

# MACRO CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

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The central tenet of macro cultural psychology is that psychological phenomena are elements of macro cultural factors. Psychology is the subjective processes that plan, implement, administer these macro cultural phenomena. Psychology is the motivation, perception, emotions, self-concept, reasoning, and memory *of* social behavior. The social aspects of behavior must therefore be contained *within* psychological functions. Psychological functions must be social in order to provide appropriate social content to behavior. We must perceive people through a social lens in order to be sensitive to people's social qualities and to respond with socially appropriate behavior. Our perception must be socially informed, socially modulated, socially colored. Our emotions and reasoning must similarly be socially informed, modulated, and colored in order to detect social stimuli and respond in socially appropriate terms. Psychology must therefore possess the qualities of cultural phenomena.

Macro cultural psychology emphasizes psychology's social character as necessary for psychology's activity and agency. In order for psychological phenomena to engage in social construction, maintenance, and participation they must have cultural features. Cultural features are constituents of their operating mechanism, and of their ability and power to engage in social behavior. Macro cultural psychology does not regard the social character of psychology as implying psychological passivity in the face

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of mechanical causation from external cultural factors. On the contrary, psychology's social character is essential to its activity and operation. It is locatable inside psychological activity and operating mechanisms.

This is precisely what macro cultural psychology studies: the cultural character of psychological operating mechanisms and activity. Macro cultural psychology explains how and why psychological operations and activities possess cultural features. Its methodology begins with these operations and activities, and traces them to macro cultural factors and processes which form their genesis, characteristics, locus, telos, and function.

Being part of macro cultural factors subjects psychology to the forces, dynamics, and principles that govern them. This means that psychology has the properties of a macro cultural factor. Psychology is not outside macro culture, being influenced by it in tangential respects. It is inside culture, part of culture, and has cultural features.

This is what the discipline of macro cultural psychology studies. It requires a serious, systematic understanding of social conditions, social factors, social structure, and politics. It looks for these in the genesis and content of psychological phenomena.

What is distinctive about macro cultural psychology is its conception of culture as fundamentally macro cultural factors. This brings all the features of macro cultural factors – such as their vastness, complexity, interrelationships, dynamics, and politics – into psychological phenomena that are implicated in them.

Cultural psychology is entirely defined by one's conception of culture. All the details of, and all the variations in approaches to cultural psychology stem from one's definition of culture. Macro cultural psychology is distinctive because of its distinctive conception of culture.

Macro cultural psychology does not simply seek to identify some cultural factors that correlate with psychological processes. It seeks to reconceptualize the very nature of human psychology.

Psychology is not simply influenced in some part by some macro cultural factors; rather psychology is a macro cultural phenomenon – its unique properties evolved to form the unique properties of macro cultural factors, it takes form in macro cultural factors, takes the form of macro cultural factors (i. e., it incarnates the features of macro cultural factors – in distinctive psychological forms), psychology is formed by macro cultural

processes, it functions to support and promulgate macro cultural factors, it is socialized by macro cultural factors (as people use them and absorb their psychological »payloads«), it exists as a macro cultural factor on the macro level (e.g., romantic love, the individualistic self, schizophrenia are cultural phenomena that are the subject matter of art/literature/music, and are codified in medical manuals, therapeutic diagnosis and treatment), macro cultural-psychological phenomena define and characterize a culture, they are a cultural tool (means) that people utilize to define and understand themselves and others, and, finally, they share the political character of cultural factors which are fought over by contending groups and reflect the vested interests of the victorious, dominant groups.

Psychological phenomena are elements of culture. They are subject to the principles and forces and dynamics that govern cultural factors. If cultural factors are formed by political struggle among competing interest groups, then psychological phenomena are also because they are part of these factors and essential to sustaining them. If cultural factors are institutionalized and administered as cornerstones of social life, then psychological phenomena are also. If cultural factors are enduring, unifying cultural phenomena, then psychological phenomena are also. If cultural factors need to be reorganized in order to solve social problems and enhance human development, then psychological phenomena must be part of that transformative process. Psychology is part of these cultural principles because it is their subjectivity.

Psychology is not independent of them, operating on the basis of other principles that interact with cultural principles. Psychology is the subjective side of culture and cannot be divorced from it – although it does have distinctive qualities that can be conceptually highlighted for the purposes of examination, just as parts of any complex entity have distinctive qualities that can be conceptually highlighted.

### **RACIAL PSYCHOLOGY AS AN EXAMPLE OF CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Perhaps the best way to illustrate this principle is with an extended example. An excellent case in point is provided by a historian, Jennifer

Ritterhouse, in her account of how White psychology was generated by the slave system (its laws, values, institutionalized power and wealth and control over property) in the United States. (Historians who concentrate on psychological issues are the best cultural psychologists because they bring a rich understanding of the historical context to bear on psychology. Psychologists are typically less informed about the details of culture and this degrades their cultural-psychological descriptions and explanations. We shall see an example of this in the case of cross-cultural psychology.)

After blacks had been legally freed and made citizens, Southern whites sought to maintain their rule over blacks through informal cultural rules known as racial etiquette (Ritterhouse 2006). Racial etiquette included demeanor on side-walks (blacks were to defer to whites), sexual behavior, play, names («Sir» vs. «boy») and eating behavior. Violations of racial etiquette were met by beatings and lynchings. Indeed, »as many as a quarter of the 4,715 lynchings known to have taken place in the South between 1882 and 1946 resulted from breaches of racial etiquette that were seldom crimes« (Ritterhouse 2006, p. 36). A particular psychology was generated by racial etiquette, and it exemplifies how cultural factors are the origins, operating system, characteristics, and function of psychological phenomena.

One example of the cultural psychology of Southern whites was their acceptance of lynching blacks as just punishment for violating the cultural codes. Whites eagerly attended lynchings and derived pleasure from watching black men hanged from a tree. In Fort Lauderdale, Fla. in 1935 a white woman, Marian Jones, claimed that Reuben Stacey had attacked her. A mob of 30 armed men took Stacey to be lynched. Word of this spread and brought thousands of curious spectators, including women and children, to watch him be shot and hanged. Excitement was rife among the crowd and photographs showed smug, satisfied looks on the faces of some observers. Ritterhouse (2006, p. 74–75) describes the perceptions, emotions, and cognition displayed at these events.

Some white southerners not only failed to regard lynchings negatively as horrors from which innocent children ought to be sheltered, but instead regarded them positively as exciting events that neither they nor their children should miss. The mob execution of a black man, woman,

or family was not only a public spectacle but also public theater, often a festive affair, a participatory ritual of torture and death that many whites preferred to witness rather than read about. Special excursion trains transported spectators to the scene, employers sometimes released their workers to attend, parents sent notes to school asking teachers to excuse their children for the event, and entire families attended, the children hoisted on their parents shoulders to miss none of the action and accompanying festivities. Children's responses to what they saw included an eleven-year old North Carolina boy who injured a white playmate during a make-believe lynching, and that of a nine-year-old who returned from a lynching unsatisfied, telling his mother, »I have seen a man hanged, now I wish I could see one burned«.

This is a culturally based, culturally formed, culturally specific, culturally functional, culturally shared psychology that was generated by the cultural practices and values of racial etiquette. People without these practices and values would not have the same perceptions, emotions, motivations, desires, and reasoning processes.

A white Southern woman recounted a childhood incident that further expresses the cultural basis, character, and function of perceptions, reasoning, and emotions. When she was eight years old, around the turn of the century, she and a playmate were walking on a sidewalk and an 8-year old Negro girl did not get out of their way. »We did not give ground – we were whites!« When the black girl's arm brushed against her, she turned on her furiously saying, »Move over there, you dirty black Nigger« (p. 129).

The white girl's perceptions and emotions were informed by the racial etiquette that included investing the sidewalk (a cultural artifact) with cultural (i. e., racial and social) significance -- sidewalks were symbolic of white people's authority and superiority, and blacks were supposed to yield even if it meant they had to walk in the gutter. These cultural facts generated a) the white girl's perception that the black girl's behavior was wrong, immoral, and disrespectful, b) her reasoning that she had a right to correct this problem, and c) her emotion of outrage and aggression. Without the symbolic significance attached to the sidewalk and the sense of white privilege, the psychological reasoning, perception, and emotion would not have been elicited.

Another white boy of 10 reacted on the same basis of white privilege. A larger, older black girl did not give way to him on a sidewalk and he hit her hard in the stomach. He declared in his memoir »I wasn't ashamed« (p. 131). He wasn't ashamed because his racial status entitled him to hit blacks and encouraged him to do so in order to preserve the racial status. His lack of shame was culturally based and formed.

These examples testify to central tenets of cultural psychology: the fact that cultural practices and values determine the situations in which emotions are elicited, the kinds of emotions that are elicited, and the concrete quality of those emotions.

An interesting cultural quality of the racist anger was that it was directed at violations of the racial code (i. e., social status of whites and blacks); it was not a personal animosity directed at the black individual. Whites actually felt close to blacks in their everyday lives, allowing them to hold, feed, clothe, and play with their children, as well as cook the food for the adults. However, whites felt angry if a black momentarily brushed their arm on a sidewalk, or sat next to them on the bus for a few minutes! Clearly, this anger was not a personal animosity that felt blacks were dangerous, diseased, or reprehensible individuals who should be always shunned. The discomfort and anger at blacks violating social rules was a kind of *social outrage*, a *structural racism* that treated the offender in terms of his impact on the social order, not his immediate impact on the white person which imperiled her personal safety. Nor was this anger a feeling of animosity directed at black personhood or individuality that would impede future close personal encounters between the black individual and the white person's family in other situations. It was a situational anger confined to the particular social situation that was challenged by the black's behavior.

Another example of the culturally specific quality of White psychology was the fact that most, if not all, of their perceptions, emotions, and cognitions about Negroes were informed by a superior, paternalistic, patronizing, snobbish attitude that they were inferior to whites in intelligence, morals, civilization, and emotional control. The anger of the 8-year-old white girl who became furious at the black girl on the sidewalk, was a specific kind of anger that was tinged with white superiority and the expectation of privilege. Superiority was *in* the anger. Her anger

was neither abstract, nor was it similar to other concrete forms of anger such as anger at a spouse for arriving home late, forgetting a birthday, or having an affair. These forms of anger are tinged with disappointment, sadness, betrayal, or a sense of being unloved, not with superiority that was manifested in the girl's anger. Conversely, the girl's anger had no elements of sadness, disappointment, betrayal, or sense of being unloved.

This psychology is nuanced by cultural values, rules, and practices. It demonstrates how psychology is organized by and permeated by cultural issues. It is fair to say that these cultural values, rules, and practices were the operating mechanisms of White psychology. They generated the perceptions and emotions in particular situations with particular culturally-nuanced qualities.

The attitude of white superiority sometimes led whites to not become angry at certain black »misbehavior« and to tolerate it as normal, typical expected, unavoidable, even charming and amusing – as long as it did not challenge the racial etiquette of white superiority. Having children out of wedlock, and even stealing things elicited no outrage or disappointment from whites because a) they didn't harm whites to any significant extent and did not challenge racial etiquette, b) they were regarded as natural for such inferior creatures. Indeed, whites enjoyed seeing blacks »misbehave« because it provided vivid testament to white superiority, and it justified whites' domination of blacks.

This patronizing tolerance of black »misbehavior« was an ingredient in whites' self-concept. It generated a sense of self-pride, benevolence, tolerance, and altruism because they did not punish blacks in these cases. This benevolent, tolerant self-concept was based on a sense, and a power relation, of superiority, not on a sense of genuine caring and helpfulness. White sense of benevolence depended on the malevolence of enslaving blacks and patronizing them, however this escaped the attention of whites. White self-concept thus had a distinctive quality, or content. It was not an abstract, pride, benevolence, tolerance, and altruism, nor was it a genuine benevolence, tolerance, and altruism that whites practiced toward other whites of their status.

The affection that whites felt for blacks was also permeated with racial superiority. It was a paternalistic, patronizing, arrogant affection. that was generated by the behavior of blacks as dutifully deferential, mind-

ing their place. »We loved 'our Negroes' downward but expected them to love us upward.« »My sense of fellowship with Negroes had an odd tie-in with my snobbery.« Within these hierarchical limits, these whites felt their relationships with blacks were beautiful and that a special love and understanding existing between them and blacks. As soon as blacks became too familiar or uppity, this special love and understanding unraveled and the ruling class men and women quickly used force to restore their class dominance. This affection that embodied racial etiquette was a specific, concrete emotion quite unlike the affection that whites felt for other whites. This other kind of affection was more egalitarian and personal and did not incorporate the quality of hierarchical distancing that characterized affection for blacks.

The psychology of white-black affection was governed by the operating system of racial ideology. Their ideology structured their caring in a particular – superior – form; this same ideology blinded them from accurately perceiving the form their own caring took; their ideology blinded them from accurately perceiving the social and psychological effects their racist caring had on black recipients; and this same ideology blinded them from perceiving its own existence as the operating system that was behind all of this – i. e., behind the structuring, and behind the blinding of them to the structure and to the structuring. Instead, the ideology made them believe that their caring was a natural, empathic response to the blacks.

A striking example of how cultural values and practices comprise the operating mechanism of psychological phenomena is an incident that occurred in the early 1950s in North Carolina. A white boy and his friends were playing basketball with some blacks, all around 12 years old. One of the white boys tried to inflate the basketball using a needle he took from a black boy named Bobo. The white boy put the needle in his mouth to wet it before inserting into the ball. As he put it in his mouth he realized that Bobo had wet the needle a moment before. The racial element of this situation generated a powerful emotional and sensory reaction:

»The realization that the needle I still held in mouth had come directly from Bobo's mouth, that it carried on it Bobo's saliva, transformed my



prejudices into a physically painful experience. The basketball needle had become the ultimate unclean object, carrier of the human degeneracy that black skin represented. It transmitted to me Bobo's black essence, an essence that degraded me and made me, like him, less than human« (Ritterhouse 2006, p. 128).

The boy delicately explains how his racial prejudice generated a physically painful sensation and emotion in him. His cultural thought about blacks *became* a sickening sensation in his body. The cultural concept *became* a psychological phenomenon. The psychology was continuous with the concept, it was a transformation of the concept into a psychological form. The two were two sides of the same coin. His prejudice was the operating mechanism of his sensation and emotion in that it generated their qualities in response to this particular situation.

His emotion and sensation were stimulated by the symbolic significance he attached to the basketball needle. The needle incarnated racist prejudice about black bodies and people, and the needle transferred this prejudice about black malevolence into phenomenological sensations and emotions.

A white woman, Sarah Boyle, recounts similar powerful, body-wrenching emotions that were generated by the racial code:

»When a Negro didn't 'keep his place' I felt outraged. My indignation was triggered by a sense of guilt. I had learned that equality with Negroes were WRONG, and that it was my fault if a Negro attempted them. Therefore, I was immediately on the defensive at the first hint of familiarity.«

When a cleaning lady who had conversed with Sarah on numerous occasions called her Patty instead of Miss Patton,

»I felt my entire interior congeal! A Negro had failed to call me Miss! *And I was a guilty as she*. How unseemly my attitude must have been to invite to such a thing! I experienced a terrible wave of depression, mixed with a kind of horror of *myself*.«

The cultural-emotional dynamic consisted of first learning a cultural concept (code) that equality was wrong and was her fault for allowing it. This cultural instruction that it was her fault became a feeling of guilt.

Guilt is the feeling that an action is one's own fault, and this feeling is simply the other side of the coin of the cultural instruction that equality was Sarah's fault.

Boyle's narrative, like the previous one, is exceptional in indicating the essential equivalence of cultural prescription and emotion (akin to the essential equivalence of mass and energy). The cultural prescription was the operating system of guilt; it made guilt happen in response to particular situations. Culture is in the mind, subjectivity, mentality, consciousness, agency, psychology.

Furthermore, guilt is continuous with defensiveness, for if one feels guilty, one seeks to defend oneself from blame. Negroes' »misbehavior« made her look bad and feel bad, so she became angry at the immediate situation that generated this discomfort. (She overlooked the real cause of her discomfort which is the cultural prohibition against equal behavior. It was more convenient and socially acceptable to blame the black behavior than the cultural prohibition. Prejudice may be said to result from ignoring macro cultural influences on behavior. Macro cultural psychology is thus an important way to overcome prejudice.)

Each of these slides into the other like the levels of a spiral seamlessly slide into one another and become new levels of the original. The cultural prescription slides into guilt which slides into defensiveness which slides into anger.

Anger is not an independent thing that simply becomes conditioned to (associated with) blacks acting uppity. According to conditioning theory, culture functions like a kind of switch that simply links anger (as a given thing with natural, intrinsic, universal qualities) to black behavior. However, this psychological theory is wrong. Culture is not a switch that connects natural psychological processes to particular situations. On the contrary, cultural conditioning molds psychological phenomena to cultural factors. Culture makes psychology (anger) cultural, and imbues it with a specific cultural quality. Anger is converted into culture, it is not simply associated with culture.

Whites' anger at black people was the result of a net of assumptions and understandings about black peoples' psychology, nature, and cultural level which were internalized from the cultural code. These cultural assumptions became located within Sarah's »psychological infrastructure«,

forming it. Furthermore, white anger was not an immediate, quasi-physiological reaction to black misbehavior; it was the result of a string of spiraling transformations of a cultural prescription from guilt to defensiveness to anger. The prescription was therefore the operating system of anger that made it happen in response to a particular kind of situation. The situation itself, i.e., black behavior, did not mechanically generate anger by being moved into a proximate connection with anger. It only generated anger *via* the cultural prescription against equal behavior.

Behavioral theories, such as conditioning, which are drawn from simple animal behavior do not suffice to apprehend cultural psychological phenomena and must be replaced by a new cultural psychological theory. Whites' fury at black infractions was not an extension of a natural anger that all animals have. It was not a natural anger associated with a particular situation. The anger was a social anger, formed by social processes and incorporating social characteristics.

The cultural code of etiquette was also the operating system of Sarah's perception. The code oriented her to look inward at her behavior for the cause of blacks violating racial etiquette; it oriented her away from perceiving the oppressive Jim Crow system as the cause of blacks' resentment and resistance. The code also led her to regard »misbehaviors« of blacks as natural deficiencies on their part.

These examples reveal that the cultural code determines a) the kind of situation in which an emotion (or perception or self-concept) is elicited, b) the strength of the emotion, c) kind of emotion – anger, guilt, or depression, d) the concrete quality of the emotion – tinged with superiority or egalitarian, e) the dynamic of the emotion – how it is generated through concepts and related psychological phenomena (e.g., surprise, looking inward, feeling guilty, hating oneself, feeling defensive, feeling angry).

The cultural code is thus not an external, secondary »influence« on some inner »basic« processes of emotion. The cultural code is the mechanism of emotions and perception. It is central to them, inside them, and constitutes their basic processes.

Another cultural feature of the psychology implicated in racial etiquette was the manner in which it was socialized. Interpersonal socialization practices reflected macro cultural factors. Mothers were the primary agents of racist socialization because they were the primary caretakers.

Since the social system was racist, the female socializers of children inevitably socialized racism in their children.

A searing example of maternal socialization of racism occurred when Sarah Boyle's mother responded to Sarah's unhappiness over a servant's telling a lie. Her mother said, »We never do [lie]. Rosemary is a Negro. They aren't like us. Promises don't mean anything to them.« Her mother's statement socialized Sarah into the Jim Crow belief system:

»I don't think I ever again – that is, never until I became integrated at the age of about 45 – expected the truth of a Negro, or held one fully accountable as I would a white person, for telling me a lie. Another stone in my inner segregation wall had been cemented firmly in place.«

Micro level interpersonal interactions should not be idealized as a purely personal realm beyond macro cultural forces. Quite the contrary, macro forces are implemented in interpersonal relations. White domination was implemented in small, mundane ways such as a calculated bump with a shoulder, or calling blacks »boy«, or demanding blacks tip their hats, or requiring them to use the back door to enter a white house.

Micro level interpersonal interactions *must* recapitulate macro practices in order to inscribe subtle habits which will be conducive to accepting and participating in macro cultural practices. If micro level interactions contradicted the macro level, people would question, resent, and deviate from macro norms. Psychogenesis can never be free of, or contradictory to, macro cultural factors.

The socialization of racist psychology and behavior was a two-step process. White parents allowed their children to play with certain black children and to treat their black nannies as surrogate mothers. However, as adolescence approached, parents indicated to their children that they must distance themselves socially and emotionally. This was a specific cultural pattern of socialization that led to a specific emotional outcome vis a vis certain groups of people but not others.

Importantly, the adult structure of life overrode the innocent, playful interactions of childhood. These positive experiences of childhood did not immunize white youth from falling into the adult molds of segregation and discrimination. »For the vast majority, the »forgotten alternatives«

of childhood interactions remained forgotten« (Ritterhouse 2006, p. 163). As Boyle said,

»These incidents were little centers of genuine truth and experience which remained sealed off by my indoctrination and training, unable to permeate and purify my overall conception of the Negro people and their situation in the South« (ibid., p. 43).

This is a powerful statement about the power of culture to shape one's cognition, perception, and agency, and to override direct positive experience with individuals.

Accounts of socialization during the Reconstruction period reveal an additional interesting cultural pattern. Psychological socialization was generally implicit in the sense that parents simply acted out racial etiquette and children imitated them without any particular instructions or explanation. Social life was structured to enforce racism, and explicit, verbal instructions were generally unnecessary. This made it difficult to identify racism because it was rarely explicit.

»We were given no formal instruction in these difficult matters but we learned our lessons well. We learned the intricate system of taboos, of manners, voice modulations, words, feelings, along with our prayers, our toilet habits, and our games« (Ritterhouse 2006, p. 131).

Instructions were only given to children when they breached the etiquette, e.g., by being too friendly with blacks and not manifesting sufficient distance and superiority. One case was Lewis Killian's experience in Georgia in the 1920s. When a black woman came begging at his front door he rushed to tell his mother »There's a lady at the door.« His mother spoke with the woman and afterwards she rebuked Lewis: »You should have told me that was a colored woman. Ladies are white!« (ibid., p. 80)

The fact that interracial play was tolerated among children testifies to variability in the racist system. It was not monolithic and absolute. Alternatives were present. However, these alternatives were circumscribed physically and temporally. They were closed off in adolescence as whites and blacks settled into their adult positions in the racist social structure.

Moreover, after the informal interactions were closed off in adolescence, it was necessary that they be overlooked and repressed or forgotten so as not to contradict adult norms and raise questions about them. Perception became desensitized to discrimination as it became normalized. »I went along«, one white woman recalled, »I wasn't very interested in race at all. I didn't see any segregation or discrimination or anything else« (ibid., p. 161).

This demonstrates that memory/forgetting is also a cultural phenomenon. It has a cultural origin, character, operating system, and function. Its cultural character (content) was forgetting non-racist alternatives from childhood. Forgetting selectively forgot according to cultural rules. Cultural rules made selective forgetting happen.

Forgetting's cultural origin lies in racist etiquette that demands alternatives be foreclosed. Parents insisted on terminating interracial play and relegating it to an insignificant episode of childhood unreality. In addition, the entire structure of white society drew whites apart from blacks and made earlier play psychologically insignificant.

After a certain amount of confusion, frustration, and even defiance, most children accept »the way we do things« without question, especially when »the way we do things« works to their advantage, as white supremacy worked to the advantage of whites. Interracial play and other forms of childhood racial contact did offer alternatives to a social pattern scripted by racial etiquette, but because they were stacked against the incentives of parental love and white peer-group acceptance, not to mention personal pride and other possible gains in status, the emotional attachments of childhood were fairly easy to »forget« (ibid., p. 164).

Forgetting's cultural function was to promote racism as the only conceivable life style (ibid., p. 9).

It was easiest to repress and 'forget' one's fear or guilt or even one's unacceptable affection for a black nurse or playmate. That was what most white adults counseled, usually implicitly rather than explicitly and often by invoking racial etiquette. In a society in which adult white southerners energetically repressed any political alternatives to white supremacy, despite their own stated beliefs in Christian and democratic values, forgetting was also what made the rest of a white child's world

comprehensible, his or her most important relationships with family and friends sustainable (ibid., p. 178).

In other words, forgetting early positive interactions with blacks, and also forgetting guilt over abandoning them in adolescence under the pressure of racial etiquette, enabled white children to accept the exclusiveness of their white adult social world. Memory thus had, and has, a cultural function of sustaining (acceptance of) social norms.

Agency was also constrained by racial etiquette and functioned to uphold it. As one white man recollected, »at the age of ten I understood full well that the Negro had to be kept in his place, and I was resigned to my part in that general responsibility« (ibid., p. 167). Lillian Smith recounts how she used her agency to serve Jim Crow by actively adjusting her psyche to participate in the racial code that framed her life:

»I learned to believe in freedom, to glow when the word democracy was used, and to practice slavery from morning to night. I learned it the way all of my southern people learn it: by closing door after door until one's mind and heart and conscience are blocked off from each other and from reality.«

All psychological phenomena have this social function. Racial etiquette could not have been maintained if blacks and whites had not developed appropriate perceptions, cognitions, motivations, emotions, and self-concepts to participate in it. If whites had developed an egalitarian, personal affection for blacks they would not have treated them in a patronizing, dominating manner. Their emotional affection had to *contain* the paternalism of racist social relations in order for those social relations to be maintained. Whites' sexuality had to *embody* racist overtones in order distance them from blacks. Whites' perceptions and cognitions of blacks had to *incarnate* a sense of their inferiority in order to justify discriminating against them. Whites' memory had to selectively forget alternatives to racial etiquette.

This vivid historical example demonstrates that psychology is generated by cultural factors, its character/quality/content is cultural, it is formulated within cultural factors to construct cultural factors, its locus is in cultural factors, it is permeated by the class structure and politics of cultural factors, and it functions to maintain cultural factors (social

institutions, cultural artifacts, and cultural concepts). Psychology is not a separate, internal, natural, or individual phenomenon.

Psychology has distinctive, subjective qualities that differ from objective qualities of macro cultural factors. Psychology is different from a classroom, it is different from a gun, it is different from the CIA and World Bank, it is different from the concept of family honor. This is why psychology deserves to be studied as a distinctive phenomenon. However, this study must emphasize the concrete cultural origins, character, and function of psychology which all permeate its subjective quality. This is what Ritterhouse does so masterfully, and what psychologists should imitate.

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