movement—a movement that Clark criticized vociferously, but a movement that transformed the line of research that he at one time began.

### Recontextualizing Kenneth Clark

William E. Cross, Jr. (1991), has stated that Clark “never really advocated collective Negro enterprise or group (cultural) solidarity as a countermeasure and proactive strategy for Negroes living in America” (p. 37). Furthermore, Cross has stated that Clark is at least partially responsible for “producing an image of the Negro dominated by feelings of inferiority” (p. 37) and “help[ing] distort Black history and the social scientific analysis of Black life” (p. 38). How can Clark be redeemed from such criticisms without glossing over and obscuring the very facts that may have produced them? To be fair, Clark has at times made statements that appear to be inconsistent with the level of commitment to the Black race that he showed in *Brown* (1954). Cross's statements, however, seem to imply that Clark was not or is not a “Race man.”<sup>11</sup> Before such a judgment can be levied, however, two hermeneutical frameworks must be considered: the historical and the developmental.

As Cross (1991) Showed, an Important Period of Black History Within Clark's “lifetime (i.e., the Black Social movement) can be di-

<sup>11</sup> A “Race man” is an individual whose self-identity is so closely aligned with the welfare of the Black race that he works assiduously for the race's collective uplift and is willing to do virtually anything to improve the status or well-being of the race as a whole. To quote Drake and Cayton (1945/1993, p. 394), a Race man is “all for The Race” and “fearless in his approach to White people.” Thus, a Race man is a type of hero who “beats the White man at his own game and forces the white world to recognize his talent or service or achievement” (Drake & Crayton, 1945/1993, p. 394). Implied is the notion that the Race man retains his loyalty to Blacks and some level of disdain for Whites, despite the latter's recognition of or admiration for him. A Race man achieves without “selling out.

vided into two distinct periods: the civil rights phase (1954–1968) and the Black Power phase (1968–1975). These two phases were characterized by distinctions in the prevailing Black ethos that could not have failed to affect both Clark the man and interpretations of his work. Clark's lifetime, particularly the 65-year span that has encompassed his professional and public life, can be divided into three distinct historical periods that correspond roughly to the years 1934–1954 (the pre-Black Social movement period), when Clark was 20–40 years old; 1954–1974 (the Black Social movement period), when Clark was 40–60 years old; and 1974–1999 (the post-Black Social movement period), when Clark was 60–85 years old.

I propose that to adequately understand Clark's views on integration and Black solidarity one must place his views, as they appeared at various times and in various places and forms, against the backdrop of these historical periods. Furthermore, one must consider the developmental forces to which Clark may have been subject at various times in his life and the way in which these forces may have affected his views. I contend that such a process will eventually lead to a recognition that Clark's views on race and integration have been consistently revolutionary and that his most seemingly incongruous and unpopular actions have merely been the result of the development of his personal identity as a "Negro intellectual" and social critic. I will proceed from a somewhat inside-out position, beginning with the middle historical period.

### Examining the Black Social Movement and Kenneth Clark

A crucial point of recontextualizing Kenneth Clark historically is the recognition of the fact that his controversial book *Dark Ghetto* (1965/1989) was positioned at the brink of change between the civil rights and Black Power phases of the Black Social movement. As indicated previously, Lemann (1988) argued that the book was considered progressive at the time it appeared. Nevertheless, its swift appropriation by Moynihan (1965) into a text that proved to be a nemesis of the Black community and its socioeconomic progress, not to mention a springboard for a nascent Black conservative movement, likely alienated Clark with the more radical arm of the

Black Social movement, both within the social sciences and outside them. Concurrent with the period during which *Dark Ghetto* appeared, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was going through changes that would transmute the civil rights movement, as emblemized by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC), into the Black Power movement, as emblemized by the Black Panthers. Young Black social scientists who were sympathetic with this shift were in the process of redefining the parameters of social science particularly as they pertained to the investigation and explanation of Black people's behavior and experiences (Cross, 1971; Jones, 1972; Nobles, 1972; see also Bunzel & Grossman, 1997). Critical models that emphasized Black strengths, even in such stressful environments as "the ghetto," were gaining currency (Billingsley, 1968; Staples, 1971; White, 1970). Black identity, self-concept, and self-esteem became "hot topics" and necessarily precipitated a critical reexamination and reevaluation of the Clarks's seminal studies.

Clark was taken to task both personally and professionally by proponents of the "new" social science (Wilson, 1989), and he had a great deal to say about the young "radicals" who gave them inspiration. Clark's remarks wax most inflammatory in a section of *Pathos of Power* (1974) titled "Black Nationalism: A Verification of the Negative Consequences of Segregation":

Under the guise of assuming a positive identity, black nationalism has adopted an imitation of white racism with its deification of race, its attempt to make a virtue out of color, its racist mystique. . . . Many of its advocates are dominated by deep feelings of racial self-hatred. Part of the pattern of pretense and posturing includes a suicidal eagerness to ascribe all middle-class patterns of speech, grammar, dress, manners, and style of life to Whites, while reserving for the exclusive use of Negroes the uncouth and vulgar. This is garden-variety racism at its most obscene. . . . Whatever the motivation for individuals associated with the black nationalist movement, I consider the movement as a whole to be sick, regressive, and tyrannical. (p. 112–116)

Clark Further stated:

Given the fact that the realities of racism in America have not changed . . . the cult of blackness must be recognized as what it is—a ritualized denial of anguished despair and resentment of the failure of society

to meet its promises. . . . Black separatism can be seen as a "sour-grapes and sweet-lemon" reaction against the failure of the society to implement and enforce the findings of *Brown*. (p. 115–117)

Although it might be reasonable to interpret these statements as Clark's personal reaction to criticism lodged against him and his work, we must not overlook that he was also critical of Black leaders of his own and the previous generation. In *The Negro Protest* (Clark, 1962), a transcription of his WGBH-TV interviews with James Baldwin; Malcolm X; and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and in *Dark Ghetto* (1965/1989) and *Pathos of Power* (1974), statements indicating his general dissatisfaction with any single strategy for the amelioration of Black-White social inequality abound. Clark consistently demonstrated partial identification and partial sympathy with most Black leaders, causes, and political strategies, but he never endorsed any without reservation. In *The Negro Protest* (1962), Clark's verbal dynamics as well as his concluding remarks suggest that he preferred King's strategy to Baldwin's and Baldwin's to Malcolm X's, although, in a much later interview (Phillips, 1994c), he expressed some identification with Malcolm X's post-Mecca views, which expressed a movement away from racial separatism. In *Dark Ghetto* and *Pathos of Power*, however, he explicitly presented what he perceived to be both strengths and weaknesses of King's and Malcolm X's causes and strategies, and other remarks indicated that he felt something of a kinship with Baldwin, whom he identified as an outspoken, iconoclastic, "Negro intellectual." "I make these points to illustrate how strongly Kenneth Clark identified with the role of social critic and "Negro intellectual."

The way that Clark construed this role required him to retain the freedom to critique both Whites and Blacks alike. That he took issue with the notion that there existed a Black "party line" is exemplified in his sarcastic criticism of two "rules of the ghetto":

1. *One basic rule* is to present to the hostile white world a single voice of protest and rebellion. No Negro who is concerned with his acceptance in the ghetto dares to violate this rule.

2. *Another basic rule* is that no issue can take precedence over the basic issue of race and, specifically, of racial oppression. (Clark, 1965/1989, p. 194)

A subtext of much of Clark's writing is discomfort with such confinement. That an individual who made such a dramatic and momentous contribution to civil rights should feel so confined is indeed an ironic twist on the fact that the historical moment called for intense and focused group solidarity. Although the appearance of the lack of group solidarity between Clark at midlife and those who, in popular consciousness, stood for Black progressiveness during the 1960s and early 1970s could, in fact, be interpreted as a true lack of group solidarity, paradoxically, it could also be interpreted as a manifestation of Clark's fierce intellectual independence—he had already "proven" his group solidarity by collaborating with the NAACP-LDF in *Brown* (1954).

### Before the Black Social Movement—The Ethnic Identity Development of Clark

Development, viewed one way, is merely personal history. In the Author's Notes to *Dark Ghetto*, Clark stated that "Dark Ghetto is a summation of my personal and lifelong experiences and observations as a prisoner within the ghetto long before I was aware that I was really a prisoner" (1965/1989, p. 252). Born in the Panama Canal Zone in 1914, Clark was brought at the age of 5 by his mother to Harlem at the dawn of the Harlem renaissance (Locke, 1925/1992) and the tail end of the Great Migration, when Black Americans left the rural South in large numbers for the economic opportunities of the industrial Northeast and Midwest (Lawrence, 1941/1993). His mother, a strict and courageous garment worker, took pains to ensure that her son completed his lessons, retained access to the academic track in the New York City public schools, and was able to attend college during the Great Depression (Hentoff, 1982).

Clark (1989) reports that his first exposure to racism was at the age of 6, when he and his mother were refused service at Childs Restaurant in New York City. This incident, which was psychologically structured for him by his mother over the remaining years of his childhood and which left an indelible mark on him, was recapitulated over a decade later when he, then a Howard freshman, was working in the main post office of Washington, DC. His attempt to gain service at the White Tower Res-

restaurant near the Capitol during one of his meal breaks was refused. This event catapulted him into his first act of protest, described in the beginning of this article.

Using Cross's (1971, 1991) nigrescence ("Negro-to-Black shift") model of identity development as a rubric, this latter restaurant incident can be construed as something of an "Encounter" (crisis) for Clark, which thrust him into "Immersion—Emersion" (exploration of his Black identity). At that time, the "Blackest" causes with which an African American youth could align himself were the NAACP's effort to eliminate segregation in public facilities and the Communist-directed Black nationalist movement. Being at Howard, alignment with the NAACP was an easy choice for young Clark. Furthermore, having the opportunity to be mentored by some of the most illustrious Black minds in America surely facilitated his transition out of Immersion-Emersion and into "Internalization" (adoption of a transracial identity anchored in one's Blackness). On leaving graduate school, Clark demonstrated his internalization by seeking to integrate the faculty at CCNY, but his "Internalization-Commitment" (internalization expressed as commitment to a cause) surfaced more clearly when he resigned from the Hampton Institute. This first cycle of his identity development (Parham, 1989) culminated in his participation in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the event that precipitated the Black Social movement.

### Identity Development After Brown (1954)

The *Brown* (1954) victory as well as the coincident disintegration of the NAACP-LDF produced another Encounter for Clark and precipitated another cycle of identity development for him. He responded to this in the early 1960s by shifting his attention from desegregation to economics—a shift that anticipated the transition of public concern from desegregation to economics a few years later and which was exemplified by his participation in HARYOU. This cycle culminated in his authorship of *Dark Ghetto* (1965/1989), a text derived from the HARYOU report *Youth of the Ghetto: A Study of the Consequences of Powerlessness and a Blueprint for Change* (1964) that precipitated both controversy and another Encounter.

Clark responded to this Encounter by turning his attention to the gentler, subtler, more "touchy-feely" aspects of integrated education as he envisioned it, namely, empathy and respect. This cycle of developmental change (Parham, 1989) culminated in the publication of *Pathos of Power* (1974), a collection of essays and speeches he had been composing since the late 1940s, and it remains evident in the oral and written statements he has produced since that time. Although it is evident that Clark possessed these views prior to their publication in 1974, it was at this time that he chose to focus on them and place them in the public spotlight. Since 1974 he has remained something of an elder spokesperson who is often sought for commentary when the topics of race and education arise.

### After the Black Social Movement—The Elder Spokesman

These newly aroused concerns motivated Clark to place all of the resources at his disposal toward the struggle for justice. He did so primarily by offering his person and his scientific writings to the causes he found credit worthy. During his late 30s he worked for *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954); during his late 40s he worked for HARYOU and produced the volume *Dark Ghetto*. In his elder years, Clark reached the highest pinnacles of his professional life, serving as President of both SPSSI and APA. The introduction to *Pathos of Power* (1974) suggests that during this time he was also confronting and examining his emotions and the more "touchy-feely" aspects of his views on education and social integration in general. Although these thoughts may not have fit the prevailing scientific ethos, he ultimately felt compelled to publish them as a statement that might complete "the record." Mentioning his admiration for such figures as "[Albert] Einstein . . . [Bertrand] Russell . . . [Robert J.] Oppenheimer, [and Linus] Pauling" (1974, p. 141), he seemed at last to find justification for his own concern with values, morality and, ultimately, emotion. To wit, he wrote, "I have come, at this stage of my life, to the conclusion that the antidotes [to the destructive polarizations among men] are embarrassingly simple—humor, empathy, compassion, and kindness" (Clark, 1974, pp. ix-xiii). After the publication of *Pathos of Power*, Clark felt liberated to em-

bark on a full-scale crusade for these issues, as demonstrated in his most recent statements. For example:

When Martin Luther King preached nonviolence, many of his listeners thought he meant ending just physical violence. But he also meant psychological violence. This part of the civil-rights lesson has not been learned in the postwar period.

Consider the standards for college admissions. For the past half century, we have determined advancement by the grades of students in reading, writing, math and other subjects, and by their performance on standardized tests. Ignorance in any of these areas can hold them back. By contrast, social sensitivity—an awareness of the needs of others—is rarely seen as part of the curriculum. Throughout the system, these social values are generally viewed as subjective interference with more objective indications of being well educated. Ignorance of decency and respect has rarely caused anyone to be flunked or kept out of college.

By encouraging and rewarding empathetic behavior in all of our children—both minority and majority youth—we will be protecting them from ignorance and cruelty. We will be helping them to understand the commonality of being human. We will be educating them. (Clark, 1993, p. 38)

Q. [interviewer Mark Feeney] You keep coming back to the human factor, the individual level. That seems to be your central concern.

A. [Kenneth Clark] Absolutely. At my age, I guess I have nothing else to be concerned about. (Feeney, 1992, p. 74).

Let us suppose, for a moment, that Clark's statements during the third historical period emanate from a core of wisdom based on a "transracial" identity (Cross, 1991) informed by a native Afrocentricity rooted in his experience as a person of African descent. Using this lens, his recent statements, which are often framed as manifestations of "liberalism" or "racelessness," can be reread as simply wise. Taking this a step further, statements such as these can even be characterized as radical (referencing *radix*, or *root*) and revolutionary, because essentially they are suggesting a reorganization of American public education around principles—such as a supreme concern with positive human interrelations— which, though Afrocentric in origin, are relevant to all people. The wisdom in Clark's exhortations is that he recognized the necessity of overhauling the effective American value system as an antidote to its current and interracial shared travails.

Given this framework, can we reconstrue the most controversial and, to some, uncomfortable stands made by Kenneth Clark, such as those pertaining to Black nationalism or the Ujamaa and Latino Leadership Schools? His focus on stigma and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes in both discussions signifies a deeper concern with the tragic fact that static and oppressive power relations that condone and benefit from separatism interact with and negate separatism that is founded on either self-defensive or self-determinative postures. Because a central aspect of Clark's conceptualization of integration is the adjustment of power relations to begin with, one possible argument is that he viewed both Black nationalism and single-race schools as diversionary and palliative. Although other explanations are possible, I prefer this one.

If there has been one flaw in Clark's thinking, it has been the failure to completely articulate an organismic organizational framework for human cultural groups. His various statements collectively have suggested that he has envisioned a world in which each culture retains its identity enough to contribute to a more robust and interesting human collective, yet he has failed to suggest the mechanism by which such cultures might retain their integrity in a fully integrated society. Perhaps the reason why separatist arguments have retained their level of cogency over many generations is that they implicitly reflect the continuing inability of all groups in U.S. society to conceive of a mechanism by which cultures might retain their integrity in a fully integrated society.

## Conclusion

I have attempted to show that Clark's views on integration have consistently been radical, revolutionary, nonassimilationist, and affirmative of Black people as well as of others. I have attempted to demonstrate this by recontextualizing his actions and statements using both political-historical and personal-historical (developmental) frameworks. I have relied on Clark's published statements as data for my analyses, and I have attempted to synthesize perspectives from psychology, history, and philosophy of science.

To return to my original question, what makes Clark a model Afrocentric psychologist-activist? First, he has maintained a supreme concern with positive human relations across the course of his life, and he has applied his scientific expertise and scholarly capital toward the betterment of human relations, particularly as they pertain to race. In this process he has rejected positivist scholarly detachment and scientific neutrality in favor of a praxis that is rooted in his own experiences as a member of an oppressed racial-cultural group and the collective political consciousness that accompanies that membership. Second, he has demonstrated an unflinching commitment to Black people underneath a rubric of concern which, paradoxically, embraces the entire human race. This commitment and concern have manifested themselves as advocacy for the equalization of power relations among the diverse groups composing pluralistic societies, including but not limited to the United States, through the symbolic as well as the physical integration of educational environments in particular and the increase of social intercourse between people from diverse backgrounds in general. The beauty of Clark's Afrocentric praxis—which should be appreciated particularly by those who are skeptical of Afrocentrism itself—is that, third, he has at all times retained his prerogative to critically engage various Black perspectives, thus respecting the diversity and complexity of Black people themselves and their many possible positions.

Despite Clark's characterization of his own life as a "series of glorious defeats," the weight of historical evidence argues otherwise. At a time when many academic institutions are concerned with the diversification of their faculty, students, and curricula, it becomes ever more important that exemplars of diverse scientific approaches be brought to light. Clark is but one exemplar of Afrocentric scientific principles and praxis. As more are singled out and studied, from Afrocentric as well as other-centric perspectives, architects of multiculturalism will gain not only a firmer understanding of the fact that diversification requires deep and difficult change but also bigger and better blueprints for such change.

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## CARNEY LANDIS AND THE PSYCHOSEXUAL LANDSCAPE OF TOUCH IN MID-20TH-CENTURY AMERICA

David Serlin

University of California, San Diego

In the last quarter of the 1930s, Carney Landis, an associate professor of psychology at Columbia University affiliated with the Psychiatric Institute of New York, headed a Committee for Research in Problems of Sex-funded research project in which he conducted interviews with 100 women between the ages of 18 and 35 who self-identified as physically disabled. Landis interviewed the women about their sex lives, their sexual identities, and their relationship to their bodies and published the results in 1942 under the title *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman*. The book represents conventional psychosexual presumptions about disabled women's stunted personality and frustrated sexuality stemming from the absence of a Freudian "sexual moment." Yet, the original research notes, housed at the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction, reveal that many of these women engaged in acts of erotic touching that played a far more dynamic and complex role in the development of their sexual subjectivities than Landis or his researchers could recognize. This article examines how touch and tactility produced meanings for Landis' research subjects and thus illuminated forms of sexual subjectivity not regularly associated with either histories of disability or histories of sexuality.

*Keywords:* Carney Landis, disability, sexual subjectivity, tactile, 1930s

When one considers the influence that the Rockefeller-funded Committee for Research in Problems of Sex (CRPS) had on the history of sexuality research in the United States beginning in the 1920s, it becomes apparent that some areas of inquiry—such as marital relations, prostitution, reproduction among the eugenically "unfit," and the problem of homosexuality—commanded significant attention. During the interwar years of the early 20th century, the conflation of sex problems with other perceived social problems such as juvenile delinquency, criminal behavior, and even political dissent made some populations more likely to attract the attention of sex research (and the financial support of the CRPS) than others. The sexual behaviors and attitudes of people with disabilities, for example, are not remembered as being especially robust areas of research funded by the CRPS. But during the second half of the

1930s, Carney Landis (1897–1962), an associate professor of psychology at Columbia University, received support from the CRPS to undertake a major research project with his colleague, Mary Marjorie Bolles (1913–), a researcher at the Psychiatric Institute of New York, to conduct interviews with and analyze the sex lives of 100 women who were identified as "physically handicapped," in the parlance of the day. These women, between the ages of 18 and 35, were classified under a range of conditions captured by the then-current rubrics "orthopedic," "spastic," "cardiac," and "epileptic" and were living in institutional care facilities in the metropolitan New York City area. Over the course of 4 years, Landis and Bolles interviewed the women about their sex lives, sexual identities, and relationships to their bodies, and eventually published the results of their study in 1942 under the title *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman* (Landis & Bolles, 1942).

It is curious, then, that in mapping the contributions of the CRPS to histories of sex research, Landis and Bolles's innovative study of disabled women's sexuality has virtually disappeared. This was not always so. During the

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to David Serlin, Department of Communication, University of California, San Diego, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, CA 92093-0503. E-mail: dserlin@ucsd.edu

process of researching and writing *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Kinsey cited *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman* as one of 19 significant sexological studies produced during the interwar years that positively impacted his investigative methods (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948/1975, p. 27). But among historians of sexology or psychology, almost nothing has been written. In its obituary for Landis, for instance, published in 1962, *The American Journal of Psychiatry* observed that “the influence of Landis’s work probably is likely to have been more widely felt among his generation than will be noted for history” (Hunt, 1962, p. 509). Landis and Bolles’s work has not fared much better under late-20th- and early 21st-century scholarship, either. According to one prominent historian of sexology, their work on disabled women’s sexuality “should be noted more for its intent than for its results” (Bullough, 1995, p. 164). Yet, there is much to say about *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman*—in particular, the ways that perceptions and prejudices about the putative capacity of disabled women to have sexual subjectivity shaped the analytical logic at the core of Landis and Bolles’s conclusions.

In this article, I am interested not so much in examining the conclusions drawn by Landis and Bolles about disabled women’s sexuality per se. Rather, I am interested in examining the relationship between Landis and Bolles’s published conclusions about disabled women’s sexuality and the evidence of sexual subjectivity preserved in the Landis Collection held at the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction.<sup>1</sup> These files contain the original notes of the oral histories Landis and Bolles conducted during the late 1930s, a good deal of which are organized around evidence of sexual touching among the young women—the fear (and desire) of which provoked confusion and, in some cases, outright censorship by the authors of the study. The tensions and discrepancies that emerged between these unpublished data and Landis and Bolles’s published work are not only historically illuminating about the concept of touch, but they also tell us much about the professional inability to comprehend the production of sexual subjectivity among disabled women. By comparing unpublished data with Landis and Bolles’s published work, I

hope to draw a more complex picture of the study and how it exemplifies the ways in which clinical psychologists of the interwar period, many sponsored by the CRPS, often mishandled psychological and social profiles of complex people with whom they did not know quite how to contend.

Furthermore, I also hope to show how Landis and Bolles’s study confounds the historical interpretations of the CRPS’s ambitions and predilections during the first half the 20th century, especially in the period just before the Kinsey Institute became the primary beneficiary of its financial largesse. In particular, Landis and Bolles’s work departs significantly from conventional understandings of CRPS-funded work in its engagement, however limited or undeveloped, with the concept of sexual subjectivity among disabled women. By and large, the topic of disabled sexuality has not been treated in any comprehensive or sustained way by historians of psychology or other fields, certainly not before the civil rights and sexual revolutions of the 1960s and early 1970s made disability’s inclusion in sponsored research a legitimate goal (Serlin, 2010). Some queer theorists and disability studies scholars argue that the absence of research on disabled sexuality is due in large part to the archival intangibility of the subject matter; what has been left behind, if anything at all, are mere scraps, most of which require extrapolation rather than straightforward interpretation (McRuer & Mollow, 2012; Shildrick, 2009). Women with disabilities, and people with disabilities more generally, have been characteristically excluded from those populations studied explicitly as sexual subjects in their own right and denied—out of fear or ignorance—the opportunity to be seen as agents of their own sexual subjectivities. Add to this the exclusion of women of various identity markers from any kind of sustained archival presence that might account for their sexual subjectivities—poor women, women of color, women in institutions, and so forth—and the silence becomes profound.

<sup>1</sup> All references to case histories taken from files, dated 1934–1937, located in the Carney Landis Collection, deposited at the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction, Indiana University–Bloomington.

Katherine Butler Hathaway's autobiography *The Little Locksmith: A Memoir* (1943/2001), published at exactly the same moment as Landis and Bolles's study, provides a superb account of one disabled woman's exploration of eroticism and sexual fulfillment (Hathaway, 1943/2001). Hathaway's narrative is striking for its forthrightness and elegance about the inner life of disabled desire and its manifestation in married life. In the end, however, it is a highly mediated work of literary memoir that has only gained a reputation through its rediscovery by scholars eager to find narrations of disabled women's sexuality outside of the parameters of pathology and pity. Thus, the challenge for historians of psychology is to seek sources that would allow us to speculate on or demonstrate the significance of erotic subjectivities among disabled women as forms of active silence given that very little archival evidence exists that would permit one to excavate and interpret the subjective contours of disabled women's sexuality using conventional methodologies. Using Landis and Bolles's study as an evidentiary anchor to rely on as well as a problematic to be worked through, this article attempts to reconcile the possibilities and limitations of theorizing disabled women's sexuality while also honoring the possibilities and limitations provided by existing archival documents.

Although Landis and Bolles's work on the topic of disabled women's sexuality was unique among studies conducted by U.S. psychologists and sex researchers in the 1930s, in many ways *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman* is a rather conventional quantitative study that reflects the predominant models used to conduct sex research during the era. Kinsey approved of its originality in terms of interview methods; but one could argue that Landis and Bolles were contributing to a cottage industry that had been in full production mode for nearly two decades. In the furtive period following World War I, many CRPS-funded psychiatric and sexological researchers collected and analyzed voluminous quantities of sexual data on both "normal" and "abnormal" American women, including studies such as "Sexual Behavior and Secondary Sexual Hair in Female Patients With Manic Depressive Psychoses" (Gibbs, 1924) and *Factors in the Sex Life of Seven Hundred Psychopathic Women* (Strakosch, 1934).

Among the many books that belong to this genre, Katherine Bement Davis' (1929/1972) study *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women* stands out as methodologically distinct in that Davis asked women to talk about not only their sexual practices but also about their erotic relationships to their own bodies. Davis deliberately broke from conventional forms of data gathering and collected her information through oral histories, which permitted her research subjects to identify their sexual subjectivities without necessarily defining themselves according to clinical or conventional categories of sexual identity. This was a radical break from the seemingly rational strategies used by contemporary researchers to define desire and deviance. Putatively "objective" methods of quantifying gender or sexual deviance (such as measuring, comparing, and cataloging varieties of breasts, clitorises, labia, nipples, and pubic hair) were regularly deployed to generate evidence that seemed to corroborate supposed "truths" about questionable or non-normative bodies (Hegarty, 2007; Rembis, 2004). These truths were supposed to have emerged as part of a general cultural anxiety about women and increasingly linked to their public presence, both illicit and socially sanctioned, outside the home: "As women's sexual desire and behavior became a site of anxiety for society at large and as women served to participate in such gender transgressive behaviors as feminism, professional work, prostitution, and same-sex behavior, [sexologists] . . . began to 'read' female bodies for 'anatomical evidence' of sexual desire and behavior" (Miller, 2000, p. 79).

Sexologists, psychiatrists, and medical professionals during the early 20th century were committed to quantifying the social behaviors and sexual characteristics of women, such as prostitutes and lesbians, who fit into recognizable categories of sexual and gendered deviance. Taxonomies were created through the use of physical examinations to prove that body parts were morphologically correlated with deviance: "A woman's genitalia revealed her confession to the sexologist, her confessor," thus revealing the tensions surrounding tactility in a professional setting where touch exists as both as an extension of the clinical gaze and a facilitator of social discipline (Miller, 2000, p. 80).

Katherine Bement Davis' decision to foreground self-narration among her informants marked a significant break from the aforementioned investigative and analytical techniques, so common during the era, and established a model far more resonant with the postwar work of Kinsey. One could argue that Davis' foregrounding of interviews provided an important methodological inspiration for Landis and Bolles in much the same way that Landis and Bolles inspired Kinsey. And in its use of oral histories with a wide variety of research subjects, *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman* seems to gesture toward something new. As such, it is tempting to consider it as a missing link that completes a genealogical arc that emerges in Davis' work on female sexuality published in the late 1920s and is fulfilled in Kinsey's work on male and female sexuality published in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Such optimism, however, is largely untenable when one distinguishes Landis and Bolles's methodological innovations from their professional convictions, which were governed by psychosexual presumptions about the effect of disability on female sexual subjectivity. In this sense, Landis and Bolles's study does not provide the kind of innovation that Davis' did in that, rather than enabling subjects to speak about their sexual subjectivities, it is driven by psychologists' prescriptive belief in the constitutional limitations that inhibit and retard the disabled subject's capacity to possess sexual subjectivity in the first place.

In the introduction to their published study, Landis and Bolles make it clear that they did not undertake their study to contribute to an understanding of disabled women's sexuality per se. "These physically handicapped women provide an 'experiment in nature' for the study of psychosexual development. . . . The general hypothesis to be tested is whether or not the psychosexual component in personality development is modified and changed by the presence of the physical handicap; and if so, whether such changes influence the form and nature of personality adjustment in adult life" (Landis & Bolles, 1942, pp. 5–6). In other words, they positioned themselves neither as explicit advocates for disabled people nor as harsh critics of the individuals or institutions that cared for them. Their work stemmed from

the conviction that disabled women constituted the ideal "experiment in nature" in that they were examples of women who could not narrate their own sexual subjectivities and were excluded from the group of self-possessed, non-disabled young women interviewed by researchers like Davis.

According to the era's conventions of psychosexual thinking, disabled women were believed to compose a subset of women whose frustrated sexual subjectivity, if they could even own such a thing, was evidence of the absence of what Freud (1910) called the "sexual moment," an originary or primary insight into one's sexual self that allows one to narrate ostensibly normative heterosexual desires. For Landis and Bolles, disabled women were useful to the fields of psychology and sexology because they were perceived to be voiceless, sexual *tabulae rasa* whose social alienation confirmed psychological and sexological "truths." Which population, after all, would be better suited to demonstrate the effects of social ills on psychosexual development than the disabled, and disabled women in particular?

Furthermore, Landis and Bolles, like other researchers in this era, believed that there was a fundamental relationship between physical disability and neurotic behavior. Following on the work of contemporary psychologists who investigated the neurotic dimensions of disabled women's personalities, Landis and Bolles argued emphatically for a correlation between hyposexuality (that is, a subnormal diminished sex drive or the absence of one altogether) and psychosexual immaturity, attributing some of it to the young women's lack of social engagement but much of it to the perception that disabled women were socially maladjusted and neurotically inclined (Pintner, Eisenson, & Stanton, 1941; Rosenbaum, 1937). Landis and Bolles made explicit links between their research subjects' personalities and their respective sexual histories (or lack thereof), the inner mechanisms of which they believed were fundamental to understanding disabled women's sexuality in relation to existing categories of psychopathology. Such insights were also applied, with equal vigor, to nondisabled women who were regarded for all intents and purposes as physically normal while also identified as psychologically neurotic. The category of the "neurotic," charged with late 19th-century con-

ceptions of the assault on the body by the pace of modern life, was typically gendered female because it played directly into the period's understanding of women's hysteria as rooted in their essentially vulnerable constitutions (Pfister, 1997). This is a legacy that continued well into the 1990s with the feminization of depression and mood disorders in both clinical and popular discourses (Metzl, 2003).

Some historians of sexuality contend that during the 1920s and early 1930s the lauded goal of making socially and sexually autonomous adults depended on teaching a generation of young men and women how to be extroverted, how to avoid isolation, and connect how to interact with others for the purposes of social solidarity—and one might cynically imagine, for the purposes of consumer identification (Haag, 1993). Normative understandings of personality were mediated through advice literature and popular self-help-oriented texts that were instrumental in developing one's capacity to tell one's own story (presuming that one had a story to tell about one's self) that included a physical history, an account of social obstacles one had overcome, a projection of self-esteem, and a sense of social belonging. Landis and Bolles's interviews, by contrast, were not designed to promote disabled women's personality profiles or to champion the centrality of their social or sexual histories to psychological growth. Their interviews were anchored in the objective pursuit of pure research, implying that there was something valuable to be gained from studying women whose social experiences were perceived to be thoroughly excluded from the typical currents of social life. Within the often state-sponsored physical rehabilitation schemes that these women inhabited, the prospect of social rehabilitation, clarified through the techniques of self-possession and self-narration, was simply part of the missionary zeal with which sexologists and psychiatrists plied their trade in the 1930s.

Sometime after World War II, Landis deposited the complete data sets for *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman* in the archives of what was then called the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University. These raw data, when compared with the published versions of Landis and Bolles's study, make it evident that the researchers omitted a large number of individual narratives from

their final conclusions. Much of their study, on the surface, seems rather unflinching in its portrait of disabled women who are far less intimately familiar with their bodies than one might have imagined young women to be at mid-century point. For example, in one of the tables appending their text presenting data on autoeroticism, Landis and Bolles give the impression that the vast majority of their informants either rejected masturbation outright or practiced it so infrequently that it was, generally speaking, a negligible component of their sexual subjectivities (Landis & Bolles, 1942, p. 134). From such a table, one might be tempted to extrapolate that disabled women in the New York metropolitan area constituted a mostly masturbation-free population.

If one examines Landis and Bolles's original notes, however, the provocative character of the qualitative data that produced these quantitative conclusions tells a different, more richly nuanced story about sexual subjectivity that Landis and Bolles presented to their readers. For example, when one informant was asked whether she experienced physical pleasure, she stated that of her earliest sexual memories "the only thing I remember is sliding down the banister. I still like it, and started again about five years ago." She also reported, "I have had experiences where I had my legs crossed, someone plumped themselves into my lap and I had a very nice sensation. [I was] about 15 or 16." Landis and Bolles rated this informant, a young adult when she was interviewed in the late 1930s, as someone who "never" masturbated, and the details she herself provided were omitted from the final version of their book. Another interview subject, diagnosed with cardiac arrhythmia and living in an institutional setting, described sex play with a female neighbor who "often stayed with me because she loved my home. We were very intimate and she purposely missed trains to be with me. [She] [d]isplayed quite a bit of physical affection . . . I remember we were so free, I'd take a shower and then I bathed her." Landis and Bolles rated this subject also as someone who did not masturbate, proving that quantitative analysis makes little or no room for cohabitations of the bathtub or shower.

In a slightly more guarded and hesitant interview by a different research subject, another young woman recalled that, as a young girl, "I enjoyed remaining in the bathroom for long

periods of time, feeling the warmth comfort me. I found great pleasure in being nude," she remembered, "but then I never looked at myself in the mirror." The hesitation coming from this particular research subject is painful to contemplate, as it suggests a measure of emotional repression and psychic control enforced not by visual or tactile pleasure but by external standards of visual and tactile disidentification generated by others and applied against one's self. As yet another informant told Landis and Bolles, "There was a time when I did not like anyone to touch me. I could not stand it. The nurses used to do it a great deal when I first came here. I shrank from it. Now this [has] completely changed . . . since coming to the hospital here."

In noting that Landis and Bolles excluded these insights from their subjects' self-narrations, I am not suggesting that the researchers acted maliciously, even though what they actually *did* do was to strip their informants of complex sexual subjectivities by removing their messy or rough edges to fit conventional ontologies of sexuality. These young disabled women had sexual narratives, or forms of what might be called sexual *habitus*, that did not correspond to known or recognized psychosexual categories (Bourdieu, 1977).<sup>2</sup> That is, the narratives of sexual subjectivity collected from their interview subjects were far more confounding than anything Landis and Bolles understood how to grapple with, especially given Freudian narratives of social and sexual maturation that so structured psychological and sexological research for the first half of the 20th century, and were therefore discounted and erased (Jones, 2004; Reumann, 2005). Such narratives gathered by Landis and Bolles conveyed subjectivities consummated not through quantifiable acts of conventional (and/or heterosexual) penetrative sex or through recognizable patterns of oral–genital or digital–genital contact. Instead, they seem to be subjectivities consummated through something far less quantifiable. Rather, the sexual *habitus* described here seems to involve various acts of touch: self-touch, being touched through one's clothes, or touching one's erogenous zones by rubbing against an object. In the 1930s, such practices of touch may well have been viewed as provocative Freudian peccadilloes of polymorphous perversity. But they also may have been re-

garded as *terra incognita* for researchers such as Landis and Bolles.

Touch, as consummated through sensual acts, is a fundamental component of the communicative landscape of sexuality. It is a modality that travels in multiple directions simultaneously, and as such can become in moments of physical interaction a double-edged sword. Yet, our historical understanding of this complex sense medium has been deeply skewed and to a large degree overdetermined by how we understand touch: as an a permeable boundary of sexual danger or inappropriate public conduct; as an epidemiological vector of contagion; as a deliberate marker of economic status or the privileges that accrue to racial or ethnic distinction. The significance of touch as a medium of erotic communication is only ever grasped, if it is grasped at all, within normative modes of human sexuality, which characteristically exclude those with mobility or visual impairments, let alone those who desire touch outside the culturally relativistic models of interaction normalized in modern Western cultures. In the words of one queer theorist who understands the concept of bodily habitus as a form of social discipline, "The work of repetition is not neutral work; *it orients the body in some ways rather than others*" (Ahmed, 2006, p. 57).

It does not seem especially remarkable, then, to conclude that sexological studies conducted during the interwar period were hopelessly complicit with normative expectations of social or sexual behavior. This might explain why the forms of sexual subjectivity exhibited in the self-narrations collected by Landis and Bolles remain largely irretrievable. They contain evidence of sexual behaviors and social practices, such as touch, that cannot be easily analyzed or understood within conventional frameworks of sexual or social *habitus*. Perhaps this is because, at this particular historical juncture, sex researchers such as Landis and Bolles perceived tactility as inherently dangerous for both the person who touches and the recipient of that

<sup>2</sup> Here I am adapting sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) famous term for those "systems of durable, transposable dispositions" in which bodies occupy physical and social spaces through particular bodily actions, behaviors, gestures, and habits that come to be expressed through the cultural frameworks in which bodies move and through which bodies are identified.

person's touch. Even if one acknowledged the dual nature of touch, as a message simultaneously sent and received, the power relationships involved were nonetheless unclear and messy. In such a context, touch was emblematic of the range of questionable sexual subjectivities that must be foreclosed in deference to others.

Some recent scholars have argued, following the groundbreaking work of Silvan Tompkins in the 1960s, that touch is infused with complexities of affect and eroticism that confound simplistic categories of sexual orientation, let alone categories of gender orientation or gender or sexual difference (Sedgwick, 2003). One could even argue that characteristic and intersubjective forms of touch—stroking, petting, rubbing, holding, massaging, fingering, tracing, fisting, inserting, encircling, slapping, grasping, poking, and exploring with the fingertips—are performed more within the complex interactive dimensions of tactility than within established conventions of sexual orientation. Clearly, in the context of disabled women's sexuality, touch must be either avoided at all costs, or it must be institutionalized to reflect and sustain the psychosexual mechanisms of compulsory heterosexuality in ways that make the seeming benignity of touch (and that of heterosexuality) appear to be enduring and natural. Among early sexologists such as Landis and Bolles, touch was regarded not as something that the research subject *does* but as something to which the research subject *reacts*. This has remained a constant theme well beyond the 1940s: According to one scholar, sex education manuals produced during the 1980s and 1990s directed at visually impaired adolescents were modeled on heterosexual romantic rhetoric that policed the boundaries of promiscuous tactility (White, 2003).

The critical examination of the evidence of touch, and its inadvertent disavowal, in Landis and Bolles's 1942 study helps to reconstruct the power relations that inhere in histories of disability and sexuality as well as the sensuous and experiential dimensions of human touch within history of psychology more broadly. Touch provides multiple conceptual bases for thinking about how to historicize certain subjective dimensions of experience—such as tasting, smelling, feeling, and affect—that do not entirely depend on able-bodied status. Touch also poses a challenge to conventional methodological ap-

proaches to the sensorium that privilege forms of human communication that subordinate the so-called "lower" senses to the rigors of the rational mind (Corbin, 1994/2005; Levin, 1993; Pallasmaa, 2007). For the young women who served as research subjects for *The Personality and Sexuality of the Physically Handicapped Woman*, the erasure of the complexities of touch from their personal narratives reveals the institutional and social pressures exerted on researchers to uphold the conventions of heterosexual normativity. Their self-narrations of subjective experience and individual history, buried in the archive, highlight the need for scholars of sexuality and disability to think about touch not merely within reactive histories of social domination or sexual discipline but to think about touch as a proactive analytical category and generative historical phenomenon.

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