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Political Psychology in Canada

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Although a number of political psychologists are active in Canada, there has been relatively little self-conscious development of the field. This article brings together contributions from political science and social psychology in Canada in an attempt to identify aspects of Canadian distinctiveness in the field of political psychology, notably the balance between mainstream and eclectic tendencies.

KEY WORDS: Canada, attitudes, social psychology, psychoanalytic approaches, political cognition

Canada presents an anomaly in the world of political psychology. For more than three decades, political psychologists working in Canadian universities have generated an impressive body of research. Despite this, political psychology receives little recognition in Canada and has been unable to achieve even minimal academic institutionalization. In this paper, I begin to set the record straight by mapping the principal achievements of Canadian-based scholars. In accordance with Greenstein's (1973, p. 469) pluralistic vision that we should "let many flowers bloom," my orientation toward political psychology derives from strands of mainstream traditions as well as from the more marginal eddy currents.

In recent years, certain scholars in the field have been anxious to sharpen and narrow the scope of political psychology through processes of systematization and rationalization, arguing that it remains "ill-defined" (Kuklinski, 2002, p. 2). Political psychology is said to be insufficiently psychological or insufficiently political (see the debates in Kuklinski, 2002; Monroe, 2002). My own definition of political psychology begins with a broad and inclusive conceptualization of the political as social relations of power with respect to the making of rules and the distribution of resources. To claim that political psychology is insufficiently political implies a conceptualization of the political that is narrower than my own.

To claim that political psychology is insufficiently psychological implies moving away from an adequate treatment of the polity and the socioeconomic milieu. I concur with most political psychologists that political systems are affected by the psychological dispositions of political actors, but I go further than most in my insistence on the equal importance of the impact of political systems on individual psyches.

Kuklinski (2002, p. 12) expressed concern that political psychologists unable to contribute adequately to the evolution of psychological science will develop “inferiority complexes.” Such concern privileges externally validated credibility and ascribed status over the more open search for insight concerning the political mind. Kuklinski posited psychology as a defined discipline demanding conformity to its agenda, rather than an evolving toolkit of theories, methodologies, and findings to be used if and when they become useful to address substantive questions. Systematizing and routinizing initiatives in contemporary political psychology betoken the closing in of a “normal scientific” paradigm (Kuhn, 1970) and speak to the discourses of internalized discipline (Foucault, 1984). In gaining our credentials, we are in danger of losing our curiosity. Openness and curiosity are essential to us as we rediscover the wisdom and insight of our intellectual founders in light of our new perspectives and realities. To the extent that we explore our origins through the narrow and limited lenses of a tighter disciplinarity, and as we come to categorize our earliest efforts as embarrassingly crude or oversimplified, so we cease to pay attention to what they can teach us. Moreover, we run the risk of ignoring or downplaying the more eclectic and marginal contributions in the field today.

In the case of Canadian contributions to political psychology, an *assertively* eclectic orientation is eminently suited to the exploration of our subject matter. There has been and remains something in the eclectic marginality of the Canadian academy that encourages such an open-ended and pluralistic approach. But assertive eclecticism has not been the only tradition in Canadian political psychology; along with Canadian social science in general, there has been a dialectical tension between the deliberate “otherness” of assertive eclecticism and what Canadian political scientist Donald Smiley (1974) called “the miniature replica” of Canadian social science. The historical origins of such intellectual tensions are readily apparent: Canadian social science in general, and political psychology in particular, has grown up barely noticed in the shadow of the dominant American academy next door. This historical asymmetry has generated two tendencies—one toward conformity and integration, the other toward assertiveness and independence. Both traditions have contributed richly to the field of political psychology, and both are celebrated in this article.

Even as an officially bilingual country, Canada is—after the United States—the second largest English-speaking center of political science. There are 44 departments of political science in Canadian universities. Of the thousands of courses offered by these departments, only six are in political psychology, while

a handful more are offered in psychoanalytic approaches to politics.¹ There are no programs; no Canadian graduate school offers a concentration in political psychology, and there is no official subfield of political psychology in the Canadian Political Science Association. Political psychology has virtually no presence in course and program offerings across Canadian departments of psychology.

Despite this lack of institutional support for political psychology, there is a tradition of research in the field in Canada. From 1979 to September 1999, there were 74 issues of *Political Psychology*, containing 688 articles, editorial introductions, research notes, rejoinders, presidential addresses, and reports. Of the 949 scholars who contributed to this work, 715 (75.3%) had American institutional affiliations. The remaining 234 authors (24.7%) were affiliated with institutions in 28 other countries. Among these other countries, Israel (52 authors; 5.5%), Canada (45 authors; 4.8%), and the United Kingdom (32 authors; 3.4%) had the most affiliations and were the only nations other than the United States to register substantial numbers of scholars publishing in the journal.

The apparent discrepancy between the actual output of Canadian political psychology and the absence of institutional recognition can be explained in terms of the distinctive character of Canadian social science discussed above. With respect to social psychology, Canadian university departments have operated as miniature replicas of their American counterparts. This means that most of the work conducted in political psychology has been standard social psychology applied to issues and focuses of power and conflict. Such work is infrequently referred to as political psychology. Political science has remained more eclectic and diffuse, with little opportunity to specialize beyond certain broad parameters. Nonetheless, programs in Canadian political behavior have been established and have generated research initiatives in political psychology. Following Rahn, Sullivan, and Rudolph (2002), I distinguish political behavior from political psychology in this article "according to whether the explanations offered for the phenomenon emphasized institutional, contextual, or cultural variables (for the former) or individual-level psychological processes such as opinion formation and change (for the latter)" (Rahn et al., 2002, p. 156). Moreover, I join Rahn and her colleagues in occasionally claiming works and authors for political psychology "even if some of the authors might be reluctant to identify themselves as political psychologists" (Rahn et al., 2002, p. 165).

Three brief qualifications are in order before proceeding. First, my focus is on political psychology that has been generated in Canadian universities. Only when a scholar has been living and working in a national political culture and

¹ Data in this section were derived from three sources: (1) Canadian Political Science Association (1998), (2) inspections of Canadian university course calendars, and (3) e-mail communication with chairs of politics, political studies, and political science departments in October and November 1999. Of the 44 departments contacted, 19 chairs responded. A handful expressed enthusiasm and support for the idea of political psychology, but most responses were preemptory and functional.

academic subculture for some years can we claim that scholar to have been socialized to the given national experience. This is especially so in a country such as Canada vis-à-vis the more dominant experience of the American academic environment. Expatriate Canadian scholars, such as Paul Sniderman (1975; Sniderman, Brody, Tetlock, & Brady, 1991; Sniderman & Carmines, 1997), who choose to make their academic careers in the United States succeed to the extent that they adapt to the expectations of the American academy. Second, intellectually speaking, Canada is a bicultural as well as a bilingual state. Although I have attempted to capture French and Quebecois contributions to political psychology in Canada, my immersion into *psychologie politique* is limited in certain respects. Third, my perspective is from a formal academic training in political science, and my principal network includes a preponderance of political scientists. Consequently, my orientation toward Canadian social psychology is anthropologically etic and I speak a different language. (For example, in this article I refer to the “behavioralist persuasion” in political science. This is distinct from and in many ways incompatible with the “behaviorist paradigm” in psychology.)

The Eclectic Origins of Political Psychology in Canada

The early roots of political science and social psychology in Canada, conducted in a handful of departments by no more than tens of scholars, left a legacy of brilliant and suggestive documents. These contributions easily drew upon and combined insights from philosophy, political economy, social psychology, cultural studies, history, and constitutional law. These contributions can be called eclectic in their curiosity-driven evolution, their lack of disciplinary boundary defense, and the absence of self-conscious schemes of systematization. The eclectic era in Canadian political psychology characterized approaches to the field during and after the Second World War, into the 1960s. In these years, the openness of social scientific discourse in combination with the relative isolation of Canadian faculty and the absence of more than limited financial support for research combined to stimulate a broad and general scholarship. Given the amorphousness of their contributions, it is difficult to identify political psychologists among the founders of political science in Canada, and none would have self-identified as such. However, three particular scholars stand out as contributors to our appreciation of the mind and politics in this era.

Political theorist Christian Bay (1965, 1970, 1981) of the University of Toronto wrote on ideology and community. Like others of his generation, Bay drew widely from a range of sources of inspiration to support his classical vision of civic virtue. Arguing that the purpose of politics is to achieve a more perfect society and that political scientists have key responsibilities in this endeavor, Bay criticized both liberalism and liberal theory for limiting human progress and condoning oppression in the name of freedom. Bay argued that the avowed freedoms

of liberalism were limited, partial, and contingent, and that in practice they resulted in impaired psychological freedom (alienation) and impaired social freedom (oppression). Individual and social actualization necessitated a more communitarian approach. Bay's communitarianism, synthesizing strands of both conservatism and socialism, is a common leitmotif of Canadian political scholarship of the era and characteristic of a distinctive Canadian presence in social analysis. In a spirited challenge to the behaviorist persuasion in political analysis, Bay reasoned that the quest for value neutrality and detachment was chimerical. In attempting to avoid political attachment through their bland descriptions of all that exists, behaviorists were by default leaving ethics and principles unexamined and thereby relegating the shaping of political destiny to those already powerful enough to take advantage. Bay's critique of behavioralism did not imply a rejection of its methodologies. In fact, Bay argued for an integrated normative and empirical approach to political enquiry, with psychology at its core: "The best hope for a development toward a politically more useful political science . . . rests with an increasingly close interaction between students of politics and students of psychology" (1970, p. xvi).

Smiley (1974) referred admiringly to the "Social Credit Series" of studies conducted in the 1950s as "scholarship [that] was eclectic and showed a marked disregard for the boundaries of academic disciplines" (pp. 38–39). Among these studies was John Irving's (1968) penetrating and moving account of the political psychology of leadership and followership in Alberta, *The Social Credit Movement in Alberta*. (Irving was the chair of psychology at the University of British Columbia in the 1940s.) The book details the rise of the charismatic William Aberhart. Irving's study is compelling and detailed testimony to the ignorance, despair, and want of the time and evokes the manner in which the deep-seated needs of the farmers were soothed by the reassuring messages of Aberhart. Based on interviews, private papers, newspapers, government documents, articles, and books, Irving's research generates a broad humanistic social psychology, careful in historical documentation and detail and yet eclectic in its theoretical sweep. Apart from an acknowledgement to Hadley Cantril, there is not a single psychological reference in the entire 369 pages!

French-born political scientist Jean Laponce enjoyed a long and distinguished career at the University of British Columbia, starting in the 1950s. Laponce, who remains an active scholar, integrates psychology, empirical political analysis, cultural anthropology, biology, philosophy, sociolinguistics, historical studies, and geography into an eclectic cross-disciplinary analysis. Prominent among Laponce's work is *Left and Right* (1981), which explores the mental topology of politics in general and the perceptual and spatial imagery of the left-right spectrum in particular. The central thesis of Laponce's *Languages and Their Territories* (1987) is the propensity for languages to act in a territorial manner.

The Behavioralist Contributions of Political Science

Behavioralism in political science began in the United States after the Second World War as an attempt to systematize and routinize political inquiry (Almond, 1956; Loewenstein, 1944). The rise of behavioralism in Canada coincided with the era of large-scale growth in Canadian departments of political science. In the early 1950s, there were no more than 30 or 40 political scientists in Canadian universities. By the end of the 1960s, a substantial number of new universities, each with a department of political science, had opened up and recruited hundreds of political scientists. (This was also the era of exponential growth in Canadian social psychology; see Belanger, 1992; Ferguson, 1992; Pyke, 1992; Wright & Myers, 1982.) Many of the American-trained behaviorist scholars who joined these political science departments in the 1960s adopted a self-consciously scientific stance and explicitly disavowed the more varied and improvised approaches of the eclectic era. Broadly defined, the behaviorist approach to systematic analysis introduced some much-needed rigor into the practices of research and stimulated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies that continue to inform most political psychological research in Canada as elsewhere. More narrowly conceived, behavioralism came into question in Canada (Macpherson, 1974; Smiley, 1974) as it had already done in the United States (Easton, 1969).

Among the earliest Canadian scholars of attitudes and behavior was John Meisel (1962, 1964, 1974, 1975). Meisel was a pioneer in the field of election studies in Canada and began a tradition of publication of books and articles associated with the 13 federal elections since 1957. Characteristic of the context in which he began his studies, Meisel's early electoral research is more discursive and more varied in its techniques of analysis, incorporating elements of political psychology. While paling in comparison with American output, there has been a substantial amount of election and voting-related material in the past four decades. Notable among the more psychologically oriented electoral studies are those of Laponce (1969); Lambert, Curtis, Kay, and Brown (1986); Brown, Lambert, Kay, and Curtis (1988); Johnston, Blais, Brady, and Crete (1992); Bassili (1995); Mendelsohn (1996); Bassili and Bors (1997); Pammett (1987, 1991); Nevitte, Blais, Gidengil, and Nadeau (2000); and Blais, Gidengil, Nadeau, and Nevitte (2002).

Canadian political psychology has also been well represented in the non-electoral study of political attitudes. Among the more prominent contributors to studies in political attitudes are Bashevkin (1985); Bassili and Fletcher (1991); Bassili and Roy (1998); Everitt (1998); Fournier (1989); Hayduk, Ratner, Johnson, and Bottorff (1995); Jabbara and Landes (1976); Johnston (1986); Mishler (1979); Nevitte (1996); Nevitte and Gibbins (1990); Nevitte, Inglehart, and Basanez (1996); Pammett and Whittington (1976); Pike and Zureik (1975); and Simeon and Elkins (1980). Three brief examples must suffice to illustrate the quality of these contributions. The essays in the volume on political socialization

edited by Pammett and Whittington (1976) offer much more than an extension of the work on imitation, interpersonal transference, apprenticeship, and other forms of direct and indirect socialization. They make challenging and contentious claims about the nature of growing up politically in Canada that remain suggestive nearly three decades after they were first written. Simeon and Elkins' (1980) research into political efficacy and political trust generated a typology of political personalities (supporter, deferential, critic, and disaffected) that they used to great effect in their analyses of regional political cultures in Canada. The more recent work of Nevitte and his colleagues (Nevitte, 1996; Nevitte & Gibbins, 1990; Nevitte et al., 1996) offers a series of extensions of this research into the decline of political deference in postmaterialist Canada.

The Contributions of Politically Relevant Social Psychology

Engaged and politically relevant psychology enjoys a longstanding tradition in Canada, going back to the 1930s and 1940s (Wright & Myers, 1982). Contributions in recent decades include the politics of intergroup conflict, prejudice, discrimination, persuasion, bargaining, and conflict resolution. The cause of cross-cultural psychology has been furthered by a number of Canadian social psychologists, notable among them John Berry (Berry, Dasen, & Saraswathi, 1997; Berry, Poortinga, & Pandey, 1997; Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dason, 1992; Berry, Segall, & Kagitcibasi, 1997; Segall, Dasen, Berry, & Poortinga, 1999); John Adair and Kenneth Dion (Adair, Belanger, & Dion, 1998; Lasry, Adair, & Dion, 1999); Donald Taylor (Moghaddam, Taylor, & Wright, 1993); and Isaac Prilleltensky (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997).

Canadian social psychologists have exhibited widespread commitment to unearthing the origins of prejudice, discrimination, and ethnocentrism as well as to exploring how multiculturalism works. Frances Aboud (1980, 1993) has conducted assessments of ethnocentrism among Canadian children. John Berry (1984; Berry & Kalin, 1995) has reviewed multicultural policy in Canada from a social psychological perspective. Donald Taylor and his colleagues (Lambert, Mermigis, & Taylor, 1986; Moghaddam & Taylor, 1987; Taylor, Wright, & Ruggiero, 2000) have looked at attitudes toward discrimination, multiculturalism, and heritage cultures among Canadian ethnic minorities. A special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* concerned ethnic relations in a multicultural society (Aboud & Doyle, 1996; Esses & Gardner, 1996; Kalin, 1996; Patterson, Cameron, & Lalonde, 1996). Victoria Esses and her colleagues (Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Maio, Esses, & Bell, 1994) have explored the relationship between group competition and attitudes toward immigrants and immigration.

Quebec scholar Simon Laflamme (1987) has written a monograph on propaganda and persuasion. Another Quebecois scholar, Daniel Latouche, contributed an article to a special issue of the *International Social Science Journal* on political psychology (1983) in which he evaluated the impact of myth, symbol, and

ritual on organizational culture in the government of Quebec. The issue of political identity, notably in the context of nationalism and French-English relations in Canada, has been studied by a number of scholars in Canada, including Doyle, Rappard, and Connolly (1980); Blake, Lambert, Sidoti, and Wolfe (1981); Genesee (1984); Koestner, Losier, Worren, Baker, and Vallerand (1995); O'Connor (1998); Flett, Endler, and Fairlie (1999); and Feather and Adair (1999).

Ronald Fisher (1993, 1997) has published widely on the role of social scientists in conflict resolution. Following in the research tradition of John Burton, Herbert Kelman, and Leonard Doob, Fisher argues that social scientists have a key role to play as mediators in conflict, using insights derived from communications theory, social psychology, and other academic fields. Kelman has also influenced Cynthia Chataway. Chataway's (1997, in press) research on aboriginal peoples and their relations with settler societies incorporates explorations of identity and security needs in intersocietal relations. The impulse to heal societal wounds and to move communities toward greater understanding is widespread among social psychologists everywhere, and there is a notable concentration of such social psychologists in Canada. Reflective of multicultural and bilingual challenges within Canada as well as Canada's role in the world as an honest broker and peacemaker among nations, these scholars have devoted considerable energy toward understanding the nature of intergroup conflict and how to reduce it. Canadian political and social psychologists have paid particular attention to Canadian issues and perspectives. Adair and Rule (1984) have written a valuable account of the contributions of Canadian social psychology to Canadian society. In the aftershock of the slaughter of 14 university women in Montreal, an entire issue of *Canadian Psychology* was devoted to violence and its aftermath (Brickman, 1992).

The Political Psychology of Cognition and Decision

The Canadian work on cognitive political psychology has been led by the prodigious research output of Peter Suedfeld of the University of British Columbia (1981, 1992a, 1992b, 1994). Suedfeld and his colleagues have developed a technique for scoring the degree of cognitive complexity of political leaders. Suedfeld has co-authored articles on the topic of integrative complexity (Suedfeld, Bluck, Ballard, & Baker-Brown, 1990; Suedfeld, Bluck, Loewen, & Elkins, 1994; Suedfeld, Conway, & Eichhorn, 2001; Suedfeld & Tetlock, 1977; Suedfeld, Wallace, & Thachuk, 1993; Wallace, Suedfeld, & Thachuk, 1996). Suedfeld has also written on the political psychology of torture (1990), on the positive face of stress (Suedfeld, 1997), on the psychology of environmental ideology (LaVallee & Suedfeld, 1997), and on the vexed issue of value neutrality versus commitment in political psychological research (Suedfeld & Tetlock, 1991). Suedfeld, Steel, and Schmidt (1994) conducted a stimulating empirical enquiry into the relationship between political ideology and attitudes toward

censorship. In an interesting Canadian application and assessment of the relationship between cognitive complexity and stress, Granatstein and Suedfeld (1994; Suedfeld & Granatstein, 1995) have explored the military career of E. L. M. Burns.

Mark Pancer and his colleagues (Pancer, Brown, & Barr, 1999; Pancer, Brown, Gregor, & Claxton-Oldfield, 1992; Pancer, Hunsberger, Pratt, Boisvert, & Roth, 1992) have further developed models of cognitive complexity to analyze the behavior of leaders. In their study on political roles and the complexity of political rhetoric, Pancer, Hunsberger et al. (1992) used Tetlock and Suedfeld's complexity theory to test whether opposition parties in Westminster systems, such as Canada, are less complex than government parties. *Hansard* is the verbatim record of legislative proceedings in Westminster systems. Using speeches coded from Canadian *Hansard* from 1948 to 1988, the authors reported broad support for the hypothesis. Among Suedfeld's students, Ballard (1983; Ballard & Suedfeld, 1988; Suedfeld et al., 1990) has written directly on Canadian prime ministers. This particular application of integrative complexity to Canada's political leaders achieved national attention in 1998 with the publication of a large feature article in Canada's national newspaper, the *Globe and Mail* (Schachter, 1998).

A small but influential group of Canadian scholars have contributed to the political psychology of international relations. Among these are Thordarson (1972), Steinberg (1981, 1991, 1996), Lehman (1993), and Stein (1988, 1994; Stein, Jervis, & Lebow, 1985). Stein's (1988) article on misperceptions of threat uses schema and script theory to illustrate an array of considerations, biases, loyalties, emotional states, strategic goals, and other barriers to the unhindered and realistic perception of threat in the international arena. Psychoanalytically informed Canadian scholars have also explored political decision-making beyond Canada. In her investigation of American presidential decision-making during the Vietnam war, Blema Steinberg (1996) found that political shame and humiliation were responsible for key decisions by Johnson and Nixon.

Continuing Canadian Eclecticism

The American presence in Canada has always been powerful, bringing with it the liberal-individualistic impulses of the frontier nation. Despite this, Canada has always been balanced by a "Tory touch" and by a modest and yet continuing socialist tradition. These realities have informed the evolution of scholarship in political psychology as they have informed everything else in Canadian culture. Anxious conformity remains in tension with assertive marginality.

Paul Roazen, a standard-bearer for the psychological analysis of political life since the 1960s and the author of the best-known systematic analysis of Freud and his relevance to politics (1999), has complained that political scientists "remain reluctant to entertain the need to explore systematically the psychological dimension to all political events; one does not have reductionistically to reduce politics

to psychology, nor inflate categories to embrace all of politics" (1999, p. xv). Despite this, Roazen referred to the intellectual advantages of being located as an outsider on the inside (1990, p. xx), and this conception has a definitively Canadian quality to it. Roazen's curiosity about Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King (1998) grew out of a chance comment from a colleague made soon after Roazen's arrival in Canada. From his contextualization of the study, it is clear that the specifically Canadian aspects of the leadership of King do not play a role in his analysis. Roazen's book offers a cautious, sympathetic, and suitably qualified reading of King's psyche through an extensive analysis of detailed case notes on King's 1916 breakdown and recovery (see also Esbrey, 1976, 1980).

In the mid-1990s, MP John Godfrey, acting on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada, invited the eminent Canadian psychiatrist Vivian Rakoff to develop a character profile of the Quebec separatist leader Lucien Bouchard (Martin, 1997, pp. 129–131). Acknowledging the limitations of constructing such a profile at a distance (if not the challenges inherent in commercial political party-commissioned psychological profiling!), Rakoff nonetheless supplied two reports to the Liberal Party in time for the 1995 Quebec referendum on separation from Canada. Rakoff used his own construct of the "esthetic character disorder" in a controversial and dark portrayal of Bouchard as insecure, vain, self-delusional, vulnerable to insult, resentful, and chronically unable to stick to political principles.

Two Canadian scholars have taken up the challenge of research into authoritarianism in the 1970s and beyond: Bob Altemeyer (1981, 1988, 1996) and H. D. Forbes (1985, 1990, 1997). What unites these scholars is their determined and independent thinking and their relentless pursuit of unfashionable ideas, resulting in their ultimate successes in convincing scholars (in Canada and beyond) of the fruitfulness of their endeavors. However, Altemeyer has continued to develop a scale of authoritarianism, whereas Forbes has generalized his research to ethnocentrism and ethnic conflict. Altemeyer has replaced a Freudian analysis with Albert Bandura's social learning theory. Forbes (1985) challenged the Berkeley group and most of their critics by arguing on the basis of Canadian data that there is no necessary correlation between ethnocentrism and authoritarianism. Forbes (1997) also questioned the contact thesis of reduced ethnic conflict. Placing contact theory in the context of competing theories, notably conflict theory and social identity theory, Forbes has pointed out that contact among persons exerts differing effects at the individual and aggregate levels. Altemeyer's work on right-wing authoritarianism has achieved international status and is widely cited in articles on authoritarianism. An American scholar, Altemeyer took up a position at the University of Manitoba in the early 1970s. Altemeyer's subsequent career has been in many respects a study in marginality and one that might offer some enlightenment as to a certain strand of Canadian scholarship. From his own highly readable and entertaining accounts of his academic career, it is apparent that Altemeyer was an eccentric in a small university, granting himself immunity from the routine academic trials of quick publication, peer review, and grant applica-

tions. Despite this, he followed a sustained research agenda and ultimately produced his first book in 1981. Over hundreds of experiments in the past three decades, Altemeyer's scale has achieved admirable robustness in terms of its reliability and validity and discriminates consistently between groups, such as political parties, whose members would be expected to score high or low on the scale.

There is a substantial tradition of left-wing political psychology in Canada. Social psychologist W. Peter Archibald (1978, 1985) has written a number of important Marxist critiques of psychology and social psychology. His book *Social Psychology as Political Economy* (1978) contributes a thoroughgoing critique of mainstream social psychology as well as a range of important insights on alienation, class, race, gender, and nationality. Isaac Prilleltensky (1990; Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997) is another socialist political psychologist critical of the major strands of research in his field and anxious to suggest alternative visions. His critique of the politics of abnormal psychology lambastes the profession for overreliance on highly individualized accounts of mental illness. Prilleltensky has written eloquently and extensively of the need for psychology to be on the side of the oppressed and the marginal. Using concepts such as surplus powerlessness, self-oppression, and learned helplessness, Prilleltensky illustrates how theories of social psychology and strategies of liberation, such as Paolo Friere's conscientization, might be used in struggles against oppression (Prilleltensky, 1994a, 1994b; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996).

Political psychology in Canada has been a largely male pursuit. In the new field of identity politics, however, it is women who predominate. Sylvia Bashevkin (1998), Shannon Bell (Bell, 1994), Janine Brodie (1996; Brodie, Gavigan, & Jenson, 1992), Joanna Everitt and Elizabeth Gidengil (1998), Cindy Schultz (Schultz & Pancer, 1997), and Blema Steinberg (2001) are prominent in the field. These scholars have theorized and articulated the politics of women's difference and identity across a range of contemporary issues and movements. Bashevkin is concerned with the social and psychological consequences of how women in the UK, United States, and Canada have negotiated through the neoliberal decades. Everitt and Gidengil have written on gendered discourse in the media and the consequences for the presentation of political leadership in Canada. Schultz and Pancer have constructed an elegant research design to confirm the proposition that female political candidates who act aggressively are viewed more negatively by male respondents than are their aggressive male counterparts.

Conclusions

Has this survey of Canadian contributions to the field of political psychology told us anything about Canada? Even a cursory scan of the material confirms the existence of the bifurcation in the Canadian academy referred to above, between mainstream political psychology and that which is best categorized as alternative,

marginal, and eclectic. Surveying the field of Canadian political science to date, Trent and Stein (1996) concluded that although there are new ideas and perspectives in Canadian political science, it is still "largely dependent on conceptual contributions developed in other countries, particularly the United States." The authors referred to this as "the trap of intellectual dependency" and recommended that Canadian political science should develop "interdisciplinary studies, critical studies which challenge mainstream approaches and methodologies, and philosophically idiosyncratic thinking."

I concur wholeheartedly with Trent and Stein's recommendations. In fact, I suggest that the field of political psychology in Canada, the United States, and beyond has begun to achieve some of the interdisciplinary, critical, and methodologically innovative approaches desired by Trent and Stein. Canada's cultural and ideological complexity constitutes a comfortable and yet engaging home for the future development of political psychology. The interdisciplinarity inherent in political psychology has indeed already found a welcome home in the Canadian academy, even if in typical Canadian style it has occurred without much fanfare. Whether as a miniature replica, exploring distinctively Canadian challenges through mainstream theories and methodologies, or as an alternative and marginal enterprise, or both, political psychology is thriving in Canada. To the extent that these hitherto isolated pockets of political psychological scholarship become aware of each other, both within Canada and beyond, the field will open itself to enrichment through broader patterns of cross-fertilization.

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