Psychology of Minority Groups Midterm Lecture Outline/Study Guide

III. The Trouble with European-American Psychology

(Montiero, 1996, p1-16)
- Be wary of psychologies that attempt to understand people and their behavior independent of their culture. Often we apply our own culture to others when we interpret them and this says more about us than it does about them.

- Suggesting ethnically specific behavior is universal poses 3 problems
  1) its inaccurate and bad science
  2) does not allow us to test the strengths and weaknesses of our assumptions
  3) does not allow the student to hypothesize about the usefulness of theory to other cultures, or our own culture as it changes.

- Limitations of European American History
  1) It ignores other Psychological perspectives that predate it.
     Asian & African psychologies are 6000 years old
     Greco-Roman/European-American Psych only 3000
  2) Has become dominated by “Scientific” / Experimental / Universalist perspective and ignores cultural influences.
     Scientific Perspective = Logical Positivism
     a. **Reductionism** - a phenomenon can be reduced to its component parts which can be independently studied to learn about the phenomenon. (ignores context)
     b. **Empiricism** - only things that can be directly observed can be studied. (ignores spiritual aspects that many cultures are founded on)
     c. **Descart’s Dualism** - e.g. mind/body, man/woman, god/man, spiritual & physical world are separate. Mutually exclusive categories exist into which we can classify individuals and phenomenon. (Mutually exclusive categories do not exist in the real world)

  3) There is a clear lack of Empirical research regarding Ethnic and Cultural groups outside White, Affluent, America/Europe

  Article: Sandra Graham “Most of the subjects were white and middle class”

  Trends in published research on African Americans
  1. total counts of articles on African American subjects
  2. number of studies conducted in a comparative “racial” framework
  3. number including SES
  4. Number citing experimenter ethnicit

  Results
  - 526 articles on Af. Am. out of 14,542 (3.6%) published in a 20 year period (1970-1990)
  - Reaches it peak in ‘74 with 49 pubs that year, lowest in ‘87 with 11
  - 3 time more race comparative studies than race homogeneous studies
-such research promotes stereotyping and ignores in-group variation.
- between less than 1/3 and less than ½ of the journals reported participants SES in any way.
- ethnicity and class are inextricably intertwined in this country and discouragingly ignored
- less than ½ of all studies report race of experimenter (except JPSP - often studying race of experimenter effects & JCP studying race of therapist effects).
- we still know very little about the effects of experimenter ethnicity on performance

4) At times psychology has been overtly racist and designed to promote the dominant European ethnicity.
   G.S. Hall - Social Darwinism / Eugenics
   Cyril Burt - class and racial determinants of intelligence (faked his data).
   His modern day followers include:
   Arthur Jensen
   Herrnstein & Murray = The Bell Curve
   racially linked IQ diffs predict: crime, poverty, unwed pregnancy, and immorality

5) Sex/Gender Bias is also prevalent.
   - Most of the research has been proposed and conducted by men.
   - 77% of the Distinguished Fellows within APA are male.
   - Often all of the participants were male.

6) Gender, Culture and Ethnicity have been treated as nuisance variables.

IV Approaches to Ethnicity

A. Etic Based Approaches
   - Etics = behavior patterns that do not vary across cultures.
     1. Universalism
        - there is a single set of ubiquitous psychological processes that apply to all people equally.
        - studying one group tells us about all other groups, but there is a need to validate findings with representative samples of all people to support Universal claims. (in practice this is not adequately done).
        - Potential Strengths:
          - economical/parsimonious theories
        - Limitations:
          - ignores the importance of ethnically specific principles
          - may obscure unique aspects of cultures.
            - e.g. viewing marriage from western perspective focuses on nuclear family and ignores extended family influences important other non-western cultures.
          - Costa & McCrea ‘s 5 factor model of personality
            (Conscientiousness, Extroversion/Introversion, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience)
            - Benet & Waller 1995, identify 7 in Spanish sample
            - Church, Katigbak, & Reyes, 1998, identify 7 in a Filipino
- devalues the richness of the diversity of human experience
- treats diversity as error.
- Treats all members of a group as the same. Ignores Within-Group Variation. Generally we find more variation within groups than we see between groups

**Class Mantra**

“There is more variation between groups than there are between groups”

2. Ethnocentric Psychology (e.g. Monocultural Psychology)
   - perspective is rooted in a specific culture (that which is doing the investigation).
   - seeks to answer questions important to that ethnic group.
   - uses its own ethnic group as a standard for comparing the “goodness” or “adequacy” of other ethnic groups. Often finds that other cultures/ethnicities are inferior.
   - Ethnocentrism = evaluating other cultures using your cultural standards and not the target cultures standards.

3. Cross-Cultural Psychologies
   - focuses on the comparison of different cultures.
   - major task is testing the assumptions that certain psychological “laws” are in fact universal.
   - often assumes that laws are universal and looks for evidence to support that (rather than looking for evidence that would suggest they are not universal).
   - often end up being ethnocentric in their criterion for comparison.
   - Potential Strengths:
     - may help expand American/European psychology
     - begins to make multicutural issues visible
   - Limitations
     - in practice studies are rarely designed to include non-european perspectives, scholarship, or needs.
     - focus in on universal etics

B. Emic Based Approaches:

**Emics:** Behavior patterns unique to a specific group or ethnicity.

1. Cultural Psychologies:
   - focus on the personal experience within the cultural perspective from which it originates.
   - rejects the notion of universality, try to prove cultural uniqueness.
   - Strengths:
     - emphasizes individual experience and the importance of cultural uniqueness
   - Weakness:
     - the complete rejection of universality, limits its scientific usefulness

2. Ethnic Psychologies:
   - emanates from the cultural and scholarly history of those being studied.
   - ask and answer questions of primary importance to the ethnic group being studied.
   - study using methods congruent with the culture of interest.
   - the scholarly agenda is completely independent of any other psychological...
perspective.
- proving universality or cultural uniqueness is not a part of the research goals.
  – For example Radical Black Psychology (e.g. Akbar, Baldwin, and Myers)
- Strengths:
  - has an applied humanistic perspective. Is useful to the target culture.
- Weakness:
  - culture specific focus limits it’s ability to inform and borrow from the psychological perspectives of other cultures.
  - Ignores the influence of multiple cultures living in a single context.

3. Multicultural Psychology:
- Focuses on the influence of multiple cultures in a single context on Human Behavior.
- Addresses the issue of Bicultural / Multicultural Identity
- Addresses both cultural and sociopolitical issues: Including Power & Oppression
- Includes issues of Race/Ethnicity, Class/SES/, and Gender/Sex.
- Is an active socio-political perspective directed at change at the individual, organizational, and societal level.

V. Defining Gender and Sex
Kay Deaux, “Commentary: Sorry, wrong number - A reply to Gentile’s call.”
- Sex = used when people are selected based on Male/Female demographic characteristics
- Gender = used when making judgements about maleness (masculinity) and femaleness (femininity)
Others suggest: Sex = biologically determined characteristics
  Gender = socially influences characteristics
  - can be problematic in that both suggest a causal relationship which is by no means clear
  - what happens with a biologically influenced characteristic is altered by a social influence, is it gender or sex.

- Sex differences vs. Sex - Related Differences = must attempt to remove causal language from relationships that are not clearly causally related.

-Sex implies that there is a mutually exclusive dichotomy between being male and being female. However, there are individuals that don’t fall clearly in one group or the other. What should they be considered, are their behaviors the result of sex or gender?

V. The Myth of Race (Probe: Justify the concept of race)
Article 1.1 Ruth Hubbard- “Race and Sex as Biological Categories”
Racism comes after the slave trade began in order to reconcile the discomfort that many people felt about treating humans in inhumane ways. It’s acceptable to beat a workhorse but not man. So African become animal because of lack of intelligence (smaller cranium = smaller brain) and lack of moral judgement
- 1500 European slave trade begins
- Linnaeus 1758 - arranged races into subspecies
  - Homo sapiens afer - ruled by caprice (whim)
  - Homo sapiens europaeus - ruled by custom (social order)
- 1800's Scientists further strengthen racist argument
- Paul Broca (French)
- Samuel George Morton (American Craniometer)
  - White men
  - Native American men
  - African men
  - White women
  - Black women

- Both researchers tampered with their data to make it fit their *a priori* assumptions
  - Discard ratio of long bones in lower and upper arm (ratio is greater in apes than humans) because white men were closer to the ape ratio than black men.

- Cartwright - U.S. Physician
  - Blood atmospherization defect (e.g., cycle celled anemia) + smaller cranial size (therefore reduced intellect) combine to give the African the mind of a child. (A white man should take up their role of benevolent protectors)

- 1940's WWII Red Cross separates white and black blood (ceased practice in 1950)

  – Dr. Charles Drew (African-American who developed the blood bank system) Dies in car wreck, bled to death after being denied treatment at whites only hospital

- 1957 civil rights act abolishes Jim Crow laws, racist theories still seriously considered by the general public.

**The Myth of Racism**

- Race is not an empirically derived concept; rather it is socially constructed
- There is no genetic basis for race, simply because features and characteristics are distributed along a continuous distribution.

*Prejudice* = making assumptions about an individual based on beliefs (accurate or inaccurate) about a group to which they are perceived to belong.

*Discrimination* = acting based on one's prejudices.

*Racism* = using pseudo-scientific explanations of racial superiority to justify discrimination.

There is more variation within a group than between groups

- 75% of all known genes are present in all people
- 25% remaining differ in their forms, but all forms are found in all groups.

What defines the cutoff between groups

- What % of race do have to be in order to be considered a member of that race.

  1870 US Census
  - Mulatto = any mix of Caucasian and African blood

  1890 US Census
  - Quadroons = 1/4 African blood (e.g., one grandparent)
  - Octoroons = 1/8 African blood (e.g., one great-grandparent)

  1930 US Census
  - If mixed then your race was the same as the non-white parent.
Group comparisons sometimes used to suggest racial diffs

-Af Am males under 45 are 10 times more likely to have high blood pressure compared to whites
-some cancers are more common in blacks than whites

Does this mean that all black share a specific genetic tendency for these traits. NO, it is confounded with SES (employment, income, housing) all effect healthy living.

median af am. Income is only 2/3 of white income (for every $1.00 a white man gets, a black man gets 66 cents)

VI - Culture
1. Define Culture (Probe)
   A. Shared man made aspects of the environment (tangible and intangible) including Social Institutions, Language, and Symbolic Systems.
      Explicit - Marriage, Employment, Education, Laws
      Implicit - Norms - unspoken rules lubricating social interaction
        Roles - norms associated with a particular situation
   B. Transmitted across generations
   C. Culture is Relational
      -our culture is in many ways what we are, but it is also what we are not (in relation to a specific group; e.g. stereotypes).
      - E. G. part of being black in America is not being white and vice-versa
      - cultures can often best be seen when they are clashing with another culture.
      - What forms the boundary of a culture?
        - I can't tell you, but I know it when I see it.
   D. Culture Simplifies an Ambiguous World
      -They provide Expectancies: Help us fill in the blanks
   E. Culture is a shared social construction, and is real only because we believe it to be real, but it also has real consequences:
      - Real emotional reactions occur when cultural values are violated or when cultural norms are ignored
      - Wars, Violence, and Aggression are quite often the result cultural conflict.

2 Some Consequences of Culture

A. Emics, Etics, and Ethnocentrism:
   1. Emics = Culture specific social and psychological phenomenon.
   2. Etics = species specific social and psychological phenomenon
   3. Culture = Emic-Etic combination
   4. Ethnocentrism = viewing one's own emic-etic combinations as Universally True and Right and other's as wrong. Also, Viewing a cultural other's behavior from the self's emic-etic combination. Viewing differences as deficits
      -In many ways Ethnocentrism is responsible for other dogmatic -isms:
        -sexism, racism, classism, ageism.
5. **Cultural Relativism** = viewing self and other's behavior from the perspective of the emic-etic combination from which it was generated.

3. Individualistic Vs. Collectivist Cultures (P. 14, L&M)
   - **Individualistic Cultures**: Rugged Individualism (e.g. U.S., Western Europe). The critical task in life is to become self sufficient and independent of society and family.
     1. Social Skills: Self promotion, being interesting, putting others at ease, having good conversation skills.
     2. Distribution of Rewards for group effort: Reward are distributed equitably (each according to their inputs).
   - **Collectivist Cultures**: Group orientation is emphasized. The need of the group come before one's own needs (e.g. Asia, Africa, Central & South America, Pacific Islands). Identity is largely in terms of the group (family, village, organization).
     1. Social Skills: Group loyalty, cooperation, contributing to the group w/o expecting rewards, public modesty about abilities, deference to higher status individuals, distribution of resources to low status individuals who defer.
     2. Distribution of rewards for group effort: Equality (all get equal share). Group effort is rewarded not individual effort.

VII Ethnicity
- Similar to culture, though more context specific. E.g. there are many ethnicitys contained within a culture.
- defined by a sense of shared experience and peoplehood, defined by a unique socio-cultural heritage that is transmitted across generations.

Jean S. Phinnen “When we talk about american ethnic groups, what do we mean?”

- Race and Ethnicity are not useful or descriptive categories
- Need to identify the aspects of Ethnicity that are meaningful and useful for psychologists.
  - Culture - values, attitudes, and behaviors that distinguish ethnic groups.
  - Identity - subjective sense of ethnic group membership held by group members.
  - Minority Status: experiences associated with powerlessness, discrimination, and prejudice.

All of these variables are measured on a continuum not at discrete categories.

VIII Class & SES

Class - socially constructed categories of social status.
- often defined by income, type of job, place one lives.
- they are ascribed by self and others
- In U.S. class distinctions are not clear or overtly enforced
- In Great Brittan and India they are rigidly enforced.
SES - Socioeconomic Status
   - More of a continuum based on job prestige, education, and income.

Correlates of Low SES
   - poorer health, lower employment rate, poorer education, and increased risk for violence, poverty, and mental illness.
   - often associated with stereotypes and prejudice
     - Lazy; on welfare

Class and SES are almost always inter-twined with ethnicity and culture, though their effects are not redundant they are often correlated.
Must take care to control for one when studying the other.