



Notes from the Chair

The Forum exists as an interest group of the History of Science Society, and it is our special goal to encourage and to reward excellence in our growing, exciting field of history. We have, on a rotational basis, prizes for the best dissertation and article in the field, and, on an annual basis, the early career award, which is named for that pioneer of our field, John C. Burnham. Members and friends should note that the rules have been rewritten and, we trust, improved, since last year. We also endorse session proposals for the History of Science Society program every year, which means that the sooner we get these proposals, the better. Last minute inspirations take a bit of a chance in meeting the HSS deadlines, over which we have absolutely no control whatsoever.

Because the Forum is an interest group, it is also an organization whose members work very hard to provide service to colleagues, whether members or friends. As Chair I would encourage the initiative of any one or any group of interested scholars to suggest ways in which we might encourage the growth of our constituencies, and the number of opportunities for excellence that we may be able to stimulate.

All of this takes effort, and money as well. Please do not forget to pay your dues, and if you can afford a contribution to the Forum, please do so as well. If there are any problems, or questions, please feel free to contact me, Ham Cravens, Department of History, 615 Ross Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011-1202, hcravens@iastate.edu, or (515) 294-1156 (work).

Thanks very much for your interest in and support of the Forum for the History of the Human Sciences.

Ham Cravens

John Carson Wins 2003 Artical Award

The FHHS Article Award is a non-monetary award for the best article in the history of human science. Entries are encouraged from authors in any discipline as long as the publication is related to the history of human science, broadly construed. To be eligible, the article must have been published within the three years previous to the year of the award (e.g. 2000-2002, inclusive, for the prize awarded in autumn 2003).

FHHS is pleased to award its 2003 Article Award to John Carson of the University of Michigan for "Differentiating a Republican Citizenry: Talents, Human Science, and Enlightenment Theories of Governance," Osiris 17 (2002). Below is the award citation:

For the past several decades, historians from a number of different specialties have begun to explore the complexity of Enlightenment thought. These recent histories have explored how Enlightenment thinkers sought to replace hereditary monarchies with a new form of republican governance in which social awards were given, not by those who happened to be born into noble families, but to those whose natural talents meant they were most worthy to receive them. In a perfectly free society we would still have inequitable distribution of resources because those with more talent would be free to rise to the top. The hereditary aristocracy would be replaced by a "natural aristocracy" in which inequality is an expected outcome of a free society.

Carson argues that the current historiography is missing a clear understanding of what the word "talent" meant for Enlightenment thinkers. What was "talent" and how did people acquire it? Because republican ideology rejected the notion of a hereditary aristocracy, did it mean that all people were really born with equal talents? Where did people acquire these talents? In answering these questions, Carson argues persuasively that Enlightenment thinkers were inclined to write "certain speculations about human nature into the very heart of the republican project and to orient the emerging human sciences toward em-

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Newsletter Highlights

Deadlines Approaching! Midwest Junto for History of Science p. 2 Dissertation award, p. 2 Burnham award, p. 3

Dues Due The FHHS needs your dues. See p. 8 for the renewal form; see also item 4 of the Minutes (p. 4). Please renew your membership!

No Winner for 2003 Burnham Award

This year the committee found that no entry reached the standards required for this award, so there will be no Burnham Early Career Award for 2003. The FHHS and the Journal of the History of the Behavioral Science encourage researchers early in their careers to send in manuscripts of articles for next year's competition. The JHBS publishes winning papers with a notice about its award, and the publisher will provide the author of the paper an honorarium of US \$500.

See the Forum's website for more information on all awards, as well as other activities: www.fhhs.org

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## News of Members

Henrika Kuldick has assumed the editorship of the *History of Anthropology Newsletter*. She is eager to receive reports of new and forthcoming contributions to the history of anthropology. They and inquiries about subscriptions should be sent to HANpenn@sas.upenn.edu

Ted Porter announces two recent books:

Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross, eds., *The Cambridge History of Science*, volume 7: *Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Theodore M. Porter, *Karl Pearson: The Scientific Life in a Statistical Age* (Princeton University Press, 2004)

Submit your news to the Newsletter! Send email to the editor: carhart@unr.edu

## Advertisement Benefit to Members

J H B S

For more than three decades, the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* has served as the premier forum for the dissemination of noteworthy scholarly research related to the evolution of the behavioral and social sciences. Among the benefits of FHHS's formal affiliation with the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* is the opportunity for members to subscribe to the journal at a 15% discount off the regular personal rate.

2004 Subscription Rates for FHHS members

\$76 per year in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico

\$96 per year outside of North America

Payment must be made in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank. Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover Cards also accepted. Please add applicable sales tax. In Canada, please add GST. Prices include shipping, handling, and packaging charges, worldwide. All subscriptions outside the U.S. will be sent by air. Prices subject to change.

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(Be sure to specify your FHHS membership status)

## Call for Papers Midwest Junto for the History of Science

April 2-4, 2004

Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering, and Technology

Kansas City, Missouri

Faculty, students, and independent scholars are invited to participate in the Midwest Junto for the History of Science annual meeting. Short papers (15 minutes) on any topic in the history of science, technology, and medicine, or the philosophy of science and technology are welcome. A short abstract (one page maximum) should be submitted by March 1, 2004, to the program committee:

Peter Ramberg

Assistant Professor of History of Science  
Truman State University, Division of Science

Kirksville, MO 63501

E-Mail: ramberg@truman.edu; or

David Robinson <d robinso@truman.edu>

Electronic submissions accepted. Graduate students encouraged to participate. Subsidies for lodging available to graduate students.

Further information @ <http://junto.lindahall.org>

or contact Cindy Rogers <rogersc@lindahall.org>

or Bruce Bradley <bradleyb@lindahall.org>

Linda Hall Library, 5109 Cherry St., Kansas City, MO 64110-2498

Call for Submissions

## Dissertation Prize

F H H S 2 0 0 4

The Forum for History of Human Science (an interest group affiliated with the History of Science Society) invites submissions for its Dissertation Prize, which is awarded every other year for best recent dissertation on some aspect of the history of the human sciences. The prize, to which a US \$100 monetary award is attached, alternates annually in rotation with the Forum's prize for the best published article. The winner of the 2004 Dissertation Prize will be announced at the 2004 History of Science Society meeting, which will be held 18-21 November 2004 in Austin, Texas. Winners are publicized in the *FHHS Newsletter* and in newsletters and journals of several other organizations (among them, HSS and Cheiron).

Entries are encouraged from authors in any discipline, as long as the work is related to the history of the human sciences, broadly construed. To be eligible, the dissertation must have been filed within the three years previous to the year of the award (that is during the years 2001-2003, inclusive, for the prize awarded in autumn 2004). Three copies of entries must be received by June 1, 2004. Send them to:

Nadine Weidman

Secretary, Forum for the History of Human Science

138 Woburn St.

Medford, MA 02155

E-mail: weidman@fas.harvard.edu

Further information (including past winners) @ <http://www.fhhs.org>

Call for Submissions

**John C. Burnham Early Career Award**

FHHS / JHBS

*The Forum for History of Human Science (FHHS) and the Journal of the History of the Behavioral Science (JHBS) encourage researchers early in their careers to submit unpublished manuscripts for the annual John C. Burnham Early Career Award, named in honor of this prominent historian of the human sciences and past-editor of JHBS. The journal will publish the winning paper with a notice of the award, and the publisher will provide the author of the paper an honorarium of US \$500.*

**G**uidelines: Unpublished manuscripts dealing with any aspect(s) of the history of the human sciences are welcome. Eligible scholars are those who do not hold tenured university positions (or equivalent); graduate students and independent scholars are encouraged to submit. "Early career" is interpreted to include the period up to seven (7) years beyond the Ph.D. Since competition may be high in any given year, people are encouraged to re-submit in subsequent years, as long as the manuscript has not been already submitted to some other journal and the submitting scholar is still in early career.

The paper submitted is the most important aspect of the competition, but since this is an "early career award," the prize committee will also consider professional activities, including (though not limited to) participation in annual meetings of the History of Science Society and other

scholarly work. The submission consists of three copies of the paper and three of the candidate's c.v. The paper must meet the publishing guidelines of the JHBS; for conference papers, these guidelines generally include revision and expansion to create an article-length paper.

The committee will acknowledge receipt of each submission and will promptly confirm its eligibility. The committee's selection of the prize-winner (the nominee to JHBS editors) will be announced at the annual History of Science Society meeting (held October or November). (If there are no appropriate submissions in any given year, no award will be given for that year.)

FHHS will promptly notify JHBS of its endorsement, and the manuscript will go through the regular refereeing process of the journal. After the editors of JHBS have accepted the nominated paper for publication, it will be published on their timetable and the publisher will issue the honorarium. Although it is technically possible that someone might win the Burnham Early Career Award and not receive the honorarium, FHHS and JHBS do not expect this to happen under normal circumstances.

**Deadline: April 30.** Send three copies of unpublished manuscript and of c.v., to Nadine Weidman, Secretary of FHHS, 138 Woburn St., Medford MA 02155

Further information @ <http://www.fbhs.org>

**Carson wins Article Award, cont'd**

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bracing those social formations most consonant with the developing notions of the republican citizen, the enlightened society, and the self-interested economic actor" (p. 84).

Carson gives us a close reading of how key Enlightenment figures—such as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, William Godwin, Etienne-Bonnot de Condillac, Claude-Adrien Helvétius, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Jefferson, and Samuel Adams—grappled with the very notion of talent, where it originated, and its implications for a "natural inequality" in society. He shows that, with the notable exception of Helvétius,

few were ready to embrace a pure egalitarian ethos, most thinkers embracing a language which was ambiguous enough to "argue for greater political and social power and a means to exclude whole groups of people from all but the most basic rights" (p. 103).

Carson skillfully weaves together the history of human sciences, political history, and political theory. He shows that an understanding of the human sciences is vital to any understanding of Enlightenment political thought, and in turn how political thought is central to an understanding of the orientation of the sciences toward human nature.

**Commentaries on Sponsored Sessions, cont'd**

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tues and vices. There is nothing odd about a colloquial word turning into a technical term through scientific inquiry—e.g. the word "force" in early modern mechanics, which was removed from the hubbub of arsenals and shipyards to the silent, smooth world of infinite planes in Euclidean space. But in the case of the virtues and vices, this is not an option. Not only popular attention but scientific projects depend crucially on the identity of meanings: to use altruism or aggression or mother love in some Pickwickian sense means one has not really explained what

one has set out to explain, much less provided the basis for a social policy that applies science to everyday life. My last question to the speakers concerns the special status of scientific inquiries into objects that, like virtue and vice, seem intractably vernacular. Instead of the creation of a technical vocabulary out of a colloquial one, will the result be to replace, for lay people as well as scientists, familiar virtues and vices with their scientific *Doppelgänger*? In these cases, does scientific explanation really mean adopting a new catechism of virtues and vices?

held at History of Science Society meeting  
**Annual Meeting Minutes**  
 Cambridge, Mass., November 22, 2003

Meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm by Hamilton Cravens, FHHS chair, with about 25 people present.

**1. Announcements:** Ray Fancher, editor of the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, said that both the JHBS and *History of Psychology*, edited by Mike Sokal, are eager for submissions from FHHS members. Ray stressed that the JHBS gives a subscription discount to Forum members; it contains specific FHHS news pages, including announcement of the John Burnham Early Career Award, which JHBS sponsors. The acceptance rate of submissions is about one out of three, and constructive referee commentary is a priority.

**2. The chair's annual report:** Ham noted the expansion in the number of history of human sciences sessions at the HSS. The FHHS officially sponsored four sessions at this year's meeting.

**3. The vice-chair's report:** Hans Pols was absent.

**4. The treasurer's report:** Nadine Weidman noted that the last call for dues and contributions produced a windfall of \$495, and that since then another \$495 has come in. From this we had to subtract \$401 for the lunch at the present meeting, and \$264 for the last newsletter. These are our major expenses. Currently we have \$1975.41 in the FHHS account. Clearly, the call for donations and back dues worked. Nadine stressed that we ought to keep doing this.

**5. Recording secretary:** Richard von Mayrhauser was absent.

**6. Representative #1:** Sarah Igo had no report.

**7. Representative #2:** Peder Anker was absent.

**8. Representative #3:** Juliet Burba was absent.

**9. Newsletter Editor's report:** Dave Robinson reported that, although most of the cost of the newsletter is the postage, the hard copy of the newsletter will probably never disappear, as some FHHS members (especially abroad) have problems getting the newsletter if it is only on the website. Also, the response to the query on the last dues form suggested that there are those who definitely prefer a hard copy. Dave said that he posts the newsletter on the web even though he sometimes has difficulty with its compatibility to the web. He also said that he does not get much response to his pleas for submissions of articles, though members are good to provide news and publication data. This year he asked commentators at FHHS-sponsored sessions to send him their comments for printing. He stressed that everyone should remember to send him, or the next newsletter editor, information about honors, awards, appointments, etc. Dave also said that he is ready to retire, presenting the job of editor as a career opportunity for a younger scholar, and he said he would train his replacement and wouldn't totally retire for another year. Hans Pols, the webmaster, said (via Ham Cravens) that he would be willing to do the same. At the present writing of these minutes, a newseditor has been identified, Michael Carhart of University of Nevada Reno. The question of who hosts the website also came up. The answer is Cedant, and they do charge a fee each year (Nadine reported that it was only \$15 per year, but the week after she said this, Cedant charged \$75 to her credit card, so she must get to the bottom of that). The website is constantly updated with new information and announcements, so members should

check it out. Ham stressed that it is good that positions like editor and webmaster rotate; all present offered heartfelt thanks to Dave and Hans.

**10. Burnham Award:** There was some discussion of the John Burnham Early Career Award, for which there were very few submissions this year, and the prize was not awarded. The prize committee (Ham, Dave Robinson, and Debbie Weinstein) suggested some ways that it could be more widely advertised; they also reminded us that those who submitted something in one year could revise and resubmit the next, provided they have no conflicting publication plans. The committee also decided to clarify the criteria for "early career": those who submit should be no more than seven years beyond the granting of their Ph.D. There was some concern that this would cut out independent scholars, adjuncts, and those not on the tenure track, but most present seemed to think that there were other prizes for such people. The committee also stressed that the prize was not only for an article, but for the pattern of a career, and that the committee members would confirm the eligibility of participants. As before, if there are no appropriate submissions for a given year, there would be no award. The winning paper is submitted to the JHBS and published on their timetable. Some discussion of the criteria for eligibility for submissions ensued; concern was voiced about the perception of an in-group for the prize; if the criteria stipulate that members of the FHHS have priority, it sounds as if FHHS members were giving the prize to their friends. The decision was made to strike such language of preference from the prize rules. Ham said that the criteria of whether someone was a Forum member, whether the paper was originally an HSS talk, and so forth, never really mattered much anyway, in his two years as committee member. The membership resolved that it should simply be a prize for good work in the history of the human sciences, that there should be no preference language, and that the stress should be on early career. The broad sense of those present was that there should be nothing in the call for submissions that would discourage people from entering. Dave said that he would work on the call for submissions and would publicize the changes to officers and committees (which he has since done).

**11. The FHHS article award** (prize committee of John P. Jackson, Jr., chair, Sarah Igo, and Juliet Burba) was given to John Carson, who was congratulated and the committee thanked. Sarah read the citation for John Carson's winning article (found elsewhere in this newsletter).

**12. Elections:** Hans was re-elected as vice-chair by acclamation. Daniela Barberis volunteered to become Representative #2 to replace Peder Anker, and was confirmed by acclamation. Richard von Mayrhauser was re-elected as recording secretary by acclamation.

**13. Sessions and miscellaneous business:** Four sessions were sponsored by the Forum at the HSS meeting this year. The sponsoring process is that session organizers must submit the session proposal and paper abstracts to the FHHS chair a week or two before submitting to HSS. Last year Ham and Jim Capsheaw were in charge of this, and both were re-appointed for next year. There is no limit on number of sessions FHHS can sponsor at any one meeting. The Burnham Early Career Award was

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not given this year, and Dave promised to scare up more submissions for next year. Debbie agreed to chair the Burnham Award committee again next year. Next year the FHHS dissertation prize will be given, and the committee for that is in the process of forming—Ellen Herman volunteered to be chair, and Hunter Crowther-Heyck also volunteered to serve on it. By way of further announcements, Bill Woodward then put in a good word for the graduate program in history of psychology at the University of New Hampshire, and Ray Fancher did the same for the one at York University. John Carson, chair of the inaugural committee for the biennial Cheiron Book Prize, noted that 18 submissions had been received this year. All present were reminded that new members of

the FHHS should send membership forms and dues to Nadine. A call for dues will also go out in the next newsletter (that is, the one you are holding in your hands).

**14. Next Meeting:** Finally, noontime on the Saturday of the HSS conference was agreed upon as the best time for the FHHS meeting, and so that is when it will be held at the 2004 conference in Austin.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nadine Weidman (for the absent Richard von Mayrhauser, recording secretary)

from the History of Science Society meeting  
**Commentaries on Sponsored Sessions**  
 Cambridge, Mass., November 20–23, 2003

*In this issue and the next of the Newsletter, we will publish the concluding remarks to the four sessions sponsored by the FHHS at the History of Science Society meeting in November, 2003. Appearing in the order heard at that meeting, this issue includes the comments of William Woodward and Lorraine Daston. The next issue of the Newsletter will include the comments of Bruce Mazlish and John Carson.*

### Subjectivity in Crisis: European Psychiatry and the Patients' Experience, 1880–1920

*Commentary by William Woodward (University of New Hampshire) on papers read by:*

**Anne Christina Rose**, "Moral Orthopedics' and the Debate over Suggestibility in Fin-de-Siècle Psychiatry"

**Juan Lanzoni**, "The Prominence of Subjective Experience in Phenomenological Psychiatry, 1912–1922"

**David K. Robinson**, "Vladimir Bekhterev and the Psychiatric Subject: Early Work in Hypnosis"

Since 1960, history of psychiatry has extended from moral treatment to community psychiatry in the U.S., from institutional to national studies, and to the mental hygiene movement in the United States and Europe. Other historians have reviewed the great male founders of psychological healing: from Mesmer and Puysegur to spiritualism and Christian Science, or from Mesmerism to Janet, Myers, and Freud. Situating Freud as an interlude, in a larger history from the asylum to the age of Prozac, E. Shorter's *History of Psychiatry* (1997) has demonstrated that biological and drug psychiatry superceded the purely mental healers in the late twentieth century.

Against this backdrop, let me briefly summarize and comment on the exciting and original papers of this session. Anne Rose, "Moral Orthopedics' and the Debate of Suggestibility in Fin-de-siècle Psychiatry," examines an animated debate over "moral orthopedics," or the ethical treatment of children using hypnosis. Rose reveals how advocates of suggestion therapy, a form of hypnosis relying on posthypnotic sugges-

tion, were engaged in an effort to defend the new subjective techniques in the face of strong criticism from philosophers and educators.

Supporting the traditionalists who opposed manipulation of subjectivity was a defense of liberty and free society. Should the child be responsible for its actions and become a person by atoning for offences? The transformation of the child through suggestion became, in this light, more dangerous than the original vice. The result of this late-nineteenth-century phase of French psychiatry was an appreciation of the child as agent with responsibility for its actions. The thumb-sucking Émile at eleven would be the citizen of tomorrow. French hypnotists promoted subjectivity as an aide to social evolution, in ways that apparently went against the grain of social evolutionists in Britain.

More social context would deepen the paper of David Robinson, "Vladimir Bekhterev and the Psychiatric Subject: Early Work in Hypnosis," which highlights subjectivity in sensory experiments on clinical patients in Russian psychiatry. A. Gauld's *History of Hypnotism* (1992) claims that the tone of Russian work in hypnosis was physiological (p. 420). Robinson corrects the implication that Bekhterev's reflexology came from this source and avers that the role of suggestion in social phenomena became the subject of his early lectures in St. Petersburg in 1897, at age 40. One would like to read more about these social phenomena from the later "reflexologist" and objectivist psychologist. D. Joravsky's *Russian Psychology* (1989) notes that Bekhterev "held to the tradition of leftist intelligentsia," stressing to his colleagues at the Medical Academy the need for a "professional mission to society at large" (pp. 84–85). In any case, Bekhterev appropriated the technique of suggestion and valued it; he opposed government intervention to regulate hypnotic techniques in Tsarist Russia, and he laid a seed for the Bolshevik revolution with his call in 1905 to overturn the repressive social system as a danger to personality. This reminds us of the moral orthopedic controversy in France, where Anne Rose depicts adherents of medical, philosophical, and psychological communities debating "the moral liberty of the child."

By 1912, on the eve of World War I, psychiatrists in the German lands and Switzerland sought an alternative to psychoanalysis and the

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from the History of Science Society meeting  
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"brain mythology" of Wernicke, Freud, and many academic psychologists. At issue was a method to treat schizophrenics that did justice to their rich emotional life, culminating in Karl Jaspers' *General Psychopathology* in 1913. Susan Lanzoni, "The Prominence of Subjective Experience in Phenomenological Psychiatry, 1912-1922," shows clearly that the emphasis shifted here to the emotional states as described by the patient. In some cases, a longer period of contact with the patient brought insights into the time disturbances and delusions, as when psychiatrist Eugene Minkowski lived with a patient who came to believe that Minkowski was participating in a plot against him. Lanzoni artfully draws on Jaspers, Specht, Minkowski, and Binswanger, who were united in seeking to examine pathology "naturally," using concepts from phenomenology to correct for natural scientific excesses. H. Ellenburger's *Discovery of the Unconscious* (1971) emphasizes the role of existential psychiatry in Swiss dynamic psychiatry, so Lanzoni's brief note, that Jaspers' use of Husserl's method of "seeing of essences" (*Wesensschau*) was limited to a "marriage of convenience," deserves expansion.

From all three papers we view the "crisis in subjectivity" as a novel historiographic venture that refocuses the reader away from the canonical asylums and "great men" and "great ideas" toward cultural debates about the rehabilitation of wayward children, the use of hypnosis to better public health in a despotic society, and doing justice to the emotional life of schizophrenics. Collectively, the authors span the French, Russian, and German literatures of psychiatry. Perhaps they will carry out elements of the project that Ellenburger pioneered, a comparative or trans-cultural treatment of psychiatry. By their focus on children and various other patients, the authors challenge the historiography of a linear progress toward objectivity of the founders of dynamic psychology and psychiatry. The historiographies covered here could be further supplemented by history of mental healing in other cultures.

Lorraine Daston (1982) posed the question whether moral psychology is "a science of mind or a theory of will." Can we hope to reduce subjective phenomena to brain physiology and its conscious correlates? Or can we allow mentality to have laws of its own, fully susceptible to psychological investigation in its own terms. Psychiatry, it seems, posed a threat to experimental psychology, and not just theoretically. Part and parcel of its methods was a respect for the intentionality of conscious (and unconscious) experience. Yet, according to Shorter, modern psychiatry has increasingly abandoned the subjective to psychologists in the latter twentieth century. Psychiatry has retreated to biological and pharmaceutical cures, under pressure of HMOs and other insurers. We have here in these three papers a glimpse of a heyday of subjectivity, albeit a subjectivity treated objectively. They illuminate a disciplinary boundary dispute between rival programs over the proper extent of the application of psychological knowledge in understanding and treating mental pathology.

In conclusion, I want to raise a question. To what extent do the frameworks of these papers reflect feminist history of psychiatry? Certainly, these three papers illustrate "alternative lines of research and argu-

ment," to use a phrase from Tomes (1994), one being a focus on the child, another being the focus on the patient. Our leading feminist scholar in history of psychology, J. Morawski, in *Practicing Feminisms* (1994), employs yet another term, "liminal experience," or experience on the threshold, that aptly fits the cases of hypnosis, suggestion, and experiential states described historically here.

*References:*

Daston, L. (1982). The theory of will versus the science of mind. In *The problematic science. Psychology in nineteenth-century thought* (W. R. Woodward & M. G. Ash, Eds.; pp. 88-115). N.Y.: Praeger.

Tomes, N. (1994). Feminist histories of psychiatry. In *Discovering the history of psychiatry* (M. S. Micale & R. Porter, Eds.; pp. 348-383). N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

## Virtue and Vice

*Commentary by Lorraine Daston (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin) on papers read by:*

**Marga Vicedo-Castello**, "Primate Love: Mothers, Machines, and Morals"

**Nadine Weidman**, "The Aggression Instinct: Masculinity and Pop Ethology in 1960s America"

**Abigail Luttig**, "Why Be Nice?"

Can virtue and vice be made into legitimate objects of scientific inquiry? Part of the fascination of these three papers lies in their location precisely at the intersection of "is" and "ought," the two verb forms science (and, for that matter, ethics) are supposed to keep strictly asunder. Mother love and self-sacrifice are unambiguously virtues in almost every known moral code; murderous aggression towards other humans a vice. So much for ethics. What is the scientific question, the "is" question, that William D. Hamilton, Raymond Dart, and Harry Harlow were trying to answer? No one seems to have doubted the existence of mother love or altruism or aggression, however much one might have argued about and regretted their relative frequencies in the population. Rather, the scientific context of these investigations was evolutionary theory (in the case of Harlow, evolutionary theory interlarded with behaviorist psychology): what was the adaptive value of virtue and vice? In the case of altruism, this was (or was to become) an acute theoretical problem for modern neo-Darwinism; in the case of aggression and mother love, adaptive value was in turn seen as a clue to the possible evolutionary differentiation of the sexes. Lurking not very far from the surface of all three inquiries were implications for social policy: Who should rear the children, and how? Can male aggression be curbed, or must it simply be re-channeled? Does altruism for near kin imply that people of whom self-sacrifice is routinely demanded—e.g. fire fighters or soldiers—ought to be recruited in families? And underlying these questions in turn was a strange subterranean logic of functionalism and naturalism: is the adaptive also the good? ditto the natural?

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It is this buried logic that I'll try to excavate in my commentary. All three of the papers analyze its workings with admirable clarity, albeit with different emphases. One of the key questions that distinguishes the research of Hamilton, Harlow, and Dart & co. was the unit of natural selection. In the case of Hamilton, it is clearly the gene. The answer is fuzzier for the cases of mother love and aggression. Perhaps the hard-core neo-Darwinians might have translated the results into gene selection, but both Harlow and Dart (and perhaps Konrad Lorenz) seem to have had in mind something more like group selection: loving mothers and murderous males endow their social groups (families, tribes, perhaps even the whole species) with better survival and reproductive chances. This is the point at which evolutionary adaptation begins to shade into ethics: when a certain trait serves the common weal, not just (or, in the case of extreme mother love, not even) self-interest. Curiously, the kin selection (or reciprocal altruism) account of altruism manages to accomplish just the opposite, but by the same implicit line of reasoning: what was previously defined as self-sacrifice for others is unmasked as refined self-interest. But note that the self in question shifts referent in this formulation: the self doing the sacrificing is an individual, but the self whose interest is thereby served is the gene. Hence a great deal of the ethical weight (and political import) of the research findings on mother love, altruism, and aggression depends on the assumed unit of selection. My first question to all three papers is how the confusions surrounding this issue were exploited by Harlow, Dart, Lorenz et al, and, if not by Hamilton, then by E. O. Wilson.

The reason why the answer matters to the larger question about virtue and vice as legitimate objects of scientific inquiry is that evolutionary accounts of adaptive value are in a fair way of becoming a shadow ethics in their own right. Here I do not have in mind evolutionary ethics, which claims to discover the roots of widespread if not universal human moral intuitions in the history of the species and asserts on that basis both the inevitability and desirability of what most people everywhere have always believed. What is particularly striking in all three papers is that the results of mathematical models of altruism, lab experiments on mother love, and paleoanthropological studies of aggression were genuinely surprising. Who would have thought that *Homo sapiens*, *Homo faber*, was a "natural-born killer"? Who would have expected that the warm maternal embrace of the cloth mother machine could replace even mother's milk for infant monkeys? What a revelation that so-called altruism in ants was really the cunning of selfish genes! No wonder these results made it into *Life* magazine and, eventually, onto the bestseller lists. There was nothing intuitive about them.

But there was something moral. The functionalism that drives all adaptive accounts has an ancient ethical lineage, going back as far as Plato's definition of justice in the *Republic* as a division of social roles and labor for the good of the whole and, more proximately, to evolutionary theory, extending to natural theology and beyond. Its peculiarly ethical associations have been powerfully reinforced by the rise of the economic

values of efficiency and the philosophical doctrines of pragmatism, both of which hallow what works as not only inevitable, but also desirable. Hence the ethical potential for functional explanations, be they evolutionary, sociological, or behaviorist, has been fortified by specific historical conditions. In the context of the scientific investigation of virtue and vice, what is at stake is not an affirmation of our fundamental moral intuitions by evolutionary ethics, but rather a Nietzschean transvaluation of values. The cases of altruism and aggression make this point forcibly: what was once an indubitable virtue starts to look more like garden variety vice, and vice versa. Mother love remains a virtue, but (at least in Harlow's initial finding), the "mother" part becomes an optional extra. Particularly in the cases of Lorenz and Wilson, both dyed-in-the-wool naturalists in love with their chosen organisms and both talented writers, the aesthetic and emotional appeal of geese and ants affectionately observed merged seamlessly with the moral message of adaptation—Aesop's Fables retold for a modern audience that cherished efficiency as its *summum bonum*.

It was also an audience that cherished science as its oracle. All three papers emphasize the intense popular interest in scientific research on vices and virtues (even if nerdy Hamilton couldn't interest the editors of *Nature* for his theory, Wilson and Dawkins have won mass readership for it). Why? The cultural authority of science seems an inadequate answer, since (at least officially) science has no authority in moral matters. Ever since Thomas H. Huxley's plea that evolution and ethics be cleanly separated, there has been no end of complaints, often from scientists themselves, about boundary transgressions. If we four speakers in this session had a penny for every time since Huxley's lecture "Evolution and Ethics" the naturalistic fallacy has not only been committed, but also been identified as such and sternly reprimanded, we'd be rich women. So why is the temptation so irresistible?

Part of the answer must lie in the covert ethical message of adaptive explanation itself: however loudly and devoutly scientists foreswear any moral mission, the very form of such explanations seems morally laden for people in certain cultural contexts. (But certainly not all: to have labeled a certain behavior as "natural" in, say, seventeenth-century court cultures would have been *prima facie* grounds for condemning and correcting it. Certain pockets of this attitude survive in our own culture: consider toilet-training and the natural alternative.) Part of the answer, however, lies in the systematic conflation of colloquial and scientific language, for which all three papers provide sterling examples. Is Hamiltonian altruism really the altruism Darwin had in mind, much less latter-day supporters of Doctors without Borders? Is the aggression that killed the *Australopithecus* youth the same as the aggression behind a terrorist attack or nuclear armageddon? Is the mutual embrace of infant monkey and mother-machine what most readers of *Life* magazine understood as mother love?

These are not simply confusions on the part of lay readers; the scientific explananda are precisely the colloquial referents of the familiar vir-

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