

## CHAPTER 6

# ON CULTURAL HISTORY AS TRANSFORMATION—OR, WHAT’S THE MATTER WITH PSYCHOLOGY ANYWAY?<sup>1</sup>

BETTY M. BAYER

On Kurt Danziger’s retirement from York University, a panel was arranged for the Canadian Psychological Association to recognize his contributions to the discipline of psychology and to the panelists’ scholarly and intellectual development as academic psychologists. Our task was to focus on a piece of his work that had played some central role in our own thinking. Having a few years into my tenure track job and having had a remarkable two years prior to that as a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada postdoctoral fellow, I was thrilled with the opportunity, as a fairly new (and optimistic) assistant professor, to offer reflection on what I saw as joint transformative powers of newer critical histories and feminism on psychology. These twinned forces of transformation had been addressed by Danziger (1994) in a paper he had delivered a few years earlier, and published later as “Does the history of psychology have a future?” For our panel, I entitled my paper “Life part way in, part way out”<sup>2</sup> to reflect that in-between place of history and feminism within psychology, and how this position might afford (or so I thought) the potential to transform the discipline (see Bayer, 1995). Sometime after, I learned from Danziger that he had tackled the question of the relation between marginality and disciplinary transformation in a paper he gave at Cheiron Europe in the early 1990s, “In praise of marginality” (1992). Here he attended to three sites of marginality as carrying the potential

for transformation—“the marginality of Psychology in the Netherlands[,] . . . the marginality of Cheiron Europe . . . [and] that of the modern historian of psychology” (p. 7). The transformative potential of the latter site was conceived of as “a space at the margins of science and history that can be usefully filled by historians whose professional affiliations are not with history but with a particular scientific discipline” (p. 8). Much in line with my own thinking, these works directed themselves to the insider-outsider status of history and of feminism as wellsprings of transformation for psychology as for other disciplines. Few of us questioned this kind of formulation at the time, and many continue to adhere to a view of the margins as disruptive or transgressive forces that somehow bring about transformation. This chapter picks up on the trail of the quest for transformation in psychology, examining further the relation between changing knowledge-making practices and transformation of the discipline. Because so many of us assumed that remaking how we produce knowledge would eventuate in a changed discipline, my examination of this set of expectations begins by putting in context the matter of disciplinary change from roughly Post-World War II on. The topic perforce encompasses numerous concerns, from those of epistemology and ontology through to more structural ones of disciplines and curriculum. Without losing sight of my initial focus on the project of a feminist historical psychology and of transforming psychology, these concerns are touched on to broaden our thinking about this very project. In the end, my hope is that the reader will also indulge me the odd side road here and there, as I examine how the question of transforming psychology invites us to ask who or what becomes transformed and in which ways for what kind of Psychology and psychology.<sup>3</sup>

### PSYCHOLOGY AND THE 'TURNS'—TO HISTORY, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

In retrospect, Danziger's and my own paper were part of several decades of wider disciplinary encounters and shaping of what has variously been referred to as the historic, cultural or linguistic turn, or the turn to constructionism, feminism, science studies or critical science studies, or more broadly, the transition from modern to postmodern. By no means am I trying to collapse these various turns into one coherent framework, for they arose within different disciplinary contexts and, while informing one another, they nonetheless are singular neither in effect nor intent. Differing in their emphases, priorities, tools of analysis, and political commitments, these turns still share certain features of disciplinary and intellectual discontent that bear on more “general issues—philosophical, theoretical, ideological and methodological” (White, 1999, p. 315; also see Iggers, 1997). For psychology,

as for other disciplines, one source of critique came from a general disenchantment with views of science (Danziger, 1994), including a growing recognition of what passed for a “*nonpolitical*, scientific attitude” as instead a masculinist, liberal, capitalist bias (Israel, 1979, p. 254; Harding & Hintikka, 1983; Herschberger, 1948; Weisstein, 1971; Keller, 1985). Following from this was a disaffection with universalizing notions, such as the idea of the subject’s nature operating in possessive individualism as one formed outside cultural-social-historical constraints (Hayles, 1999). Deriving from the joint forces of advocates and activists of parallel civil rights movements (e.g., blacks, women and lesbians and gays) along with antiwar and welfare rights struggles, more interpretative approaches began to displace those holding what I will loosely refer to as of a more positivist bent. These various turns—literary, linguistic, cultural and historical—have been thought of as “plac[ing] both agency and history back on the agenda” (McDonald, 1996, p. 5). They also served to place front and center a historiography of the everyday, and of those marginalized and forgotten (Iggers, 1997). Seen by many as issuing from “historical events interact[ing] with historiography and theory” (McDonald, p. 5; also see Bonnell & Hunt, 1999), these emerging approaches often served simultaneously as the basis of critique of traditional approaches to knowledge production *and* the basis for building alternative ones. From this vantage point, Danziger’s 1994 piece “Does the history of psychology have a future?” represents a marker of over, at minimum, a decade’s efforts devoted to disciplinary transformations, and recalls, in different ways, Roger Smith’s (1988) “Does the history of psychology have a subject?”; Graham Richards’s (1987) “Of what is the history of psychology a history”; and, Laurel Furumoto’s (1989) “The new history of psychology.” Together, these pieces tackle the interchange between the history of psychology and the theory of history, between epistemology and ontology, and between the discipline Psychology and its subject matter psychology. For each there grew comprehension of the significance of gender for understanding science and the practices of psychology.

With over another decade behind us, it is a propitious time to inquire again into this historic turn in psychology, asking ourselves to what extent and in what ways Psychology and psychology evidence signs—if any—of awakening to this “historical self-consciousness.” But more than this, the topic cries out for deeper examination of how we might construe transformation and marginalization, including the linking of one to the other. In thinking about what counts as transformation or marginalization, we need also consider what, in using such terms, we avoid talking about, hide, or make more palatable—for ourselves and others. Far from a progress report, then, my examination provides a critical revisiting of our hopes to transform Psychology and psychology through critical history.

Before I begin my examination, one overarching concern remains. And that is what I sense to be our, or at least my, dwindling optimism for what was envisioned as a historicization of Psychology and psychology. My fading hope brushes up against my continuing strong commitment to a feminist critical history for psychology, and my unwavering belief that Psychology and psychology without history is not simply bad science but rather a disingenuous—maybe even dangerous—discipline and disciplinary subject. Strong words, I know. But, I am not alone in my concern. Just recently, Graham Richards (2002) wrote that for all the “wealth of history of Psychology scholarship accumulated since around 1980 . . . history of psychology remains academically marginalized” (p. 8). His statement becomes all the more striking given the absence of Psychology and psychology in recent books devoted to the historic and the cultural turn (e.g., Bonnell & Hunt, 1999; McDonald, 1996), and the discipline’s ongoing rather minimal representation in volumes on feminist and critical scholarship. Gergen (2001) makes a similar case around the absence of psychology in postmodernist debate. Within the discipline, other telling gaps appear. Whereas a healthy number of departments in colleges and universities offer a course on history of psychology, the teaching of this course is often undertaken by those for whom history is, at best, a secondary interest and the course content rarely includes work from the newer histories (Fuchs & Viney, 2002; also see Richards). Specialization in history by faculty members and programmes offering a track in history and theory of psychology (undergraduate and graduate) are rare.<sup>4</sup> All of this becomes even more surprising when we realize that the discipline has never really cemented a core curriculum (Benjamin, 2001). We need therefore to attend as closely to the absence or minimal inclusion of cultural history scholarship inside as outside of our discipline. Without representation in the broader discussions of cultural history and changing intellectual tides, cultural historical psychology loses authorial voice inside and outside the discipline, in psychology’s curriculum and within the wider culture. However much cultural history may have to offer on the place of Psychology in psychology, and more generally in the tendency toward a psychologization of cultural, social, and political life, our efforts will go unnoticed unless we create more inroads into these discussions.

So, we cultural historians find ourselves, much as feminists have, with a paradoxical success—we continue to work out how the new history offers new ways to think about what counts as the psychological along with what counts as human and who does the counting while undergraduate curricula and the vast majority of psychologists in the Western world carry on *sans* pause. To what might we attribute this gap? If the areas of feminist and critical historical scholarship are developing nicely, where are its practitioners or their work to be found? It is to these issues that I now turn, beginning with professional reflections from feminist science studies scholars to gain insight into who or what becomes transformed with moves to new critical historical frameworks.

## PSYCHOLOGY AND CULTURAL HISTORY: WHOSE TRANSFORMATION? WHOSE KNOWLEDGE?

### SUBJECT OF OR TO TRANSFORMATION?

Sandra Harding (1991) writes that in the 1970s feminists began to “bring to bear on theories and practices of science and technology the distinctive approaches that had been developing in the social sciences, the humanities, and, more generally, the women’s movement” (p. 19). Reviewing feminist advances since these critiques, Harding recognizes development toward a more historicized appreciation of gender and of science at the center of questions of whose science and whose knowledge. In reading through a set of essays in the recently edited volume, *Feminist science studies: A new generation*, I was reminded anew of Harding’s questions and their importance to discussion on transformation. In particular, I was struck by a set of writings collected under the heading of “(un)disciplined identities: forging knowledge across borders.” Introducing these papers, Angela Ginoria (2001) announces, almost celebrates, a sense of splits, fractures, of transgressions accompanying feminist reworkings of science in her title “Proud to be an oxymoron! From schizophrenic to (un)disciplined practice.” Ginoria, a social psychologist, describes her insider-outsider status as conveying at once her personal and professional “internal” sense. She writes: “I have continued this schizophrenic existence—personally, as a Puerto Rican woman in mainstream America, and professionally, as an interdisciplinary scholar working on the seemingly unrelated issues of violence and science” (p. 14). Drawing on the chapters that follow, Ginoria highlights the diverse self-characterizations offered by the seven contributors as “insider-outsider,” “meandering river,” “self-reflexive boundary-straddling,” “dual citizen,” “resident alien,” “boundary-crossing,” and “naturecultures.” Ginoria reads these terms, as do many of the contributors, as “empowering” tools to use in “decoding the experience that my [her] first discipline [psychology] would have labeled as maladjusted at best and schizophrenic at worst” (p. 19). Picart (2001), another contributor, reports a similar thing in relating the advice she imparts to students on being a “scientist who turncoated to become a philosopher”: “I speak . . . with quiet conviction of the humorous, painfully ambivalent and creatively survival-rich experiences, of being at the limen—and invite them [students] to join in the cautious destabilization and joyous reworking of these borders” (p. 46).

One is hard-pressed to escape the bittersweet irony at work here, especially when you take into consideration that the transgressive labours of these feminist scientists are undertaken, for the most part, not within their respective scientific disciplines but rather within Women’s Studies or some other interdisciplinary academic location. Insiders who have left, or never been allowed to enter, their primary disciplines complicate the story of insider-outsider status as in and of itself transformative. Their labours’ migration from disciplinary to interdisciplinary locations

raises questions about who or what is being transformed in primary disciplines by this new generation of feminist science studies scholars. Their stories suggest we need to follow scholars' migration patterns. Are critical histories of psychology being taught outside the discipline? Are interdisciplinary programs offering tracks in a cultural history psychology? Where does a cultural historical psychologist or psychology reside? These migrations also provide an initial clue into what may be considered the myth of transformation, much like the myths of origin and objectivity early revealed in feminist critiques (e.g., Keller, 1985; Samelson, 1974). Transformation (or new found freedom) may be the promise but at what costs and for whom? This new generation, while not identical with the positions held and border transgressions made by earlier ones, nonetheless makes one mindful—all too sharply and even painfully—of transformation as a work undertaken in perpetuity. It is a work of generations, of vigilance, responsibility and politics *and* a work of fortune—good and bad. In short, to make claims on the transformative powers of marginalization, we need to know the relevant history.

As another example, for well-known scholar Donna Haraway (2000) reflecting back to 1979 when she accepted the “dream job” of feminist theorist in the History of Consciousness program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, the position solved several problems. As she says, the position was a “dream job” in that it allowed her to “work on what [she] really wanted to do, keep doing the political work that really mattered to her, and write about animals” (p. 38). It contrasted sharply with her time at Johns Hopkins University, where they were not going to promote her to Associate Professor, and where, during her review, a colleague had recommended she “erase” two of her publications from her CV “because they were too political and embarrassed [her] colleagues” (p. 38). So, the very reasons Haraway was denied promotion in one institution were precisely the qualifications for her acceptance elsewhere. She relocated to the History of Consciousness program, which was being revitalized by Hayden White and James Clifford, key figures in the linguistic or discursive turn. However positive the move was, the fact remains that those envisioning new creative directions may be penalized, and that disciplines, in shoring up their boundary defenses, may restrict not only the intellectual life of individuals but the profession, its academic curriculum and its intellectual livelihood.

Even though I have come across a number of these sorts of accounts, my own reaction on writing about them here is to rush to assure readers, and myself, that, of course, these sorts of views are so yesterday and that today we are well beyond either giving or receiving this type of advice. But the fact of the matter is that these stories remain all too common, and are often accompanied by feminist and cultural history scholars being prompted to move academic homes in search of more hospitable intellectual climes. Notwithstanding my own experience, I have come to know many psychologists working in a department or program outside of psychology. Part pushed, part prodded and part drawn to another location, the

moves are never simply about choice. By this, I do not mean to convey *all* switches from one to another institution, department or program result from disciplinary wrangling and policing. Nor do I want to be heard as positing that residing outside of Psychology is wrong or bad for psychology or psychologists or, for that matter, that residing in psychology is *de facto* good or a measure of success. Nonetheless, one has to speculate whether, if the discipline of psychology (and others) was open to alternative approaches, to feminism and more interdisciplinary scholarship, many of us would be happily ensconced in our “home” disciplines. Were departments and programs more hospitable to cultural history psychology and to its development within curriculum and research, we might well have been positioned more centrally than Richards (2002) found in his review. On imagining our numbers and our varieties of scholarship, one can’t help but wonder how the face of Psychology and psychology would appear today. And, on imagining this, one cannot help but conjecture how restrictions shortchange all of us in the end at so many levels—institutional, professional, intellectual, everyday life—by reducing the possibilities of scholarship and teaching that may make a real difference for all of our lives.<sup>5</sup>

In inquiring into where historians in Psychology and other disciplinary historians might make their home, Danziger (1992) posed the dilemma as follows: The disciplinary historian “can elect either to bow to the moral authority of the discipline and become an ornament to the discipline by historicizing that authority, or to produce critical history for an audience composed entirely of other critical historians” (p. 10). Recognizing the potential risks for graduate students of psychology and for less and more established psychologists who pursue disciplinary history, Danziger sought to locate a place where scientists’ and critical historians’ interests converged. But, as he found, herein lies the rub: the place of convergence is precisely that hotspot of contention about the nature of science, including scientific authority and moral commitment. In Danziger’s words, “It is when that authority becomes questionable, when the professional community is divided in some profound way, that a critical disciplinary history has a significant contribution to make” (p. 19). But as found by scholars of international psychologies, feminism, and the new historiography whose inquiries aimed to alter Psychology’s near monolithic authority (Danziger), challenges to the discipline, whether localized in departments or more broadly within the academy, do not always eventuate in change. These inquiries were imagined initially to be of transformation-inducing potential by foregrounding the “particularly intimate connection between the historicity of the subject matter and the history of conceptions about that subject matter” (Danziger, p. 21). Yet, this very recognition bore paradoxical effects for scholars. Even as they reconceived significant fields within psychology—a historical social psychology or feminist historical social psychology—scholars, having transformed their teaching and scholarship, sometimes found themselves either at odds with their colleagues or in homes outside the discipline, as was the case for Haraway and Ginoria.

At the risk of being read as trading off talk of possibilities for stories of doom and gloom, it seems to me that we cannot afford to overlook this question of where cultural historians, feminist and otherwise, are located. To ignore this question does a great disservice to cultural history, to its place in formal organizations, to academic positions and curriculum, to our students (undergraduate and graduate), and, given the authority granted to psychology within North America, to culture more widely. Any question of how cultural history in psychology has served to remake Psychology and psychology must therefore bring within its purview the welfare of critical scholars, and of how we might more actively ensure their—our—livelihood. Likewise, we need to think about structural supports—about how to build and support cultural history programmes in psychology. In renewing our cultural history project, we might do well to adopt Haraway's (1997) attitude toward her work, an orientation she describes of her writing in general as "anxious much more than it is optimistic" (p. 44). For all of us, being "troubled or uneasy" (OED) about the place of cultural history in psychology may prove to be far more productive than undue optimism.

Having looked at *whose* transformation, the next step is to consider *what* becomes transformed—the subject of our disciplines, disciplines themselves, and/or the relation of our disciplines to other disciplines and programmes. To do so means extending this inquiry to cultural history psychology's larger context of emergence as followed through an historicized appreciation of area studies and interdisciplinarity, sites to which psychologists committed to cultural history and feminism sometimes move. Following this, we need to direct ourselves to the place of Psychology and psychology within, as Richards (2002) puts it, "the 'psychological ecology,' as it were, of modernist cultures" (p. 18). This means understanding how psychology "operates in contemporary culture" and the "matrix" of loosely, integrated elements in this production (Richards). I turn now to that historical tide of intellectual, social and cultural change most often earmarked as the transition from modern to postmodern as it was shaped by events from post-World War II on.

#### SUBJECT OF OR TO KNOWLEDGE?

At base in this inquiry lies a root conundrum for me: How could psychology as a discipline whose penchant claims to lie with evidence overlook scads of it in what appears to be an effort to secure a particular positivist narrative about its scientific nature and status? What transpires in psychology's longstanding love affair with this view of science to prevent the discipline from looking closely and deeply into the soul of its beloved? How are we to understand the seeming contradiction between the discipline's scientific commitments and its epistemological desires? Given the vast and longer history of critique on these very fronts, how might we approach psychology's entanglements and resistance to a cultural



historical psychology? Two avenues of exploration seem to offer ways for cultural historians to open up the conceptual deadlock created by repeatedly pitting a stable mainstream psychology against proliferation of alternative but subordinate approaches. One is to produce a more cultural historical analysis of this very relation between psychology's weddedness to a single version of science and scientific methods and cultural history's to more interpretive approaches. A second is to historicize relations between disciplines and interdisciplines. To pursue the former, I will look at the culture of disciplines and disciplinary relations through their signs and symptoms, as Marjorie Garber develops this analysis. Delivered with a bit of tongue-in-cheek, Garber posits a more (psycho)dynamic entanglement of desires in disciplinary relations in her effort to reconceive academic feuds and attacks on the academy. Despite our usual reluctance to engage Freudian and, for some, Foucaultian, analysis, Garber makes this pursuit worth the indulgence.

### Signs and Symptoms of Disciplinary Affairs

"Disciplines," writes Garber (2001), "are constituted on the site of their own lack." In fact, she adds, "they are . . . twice so constituted" (p. 89). They are so, first, because "their desire is for genius," an impossibility as genius is neither structured nor rule bound whereas disciplines often operate with both. They are so, second, because "their existence is bound up with the continual attempt to coincide with [an] ideal [of themselves]" (p. 90)—an ideal that harbours a masculine sense for, as Atwood (2002) reminds us, women "never had a lot of Genius medals stuck onto them" (p. 100). The space between "the attempt and the idealization, the space of disciplinary desire," continues Garber, "is what we call 'theory'" (p. 90). Never really stabilized, except where theory becomes doctrine, desire is understood to be rather mobile. Disciplinary desire thus moves about as disciplines seek to realize their "ideal" self, making envy a discipline's "indwelling spirit" (p. 90). Garber's interest is thus with how envy makes disciplines tick.

Granted, in writing this, Garber premises "discipline envy" on its operating as "a mechanism—a structure. . . . New disciplines develop; others fade away. Envy, or desire, or emulation, the fantasy of becoming that more complete other thing, is what repeats" (p. 67). Playing on Freud's psychosexual dynamic of "penis envy," Garber sees a cultural proliferation of envy from cosmetic surgery (venus envy), journalists-turned-authors ("pencil envy"), and American's "magnitude envy" (big, bigger, biggest), through to "disciplinary—and literary—desires." Quoting psychologist Howard Gardner, Garber enters psychology's physics envy—its wish by aping the methods of physical science to *be* a science—as a case in point. The envy tag, however, has also been attached to those whose work fits more with one or another of the 'turns,' as, for example, recent indictments against science studies scholars. Often dubbed the 'science wars,' science studies scholars have been characterized as suffering from "science envy," a diagnosis turning their view of

science as culture, or as social relations and practices, into the sign and symptom of their envy.<sup>6</sup> Deemed envious of “science’s privileged position,” these scholars are regarded as seeking the privilege through the means of “exploiting that prestige” to enhance the “rigor” of their own critical discourse.

One simply cannot help but see a parallel to Freud’s view of women’s lack as translating into envy leading them to search (interminably) for the unobtainable. Their only hope is to approximate obtaining the desired object indirectly through a male child (p. 71)—their own power, status and moral authority therefore always in question and enacted by mediation through another. Through the gendered associations made of disciplines as either “hard” or “dry” (quantitative) or “soft” or “wet” (narrative, interpretive, descriptive) sciences, the *envy* idea circulates, rendering science studies scholars effeminate, as the ones subject to fantasies of completing their own taken-for-granted incompleteness through their critical relation to the object ‘science’ and without authority of their own. In Psychology this diagnosis is delivered without any sense of irony about Psychology’s physics envy.

Much as Freud’s notion of penis envy was about generations and symptoms of power so discipline envy can be understood as about lineage and indications of power. If, as Garber writes, “in current psychological shorthand, *envy* means not having it all: feeling a sense of loss, or limit, or even . . . nostalgia for a past imagined as more perfect and more whole” (p. 69), then we might ask of what else this sense is productive. We might further imagine “envy” as culturally productive for disciplines, even as it might be damaging for individual scholars. That is, envy is simultaneously about the possibility of sublimation and the risk of neurosis. It circulates in the space of disciplinary and interdisciplinary desire, the space within which idealized masculinity, neurosis and femininity arise as well as the space of culture, the space of both symptom and symbol. It creates both mainstream and alternative, and traps them in a dance of mirrorings.

From this perspective, we can imagine interdisciplinary programs or studies, as area studies (e.g., Asian, Women’s, Medieval), as emerging or being egged on, in a manner of speaking, by disciplines. Interdisciplinary programs, therefore, function to “stage encounters” among disciplines, often through imagining new combinations, as, for example, science and literature or culture and science (Garber). The lost object, if not necessarily found, is promised to be fashioned anew. But if disciplines are founded on a site of their own lack, and if interdisciplinary are the space of imagined potential wholeness, then, we need to look at relational dynamics between the two as a struggle to keep at bay anxieties about inevitable incompleteness. Framed this way, both appear doomed to a repetition of the fantasy of the other’s basic *lack*—disciplines locating it in interdisciplinarity and vice versa. Their reflexive relation resembles Narcissus’s to his own reflection, rather than a critical reflexivity that would enable moves beyond this repetitious pattern—we gaze at ourselves gazing at reflections of ourselves gazing back at our

representations *ad infinitum*. Haraway (1997) writes of something akin to this as a “relentless insistence on reflexivity, which seems not to be able to get beyond self-vision as the cure for self-invisibility” (p. 33). One result is the production and reproduction of the same thing, rather than breaking up the pattern to allow for something different (i.e., transformation). In these ways, envisioning transformation of disciplines as following automatically from more interdisciplinary scholarship may itself be a fantasy subject to ill-fated ends, especially if this dynamic enables disciplines to expel, deauthorize or declare alternatives as lying outside the discipline’s intellectual mandate.

To expand further on these dynamic contexts of knowledge’s emergence, Garber uses Foucault’s (1977) recognition of “the disciplines mark[ing] the moment when the reversal of the political axes of individualization—as one might call it—takes place . . . that moment when the sciences of man became possible is the moment when a new technology of power and a new political anatomy of the body were implemented” (pp. 192,193). According to Foucault, and as used by Garber, “all the sciences, analyses of practices employing the root ‘psycho-’ have their origin in this historical reversal of the procedures of individualization” (p. 193). This process of individualization psychically charges disciplinary disputes and dissent and impels the narrative of nostalgia, a longing for a lost (imagined) “wholer version of oneself” or one’s discipline or of knowledge itself (Garber, p. 89). This charge might be especially potent for those in psychology whose narrative has been overly determined by the discipline’s struggle with its scientific status—its physics envy. This preoccupation has manifested in North American Psychology’s over emphasis on methods to the detriment of its subject matter (Smith, 1997), and, perhaps, in the schism of APS from APA. Much as Freud was unable to critique idealized masculinity, so we might find disciplines and science, and, for that matter, interdisciplinary programmes and studies, unable to sustain or allow for a thoroughgoing critique of the idealized masculinity operating within their desires for a unitary perfected knowledge/self (perfect meaning complete, wholeness).

From a different angle, there is another way to think about these ‘lacks’ and their intellectual entanglements. What is missing in Psychology for cultural historians is a Psychology and psychology situated in time, place and circumstance. Many would agree that the hoped for change lies with methods attuned to more local contexts, or the everyday, with an appreciation of science as a social and cultural practice, as interpretive, and objectivity as a more critically reflexive position, situated in social relations and practices. Psychology’s refusals and its asserting of universal insights into our nature outside the bounds of history and time, as Garber (1998) writes elsewhere, can also be read as symptomatic. That is, symptoms of the discipline’s desire to free itself of its apparatuses of knowledge production, of those very social relations of practices that critical historians, feminists, and science studies scholars have been detailing in developing other ways to produce knowledge. Danziger (1994) writes of something close to this in what he calls,

after Max Weber's "disenchantment of the world," the "disenchantment of science" (p. 473). According to Danziger, Weber was referring to "a historical process in which science played a major role. In this process the world ceased to be an arena for miracles and spirits and for divinely inspired moral dramas and became an arena for human calculation and rational prediction" (p. 473). Art and science parted ways. Foucault's (1977) notion of the "psycho-" technologies of rational measurement and management—a "calculable man" (p. 193) make evident complaints captured by our current "disenchantment of science".

Using the case of the "culture wars," Garber instances how this 'war' tells a larger story of "striking symptoms of culture in our time." For Garber, the "culture wars" reflect a "conflict that might be located precisely in the clash between the timeless, ahistorical, universalizing, decontextualizing function of the 'symbol' and the historically contingent, specific, and overdetermined function of the 'symptom'" (p. 7). While Garber then looks at the implications of this for literature, her analysis can be extended to psychology to read: Psychology as "symbol" is "expected to proclaim 'timeless, universal, truths'; [psychology] as 'symptom' is embedded in particular historical preoccupations and conflicts, both in its own time and in ours" (p. 7). Garber's analysis is edifying in that she helps us to connect the dots between the problems for *psychology* of a *Psychology* that is symptomatic of "decontextualization, historical forgetting" and the "erasure of conflicting forces." For one, the struggle between the local and the global, or specific and general, identifies one line of debate between cultural historical psychologists and positivist science paradigms. For another, there is operating in this cultural symptom a "tyranny of the empirical" that Garber regards as impoverishing our cultural understandings. In her words, "our culture likes numbers, statistics, 'facts.' As if a fact were somehow the end of the story rather than the beginning" (p. 6). What this empirical point of view *lacks*, are ways to read the cultural, and to locate or create meaning. To really bring the risk of a calculable subject home, Garber invites us to imagine what would have happened to the Oedipal drama had it been wrought through hypothetical exploration of "the statistical occurrence of dysfunctional families within a) 'real' Theban households of the period, or b) classical tragedy. How many royal babies were exposed on hillsides? What were the social and economic pressures compelling the remarriage of widows?" (p. 5). No need to belabour the point.

I have found Garber's turn to psychoanalysis in both her thinking through of discipline envy and of the symptoms of disciplinary cultures useful for how effectively she redirects attention to the arena of desires, fantasies, and imaginings. Her work prompts us to delve further into psychology's place in creating and sustaining this "calculable subject," or culture of the "empirical self" (Bayer, 2002). Indeed, this form of a rational subject underlies much of Psychology's approach to the psychological, of which cultural historical psychology has provided astute analysis upon analysis. Perhaps many of us assumed that by showing

how Psychology and psychology have themselves grown out of and been involved in shaping cultural history, that the discipline itself would change (or convert) its knowledge-making practices. But the dynamics, the networks, and the cultural entrenchment of Psychology and its hold on psychology run deep, and those of us working in the critical historical vein have perhaps been ourselves less wide-ranging or outside the ordinary than we might have thought. In fact, we have in many of our critical engagements with Psychology's paradigmatic, theoretical or historical lacks, however wittingly or unwittingly, been given to certain repetitions ourselves. At various times we have identified how our approaches might fill a gap, provide the connective tissue in a narrative of disciplinary progress (despite our critique of grand narratives), or assumed some democratic (rational) model of representations of constituencies as bringing about a more diverse discipline (Bayer, 1995, 1997; Danziger, 1994; Richards, 1987, 2002). We may also have been far too quick to supplant notions of a calculating subject with those of a regulating, disciplining (Foucaultian) one. We have undoubtedly directed our efforts too inwardly, too much at the discipline itself and perhaps not enough toward interdisciplinary sites of critical historical work, at creating a space for cultural historical psychology in science studies, women's studies, cultural studies, history of science and so on.

### Looking to Wider Contexts of Emergence

Approaches in critical cultural historical psychology could be said to have emerged from that larger context of a massive and far-reaching historical transition from modern to postmodern, which we are still undergoing and which is often characterized as a changeover from an industrial-based to information-based economy (see Hayles, 1999). Its momentum in the United States has put it on a scale akin to the "turmoil at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in England" (Traweek, 2000, p. 22). Pursuing this political, social, intellectual and cultural "revolution" from the period of World War II, Traweek traces how this upheaval brought with it demands for new kinds of knowledge and knowledge production by "new kinds of researchers at new kinds of universities" running all the way from "new defences against new weapons" through to "new ways for government to communicate with citizens" (p. 38; also see Herman, 1995). Psychology was among those disciplines most affected, along with the physical sciences, engineering, economics, and political science, creating interdisciplinary sites for research (Traweek). Interdisciplinary think tanks, such as the cybernetic conferences, and research centers cropping up around group dynamic research were part of this shift-change (Edwards, 1996; Herman, 1995). To quote Traweek, "cold war sensibilities" encouraged "mission-oriented" research to protracted effect, and psychology was no exception.

The term 'studies' signaled interdisciplines, "nexes of overlapping interest," and reflected in its postwar coinage, a sign of the "increasing interest in

non-European or non-Western regions of the world” (Garber, 2001, p. 77). From the 1950s on, interdisciplinary and area studies grew in number and kind, often being refitted to the times in their changing emphases from temporal to geographic to cultural markers. Most of us readily refer to the sixties and seventies as ushering in ethnic, sexuality and women’s studies. Traweek sees temporal centers as characteristic of new area studies in the 1980s, followed by cultural studies, environmental studies, and we might now add postcolonial and global studies. Traweek notes that “at UCLA the list of interdisciplinary research ‘centers’ is longer than the list of the traditional disciplinary departments, as is true of most highly ranked American research universities” (p. 45). Despite how these seemingly “postdisciplinary” sites have grown since the 1950s and come to characterize or to be used as an ‘unique’ benchmark of institutions, as at the liberal arts institution where I teach, there remains a stubborn hold by disciplines on “the definition of intellectual authority” (Traweek). If my institution offers any insight, this contradictory arrangement has to do with a failure on the part of administration to provide structural support outside of disciplines. These contradictions may prove damaging to institutions, to faculty and to students who allow disciplines to promulgate misinformation that jobs are few and far between for those holding interdisciplinary degrees or adopting interdisciplinary approaches (Traweek; Balsamo, 2000a). Differences in intellectual authority can also result in academic wrangling over department affiliation, the status of courses and scholarship, the relation of interdisciplinary or area studies or centers to disciplines, and so on. Added into this complex of power relations is the backlash against ethnic and minority studies of late, making for a rather chilly climate for many (Balsamo, 2000b).

To overlook this context, is to ignore, on the one hand, the very basis of undertaking critical history, feminist and otherwise. On the other hand, it also makes us shortsighted about the ways in which departments and disciplines continue to exercise their authority despite mounting pressure for change, as Danziger observed. So, we need to situate historically disciplines, interdisciplines and area studies in trying to understand transformations-in-the-making, their promises and the resistance they meet. Without this, we may misdirect our struggle for recognition from the discipline and in psychology curricula in ways that continue to limit real possibilities for change. Failing to address our context of emergence and a much more complex, rich and varied history of science and practices of knowledge within psychology also risks continued solidifying and reifying of a disciplinary authority that has little basis in Psychology’s own history of methods, practices or struggles with its subject. We simply can no longer afford to succumb to barren counter-challenges to our work, such as those boiling down to some equation of declining interest in positivism with either the demise of the discipline itself or our own legitimacy as psychologists. Such equations illumine psychology’s cultural symptoms and worries as about its status as a science and its wider cultural currency. They also reveal the discipline’s tendency to misidentify the ideology of its

(masculine) power as a “natural” instead of historically rooted authority. What this standard criticism cannot provide is a form of engagement with changing practices of knowledge production or changing notions of our subject, or indeed emerging interdisciplinary sites of psychological inquiry.

## FROM MYTHS TO PRACTICES OF TRANSFORMATION

To situate psychology within the transition from modern to postmodern would be to resituate various streams of work as more central than typically recognized. Among these would be cultural historical psychology, including the growth of centers of study marked by a particular approach, such as narrative, discursive or critical psychology, the long history of feminism in psychology, as well as “mission-oriented” research centers, civil rights work, and cybernetics along with other political economic-based shifts. The history of the discipline would also be substantively transformed were it told through the framework of struggles over methods, alternative approaches and so on. Tracing this story through works following the various ‘turns’ would be an important component of a critical examination of our quest to transform Psychology and psychology. With but a moment’s pause, a number of relevant works flock to mind, including Buss’s (1979) *Psychology in social context*; Dinnerstein’s (1976) *The mermaid and the minotaur*; C. Sherif’s (1976) *Orientation in social psychology*; Weisstein’s (1971) “Psychology constructs the female;” Samelson’s (1978) “From ‘race psychology’ to ‘studies in prejudice’”; Henriques et al.’s (1984) *Changing the subject*; Kitzinger’s (1987) *The social construction of lesbianism*; Morawski’s (1988) *The rise of experimentation in psychology*; and, Danziger’s (1990) *Constructing the subject*; and, more recently, Graham Richards’s (1997) *‘Race’, racism and psychology: Towards a reflexive history* and Katherine Pandora’s (1997) *Rebels within the ranks*. Even from this limited selection, one can gain a sense of the sorting out, in recent decades, of questions that derive from psychology being a part of larger social and cultural historical changes and from debate on the production of knowledge for Psychology and psychology. These works not only supply relevant lines for us to historicize the project of a cultural history psychology but they serve to underscore the need for critical historical scholarship to become as mindful of its own gaps and shortcomings as it is about the discipline’s more generally.

Here’s what I mean by this. Within critical science studies, Haraway (1997) observed science studies scholars’ analyses as limited by their failure to draw from the “understandings of semiotics, visual culture, and narrative practice coming specifically from feminist, postcolonial, and multicultural oppositional theory” (p. 35; also see Golinski, 1998). Offering critical reads of science, some scholars nonetheless rendered their analyses through narratives of heroic action, or stories of “trials and feats of strength, amassing of allies, forging of worlds in the

strength and numbers of forced allies” (p. 34). Some accounts have also “mistaken other narratives of action about scientific knowledge production as functionalist accounts appealing in the tired old way to preformed categories of the social, such as gender, race, and class” (p. 35). As she puts it, “either critical scholars in antiracist, feminist cultural studies of science and technology have not been clear enough about racial formation, gender-in-the-making, the forging of class, and the discursive production of sexuality *through the constitutive practices of technoscience production themselves*, or the science studies scholars aren’t reading or listening—or both” (p. 35). A similar argument could be made of critical historical and critical feminist scholars in psychology for we too fail to engage regularly one another’s work, devoting more attention to the faultlines between cultural history and the mainstream of psychology and making for shortsightedness.

For critical history scholars to engage with one another’s work is to allow cultural historical psychology to enlarge its work on science, practices of knowledge, and notions of the subject. Paralleling Haraway’s (1997) finding of new understandings of masculinity and scientific observers by reexamining science studies histories of early modern scientist Boyle’s laboratory, we might engage ground breaking works in cultural history psychology, such as Danziger’s (1990) on social relations and practices in Psychology’s “constructing the subject.” For example, in looking at the models of education and testing, clinical practice and hypnosis, and introspection, we might inquire into who was being made in what counted as credible witnesses or observers, and as credible subjects of science. Surely gender was at much at stake in constructing the subject of testing as it was in introspective observers and in clinical subjects. What would this critical history add to our understanding of psychology’s participation in gendering authority, ways of life and practices of science? And what types of masculinity were at stake in forging the rational, testable and calculable subject of psychology? Likewise we might inquire into how our discipline’s history would look if told through female subjects’ performances in spaces signified by the couch, the laboratory, the clinic, and the field where they facilitated the interchange of meanings between the world outside and the world inside the discipline without authority in either. What I am arguing for is sustained treatment of gender-in-the-making in which gender “is the relation between variously constituted categories of men and women (and variously arrayed tropes), differentiated by nation, generation, class, lineage, color, and much else” (Haraway, p. 28).

Critical histories attending to these complex relations constituted *in* the making of psychological knowledge are sorely needed and are most assuredly not of significance only for women and people of color. Building on our work rather than reiterating our divergence from the mainstream is crucial. To assume otherwise is to repeat the very timeworn and thinly veiled dualism invoked by mainstream scholars of work on gender, race, class, sexuality and so on as about “special interest groups”—ideology—rather than serious scholarship. One would have thought



this criticism to have outlived its day long ago, especially given innumerable demonstrations of the very ideologically-laden premises and parameters of logical positivist science (e.g., Haraway). But, as Steinberg (1996) discovered when a new faculty member, the term “ideologue” continues to be invoked tactically to pressure faculty to follow certain departmental tradition or “scholarly” ways. On reflection, Steinberg says that he saw his “epistemological and ethical choice not as one between tradition and innovation or between objective and ideological scholarship, but between the tradition of ideologically marked ‘normal’ science and the tradition of critical thinking and, most specifically, of the critique of ideology” (p. 105). He was thus, “loath to accept the scholar/ideologue distinction because of its kneejerk acceptance of the myth of objectivity” (p. 105). His story is instructive for how he helps us to move beyond the myth of transformation to practices of transformation.

Engaging a fuller range of our cultural historical psychology work will also serve to build upon already strong scholarship on epistemology, and ontology, most especially on what Smith (1997) calls the “core problem” of subject-object relations. At heart, for Smith, are such questions as “how, objectively, can we observe ourselves? By the process of observation, do we not make ourselves into something different?” (p. 15). Without recounting it in detail, there is a healthy body of scholarship on the problem of objectivity, whether approached as characteristics of the observer, scientific practices or paradigmatic assumptions. Such critiques freed us from the view that objectivity—whether of the observer or scientific practices—was neatly achieved by assumptions of detachment or ‘hands-off’ methods (e.g., Haraway, 1997; Keller, 1992; Megill, 1991; Nagel, 1986). A more reflexive appreciation was called for. Philosopher Elizabeth Grosz (1993) pinpointed the problematic well: If critical inquiry into the subject of knowledge has located a blind spot in knowledge production of reason’s inability to “know the knower,” then a “discipline whose object is *man* is necessarily incomplete unless it can include its own production as a discipline within the knowledge it produces” (p. 11). For those adhering to positivist formulations of a scientific psychology, this reflexive relation has wreaked havoc, calling forth endless defensive maneuvers in an effort to shore up the line between those scientific psychologists doing the observing and their objects of observation—humans, animals, birds, fish, computer programs and so on. Interestingly, the more efforts are directed in this way, the more they reveal the very constitutive nature of subject-object relations (e.g., Morawski, 1992; Rosenzweig, 1933).

That observers cannot get around this reflexive relation is probably more readily agreed upon than how this reflexive relation functions or might function in the production of scientific knowledge. One thing we do know is that the historicity of reflexivity remains relatively unexamined for its changing meanings across different ‘turns’. Hayles (1999) traces one significant shift in subject-object relations, and the meaning of reflexivity to post-WorldWar II social movements

and the emerging area of cybernetics (also see Haraway). Cybernetics, she argues, carried potent new ways to think about feedback in terms of circuits of information that flowed through us. Soon these ideas began to subvert versions of “observers as outside the system they observe” such that information could loop “*through* the observers, drawing them in to become part of the system being observed” (p. 9). This shift entailed a wholehearted makeover from more static, even if constructionist, notions to more constitutive notions of relations between observers and observed, and between both of these and the broader cultural context (e.g., Abbott, 2001).

Cybernetic influences reworked visions of the human as a set of “informational processes” whose erasure of our embodied ways of being set itself apart from “other critiques of the liberal humanist subject, especially in feminist post-colonial theories” (Hayles, 1999, p. 4; also see Edwards, 1996). It did so mainly by positing a relational flow of information as the key organizing idea to the liberal humanist subject, displacing previous notions organized around possessive individualism in which the body marked the boundary of the self and was conceived of as the container of our ‘selves,’ even though this rational subject was “not usually represented as *being* a body” (p. 4, author’s emphasis; also see Bordo, 1993). Of course, one might usefully argue that cybernetics ushered in a particular kind of embodied subject organized through information, codes and so on but key for us here is the idea of the constitutive nature of subject-object relations.

These more constitutive approaches to knowledge-making relations and practices have led over past decades, as I noted earlier, from ways to critically examine to ways to critically re-envision how we might proceed in psychology. Insofar as “linguistic and symbolic discourse is primary in our world, then the history of discourse, the history of the way cultures picture themselves to themselves, is central to the human sciences. In other words, from this perspective the history of the human sciences is itself a human science” (Smith, 1997, p. 870). That is, the quest to think about whose science and whose knowledge has led not only to changing appreciation of the relation between Psychology and psychology, but how science, culture, politics, language, and much more are part and parcel of any cultural historical psychology.

By zeroing in on local cultural histories, the project of a cultural historical psychology enlarged approaches to the study of psychology in everyday life to considering as well the discipline’s hand in fashioning a modernist subject, and in translating so much of life, politics and culture into psychological turns. Indeed, “the psychological” has been characterized as a “great modern ideological system” of the twentieth century (Williams, cited in Pfister, 1999a). By the 1920s and 1930s, Pfister (1999b) observes, the field of psychology had a “growing popularity and even the cachet of ‘psychological’ identities partly produced by and made available through mass and high culture (psychological and pop psychological books, articles, and advertisements, therapy, literature, theater, films, art)”

(p. 167). In fact this “psychological” spin on subjectivity, says Pfister, became, in some ways, a “hallmark of the ‘modern’” (p. 167). Treating “the psychological” as Foucault did “sexuality”, Pfister’s more critical history approach allows for an examination of “the psychological” as a “popular ‘truth’ discourse freighted with meanings, values, significances, and practices” (p. 169). His cultural history is instrumental, and offers ways to think more contextually and historically about Psychology’s cultural ecology with emerging psychologies of everyday life. It thereby extends earlier works looking at Psychology’s part in our changing psychology, whether by ushering in new ways to think about ourselves as psychological subjects, as in Freudian, behaviorist, or sociobiological terms, or by characterizations of psychological phenomena (e.g., MacIntyre, 1985; Richards, 2002). Cultural histories of this sort extend beyond the value of evidencing notions of the subject and subjectivity in flux to a discipline whose history evidences all the signs and symptoms of a similarly changeable ‘nature.’ What awaits us is making this known.

### TRANSFORMATIONS—FOR THE LOVE OF THE DISCIPLINE

Those of us who entered psychology in the years of the ‘turns’ probably felt the winds of change to be stronger than we do now in hindsight. This awareness, however, need not dampen our enthusiasm for a cultural history psychology. If anything, social and historical events of late combined with what many deem a conservative backlash of considerable force makes our project all the more pressing. That is, since the attack on the World Trade Centers in the U.S. on September 11, 2001, there is a renewed and profound emphasis on what we do not understand in our increasing globalized lives, of how limited our understandings of culture, self and other have been, and of how quickly a nation, such as the U.S., can render dissent of views as a threat to its sense of security. Much as the post-World War II protests and movements registered piercing questions into rights, of identity and politics around gender, sexuality and race, and of a renewed appreciation of the limits of scientific objectivity, so globalization along with changing technologies has set in motion inquiries into the cultural and political economies of our daily lives. In the academy, interdisciplinary programs are in the midst of regenerated interest. Cultural historical psychology is of a different age now too, and perhaps more ready than before to assert its voice in areas that one would have expected Psychology to have a say in—subjectivities, social psychology of group relations, and identities formed through contexts of competing histories, beliefs, cultures, and politics. To do so, we will need to turn to practices of transformation that call on cultural history psychologists of every ilk far and wide for the livelihood of cultural historians in psychology is indeed about ensuring we live in worlds, (inter)disciplines, departments and curricula that matter.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Thanks to Adrian Brock for his support in the preparation of this chapter. I am deeply grateful to Susan Henking whose generous and scholarly advice helped to shape ideas for this chapter.
- <sup>2</sup> This title is taken from Snitow's (1989) on the feminist divides that have arisen around interrogation of 'woman'.
- <sup>3</sup> I follow here Graham Richard's (1987) convention of designating the discipline, Psychology, by uppercase, and the subject, psychology, using lowercase. I am also borrowing loosely from Haraway's (1997) discussion on science's experimental ways of life as that space in which "what will count as nature and as matters of fact get constituted for—and by—many millions of people" (p. 50).
- <sup>4</sup> The APA web site does not itself promote history of psychology. In the United States as in Canada, there appears to be but one program offering graduate work in history, in which students are encouraged to develop a dual focus—one in a traditional (experimental) field and one in history.
- <sup>5</sup> Laurel Furumoto (1988) wondered a similar thing in her work on the exclusion of women from Titchener's elite society, *The Experimentalists*.
- <sup>6</sup> The most publicized case of this was the hoax created by physicist Alan Sokal.

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