

Social psychology in Australia: Past and present

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This paper reviews the development of social psychology in Australia from its early beginnings, through post-World War II, to the current situation. Social psychology became an integral part of the psychology curriculum after the Second World War, with a strong emphasis at the University of Melbourne. It received an impetus in the 1960s with the creation of Flinders, Macquarie, and La Trobe universities. Currently, teaching and research in social psychology is widespread, with major centres at the Universities of Queensland and New South Wales, and at the Australian National University, but with universities such as Flinders, Macquarie, and Melbourne continuing to contribute. In general, social psychologists in Australia have not deliberately set out to develop a distinctive local identity. Instead, they have a strong international focus and are eclectic in their interests, drawing on theories and methodologies from major centres in North America, the United Kingdom, and Europe. They have made distinctive contributions in many areas, including research on acculturation, achievement motivation, the psychological impact of unemployment, values, expectancy–value theory, role theory, social identity and self-categorization theory, deservingness, gender studies and household work, close relationships, decision-making, social cognition, ostracism, and the effects of mood. Uniquely, Australian topics include research on tall poppies or high achievers, and on the cultural cringe. Social psychologists in Australia have also been active in industrial/organizational research and in cross-cultural research, but there is little social psychological research involving the indigenous Australian population. Australian contributions to social psychology are not always recognized, partly because of Australia's distance from the major centres. However, social psychologists in Australia now have their own association, the Society of Australasian Social Psychologists (SASP), offer symposia and special academic appointments that draw international visitors, and compensate for the tyranny of distance by travelling widely and using the internet. Social psychology is now one of the strongest areas of Australian psychology internationally.

Cet article fait la revue du développement de la psychologie sociale en Australie de ses tout débuts, en passant par l'après Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, jusqu'à la situation actuelle. La psychologie sociale est devenue une partie intégrale de la psychologie générale après la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale et s'est imposée fortement à l'Université de Melbourne. Elle a pris son élan dans les années 1960 avec la création des Universités de Flinders, Macquarie et La Trobe. Récemment, l'enseignement et la recherche de la psychologie sociale se sont étendus principalement dans les Universités de Queensland et de New South Wales, ainsi qu'à l'Université Nationale Australienne, tout en demeurant actifs dans les Universités comme Flinders, Macquarie et Melbourne. De façon générale, les psychologues sociaux d'Australie n'ont pas délibérément cherché à développer une identité locale distinctive. Ils ont plutôt une forte vision internationale et des intérêts éclectiques, se basant sur les théories et méthodes de recherche des centres majeurs d'Amérique du Nord, du Royaume Uni et de l'Europe. Ils ont apporté des contributions distinctives dans plusieurs secteurs, incluant la recherche sur l'acculturation, la motivation à l'accomplissement, l'impact psychosocial du chômage, les valeurs, la théorie attente-valeur, la théorie des rôles, la théorie de l'identité sociale et de l'auto-catégorisation, le mérite, les études du genre et du travail ménager, les relations intimes, la prise de décision, la cognition sociale, l'ostracisme et les effets de l'humeur. Les thèmes exclusivement australiens incluent la recherche sur les personnes vivant la honte relativement à leur culture ou sur les personnes douées et sur la servitude culturelle. Les psychologues sociaux australiens ont aussi été actifs dans la recherche industrielle/organisationnelle et dans la recherche trans-culturelle, mais peu d'études de psychologie sociale ont impliqué la population indigène australienne. Les contributions australiennes à la psychologie sociale ne sont pas toujours reconnues, en partie à cause de la distance de l'Australie par rapport aux centres majeurs.

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Cependant, les psychologues sociaux d'Australie ont maintenant leur propre association, la Société des psychologues sociaux australiens, ils offrent des symposiums et des ateliers académiques attirant les visiteurs internationaux et compensant pour les inconvénients de la distance en voyageant sur une grande étendue et en utilisant internet. La psychologie sociale est maintenant un des domaines les plus forts de la psychologie australienne sur le plan international.

*E*ste trabajo reseña el desarrollo de la psicología social en Australia desde sus comienzos, pasando por la posguerra, hasta la situación actual. La psicología social se convirtió en una parte integral del plan de estudios de psicología después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, con un énfasis muy fuerte en la Universidad de Melbourne. Recibió un ímpetu en los años sesenta con la creación de las universidades de Flinders, Macquarie y La Trobe. Actualmente, la enseñanza e investigación de la psicología social se encuentra ampliamente difundida principalmente en las universidades de Queensland y New South Wales, y en la Universidad Nacional Australiana, aunque siguen contribuyendo universidades como las de Flinders, Macquarie y Melbourne. En general, los psicólogos sociales en Australia no se han propuesto desarrollar deliberadamente una identidad local. En vez de esto, tienen un enfoque fuertemente internacional y son eclécticos en sus intereses, al recurrir a teorías y metodologías de los principales centros de Estados Unidos, el Reino Unido y Europa. Han hecho contribuciones distintivas en muchas áreas, que incluyen investigación sobre aculturación, motivación de logro, el impacto psicológico del desempleo, valores, la teoría expectativa-valor, la teoría del rol, la teoría de la identidad social y la auto categorización, merecimiento, estudios de género y trabajo doméstico, relaciones cercanas, toma de decisiones, cognición social, ostracismo, y los efectos del estado de ánimo. Los tópicos exclusivamente australianos incluyen investigación sobre personas de alto desempeño, y vergüenza ajena cultural. Los psicólogos sociales en Australia han estado también activos en la investigación industrial organizacional y transcultural, pero la investigación psicológica social que estudie las poblaciones autóctonas australianas es escasa. Las contribuciones australianas a la psicología social no siempre se han reconocido, en parte por la distancia entre Australia y los centros principales. No obstante, los psicólogos sociales en Australia tienen ahora su propia asociación, la Sociedad Australoasiática de Psicología Social, ofrecen simposios y nombramientos académicos especiales que atraen visitantes internacionales, y compensan la tiranía de la distancia mediante viajes frecuentes y el uso de la Internet. La psicología social es ahora una de las áreas más fuertes de la psicología australiana en el ámbito internacional.

In this review, I attempt to trace the development of social psychology in Australia and to comment on whether or not it has distinctive characteristics when compared with social psychology elsewhere. This is no easy task. A complete analysis would call on the skills not only of psychologists but also of other social scientists well versed in historical and sociological analysis. I lay no claim to combining these talents. Inevitably, therefore, the present account is one person's view that is based on both personal experience and observation as well as on reading of other's descriptions of how psychology developed in this island continent that is far removed geographically from the major centres of northern-hemisphere influence.

I argue that this separation is both a cost and a benefit. It is a cost in the obvious sense that Australian psychologists have less easy access to the groups, elites, and networks that actively develop and promote social psychology in the major sources of influence in both North America and Europe. This separation is now less pronounced given the universal use of electronic communication, but it is nevertheless true that influence via both formal and informal personal contacts makes a difference in the spread of ideas, in their acceptance, and in the recognition

accorded to those who produce them. Australians have the reputation of being frequent travellers but visits to North America and Europe cannot completely overcome the cost of what Blainey (1983) called the tyranny of distance.

From the beginning, Australian psychology has been strongly influenced by developments in psychology that have occurred in both North America and Europe, but its geographical position means that it is also closer to developments in psychology in Asia and the Pacific, though to date these have had a minor influence. The relative separation from dominant and influential ingroups in the northern hemisphere provides Australian psychologists with the opportunity to develop ideas that may be outside of the mainstream, at the forefront of research, and sometimes ahead of their time. The danger, however, is that these ideas may struggle to survive if they are not closely related to the dominant paradigms that prevail in the major centres and if they fail to become the fodder of large graduate schools and communication via conferences and major journals.

The development in Australia of psychology in general and social psychology in particular has also been constrained by economic and political

forces that affect the resources available for teaching and research in universities and the form that tertiary education takes in a country that does not have a huge population (about 20 million at the last count). Universities, of which there are nearly 40 in Australia, compete for resources, position, and status in a climate where there are diminishing centrally funded resources in real economic terms and where the per capita level of funding for higher education in general is smaller compared to the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe.

Research funds are lightly spread across the community of social psychologists, which numbered about 190 in the ninth edition of the directory published in 1999 by the Society of Australasian Social Psychologists (SASP), including graduate students and a small number of overseas members. This smaller level of funding has consequences for the type of research that can be conducted. Despite those constraints, social psychologists continue to make useful and innovative contributions to their discipline both nationally and internationally.

Within this wider framework of constraints, the development of social psychology in Australia reflects the influence of particular university departments of psychology, research groups, and key individuals who have fostered its growth. The location of these influences changed from time to time as people moved on, groups changed, and policy decisions were made to give social psychology more or less emphasis in the curriculum. I track some of these changes in a summary way before describing the current contributions that social psychologists in Australia are making to their discipline. I also comment on whether Australian social psychologists have developed a distinctive approach to their discipline that reflects local interests and cultural values and that somehow goes beyond the universal themes that have occupied social psychologists elsewhere.

EARLY HISTORY

There have been number of accounts of how psychology developed in Australia, (Nixon & Taft, 1977; O'Neil, 1987; Taft & Day, 1988; Turtle, 1985). O'Neil, for example, provided a detailed history in which he noted that psychology was first included as a topic in philosophy courses and gradually emerged as a fully fledged major in undergraduate degrees, beginning at the University of Sydney and the University of Western

Australia. O'Neil also described the influence of education and the testing movement on the development of psychology in Australia. He viewed the character of Australian psychology as "broadly functionalist, observational and strongly applied ... functionalist in that it has been most concerned with processes (perceiving, thinking, remembering, learning, motivation, personality dynamics and development, and social interaction) and their determinants ... and with their roles in mental life" (O'Neil, 1987, p. 126). The applied orientation "included counseling aimed at helping persons confronted by emotional and social adjustment problems and at helping in situations requiring educational and vocational choice, and studies directed to improvement of work practices in the office and factory" (p. 127).

O'Neil recognized that some deviations from a functionalist perspective included interests in dynamic depth psychology, American behaviourism, information or communication theory, Gestalt theory, and Piagetian psychology. He tended to downplay Australian contributions to theory, a view that I believe was overdrawn at the time and that is certainly not correct in relation to current Australian psychology and current social psychology in particular.

Social psychology in Australia began to be included as part of psychology courses to students in the first half of the last century. The treatment was fairly limited and theoretical and the references were mainly to influential writings of the time, such as works by McDougall and Le Bon from England and Europe, and included references to anthropological and sociological concepts and research. At the University of Western Australia in the 1930s Hugh Fowler, whose postgraduate training was with Charles Spearman at University College, London, made use of anthropological findings and also drew attention to overseas research concerned with social influences on cognition (e.g., Bartlett's research on serial memory). After a visit to the USA, he introduced Lewin's dynamic psychology in his teaching.

In addition, there was very early interest in Australia in the effects of social relations in the workplace. Peter Muscio was a pioneer of industrial psychology and provided lectures in this topic at the University of Sydney in the 1910s. Elton Mayo, who was a graduate of the University of Adelaide, left his position at the University of Queensland to go to the USA in the 1920s, where he became a major influence in the field of industrial relations.

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

The academic training of early figures in Australian social psychology is important in order to understand the development of the specialty within the country. In the text that follows I have indicated in parentheses following each name the institution of their PhD degree. It will be seen that whereas the majority obtained their doctorate in the United States—Harvard and Michigan being two of the major centres—a substantial number (e.g., Lafitte, Gardner, Richardson, Innes, and Forgas) obtained their postgraduate degrees in the United Kingdom. The PhDs of several others (e.g., Hammond, Emery, D. Keats, O'Brien, and Bochner) were obtained from Australian universities. Of the foreign-trained academics, the majority had obtained their undergraduate education from an Australian university. So, whereas the majority of individuals forging social psychology in Australia were native Australians, most received their doctoral training in the US or the UK. For most of these individuals their first academic appointment was in an Australian university. Other social psychologists were expatriates from overseas (e.g., Scott, Innes, Peay, Turner, Foddy, Gallois) who came to take up an Australian posting. This academic lineage also was important for giving Australian social psychologists linkages to centres in the US and UK.

Social psychology became a more integrated part of the psychology curriculum after the Second World War. An impetus was provided by the appointment of Oscar Oeser (PhD: Cambridge) to the foundation chair of psychology at the University of Melbourne in 1946. Oeser developed a strong focus on social psychology in his department attracting notable scholars such as Sam Hammond (PhD: Melbourne), Fred Emery (PhD: Melbourne), Paul Lafitte (PhD: London), and Godfrey Gardner (PhD: London). Oeser combined a social psychological approach with sociological analysis and had a special interest in social structure, social roles, and the influence of cultural norms. He was influenced in his approach to social psychology by the work of Eric Trist, Paul Lazarsfeld, Herbert Mead, and Kurt Lewin among others. Community studies conducted by Oeser, Hammond, and Emery in urban and rural settings used a wide variety of methods that included interviews, questionnaires, participant observation, and standardized scales.

There was a strong theoretical and empirical orientation in the social psychological research conducted by the Melbourne group. The department produced notable graduates such as Leon

Mann, Gordon O'Brien, and Richard Trahair, and for some years the University of Melbourne was the main focus of social psychology in Australia. In later years Oeser developed structural role theory, combining a conceptual analysis of the nature of roles with mathematical graph theory.

On the other side of the continent at the University of Western Australia in Perth, Ronald Taft (PhD: California at Berkeley) and Alan Richardson (PhD: London) were conducting studies in the 1950s and 1960s on the acculturation of immigrants to Australia, focusing on how well they adapted to their new environment. These pioneering studies of immigrant adaptation in Australia provided frameworks for understanding adjustment to a new culture. Kenneth Walker (PhD: Harvard) was appointed to the chair of psychology at Western Australia in 1952 and conducted research into structural factors in industrial relations. Taft (1989) noted that research at the University of Western Australia was "eclectic between sociological and psychological social psychology but there was a strong preference for naturalistic research rather than laboratory studies" (pp. 229–330). Taft later moved to the University of Melbourne and subsequently was appointed to the chair of social psychology in the Faculty of Education in Monash University in Melbourne.

Social psychology did not have a strong presence in the other Australian universities in the years just after the Second World War. Cecil Gibb (PhD: Illinois), at the University of Sydney, contributed a chapter on leadership to the first edition of the *Handbook of Social Psychology*. Subsequently, in 1956, Gibb was appointed to the chair of psychology at Canberra University College, which later was absorbed into the Australian National University.

Social psychology was given an impetus following the creation of new universities in the 1960s. Feather (PhD: Michigan) was appointed to the foundation chair of psychology at the Flinders University of South Australia in Adelaide in 1968, having been at the University of New England in Armidale, New South Wales, for some years. The academic structure at Flinders University was designed to break away from old traditional structures by creating schools rather than faculties. Elsewhere I have given the history of the development of psychology at Flinders University (Feather, 1995). My appointment reflected an intention by the university to promote the development of social psychology as a key discipline within the school and university, in contrast to the

University of Adelaide, where social psychology at the time received little emphasis.

I came to Flinders University with strong research interests in achievement motivation, expectancy-value theory, and cognitive dynamics (especially balance and dissonance theory), as well as emerging interests in attribution theory and the psychology of values. I was influenced by Kurt Lewin's emphasis on the importance of relating behaviour to both the person and the perceived environment and by his injunction to base research on theory and then to apply the theory in realistic settings.

During the 1970s and 1980s, teaching and research in social psychology flourished at Flinders University and it became the focal location for social psychology in Australia. Social psychology was strengthened by the appointment of Leon Mann (PhD: Yale) to a Readership in 1972 and then as the second Professor in 1973. He had authored an introductory textbook on social psychology (Mann, 1969). At one stage Mann and I jointly offered a course in cross-cultural psychology. He moved to the Business School at the University of Melbourne in 1990. Other early appointments at Flinders were Ed Peay (PhD: Michigan), who contributed topics in social psychology and research methods, and Gordon O'Brien (PhD: Melbourne), who was appointed in 1969 to develop courses in industrial/organizational psychology.

Those were exciting times for social psychology at Flinders University. Graduate training commenced and there was a strong emphasis on research. During the two decades of the 1970s to 1980s I conducted research on causal attribution, expectancy-value theory, the psychology of values, and the psychological impact of unemployment, leading to widely cited journal and book publications in those areas. Leon Mann was active in research on collective behaviour and decision-making, producing an important book with Irving Janis on the latter topic. Gordon O'Brien conducted research into work and unemployment and collaborated with me on one of the rare longitudinal studies of the psychological effects of unemployment. The Psychology Discipline at Flinders University made the list of highest-impact institutions from 1986 through 1990 in a citation analysis (compiled by Eugene Garfield of the Institute for Scientific Information—ISI) that appeared in the daily news sheet of the 25th International Congress in Brussels in 1992.

Social psychology at Flinders University was advanced in other ways. In 1972 I conceived the idea of organizing a mini-conference on social

psychology that would meet each year. Leon Mann and I developed the idea further. The proposed meeting was christened the Flinders Conference on Social Psychology and the first specialist meeting of social psychologists was held at Flinders University in 1972. Subsequently it has met annually in different locations (as far afield as Cairns, Perth, and Hobart). It has become the major national conference for social psychologists in Australia, providing social psychologists of all persuasions with the opportunity of meeting together and presenting their ideas in an atmosphere that has always been friendly and supportive without losing the edge of criticism. Inevitably the conference increased in size and became more formal in its organization. It was constituted in 1995 as a voluntary incorporated organization called the Society of Australasian Social Psychologists (SASP), representing both Australian and New Zealand social psychologists. The annual meeting is an important event for social psychologists in Australia and New Zealand and it attracts contributors from overseas as well as invited speakers.

Concurrent with these developments at Flinders University, teaching and research in social psychology was also occurring at other universities. At Macquarie University in Sydney, social psychological research was being conducted by John Antill, John Cunningham, John Turner, Sue Kippax, Kay Bussey, and Jacqueline Goodnow in areas that included gender roles (see Antill, Bussey, & Cunningham, 1985), media influences, group processes, and the sharing of household work in the family. Goodnow (PhD: Harvard) and her colleagues were training new graduates in social psychology and in social aspects of developmental psychology (e.g., Goodnow, 1988). She became an important force for social research at Macquarie University. At LaTrobe University in Melbourne, Margaret Foddy (PhD: University of British Columbia) conducted research on expectation states and social dilemmas, combining social psychological analysis with sociological theory.

Bill Scott, an American social psychologist (PhD: Michigan) who had made important contributions to the psychology of values, was appointed in 1974 to the chair in behavioural sciences at James Cook University in Townsville. Scott put social psychology at the forefront of his department, recruiting Mike Smithson, Paul d'Amato, Joe Reser, and others who pursued interests in social psychology and study of the indigenous people. Scott later moved to the Australian National University in Canberra where he and his wife, Ruth, researched on the structural

properties of groups and subsequently mounted an impressive international study on immigrant adjustment. Ronald Taft maintained a continuing interest in immigrant adjustment at Monash University.

During the 1970s and 1980s social psychology was also active in other universities. Steve Bochner (PhD: New South Wales) contributed innovative research on culture contact and culture learning. Joe Forgas (PhD: Oxford), conducted research into social cognition and the effects of mood.

At the University of Adelaide, John (Mike) Innes researched social attitudes and prejudice, a topic that was also pursued by Martha Augoustinos using discourse analysis. Research on the social effects of unemployment by Tony Winefield and his colleagues, and on social facilitation by Bernard Guerin, was also progressing at the University of Adelaide. Innes later moved to the chair in psychology at James Cook University, and then to Murdoch University in Perth, where he advanced social psychology at that university via teaching, research, and the recruitment of new staff members such as Iain Walker (PhD: California at Santa Cruz). He has now returned to the University of Adelaide.

At the University of Newcastle in New South Wales, John and Daphne Keats conducted pioneer cross-cultural research in China and other Asian countries. John Keats (PhD: Princeton) came to the foundation chair in psychology at Newcastle in 1965. His doctoral research had been on Piaget and cognitive development, and he brought with him expertise in measurement and psychometrics. His wife, Daphne Keats (PhD: Queensland), developed a strong interest in cross-cultural psychology, which was recognized by her election to the title of honorary fellow by the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology.

Finally, at the University of Queensland, research in social psychology was underway with Cindy Gallois, John Western, Pat Noller, Victor Callan, and others making important contributions. Other research with a social psychological focus was conducted at some of the regional universities such as Patrick Heaven's research at Charles Sturt University in New South Wales.

This summary is probably not complete and I apologize for programmes I have missed and to people I have not mentioned. But the summary gives some of the flavour of social psychology in the 1970s and 1980s in Australian universities and the diverse backgrounds of those who were contributing. It is clear that social psychology was quickly becoming established as a basic part

of teaching and research in psychology departments in Australian universities during this period.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

During the 1990s strong centres of social psychology developed at the University of Queensland, the University of New South Wales, and the Australian National University. John Turner, who had worked with Henri Tajfel in England, moved from Macquarie University to the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. With Tajfel, he had already made important contributions to social identity theory (SIT), and he developed these ideas further in self-categorization theory (SCT), a theoretical approach that attracted considerable interest and led to influential publications. A strong research group developed at the ANU. Turner, Penelope Oakes, Alex Haslam (now at the University of Exeter), Craig McGarty, and Kate Reynolds conducted research on group processes and social identity that drew on SIT and SCT. Also at the ANU Valerie Braithwaite developed a value balance model of political evaluations, building on research that she had previously published with Henry Law at the University of Queensland.

Michael Hogg was another social psychologist from England who was influenced by Tajfel's contributions. He had published a widely cited book on social identity and social identifications with Dominic Abrams and he also collaborated with Turner and other colleagues in producing an influential book on self-categorization for which Turner was the senior author (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Hogg moved from Melbourne to an appointment at the University of Queensland. Turner and Hogg were instrumental in bringing social identity theory to Australia and in promoting it both there and internationally. These new ideas were developed further and found a fertile soil in Australia. It is fair to say that the major centres of social identity theory and its further refinement, development, and application are now in Australia, although there are still important roots in the United Kingdom and Europe. A symposium on social identity is hosted annually by the University of Queensland.

At the University of Queensland, research in social psychology was also being pursued in other areas such as language and communication in social settings (Cindy Gallois), attitude-behaviour relations and the social psychology of organizations (Deborah Terry), social/organizational

psychology (Victor Callan), mass media, attitudes, and persuasion (Julie Duck), and social development and family dynamics (Pat Noller). Terry, Hogg, and Callan took social identity into new contexts, showing how it could be applied to understanding behaviour in organizations and organizational change. Also in Queensland, Drew Nesdale at Griffith University was conducting research on ethnic prejudice in children.

The University of New South Wales also became a centre for social psychology in the 1990s largely due to the efforts of Joe Forgas. He initiated the Sydney Symposium on Social Psychology, which meets annually at the University of New South Wales and comprises a selected group of contributors who come mainly from overseas. Each symposium addresses a particular topic and the papers are subsequently published in book form as part of a continuing series. Forgas has been assisted by colleagues in these publications (e.g., Forgas, 2000; Forgas, Williams, & Von Hippel, 2002; Forgas, Williams, & Wheeler, 2001). These social psychologists left the United States to take positions at the University of New South Wales. Kip Williams later moved to a chair at Macquarie University, where Ladd Wheeler is also now located. Williams had previously developed ground-breaking research on social ostracism and an active research programme in that area continued at Macquarie University (Williams, 2001). Also at the University of New South Wales, Meg Rohan has contributed research on values and the self-concept, and Steve Bochner continued to contribute to research in applied areas of social psychology.

The Sydney symposium has been very important in drawing international scholars in social psychology to Australia, significantly enhancing Australia's international reputation as an important centre for research in social psychology. Previously, a large influx of prominent social psychologists to Australia occurred at the International Congress of Psychology and at the associated satellite conferences that were held in Sydney in 1988. These conferences had a strong flow-on effect and helped to stimulate the development of even closer ties with overseas scholars.

Research in social psychology has continued apace at the other universities in Australia and the annual meetings of the Society of Australasian Social Psychologists (SASP) provide a rich and varied programme of research papers from social psychologists from all over Australia. For example, at the 2003 meeting in Sydney, there were symposia that presented research on such varied topics as ostracism; close relationships;

organizations; gender and body image; social cognition; hurt and forgiveness; power and punishment; stereotyping; prejudice; decision-making and impression formation; attitudes, norms, and communication strategies; social psychology and the law; critical and discursive social psychology; and clinical applications of social psychology. Keynote addresses were provided on sexual treachery (David Buss from the United States) and tall poppies and *schadenfreude* (Norm Feather).

At a meeting of SASP held in Cairns, Queensland in 1997, Mike Innes provided an analysis of papers presented over 25 years at the meetings of social psychologists that began at Flinders University in 1972 (Innes, 1997). He commented on the rapid growth in recent years and noted that the ratio of male to female first authors had changed from a 3 to 1 ratio over the first decade to a 1 to 1 ratio over the final 10 years, reflecting parallel gender changes in academic appointments. There was also a shift toward an equal number of multi-authored papers and sole-authored papers, reflecting more collaboration and the input of postgraduate training. Innes also noted that there was a core set of authors who contributed disproportionately to a very large portion of the research. The areas of research were similar to those in other parts of the world over 25 years, with a growth of interest in the traditional areas of attitudes and related topics such as values; person perception and attribution; stereotyping and prejudice; cross-cultural studies; group processes; and communication across cultures and within families. I also note over recent years more papers on social identity, social cognition, social psychology and justice, critical analyses of social psychology, and applied social psychology (e.g., to organizations).

Finally, there is increasing recognition of the need to acquaint undergraduate and graduate students with social psychological research from their own culture in the topics they undertake for their degrees. Some theoretical and research contributions that Australian and New Zealand social psychologists have made have been included in textbooks on introductory social psychology that have appeared in the past decade (McKnight & Sutton, 1994; Vaughan & Hogg, 2002).

There is insufficient space to review developments in and contributions from other social sciences cognate with social psychology. Sociology departments were introduced later in Australian universities and these sociologists have conducted research on social class, gender relations, political sociology, family studies,

multiculturalism, and other topics. However, there has not been much interaction between social psychologists and sociologists in the Australian context. They tend to go their separate ways. The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) conducts workshops and symposia that sometimes involve social psychologists. The Academy has also produced book series that are relevant. For example, there have been Academy-sponsored series of books on research concerned with Aborigines in Australia and on immigration and the adjustment of new ethnic groups to the Australian culture. Publications have also appeared on topics relating to national identity, work and unemployment, demography, health, youth, Asia and the Pacific, and social indicators. The books sponsored by the Academy over a number of years provide an important record of how social scientists thought about key social issues at different points in Australian history.

IS THERE A DISTINCTIVE AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY?

In one of the Academy's books, *Australian Psychology: Review of Research*, I compiled a collection of 15 papers by different authors that described the state of the art in their particular research areas (Feather, 1985). These chapters were produced by key contributors to each area. In a summing-up at that time (the mid-1980s) I stated that:

One could not say that there is a distinctive Australian psychology that is markedly different from psychological theorizing and research in other countries. Australian psychologists draw upon overseas developments, especially from North America and Great Britain. The publication record indicates that the research being conducted is timely and keeps pace with the best overseas work. Like scientists everywhere, psychologists in Australia are influenced by the theories and procedures developed by a small group of leading figures who command the attention of the scientific community. While Australian society may suggest some distinctive questions that require answers, the theories and techniques used to deal with these questions are predominantly those that are in the repertoire of psychologists world-wide, irrespective of their national affiliations That is not to say, however, that the Australian work is derivative, lacking in originality or depth ... Australian psychologists have made important and innovative contributions to the mainstream in all sorts of fields (Feather, 1985, p. 388).

Commenting on the book, Taft and Day (1988) stated that what the collection of papers makes clear "is that psychological research in Australia is well-developed, sophisticated, and vigorous. Compared to the research scene in North America and Europe the difference is essentially one of scale, not of kind or standard" (p. 393).

Has the situation changed since then? Not really. In the case of social psychology, advances are cumulative, although contributions in Australia and elsewhere tend to have a short "shelf-life" unless they capture the imagination of the wider community of social psychologists and are promoted in books and journals by influential figures and by formal and informal networks. New types of theory have emerged in social psychology generally that reflect, for example, strong interests in social cognition and cognitive processing, a renewed interest in the self, and new ways of looking at attitudes, stereotyping, social groups, personality, and interpersonal relations. As in the past, interest in some topics reflects salient social issues at the time (e.g., prejudice, gender relations); other topics seem to go through a cycle, retreating and then re-emerging (e.g., group dynamics, social motivation) and the new theories that are developed sometimes resemble old wine in new bottles. Commenting on the Australian scene, Taft and Day (1988) remarked "...the problems associated with mind and behavior, which is the business of contemporary psychology, cannot be expected to be much different in Australia from those elsewhere except in minor details ... Likewise, the methods of tackling these problems and developing theories would be expected to be broadly similar" (p. 393). Add to this the fact that Australian psychology is strongly influenced by trends in North America and Europe and the conclusion follows that social psychology in Australia cannot claim to be radically different from social psychology in these major centres of influence.

It is probably also the case that Australian social psychologists (and Australian psychologists generally) have not deliberately set out to develop a distinctive local identity. We do not have a local journal in social psychology. Social psychologists in Australia publish mainly in overseas journals, with occasional articles appearing in the *Australian Journal of Psychology* and the *Australian Psychologist*. There is not a great deal of collaboration between social psychologists across Australian universities; they tend to collaborate with close colleagues within their university or with overseas colleagues. They follow cutting-edge developments overseas but, with some exceptions

(e.g., immigration research, tall poppy studies, cultural cringe studies, research on unemployment), they have not given a lot of attention to Australian issues. The international focus among Australian social psychologists is evident from the fact that many of them belong to associations such as the Society of Experimental Social Psychologists (SESP), the European Association of Experimental Social Psychologists (EAESP), and the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP). Finally, the Sydney symposium on social psychology and the Brisbane symposium on social identity are explicitly international in their focus. Thus, Australian social psychology deliberately tries to be mainstream and actively promotes this orientation.

That said, however, it is true to say that Australian social psychology is more eclectic when compared with social psychology in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe. It draws on theories and methodologies from all of those countries. This greater openness to different ideas is probably a legacy of the different backgrounds of social psychologists in Australia, some with postgraduate training in the United States, others with training in the United Kingdom and Europe. The mixing of traditions from other countries is also an outcome of a strong need to reduce the effects of Australia's remoteness from the major centres of activity in social psychology and to travel overseas so as to contribute to and learn about new developments in the field.

Within this context, however, are there distinctive contributions to mainstream theory and research that Australian social psychologists have made? The examples that I now present are ones with which I am familiar, and the list is probably incomplete. An early contribution was made by Oeser and his colleagues in the development of structural role theory (e.g., Oeser & O'Brien, 1967), an approach to role theory that used graph theory and that conceived of roles as involving a structure of relations linking persons, positions, and tasks. Not much attention has been given to social roles in recent social psychological theorizing, but no doubt its time will come again.

The studies of the adjustment and adaptation of immigrants to Australia conducted by Taft (1966) and Richardson (1967) were related to theoretical ideas that were presented by each of these researchers (see also Feather, 1979). Sadly, much of this early research has been ignored in favour of more recent developments from Canada, a point highlighted by Rudmin (2003) in a recent review. Social psychologists in Australia maintain an active interest in acculturation in its various

aspects (e.g., Drew Nesdale, Doreen Rosenthal, and Steve Bochner).

An influential theoretical approach to decision-making by Janis and Mann (1977) focused on the role of conflict in decision-making, analysing the coping patterns that individuals use when they are required to make consequential decisions that affect their lives. Coping patterns were described that involved unconflicted adherence, unconflicted change, defensive avoidance, hypervigilance, and vigilance, and these patterns were associated in the theory with conditions of either conflict or no conflict, optimistic or pessimistic expectations, and the presence or absence of time pressure. The theory was an outcome of collaboration by Janis (Yale University) and Mann, who was at Flinders University at the time. In recent years at the Melbourne Business School, Mann and his graduate students have conducted research on innovation, teamwork, and leadership in applied settings.

In early research (Feather, 1959) I provided evidence that subjective utilities were not always independent of subjective probabilities, as was assumed in classical subjective-expectancy-utility (SEU) theories of decision-making. Later I published a book with Atkinson (University of Michigan) that brought together research relating to a theory of achievement motivation (Atkinson & Feather, 1966). I continued research into expectations and actions and drew together developments in expectancy-value models in a major edited volume, *Expectations and Actions* (Feather, 1982). I have also contributed new theoretical ideas and research about the nature of values and their effects on thought and action (Feather, 1975, 1990a), and most recently I have developed a structural analysis of deservingness that includes values as an important component in a model that provides a new way of determining the conditions under which a positive or negative outcome that follows a positive or negative action is perceived to be deserved or undeserved (Feather, 1999). This model uses structural balance theory and represents relations between entities as either liking or unit relations (Heider, 1958), an approach that I also applied in an earlier analysis of communication effects (Feather, 1967). The structural model of deservingness opens up new ways of looking at basic topics concerned with the social psychology of justice.

As noted previously, Turner and his colleagues have developed theoretical ideas about the self-concept and the effects on judgments of different forms of self-categorization (personal versus social self) that depend also on the context of judgment. Social identity theory (SIT) and self-categorization

theory (SCT) are now important approaches to understanding stereotyping, in-group/out-group effects, and other basic topics in social psychology. Social psychologists at the Australian National University have actively developed SIT and SCT in creative ways, expanding the range of their application (e.g., Haslam, Turner, Oakes, McGarty, & Reynolds, 1998). Social identity theory has also been developed further by Hogg in relation to the analysis of group cohesiveness (Hogg, 1992) and leadership (Hogg, 2001). Terry, Hogg, Callan, and Duck have also applied social identity theory to the organizational context in innovative ways (e.g., Hogg & Terry, 2001). These various contributions provide new ways of looking at old questions and they add importantly to the understanding of group processes and intergroup relationships.

A conceptual analysis of the effects of mood has been presented by Forgas (1995) in his affect infusion model. This model enables us to understand which judgments are readily influenced by mood (those based on heuristic and substantive processing) and which are not (those based on direct and motivated processing). It makes an important contribution to the analysis of mood effects.

Australian psychologists have also been at the forefront of research into the psychological study of work, employment, and unemployment (Feather, 1990b; O'Brien, 1986; Winefield, Tiggemann, Winefield, & Goldney, 1993). They have also made important research contributions on the interface of social psychology, gender studies, relations within the family, and social development. For example, Pat Noller at the University of Queensland, Barry Fallon at the University of Melbourne, and Julie Fitness at Macquarie University have contributed research on close relationships. Jacqui Goodnow at Macquarie University pioneered the study of children's household work and the division of labour within the family (Goodnow, 1988), research that earned her international recognition. Australian social psychologists have also adapted overseas scales to meet Australian conditions (e.g., the Bem Sex Role Inventory; Antill, Cunningham, Russell, & Thompson, 1981). At the University of Western Sydney, Herb Marsh has been at the forefront of research on the multidimensional analysis of the self-concept (e.g., Marsh, 1993). He has also developed a widely used Self-Description Questionnaire to measure different types of self-concept and, with his colleagues, has applied social psychological concepts to the

educational context (e.g., Marsh, Kong, & Hau, 2000).

Other innovative social psychological research has also been conducted in Australia (e.g., personality and attitudes, psychological well-being, quality of life, prejudice, industrial/organizational psychology, social cognition, language and communication). There is not space to list all of these contributions but they are significant and substantial.

Have topics emerged that uniquely concerned the Australian culture and that have not been investigated elsewhere? In a report of the results of a cross-cultural study (Feather, 1998) I noted that:

the Australian culture values achievement within a context of individualism but also shows collectivist concerns for equality, friendship, and group solidarity ... Allied to these concerns is a distrust of status seekers, a dislike of rank and privilege ... especially if it is not earned ... and a rejection of pretentiousness. Thus, attitudes toward authority may involve a mixture of respect, distrust, and cynicism ... and Australian individualism may often be reflected in following one's own path without necessarily conforming to the dictates of others. (p. 757)

This description was based on studies of Australian values (Feather, 1975) and also on the results of research into "tall poppies" or people who occupy high status positions. Australians are frequently portrayed in the mass media as wanting to see tall poppies cut down to size and as feeling pleased when they do suffer a fall. My research on tall poppies was motivated by a strong wish to investigate a belief that was commonly assumed to be distinctive of the Australian culture, a status-related belief that had not been investigated elsewhere (Feather, 1994). I showed that Australians do not stand out in wanting to see tall poppies fall when compared with how people from some other countries respond to high achievers. This detailed investigation of tall poppy beliefs in experimental and questionnaire studies led to a focus on whether the high status was deserved or undeserved, to the structural model of deservingness, and to a new understanding of *schadenfreude*, or taking pleasure in another's misfortune (Feather, 1999; Feather & Sherman, 2002). This research that began in Australia is now widely known and has stimulated overseas studies, especially on deservingness, social justice, and *schadenfreude*.

A second example of how a culture might suggest a topic that is somewhat distinctive

concerns the so-called "cultural cringe" in Australia—the belief that Australians tend to devalue the products and achievements of their own culture relative to other cultures. I have conducted research on the cultural cringe (e.g., Feather, 1993) and there is little evidence for it among those whom I studied. Instead, I found evidence supporting the conclusion that Australians favoured Australian products and achievements rather than devaluing them. Consistent with social identity theory, this favouritism was positively related to strength of identification with the Australian nation. The results of this research are consistent with and add to studies of national identity and identification emanating from Europe, but they have not yet found a place in the social identity literature.

INDIGENOUS AND CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES

Social issues that emerge within a culture at particular points of its history also command the attention of social psychologists. Examples from Australia are the effects of immigration and the psychological impact of unemployment. Other issues concern relations with the indigenous Aboriginal population and Australia's relations with its neighbours in Asia and the Pacific.

There has not been a great deal of social psychological research concerned with Aboriginal issues in Australia, partly because the topic is something of an ethical and political minefield and not easy to pursue. An early study of prejudice toward Aborigines was conducted by Ronald Taft while at the University of Western Australia. More recent studies have been conducted at Murdoch University by Iain Walker and his colleagues and by Martha Augoustinos and colleagues at the University of Adelaide. Jacqueline Souter and I have researched mandatory sentencing involving white and Aboriginal offenders (Feather & Souter, 2002). Social psychologists in other places in Australia have also initiated research with Aborigines but the published literature is relatively sparse.

Research has also been conducted on the cognitive assessment of Aborigines and other ethnic groups, taking account of the effects of cultural context (e.g., the set of papers edited by Davidson, 1988). Earlier Don McElwain and George Kearney published a handbook for use of the Queensland Test, a culture-fair test of intelligence used with Aborigines (McElwain & Kearney, 1970). The *Australian Psychologist*

published a set of papers on psychology and indigenous Australians in 2000. Papers from indigenous and nonindigenous authors were included and they covered such topics as reconciliation, encounters with dominant cultures, and the construction of Aboriginal identity. Dudgeon, Garvey, and Pickett (2000) have published a handbook for psychologists who work with indigenous Australians. In 1996 the Australian Psychological Society published *Ethical Guidelines for the Provision of Psychological Services and Conduct of Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People of Australia*, and updated it in 2003. Aboriginal issues cry out for much more attention from Australian social psychologists.

On the cross-cultural front, Australian psychologists have been active. My 1975 book on values contained reports of cross-cultural studies conducted in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the United States and new research from Canada and the USA was added subsequently (Feather, 1998). A comprehensive collection of cross-cultural studies was published in the *Australian Journal of Psychology* (Mann, 1986), a collection that was international in scope and authorship and that covered a wide range of topics. Daphne Keats from the University of Newcastle has conducted research on values using Australian, Malay, Chinese, and Indian samples (Keats, 2000). Daphne and John Keats have been front-runners in promoting cross-cultural research in China and other Asian countries. Don Munro, also from Newcastle, has published studies on work motivation and values in Africa, among other topics. Yoshi Kashima, first at LaTrobe University and now at the University of Melbourne, has also contributed publications in cross-cultural psychology, especially on individualism and collectivism (e.g., Kashima, Kim, Gelfand, Yamaguchi, Choi, & Yuki, 1995). He has actively promoted links between Australian and Asian social psychology through the Asian Association of Social Psychology. These links should be strengthened in the future. Steve Bochner at the University of New South Wales and his colleagues have updated previous research on culture shock, providing a wide-ranging review of this literature (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001).

Australian psychologists continue to make important contributions to cross-cultural psychology via conferences, handbooks, and other edited volumes, and they have taken active roles in and been strong supporters of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Research for many years. Ronald Taft and Daphne Keats have held key positions in that organization.

FINAL COMMENTS

My review shows that social psychology in Australia has developed rapidly over the past 50 or so years. It has certainly come of age and is one of the strongest areas of Australian psychology internationally. The main centres of activity shifted from time to time depending on personalities and resources. Larger centres tended to be favoured because they were more likely to contain a critical mass of social psychologists who could communicate and collaborate in research and who could assemble a group of graduate students around them. Smaller units do not have that advantage and they are vulnerable in a climate of diminishing resources. A lot of the social psychological research had an applied emphasis, consistent with the way psychology emerged in Australia (O'Neil, 1987). At the same time Australian social psychologists have made significant theoretical and empirical contributions to the field. Their contributions are generally in the mainstream of social psychology internationally, influenced by the large centres of activity in Europe and North America, but Australian social psychologists can also claim to have made their own distinctive contributions.

These contributions are not always recognized and they sometimes get lost despite the revolution that has taken place in communication technology via email and the internet. The dominant networks and elites in the United States and Europe tend to favour their own products, consistent with what one might expect from social identity theory. In addition, the explosion of publication outlets (journals and books) in the dominant cultures and their cost in relation to available resources has the unfortunate consequence that flagship journals in the smaller countries tend to be ignored by the dominant groups and are often not subscribed to by libraries. As mentioned previously, the situation is also complicated by the fact that direct personal contact and communication with the dominant North American and European networks is more difficult for Australian social psychologists because of the distances involved and the limited resources for travel. However, two-way cultural interchange is now much more frequent. There are more social psychologists who visit Australia from North America and Europe, as occurs, for example, at the annual conference of SASP, by way of sponsored visiting positions in universities, and via invitations to participate in symposia.

However, Australians are resourceful people and social psychologists in Australia are constructing

networks of their own via national conferences (SASP), symposia, electronic communication, and collaborative research. A number of them are internationally known and respected for their contributions, and their research is frequently cited by others. But the tyranny of distance still prevails to some extent both within Australia and in relation to other countries, even though some of its effects may have diminished over the years.

In the future, differences in status, influence, and power that are linked to economic resources, geography, population size, and other factors will continue to influence what becomes part of the mainstream in social psychology and Australian social psychologists will continue to look toward North America and Europe in framing the research that they conduct. They will also draw upon ideas that they have created in their own pursuit of knowledge and conduct research that sometimes has a distinctively Australian flavour. Let us hope that the dominant influences in the northern hemisphere will pay even more attention to contributions that come from Australia and from other countries south of the equator so that social psychology can become truly internationalized.

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