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UMI

EXAMINATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF POSTMODERNISM ON PSYCHOLOGY

AND THE ATTITUDE OF PSYCHOLOGY TOWARD POSTMODERNISM

By

Bryan Neal Baird

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science
in Psychology
in the Department of Psychology

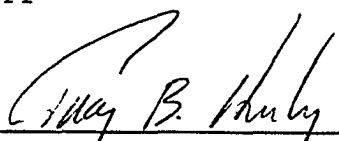Mississippi State, Mississippi

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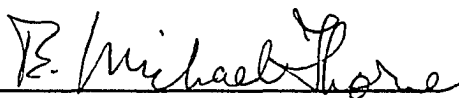300 North Zeeb Road
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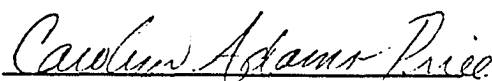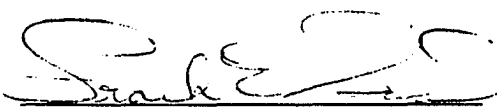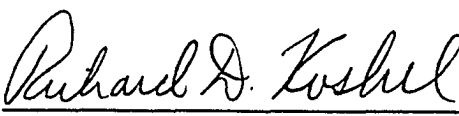
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Candidate for Degree of Master of Science

Postmodernism has achieved a high level of influence in
the humanities but has not shown a commensurate level of
influence in the sciences. Using a questionnaire developed
by the researcher, the present study measured the level of
influence of postmodernism on the social science of
psychology, which possesses characteristics of both the
humanities and the sciences. Subjects were asked in Part I
of the questionnaire to evaluate particular statements in
order to measure their agreement with tenets of
postmodernism. In Part II, the subjects supplied specific
information regarding their knowledge of postmodernism.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge God, the Sovereign Creator, Redeemer, and Judge. Without Him I would have neither the mind nor the matter to accomplish such a feat as this work. To Him be this glory.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As an ideology, postmodernism can be defined as a
questioning of everything that has come before and is
included in it. "All that has been received, if only
yesterday . . . must be suspected" (Lyotard, 1983, p. 79) is
an appropriate battle cry of postmodernism. Postmodernism's
extreme suspicion supports its specific assertions, such as
the abandonment of a positivistic science, the denial of
fixed reference points for experience, and the acceptance of
multiple realities rather than a single reality.
Fragmentation, indeterminacy, and distrust reigns supreme in
postmodern thought (Harvey, 1989).

Postmodernism stands as a period after (post) modernism
that suspects the core assumptions of modernism. Table 1
represents the antithesis between modernism and
postmodernism by using terms familiar to many disciplines.
Modernism provides a sense of great potential for society in
placing the individual as the ultimate source of all things.
Science aided by reason is the mark of progress (e.g.,

1

Table 1

Differences Between Modernism and Postmodernism

Modernism	Postmodernism
Symbolism	Dadaism
Form (conjunctive, closed)	Antiform (disjunctive, open)
Purpose	Play
Design	Chance
Hierarchy	Anarchy
Mastery/Logos	Exhaustion/Silence
Art Object/Finished Work	Process/Performance/Happening
Distance	Participation
Creation/Totalization	Decreation/Deconstruction
Synthesis	Antithesis
Presence	Absence
Centering	Dispersal
Genre/Boundary	Text/Intertext
Semantics	Rhetoric
Paradigm	Syntagm
Metaphor	Metonymy
Selection	Combination
Root/Depth	Rhizome/Surface
Interpretation/Reading	Against Interpretation/Misreading
Signified	Signifier
Lisible (Readerly)	*Scriptible* (Writerly)
Narrative	Anti-narrative
Master Code	Idiolect
Symptom	Desire
Type	Mutant
Genital/Phallic	Polymorphous/Androgynous
Paranoia	Schizophrenia
Origin/Cause	Difference-Differance/Trace
God the Father	The Holy Ghost
Metaphysics	Irony
Determinacy	Indeterminacy
Transcendence	Immanence

Note. Adapted from Hassan (1987).

Comte, 1830-1842/1858). In psychology, behaviorists such as John Watson (e.g., 1913) and B. F. Skinner (e.g., 1974) followed a Comtean-like positivism in their work. Modernism's focus on seeking universal, objective knowledge has been a principal concern of more contemporary (logical) positivists (e.g., Carnap, 1932/1963; Russell, 1918). Modernity is marked by purpose, design, and a demand for unity, simplicity, and communicability (Lyotard, 1983). Modernity includes such rubrics as form, rationality, and hierarchy (Hassan, 1987); linear progress, truth, and the standardization of knowledge (Harvey, 1989).

Recall the futuristic predictions in the popular magazines of the 1950s and 1960s that envisioned pristine buildings, antigravity vehicles whizzing quietly through the air, no smog or pollution, mechanized kitchens complete with every convenience imaginable, and smiling faces basking in the afterglow of technological advance by the year 2000. These were the promises to society made by technology, science, and progress--the promises made by modernism. But modernism has not kept its promises, for life is not so pristine. A culturally relevant excerpt from the lyrics of songwriter John Prine (1980) emphasizes this point: "We are living in the future/I'll tell you how I know/I read it in the paper/fifteen years ago/We're all driving rocket

ships/and talking with our minds/wearing turquoise jewelry/and standing in soup lines." Prine (1993) commented on the song:

> When I was growing up, it seemed like once a year some guy would write a story about how this is the way your city is going to look in 20 years. And the only city that ever looked like that was Seattle, and they built that for the World's Fair. None of the other places had monorails. Instead, everybody's standing in soup lines or looking for jobs. (p. 42)

Rather than life being made easier for the populace, modernism has brought with it a price to be paid for its advances. It is in this sense that problems are not only not solved; problems are compounded. It is therefore quite possible that the intellectual milieu of our civilization harbors a suspicion toward modernism because of its failures. Postmodern thought provides telling criticism of modernism and its results; thus, because of a cultural suspicion toward modernism, the postmodern attitude toward modernism is not likely to be bound within the walls of academia but will likely have (and has likely had) a cultural impact.

It has been suggested that the beginning of postmodernism (and the end of modernism) occurred at 3:32 p.m. on July 15, 1972. At that moment, the Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St. Louis--an exemplar of modern architecture--was demolished. What the modern rationality had erected became so impersonal, depressing, and crime ridden that it was virtually uninhabitable (Jencks, 1977). Modernity has made itself unlivable.

Postmodernism questions the privileged position modernism gives to the individual. Rather than liberating the individual, knowledge based on reason tends to enslave and oppress others (e.g., Adorno & Horkheimer, 1944/1993; Foucault, 1975/1980). For example, in order to be able to better recognize and therefore treat psychological disorders, a psychological model based on that used in the medical field was initiated; the model continues to determine the way we talk and think about psychological disorders. According to this model, mentally ill patients are diagnosed with a psychopathology, which can be cured through psychotherapy. Far from helping these individuals, reification of the individual results from the label of being "mentally ill." Psychological health provides the identity within which to fit the subject in order to manipulate the subject (Foucault, 1965; Szasz, 1961).

Another claim of postmodernism is that "objective" truth is simply a social creation imposed upon an otherwise meaningless world (Nietzsche, 1873/1968). Thus, according to postmodernism, the attainment of universally applicable knowledge by any means is impossible. In keeping with postmodernism's emphasis on the social construction of meaning, "truth" is confined to local communities that speak in particular ways (Gergen, 1994), because the meaning of language itself depends upon the rules of the language games communities play (Wittgenstein, 1953).

Common to the postmodernist literature, postmodernism makes great use of literary terminology. For instance, every cultural artifact and expression is a "text" and can be interpreted and analyzed in the same way as a literary text. Both literary and cultural texts are analyzed according to an interpretation based on suspicion (Oden, 1992). That is, because it is impossible to find out "objectively" what a text means, the interpreter must reveal what the text is hiding--a process called "deconstructing" the text (e.g., Derrida, 1968/1982b). In deconstructing cultural texts, the postmodernist shows that certain accepted, universal traditions are simply oppressive abstractions of local traditions (Foucault, 1971/1984; Harvey, 1989; Waugh, 1992). Examples of such "universal" traditions include Marx's

"great narrative of emancipation," Freud's "narrative of the possibility of psychoanalytic redemption," and Darwin's "story of constant development and adaptation" (Docherty, 1993, p. 11).

In academia, the postmodern school of thought has had a measurable impact upon the humanities for the past 2 decades. It has become securely established in such traditional disciplines as philosophy (e.g., Habermas, 1987), language (e.g., Derrida, 1971/1982a), history (e.g., Rabinow, 1984), and art (e.g., Crowther, 1990). Postmodernism has also had a growing influence upon architecture (e.g., Frampton, 1983), music (e.g., Nyman, 1980), and film (e.g., Baudrillard, 1987). Furthermore, postmodernism is making inroads into areas such as politics (e.g., Laclau, 1983; Rorty, 1983), business (e.g., Thompson, Pollio, & Locander, 1989), and sociology (e.g., Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

A cursory glance across the various literatures of postmodernism suggests that the topic has earned a niche in the noted disciplines but has not achieved a commensurate level of influence in the natural sciences. Although postmodernism has touched such fields as geography (e.g., Harvey, 1989), engineering (e.g., Platten, 1986), medicine (e.g., Widgery, 1989), and forestry (e.g., Wikstrom, 1987),

the degree of impact clearly remains limited. Smith (1994) surmised that the restricted influence of postmodernism stems from differences in focus between the humanities and the sciences. The humanities' focus on "cultural" issues provides an environment in which postmodernism flourishes. In contrast, the sciences' "naturalistic" emphasis makes them intolerant of postmodernism--which can be viewed as antiscientific.

The relevance of the humanities-sciences discussion to psychology rests in the fact that psychology is a "social" science. The social sciences represent a type of synthesis of the humanities and natural sciences, possessing characteristics of both (e.g., interest in cultural problems and insistence upon scientific research). Keeping in mind that postmodernism has historically had greater influence in the humanities, psychology should show at least traces of postmodernism's influence. It is worth noting that some of psychology's subdisciplines fall heavily on the "science" end of this dichotomy (e.g., neuropsychology), whereas others fall more toward the "humanities" end (e.g., social psychology). Therefore, it is possible that a noticeable continuum of influence within psychology would surface.

Assumptions of Postmodernism Applied to Psychology

From the preceding survey, important tenets of postmodern thought that have been extracted can now be applied more directly to psychology. First, contingency plays an important role in understanding postmodernism. For the postmodernist, no matter whether the discussion involves language, knowledge, or genres of art and literature, all is contextual and relational--no set, absolute, referential base exists. Consequently, there is not one overarching reality but rather multiple possibilities; thus, no one view of the world takes precedence over another.

The postmodern era thus focuses on the profusion of multiple worldviews and "realities." These belief systems are not fixed but change according to the particular culture, time, or circumstance in which they occur (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Knowledge is thus not grounded in truth but in the assumptions made and the presuppositions possessed. "That world we seek to understand remains always on the horizons of our thoughts" (Kelly, 1977, p. 6). The importance this has for psychology is in criticizing existing psychotherapies and constructing new therapies that consider such a relational view of human beings (e.g., Neimeyer, 1993).

Another result of postmodernism's application to psychology is that the self and its components (e.g., perception, motivation, emotion, cognition) become reconstrued in social (relational) terms rather than as stable structures or traits (Kvale, 1992). For psychology, this assumption demands new perspectives on personality theory and social psychology. Personality is no longer something a person "possesses." It is no longer something that characterizes the "essence" of a person, for that person is never only one character or one character more than other constituent characters. This is because there is no essence or personality "out there" (object) for us to discover; neither is it "in here" (subject). What we "are" never ceases to move about and elude us. For social psychology, this assumption may require a relinquishing of the "self-this" and "self-that" mentality.

A third assumption of postmodernism that is important for psychology and called its distinctive feature by Gergen (1994) is the abandonment of representationalism. By this, Gergen means "the assumption that there is (or can be) a determinant (fixed or intrinsic) relationship between words and world" (p. 412). For psychology, the theories and conclusions (words) offered by psychologists about matters like depression, therapeutic success, or the hypothalamus

(world) cease to say something true or absolute about these matters.

A final assumption of postmodernism that clearly affects psychology is the denial that science can produce absolute, universal knowledge. Without science's firm foundation, one must ask, along with Kvale (1992) in the beginning chapter of Psychology and Postmodernism, "does postmodern thought radically undermine, or transform, the concept of a scientific psychology as developed during the modern age?" (p. 1). Within the psychological literature, debate already has surfaced with respect to such a question (e.g., Datan & Reese, 1977; Gergen, 1994; Smith, 1994).

Postmodernism and Psychology

Psychology has seen a considerable increase in discussions of postmodernism within the last decade. These discussions have ranged from postmodernism's influence on social psychology (e.g., Ibanez, 1991; Michael, 1991) to connectionist models of artificial intelligence (e.g., Gutknecht, 1992). Perhaps the first instance of postmodern tenets being introduced to psychology was Gergen's (1973) article "Social Psychology as History." In it, Gergen called for a change in the way social psychology practiced research, away from an empiricist approach and toward a contextualist approach. Since then, discussions in

psychology have centered around both changes in the empiricist approach to research (e.g., Datan & Reese, 1977) and the viability of a postmodern approach to psychology. Recently, American Psychologist (Vol. 4, May 1994) devoted an issue to discussing the possible implications of postmodern thought for psychology, and the work of Kenneth Gergen (e.g., Gergen, 1994; McNamee & Gergen, 1992; Semin & Gergen, 1990; Shotter & Gergen, 1989) and Robert Neimeyer (e.g., Neimeyer, 1993; Neimeyer, Neimeyer, Lyddon, & Hoshmand, 1994) has consistently surfaced in surveys of a postmodern influence in psychology, mainly in the form of constructivist and social construction models of psychotherapy.

Gergen (1994) is one representative of the camp that claims that the postmodern influence will broaden the possibilities of knowledge rather than limit them. Scientific psychology as we know it is radically undermined and transformed by postmodern thought, but the transformation is a positive one. Another camp, of which Smith (1994) is a representative, contends that with the "death of the self" goes the death of psychology as a science because the "self" is one of psychology's principle foci. Bereft of a stable and anchored view of the self and the world, we are at odds to find the possibility of certain

knowledge. Here again, scientific psychology as we know it is radically undermined and transformed by postmodern thought, but the transformation is a negative one that aides psychology's demise.

Although most psychologists can applaud the demise of logical positivism, the desire to abandon the conception of science seems quite extreme. Indeed, if, as Gergen (1994) surmised, "theories are given priority over what we take to be fact" (p. 415), then psychology devolves to the period before it broke from philosophy as a science of its own. Thus, we find discussion on the implications of postmodernism's impact upon psychology and the debate it fosters within psychology.

<u>Purpose of Present Investigation</u>

The question of interest is: "What (if any) is postmodernism's demonstrable influence on psychology?" I hypothesize that postmodernism's influence extends to the "softer" areas of psychology (e.g., social, personality, therapy). I also expect to find interest and agreement in these areas with several of postmodernism's assumptions, whereas affiliation with the label "postmodernist" will be wanting. I expect this result because of the controversy surrounding the postmodern movement that I predict has paradoxically popularized postmodern ideas while

simultaneously polarizing reaction to the term itself. As Hibbard and Henley (1994) have noted, psychologists have a dualistic tendency to embrace new philosophical ideas while holding firmly to established scientistic traditions.

Neimeyer (personal communication, October 19, 1994) examined where "postmodernism" was cited in the title of talks by divisions of the APA at the 1993 convention. Assuming that the influence of a movement can be seen via such carriers of information within a discipline, Neimeyer suggested that several APA divisions have been influenced, at least marginally, by postmodernism. Of course, these citations do not reflect a positive or negative context for the term, which the present study was designed to clarify.

Based on the previous discussion, the list of divisions cited by Neimeyer (Table 2) is hardly surprising, for the list contains the divisions most closely associated with the humanities and psychotherapy. The purpose of the present study was to clarify the attitudes (positive or negative) toward postmodernism and to measure the extent of the influence of postmodern thought on psychology by taking the key elements of postmodernism outlined above and converting them into a questionnaire format. In addition, the study explored whether the influence is purely nominal or whether it is also (even perhaps more) evident in patterns of

thinking. In other words, might agreement with the tenets of postmodernism apart from the use of the term exist? If agreement with the tenets is present, will the label of "postmodernist" follow in agreement? The study's main hypothesis was that there would be little correlation between agreement with postmodernism's tenets and association with the term itself.

Table 2

APA Divisions Cited by Neimeyer

Division 8:	The Society of Personality and Social Psychology
Division 10:	Psychology and the Arts
Division 12:	Clinical Psychology
Division 17:	Counseling Psychology
Division 24:	Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology
Division 29:	Psychotherapy
Division 32:	Humanistic Psychology
Division 35:	Psychology of Women
Division 41:	American Psychology and Law Society
Division 42:	Psychologists in Independent Practice
Division 45:	Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic and Minority Issues

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects were 55 current members of the American

Psychological Association (APA) and were selected from four

APA Divisions using the 1993 Directory of the APA (American

Psychological Association, 1993): Divisions 1 (General

Psychology), 8 (Society of Personality and Social

Psychology), 10 (Psychology and the Arts), and 24

(Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology). Based on their

responses on Question 2 ("Do you have a favorable or

unfavorable opinion of postmodernism?") in Part II of the

questionnaire (Appendix B), the participants were divided

into three groups: The Neutral Group consisted of 23

participants who claimed to have either a neutral opinion,

no opinion, or did not state an opinion of postmodernism.

The Unfavorable Group consisted of 14 participants who

stated an unfavorable opinion of postmodernism by circling

the word "unfavorable" in the question. The Favorable Group

consisted of 21 participants who gave a favorable opinion of

postmodernism by circling the word "favorable" in

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the question. Table 3 provides the divisional affiliations
for the three groups. Other relevant characteristics of the
sample can be found in the 1993 directory.

Materials

The questionnaire used in the present investigation was
developed by the researcher. To ensure confidentiality for
the subjects, the questionnaires were coded numerically. The
first portion of the questionnaire (Appendix A) was a
6-point Likert scale intended to measure the influence of
postmodernism by having the subjects rate their acceptance
or rejection of postmodernism's tenets as deduced from the
literature. The term "postmodernism" was not used in this
portion in order to contrast the answers with answers in the
second portion. In the second portion of the questionnaire
(Appendix B), specific questions were asked concerning
postmodernism as a movement in order to measure the degree
of association with the term in light of agreement or
disagreement with the tenets.

Procedure

The experimental materials were mailed with a cover
letter (Appendix C) explaining that the researcher was
interested in measuring the degree to which psychologists
from different subdisciplines agree or disagree on certain

issues and areas in psychology. A stamped reply envelope was enclosed. Of the 200 questionnaires mailed, 63 were returned by the participants--16 of these were returned because of wrong addresses. Of the 63 returned questionnaires, 8 were discarded because only one of the two parts of the questionnaire was returned, thus rendering the answers useless. There was a 34% return rate for the questionnaire.

Table 3

Divisional Affiliation of Subjects by Group

APA Division	Favorable ($\underline{n}$ = 21)	Neutral ($\underline{n}$ = 23)	Unfavorable ($\underline{n}$ = 14)
1 General Psychology	2	8	1
2 Teaching of Psychology	5	4	5
5 Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics	1	1	3
8 The Society of Personality and Social Psychology	17	9	9
9 The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues	8	2	2
10 Psychology and the Arts	4	6	3
12 Clinical Psychology	1	4	2
13 Consulting Psychology	1	2	0
14 The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Inc.	2	0	1
17 Counseling Psychology	3	4	0
20 Adult Development and Aging	0	2	1
24 Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology	12	6	8
26 History of Psychology	1	1	3
29 Psychotherapy	5	5	0
35 Psychology of Women	3	0	0
36 Psychologists Interested in Religious Issues	1	5	0
38 Health Psychology	1	2	0
39 Psychoanalysis	1	4	0
42 Psychologists in Independent Practice	1	5	1

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Analysis of Variance

By Group

A one-way analysis of variance was performed for Part I
of the questionnaire to determine if the three groups
differed significantly from one another. The test revealed
no significant differences between the three groups.

By Question

One-way ANOVAs were also performed on each of the 15
questions to determine if the three groups differed
significantly from one another on each of the questions
answered. A significant difference was found for Question 8,
$F(2, 53) = 3.87$, $p < .05$, and Question 10, $F(2, 52) = 9.14$,
$p < .05$. Post hoc tests showed that for Question 8 ("The
goal of scientific research should be to mirror
psychological reality without distortion or human bias"),
the Neutral Group did not differ significantly from the
Unfavorable Group, but the Favorable Group differed
significantly from the other groups. Post hoc tests showed
that for Question 10 ("Fact should clearly take priority

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over theory"), all three groups differed significantly from one another.

Questionnaire--Part I

For several of the questions, similar answers were given regardless of which group was answering them. Table 4 shows the mean response of each group. Low scores were given for Questions 7 ("Memory is not simply recalling a stable representation of past experience") and 11 ("The knowledge gained from scientific research should itself always remain subject to a process of continuous scrutiny") for all three groups; low scores on these questions indicate an agreement with postmodern theory as outlined here. High scores given for Question 4 ("Individuals do not construct their own realities; rather, they conform their beliefs to events in the world") likewise indicate an agreement with postmodern theory.

However, low scores were given across the groups for Questions 1 ("Psychological studies on topics like violence could be the basis for legal reform in society"), 5 ("Knowledge that can be applied to areas outside psychology is a necessary goal of scientific research done by

Table 4

Mean Response for Questionnaire (Part I) by Group

Statement	Favorable (n = 21)	Neutral (n = 23)	Unfavorable (n = 14)
1. Psychological studies on topics like violence could be the basis for legal reform in society.	1.95	2.39	2.00
2. The self is defined only in social (relational) terms.	3.48	3.04	2.86
3. A person diagnosed as depressed by respected clinical psychologists is suffering from a mental illness.	3.52	3.52	3.54
4. Individuals do not construct their own realities; rather, they conform their beliefs to events in the world.	4.43	4.47	3.69
5. Knowledge that can be applied to areas outside psychology is a necessary goal of scientific research done by psychologists.	2.81	2.96	2.93
6. Self-understanding must have a role in the understanding of individuals.	1.81	1.64	1.62
7. Memory is not simply recalling a stable representation of past experience.	5.57	5.44	5.21
8. The goal of psychological research should be to mirror psychological reality without distortion or human bias.	3.48	2.24	2.36
9. Self-concept and self-esteem are necessary and trustworthy terms to be used when referring to individuals.	3.29	2.82	2.85
10. Fact should clearly take priority over theory.	4.68	2.87	3.69
11. The knowledge gained from scientific research should itself always remain subject to a process of continuous scrutiny.	5.81	5.78	5.86
12. It is impossible to view the "self" as a distinct and stable entity because the identity of the individual is constantly being defined and redefined by linguistic and cultural practices.	4.38	3.83	3.77

Table 4 (continued)

Statement	Favorable (n = 21)	Neutral (n = 23)	Unfavorable (n = 14)
13. If a variety of articles appear in respected journals on a new psychological construct such as aspiration or self-deception, then that construct must correspond to some real phenomenon in the world.	4.19	3.78	4.00
14. It is impossible for one person to really understand another.	2.74	2.59	2.46
15. Psychology will never be able to construct a universally applicable theory that predicts human behavior.	4.14	3.74	3.50
Totals	56.28	51.11	50.34

Note. Scores correspond to the following scale: 1 = strong disagreement with tenets of postmodernism, 6 = strong agreement with tenets of postmodernism.

psychologists"), 6 ("Self-understanding must have a role in the understanding of individuals"), and 14 ("It is impossible for one person to really understand another"); such scores indicate a disagreement with postmodern theory.

Questionnaire--Part II

Question 1--Definitions

All participants in both the Unfavorable and Favorable Groups claimed to know what postmodernism entailed and had a viable definition of it. Four different aspects of postmodernism consistently emerged in these definitions: One aspect deals with the social context/construction of reality/knowledge, one deals with the denial of absolutes, one deals with the abandonment of positivistic science, and one deals with the transdisciplinary nature of postmodernism. Tables 5-7 provide examples of these four aspects by group. Examples of the first of these aspects include definitions such as: "all human knowledge is a social construct," "knowledge is socially constructed and relative," "self is a social construct," "reality is socially constructed," "emphasis on individual interpretation/construction of experience," "reinterpreting [past works] in current context," and "views ideas in terms of their social/cultural context."

Skepticism of claims of objective knowledge or truth is central to postmodernism. Examples from the participants of this second aspect include: "'post' belief in an ultimate truth criterion," "gives up the search for truth," "skeptical stance toward objective knowledge," "nothing is absolutely true or false," "deconstruction of notions of wholeness or final truth," and "seeking universal truths will be misleading."

In keeping with its emphasis on the social contextualization of knowledge and skepticism toward objective knowledge, these two aspects come together against traditional conceptions of the way science operates and how scientific knowledge is gained. Examples of this third aspect include: "takes an anti-scientific position," "post logical-positivism," "positivistic science is not a model for psychology," "setting the positivist and reductionist assumptions aside as needed," and "grounding assumptions that differ from those of the 'modern science.'"

Just 8 out of the 21 participants in the Neutral Group claimed to have a working definition of postmodernism, and only 5 actually provided a definition. An exhaustive list of definitions is: "values are relative to the person and the situation," "reality is relative," "unconstrained by logical positivism," "radical subjectivity," "critical of the

Table 5

Definitions of Postmodernism--Favorable Group

Category	
	"no basis for privileging <u>any</u> point of view"
	"views of reality are (social) constructions"
	"study of experiences within social <u>context</u>"
Social Construct/Context of Knowledge/Reality/ Truth	"refers to increasingly accepted plural realities in place of one 'reality' which is assumed to be true and universal"
	"emphasis on multiplicity and cultural context"
	"centering on social construction"
	"understanding behavior as at least partially constructed by society, the individual, and the observer"
	"the belief that reality is socially constructed and maintained"
	"designates a view that views our human 'reality' as a constructed reality"
	"nothing is absolutely true or false"
	"belief that knowledge is relative to observer or culture"
Denial of Absolutes	"the deconstruction of notions of wholeness or final truth"
	"any methodology based on seeking universal truths will be misleading"
	"post-logical-positivism"
	"based on an assumption that positivistic science is not a model for
Rejection of Logical Positivism/Science	psychology"
	"assumptions that differ from those of 'modern science'"
	"setting the positivist and reductionist assumptions aside as needed"
	"reaction to logical positivism"
	"Art after Picasso. Music after Debussy."
Transdisciplinary Aspect	"rejection of modernism, esp. in arts/literature"
	"forms of art, architecture, literature"
	"art/architecture"

Table 6

Definitions of Postmodernism--Neutral Group

Category	
Social Construct/Context of Reality/Knowledge/ Truth	"Reality is relative" "radical subjectivity" "subjectivity of interpretation" "post modernists put emphasis on the role of language in experience"
Denial of Absolutes	"impossibility of 'objective knowledge'" "values are relative to the person and the situation"
Rejection of Logical Positivism/Science	"unconstrained by logical positivism" "do not follow 'traditional' ways of doing things"
Transdisciplinary Aspect	"I have seen it used in the art world" "not [a definition] for psychology" "In art"

Table 7

Definitions of Postmodernism--Unfavorable Group

Category	
	"implying that all human knowledge is a social construct and absolutely nothing else"
Social Construct/Context of Knowledge/Reality/ Truth	"the view that knowledge is socially constructed and relative"
	"self is a social construct and not unitary"
	"views ideas as emerging from and being evaluated solely in terms of their social/cultural context"
	"emphasis on individual interpretation/ construction of experience"
	"reinterpreting in current context"
Denial of Absolutes	"gives up the search for truth"
	"takes a highly skeptical stance toward objective knowledge"
	"characterized by denial of foundational realism and objectivity"
	"hard science is a social construct"
Rejection of Logical Positivism/Science	"used . . . to suggest an advanced view of science that gives up the search for truth"
	"how people look at knowledge in this technological era"
	"takes an anti-scientific position"
	"often used in the humanities"
	"depends on context-literary is different from psychological"
Transdisciplinary Aspect	"I know the term in architecture and decoration"
	"movement in philosophy and literature, primarily"
	"refers to a period in art"

Enlightenment project, etc.," "futuristic," "does not follow 'traditional' ways of looking at things," and "impossibility of 'objective' knowledge."

The Unfavorable and Favorable Groups shared more with each other in their definitions than with the Neutral Group. Nevertheless, the opinions of the participants in the Favorable Group were generally much more positive than the opinions of subjects in either the Neutral or Unfavorable Groups--where terms and attitudes such as "trendy," "pretentious," and "fashion" were common. Examples of this pejorative language actually included: "it's not a term I would use with seriousness," "a trendy desire to appear sophisticated," "I ignore such as fashion," "think it heavy and pretentious," "it goes too far," "the clinician's/scholar's version of co-dependency," and "I am bored with it and look forward to post postmodernism."

Question 3--Context of Encounter

Three categories of encounters with postmodernism were mentioned: Printed media (e.g., journals, books), mass media (e.g., television, newspapers), and spoken media (e.g., conversations, conferences). From the Neutral Group, only 5 out of the 23 participants provided encounters--4 of them encountered postmodernism in printed media (3 from

books, 1 from journal articles) and 1 in conversation. In the Unfavorable Group, 5 respondents cited encounters with postmodernism from printed media, 4 from spoken media, and 2 from mass media. In the Favorable Group, 16 respondents cited encounters from printed media, 6 from spoken media, and 2 from mass media.

Interestingly, the Unfavorable and Favorable Groups both mentioned other disciplines in their responses. One participant from the Unfavorable Group cited art and architecture as a context of his encounter with postmodernism. Four respondents from the Favorable Group cited other disciplines (besides psychology): 3 cited architecture, 3 cited art, 1 cited music ("jazz magazines"), 1 cited philosophy, and 1 cited film.

Question 4--Individuals Associated with Postmodernism

Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida were cited with the highest frequency (see Table 8). Jacques Lacan and Richard Rorty followed closely behind as key figures of postmodernism in terms of not only frequency cited but also the number of groups that cited them. Although the subjects in the Neutral Group did not show much familiarity with postmodernism in their definitions, they showed a familiarity with the individuals associated with postmodernism. Furthermore, the individuals cited by the

participants represent many different disciplines, including philosophy (Foucault, Derrida), performing arts (Kiefer), literature (Wolfe), political science (Heleman), and language (Gadamer). This finding echoes the diversity of postmodernism.

Question 5--Individuals in Psychology Associated with Postmodernism

Kenneth Gergen, John Shotter, and Steiner Kvale were cited as the individuals in psychology most associated with postmodernism. The Favorable Group cited the highest number of individuals (21), followed by the Neutral Group with 10, and the Unfavorable Group with 8 individuals cited. Although the Neutral Group cited more individuals than the Unfavorable Group, the latter group cited key postmodernist individuals in psychology (e.g., Gergen, Shotter, Kvale) with greater frequency than the Neutral Group, thus indicating more familiarity with the subject. The Favorable Group cited the highest number of key postmodernist individuals in psychology and also the highest frequency of individuals than either of the other two groups (Table 9).

Question 6--Recommended Reading

Not surprisingly, the Neutral Group did not recommend any works for further reading on postmodernism. Also not surprisingly, the Favorable Group recommended not only more

works for further reading but also a wider diversity of reading, i.e., from outside as well as inside psychology, than did the Unfavorable Group. Both the Favorable and Unfavorable Groups consistently recommended works by Gergen, a total of 5 out of the 12 responses, and works dealing with social constructivism, a total of 6 times.

Question 7--Benefits of Postmodernism

Both the Unfavorable and Favorable Groups shared similar opinions on the possible benefits of studying postmodernism in the classroom. Among the similarities were developing an open mind and "loosening" thinking, being aware of new issues and how they impact psychology, having an appreciation of divergent views, and the importance of keeping up with current theory. Specific examples include: "new openness, loosening of positivism's aging grip on psychology," "Loosen up [students'] thinking," "appreciation of divergent point of view," "a less dogmatic approach to life," "broadening perspectives on self and society," "open-mindedness about methods," "loosen students' indoctrination into logical empiricism and realism," "currency with contemporary thought," and "openness to critiques of science and research."

Table 8

Individuals Associated with Postmodernism Cited by Group (Frequency)

Favorable (n = 17)	Neutral (n = 4)	Unfavorable (n = 6)
Derrida (6)	Foucault (3)	Foucault (6)
Foucault (5)	Derrida, Lacan,	Derrida (3)
Lacan (3)	Rorty (1 each)	Rorty, Berger,
Watzlawick (2)		Luckmann,
Rorty, Gadamer,		Hare-Mustin, Minton,
Kuhn,		Bloor (1 each)
Feyerabend,		
Baudrillard,		
Wolfe,		
Habermas,		
Kiefer,		
Lyotard,		
Heleman (1 each)		

Table 9

Individuals in Psychology Associated with Postmodernism Cited by Group (Frequency)

Favorable (n = 4)	Neutral (n = 13)	Unfavorable (n = 7)
Gergen (9)	Gergen, Shotter,	Gergen (7)
Shotter (3)	Freud, Jung,	Shotter, Harre,
Kvale,	Winnicott, Klein,	Hare-Mustin,
Watzlawick,	Miller, Greenacre,	Sampson, Slife,
Bohan, Unger (2)	McAdams, Houston	Williams, Minon
Neimeyer, Harre,	(1 each)	(1 each)
Hare-Mustin,		
Sarbin, Spence,		
Mahoney, Butler,		
Harries,		
Goerner,		
Vanderbilt,		
Sperry,		
Morawski, Brown,		
Bullon, Lacan (1 each)		

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

As noted earlier, the postmodern attitude can be
summarized as a questioning of everything that has come
before and is included in it (Lyotard, 1983). This
principle fuels postmodernism's denial of absolute truth,
its admonitions about the limitations and deconstruction of
language, its recognition of the contextualization of
experience, as well as its antirationalistic and
antifoundationalistic other assertions.

Respondents' Knowledge of Postmodernism

Four elements were central to the definitions of
postmodernism given by the subjects: the social
contextualization/construction of the self, reality, and
knowledge; the denial of absolutes; a rejection of
positivistic science; and the transdisciplinary nature of
postmodernism. These elements compare well with tenets of
postmodernism noted earlier and, consequently, show that
the subjects knew what postmodernism meant.

For instance, a principal foundation for the
postmodern attitude is the claim that "absolutes" are not

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absolute, but in fact are historically contingent (e.g., Habermas, 1987; Nietzsche, 1873/1968). Fourteen out of the 39 participants who provided a definition of postmodernism said that the denial of absolutes was a major part of postmodernism.

Three quotes given by the participants were related primarily to deconstructing notions of unity and truth. As noted earlier, deconstruction describes both postmodernism's theory of interpretation and general attitude (e.g., Derrida, 1968/1982b). Furthermore, Derrida came in a close third to Gergen and Foucault in Question 4, Part II, as the individual most associated with postmodernism. The concept of interpretation surfaced nine times, especially with regard to interpreting experience in the social/cultural context, thereby showing that for postmodernism a text is cultural as well as literary (Oden, 1992).

As noted earlier, Michel Foucault is one example of a postmodernist historian whose stated purpose was to show that universal truths are contingent and illusory (Rabinow, 1984). Although the participants' definitions did not include specific references to the practices of postmodernist historians, the concept of reinterpretation and the belief that postmodernism represents a denial of

universal truths were present. Furthermore, Foucault's name

was cited more than any other (12 times) in Question 4,

Part II, as an individual associated with postmodernism.

Discussions of postmodernism in psychology have

frequently focused on viewing human beings as actively,

both individually and collectively, making the meaning of

their world (e.g., Neimeyer, 1993). Sixteen of the

subjects' quotes noted the social construction/

contextualization of knowledge, of the self, and of reality

as definitive of postmodernism. Changes in the way research

is viewed also crop up in the psychological literature.

These changes in the view of science clearly come through

as an integral part of the definitions of postmodernism in

the 10 citations in which logical positivism was challenged

as a viable scientific framework.

Several participants recognized postmodernism as a

form of art, architecture, music, and literature. When

asked which individuals are most associated with

postmodernism, the majority of answers included major

figures from a variety of disciplines: Derrida, Foucault,

Habermas, Kuhn (science), Baudrillard (art), Gadamer

(language), Rorty (politics), Lyotard, and Kiefer

(performing arts), to name a few. When asked about the

context of their encounter with postmodernism (Question 3,

Part II), nine of the participants showed a more "artistic" (art, architecture, film, etc.) than philosophical influence of postmodernism. These observations support the transdisciplinary nature postmodernism has acquired.

That the four elements noted earlier coincide with the postmodernist literature suggests that the subjects had a good idea of the meaning of postmodernism. However, the low return rate for the questionnaires might suggest that the nonresponding subjects did not know anything about postmodernism. If this is true, then the responding sample's knowledge of postmodernism overestimates the knowledge of postmodernism among psychologists.

The General Scope of Postmodern Influence in Psychology

Subjects who held an unfavorable opinion of postmodernism did not score high on Part I of the questionnaire; that is, they were not in agreement with the implications of postmodern theory for psychology. On the other hand, the participants who held a favorable opinion of postmodernism were in general agreement with the implications of postmodernism.

Another trend in the responses was the tendency to shy away from the extreme assertions of postmodernism. It could be inferred from this result that although psychology might gain some important benefits from postmodernism, psychology

should not adopt all of postmodernism's assumptions. What remains to be done is to examine the general scope of influence more specifically and then to answer the questions raised by the hypotheses of the study.

The Golden Mean

As noted, there was a general trend away from the extremes of postmodernism and toward a "golden mean" of acceptance. Implicitly, the balancing surfaced in the fluctuation of scores around a "middle ground." That is, none of the groups showed a denial of postmodernism, but neither did they voice whole-hearted acceptance. More explicitly, this balancing was seen in several of the participants' comments.

For some of the subjects, postmodernism "goes too far"; it "throws the baby out with the bathwater"; and exhibits a "trendy desire to appear sophisticated." One participant even stated, "[I] don't want to return psychology to the philosophy departments and humanities," presumably what would occur if postmodernism were carried out completely in psychology. This trend away from the extremes was also evidenced in a few of the participants' "re-writing" questions in Part I of the questionnaire. The originally (and purposely) strong nature of the questions

was sometimes replaced with a less dogmatic and more palatable version.

The participants' reaction to postmodernism is perhaps best viewed as a survival mechanism. To illustrate, low scores that were given on Question 1 ("Psychological studies on topics like violence could be the basis for legal reform in society") indicate that psychologists value their research to the extent that it should have an impact on society. This represents a denial of postmodernism's belief that the findings of particular communities (e.g., the research of psychologists) are limited in application to those communities (Gergen, 1994). Although faith in empirical research is maintained, low scores on Question 11 ("The knowledge gained from scientific research should itself always remain subject to a process of continuous scrutiny") suggest that continuously questioning research is a good thing. It may be that this question was interpreted as--one respondent noted--"having a healthy skepticism toward one's research"; however, the restatement hardly does justice to the postmodern attitude.

The State of Science

Postmodernism's specific influence on psychology concerning scientific research appears to be paradoxical. For Question 10 ("Fact should clearly take priority over

theory"), all three groups differed significantly from each other in their responses. The Neutral Group (2.87) showed marginal disagreement with the postmodern idea that theoretical frameworks are much more important than "brute facts." For the postmodernist, it is not only that assumptions interpret the "facts," it is also the case that they limit the application of facts (Neimeyer et al., 1994). The Unfavorable Group (3.69) showed marginal agreement with the postmodernist idea of the priority of theory over fact, and the Favorable Group (4.68) showed a significant agreement with the postmodernist assertion.

Thus, the Neutral and Unfavorable Groups believed facts backed by solid research to be extremely important, whereas the Favorable Group saw the preeminence of theory and a rethinking of the goal of research as an overarching concern. Nevertheless, for practical questions in the questionnaire (e.g., Question 1, "Psychological studies on topics like violence could be the basis for legal reform in society," and Question 5, "Knowledge that can be applied to areas outside psychology is a necessary goal of scientific research done by psychologists"), it seems that all groups exercised faith in the applicability of psychological research. This paradox probably stems from the idea that psychology without the practice of research would, in the

words of one of the participants, "return psychology to the philosophy departments and humanities." In this way, postmodernism does not have the epistemological respect to influence psychology in this area.

The State of Social Constructionism

As was the case with scientific research, postmodernism's particular influence with respect to social constructionism presents a paradox. As shown in Table 4, all three groups scored high on Question 4 ("Individuals do not construct their own realities; rather, they conform their beliefs to events in the world"), thus denying to some degree the correspondence theory of truth (Jahoda, 1958). As a result, credence is given to the postmodern belief in the social (vis a vis individual's) construction of reality. For Question 6 ("Self-understanding must have a role in the understanding of individuals"), Part I, the mean scores for all three groups were low, thereby confirming the respondents' belief that, epistemologically, the individual has primacy over the social. This is in stark contrast with the postmodern idea that the social has primacy over the individual (Kvale, 1992).

Thus, with social constructionism, as with scientific research, the responses appear paradoxical. These results indicate that where a practical intrusion by postmodern

theory upon the business of psychology is perceived, there is a rejection of postmodernism, in so far as Question 6 is more of a research issue than Question 4.

Variety of Publication Sources

In answering the question "What is postmodernism's influence on psychology," it is important to examine the sources of that influence. In Question 6, Part II, the participants were asked to cite the publications they would recommend for further study of postmodernism. The responses revealed that their knowledge of postmodernism came from the many books, articles, and discussions that have appeared in the psychological literature regarding postmodernism. One participant noted: "I review books for a journal and encounter the term daily in dozens of articles and books." This comment reflects the growing attention postmodernism has received in the psychological literature and, therefore, the need to flesh out its effect. Another participant put it this way: "[At the] 1995 APA Conference, every other talk was postmodern something . . . [they] all had their own interpretation." Postmodernism has not only received much attention, it is also a difficult task to define the term in a way that brings desirable consensus, a consensus not achieved even by scholars (Hassan, 1987).

The "Softer" Side

Now that the question of postmodernism's influence on psychology has been answered, the question of where the influence is manifested remains to be answered. The results in Table 3 are relevant to the empirical question and the hypothesis that postmodernism would find a home in the "softer" areas of psychology. Given the philosophical and social orientation of postmodernism, it is not surprising that members of Divisions 8 (Personality and Social Psychology), 9 (Psychological Study of Social Issues), and 24 (Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology) dominated the Favorable Group, accounting for 54% of the representation. It can be inferred from this result that postmodernism has indeed found a place in the "softer" areas of psychology.

The Neutral Group

A third question relevant to the hypotheses of the study remains: "Is an influence of postmodernism present where familiarity with the school of thought is absent?", thus showing an influence on a different level. The group of particular interest is the Neutral Group, whose members do not claim to have a notion of what postmodernism means. Presumably, if postmodernism is having a widespread effect on psychology, this group should show agreement with the implications of postmodern theory for psychology, regardless

of their knowledge of the term. The mean totals in Table 4 suggest that the Neutral Group did show slightly more agreement with postmodernism than the Unfavorable Group and slightly less agreement than the Favorable Group.

The Neutral Group also acts as a "control" group in that it represents psychologists consciously devoid of any knowledge of postmodernism. Thus, the differences in the Unfavorable and Favorable Groups from the "norm" indicate an influence of postmodernism. For the Favorable Group, the reaction is a positive one, as it agrees with the conclusions for psychology that postmodern theory brings. For the Unfavorable Group, the reaction assumes a negative role, driving it away from the conclusions postmodernism anticipates.

The possibility exists of another interpretation of the results. Given that the Unfavorable Group disapproved of postmodernism and was not sympathetic to its cause, this attitude would put in check any agreement with the conclusions of postmodern theory for psychology in the responses. Thus, <u>this</u> group would be a kind of standard by which other groups are gauged. If this is true, the agreement with postmodern theory that the Neutral Group shows could be viewed as the unconscious infiltration of postmodernism into its camp. This influence is obviously not

conscious or explicit, as the members of this group have either never heard the term before or do not know what postmodernism means. Either way the result is interpreted, postmodernism as surveyed in this study has had a marginal effect on psychology.

Conclusions

In response to postmodernism, psychology appears to accept the least contrary and least extreme elements of the topic while rejecting the most extreme. Blank's (1988) article on reactions in social psychology to Gergen's (1973) article "Social Psychology as History" suggests that this is the case. Blank said that supporters of Gergen have moderated some of their positions over the years, particularly in the area of experimentation. Furthermore, the least extreme parts of Gergen's thesis, such as the need for greater sensitivity to cultural factors when interpreting results, were incorporated into psychology. Blank added:

> Most of what Gergen said has been "tamed" and even
> made an important part of the history of the
> field, whereas his call to revolution, to the need
> to grow beyond a mechanistic worldview to a

contextualist, constructionist one, has been

deemed unnecessary or at least anachronistic. (p.

659)

Thus, the results of the present study could be seen as the

reaction of social psychology noted by Blank applied to

psychology as a whole, especially given the recent

discussions of postmodernism in the psychological

literature.

Blank (1988) also stated that, as of 1986, Gergen's

(1973) article had been cited 310 times and in areas other

than social psychology. This finding, along with the

subjects' responses in the present study (Table 9), suggest

that discussions of postmodernism in psychology may be

generated from the same sources and focused around the same

issues. The fact that the subjects in the present study

consistently cited both Gergen and contextualization as the

principal elements of recommended reading on postmodernism

lends credence to this interpretation. If this

interpretation is correct, then Smith's (1994) argument

noted earlier is irrelevant to the discussion of

postmodernism and psychology, in that the "death of the

self" is not a tenet of postmodernism that psychology

accepts.

In conclusion, specific tenets of postmodernism are evident in psychology, although there is no broad influence. The reaction of psychology to postmodernism is akin to a preservation instinct--to accept what is beneficial to psychology and to phase out what brings de(con)struction. The extent of the assimilation of postmodernist tenets in the study is directly proportional to the singular benefits of postmodernism. The benefits participants cited were not much different from the benefits expected of any "new" theory; likewise, the extent of acceptance was not statistically significant, although surely noticeable. The consensus of the study is that a small dose of postmodernism might provide a richer foundation for psychology's future (e.g., Gergen, 1994), but an overdose would certainly be lethal (e.g., Smith, 1994).

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE--PART I

APPENDIX A

Please read the following statements carefully and write the number that best represents your professional opinion in the blank.

1 strongly agree	2 agree	3 somewhat agree	4 somewhat disagree	5 disagree	6 strongly disagree

__1. Psychological studies on topics like violence   1 2 3 4 5 6
could be the basis for legal reform in society.

__2. The self is defined only in social (relational)   1 2 3 4 5 6
terms.

__3. A person diagnosed as depressed by respected   1 2 3 4 5 6
clinical psychologists is suffering from a
mental illness.

__4. Individuals do not construct their own realities; 1 2 3 4 5 6
rather, they conform their beliefs to events in
the world.

__5. Knowledge that can be applied to areas outside   1 2 3 4 5 6
psychology is a necessary goal of scientific
research done by psychologists.

__6. Self-understanding must have a role in the   1 2 3 4 5 6
understanding of individuals.

__7. Memory is not simply recalling a stable   1 2 3 4 5 6
representation of past experience.

__8. The goal of psychological research should be to   1 2 3 4 5 6
mirror psychological reality without distortion
or human bias.

__9. Self-concept and self-esteem are necessary and   1 2 3 4 5 6
trustworthy terms to be used when referring to
individuals.

__10. Fact should clearly take priority over theory.   1 2 3 4 5 6

__11. The knowledge gained from scientific research   1 2 3 4 5 6
should itself always remain subject to a process
of continuous scrutiny.

__12. It is impossible to view the "self" as a distinct 1 2 3 4 5 6
and stable entity because the identity of the
individual is constantly being defined and
redefined by linguistic and cultural practices.

__13. If a variety of articles appear in respected   1 2 3 4 5 6
journals on a new psychological construct such as
aspiration or self-deception, then that construct
must correspond to some real phenomena in the
world.

__14. It is impossible for one person to really   1 2 3 4 5 6
understand another.

__15. Psychology will never be able to construct a   1 2 3 4 5 6
universally applicable theory that predicts
human behavior.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE--PART II

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APPENDIX B

Please take the time to answer the following questions.

1. Have you ever encountered the term "postmodernism" before? If so, how would you personally define the term?

2. Do you have a <u>favorable</u> or <u>unfavorable</u> opinion of postmodernism? (Circle one)

3. If you answered "yes" to Question 1, in what context did you first encounter postmodernism (e.g., journal article, talk given at a conference, conversation with others)? If you have encountered it frequently or in several contexts, please list a few different examples. Be sure to include date(s) and specific people and/or publications, if possible. Note: If you can't remember a "first time," please list any important early encounters.

4. What individuals (e.g., authors) -- past or present -- do you currently most associate with postmodernism?

5. What individuals -- past or present -- <u>within psychology</u> do you currently most associate with postmodernism?

6. If given the opportunity, would you have your students read or study the work of the individuals you listed in Items 4 and 5? If so, what specific works would you recommend for study?

7. Continuing from Question 6, what benefits, if any, would you expect of such study?

APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER

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APPENDIX C

Dear APA member:

My name is Bryan Baird, and I am a graduate student at Mississippi State University working on my master's thesis. The enclosed questionnaire is designed to measure the degree to which psychologists from different subdisciplines agree or disagree with certain conceptions of psychology. I believe that my work is genuinely substantive, and this is an opportunity for you to contribute greatly to a better understanding of current issues within psychology.

You are one of a group of APA members selected using an a priori procedure to participate in this study. In order for the results to represent all of the groups being studied, it is vitally important that a majority of the questionnaires be completed and returned to me as soon as possible.

You are not obligated to complete the questionnaire. You may elect to not answer any question. Should you agree to take part in the study, simply complete the questionnaire and place it in the small envelope enclosed to be mailed to me.

You may receive a summary of the results at the completion of the study by writing "Send Results" on the back of the small envelope in which you place the questionnaire.

I will be most happy to answer any questions you might have. Please write, call, or send me email. My number is (601) 924-5409, and the email address is baird@teclink.net. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Bryan Baird

APPENDIX D

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM
FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

STATEMENT OF BOARD: IRB DOCKET # __35-127____

This is to certify that the research proposal entitled, "_An Examination of the Influence_

_of Postmodernism Upon Psychology_____,"

and submitted by: _Bryan Neal Baird_____
                    Name
                    _Psychology_____
                    Department
                    _Tracy B. Henley, Ph.D._____
                    Name of Advisor

to _____Sponsored Programs Administration_____ for consideration
has been reviewed by the Regulatory Compliance Officer or the IRB and approved with
respect to the study of human subjects as appropriately protecting the rights and welfare
of the individuals involved, employing appropriate methods of securing informed consent
from these individuals and not involving undue risk in the light of potential benefits to be
derived therefrom.

Administrative Approval Date: __5-17-95____

____(a)   Contingent upon receipt of _____

    _____.

_X_(b)   All necessary documents were received.

Expedited Approval Date: _____

____(a)   Contingent upon receipt of _____

    _____.

____(b)   All necessary documents were received.

Full Board Approval Date: _____

____(a)   Contingent upon receipt of _____

    _____.

____(b)   All necessary documents were received.

_____   _5-17-95_
Angela J. Corder, MSU Regulatory Compliance Officer   Date

_____   _____
Institutional Review Board Member   Date