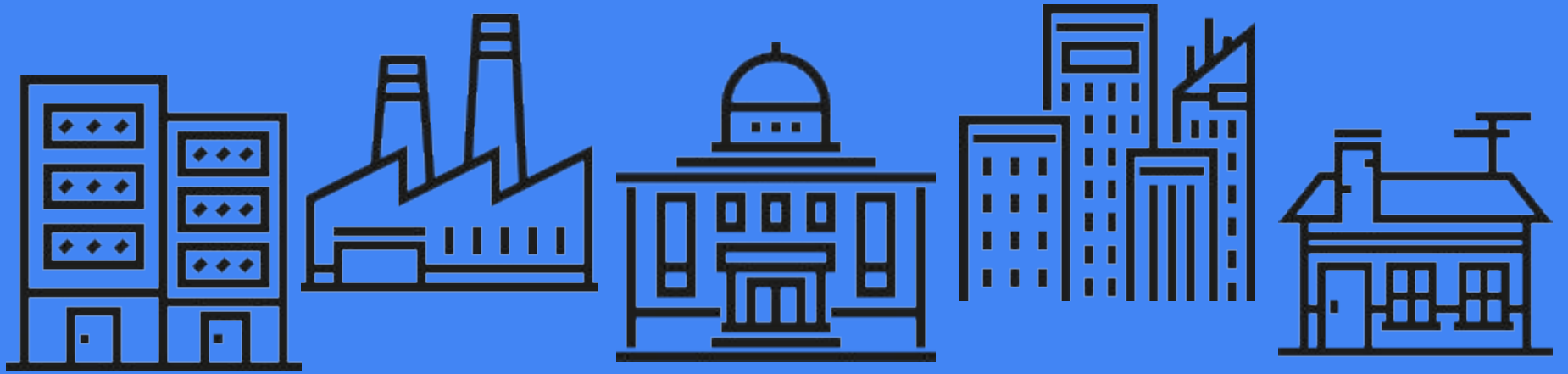


Critical and Collective Psychologies



w/ Leah McKown

A Tale of Two Psychologies 2.0

Critical Psychology: a school of thought which fundamentally rejects the basic tenets of “mainstream psychology”

Collective Psychology: a school of thought which emphasizes the psychological faculties of units beyond the individual

Critical Psychology

“Mainstream Psychology”: schools of thought which are most commonly taught in university settings and practiced in clinical settings (Fox, 2009, p.3); think cognitive-behavioral and biological models

Why does critical psychology reject “mainstream psychology”?

Critical Psychology

ANSWER:

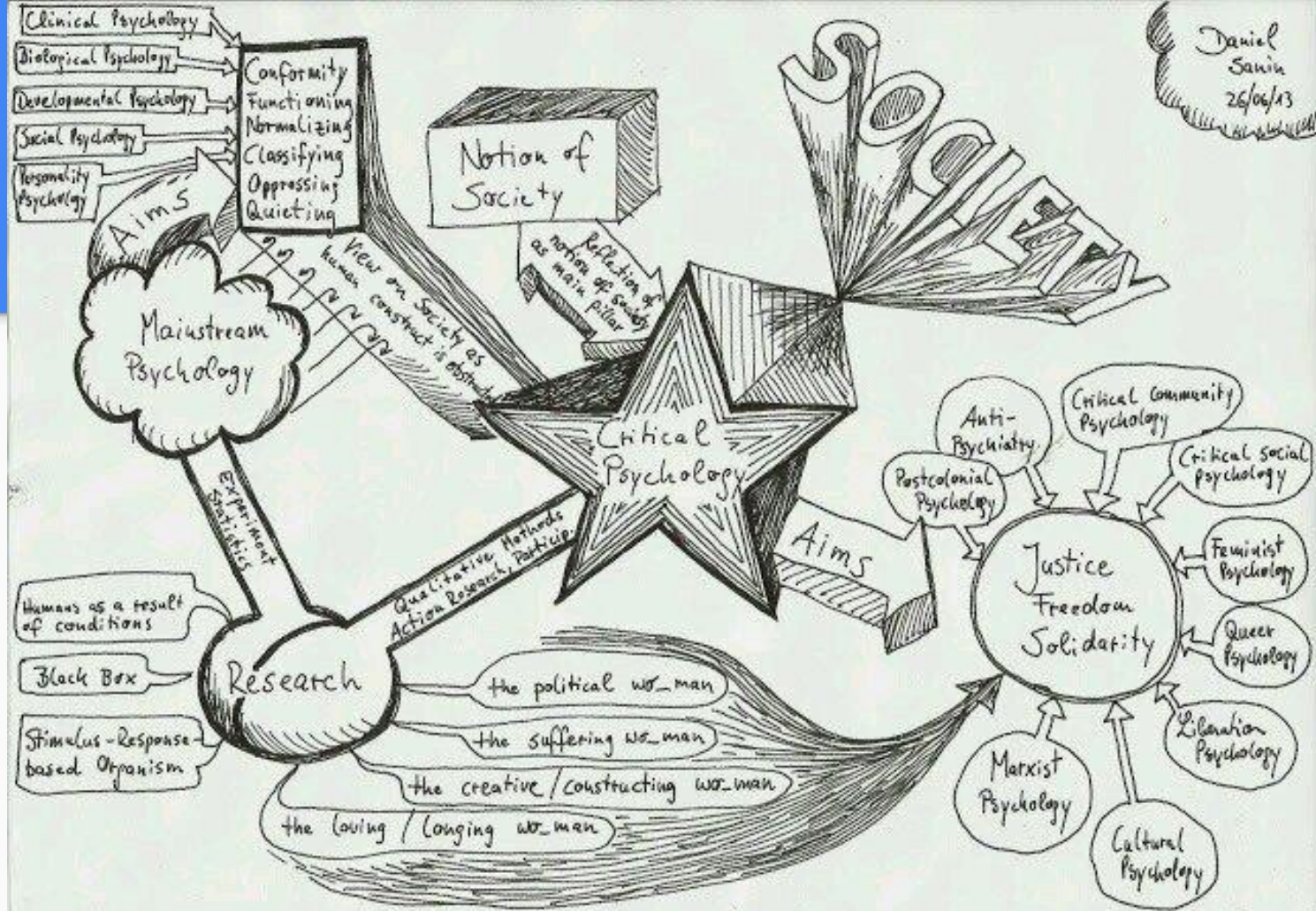
- 1 by focusing on the individual rather than the group or larger society, mainstream psychology overemphasizes individualistic values, hinders the attainment of mutuality and community, and strengthens unjust institutions;
- 2 mainstream psychology's underlying assumptions and institutional allegiances disproportionately hurt members of powerless and marginalized groups by facilitating inequality and oppression; and
- 3 these unacceptable outcomes occur regardless of psychologists' individual or collective intentions to the contrary (Fox, 2009, p. 5)

Critical Psychology

- Heavily influenced by the Frankfurt School and Critical Theory, a German sociological program based on Marxist visions of justice
- Originated in 1970s Germany with Klaus Holzkamp
- Associated with various social movements and platforms



Daniel Sanin
26/06/13



Erich Fromm & *The Sane Society*

- Born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1900
- Fled Germany after the Nazis rose to power
- Lived in Switzerland, United States, and Mexico
- Admired the work of Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx
- Wrote *Escape from Freedom* and *Man for Himself*



Erich Fromm & *The Sane Society*

- Published in 1955

Question: How is *The Sane Society* historically situated?

- Draws on psychoanalytic, humanistic, and existential traditions
- Posits a theory for what human beings need and how Western society subverts and rejects these needs

Erich Fromm & *The Sane Society*

“Mental health is characterized by the ability to love and to create, by the emergence from incestuous ties to clan and soil, by a sense of identity based on one’s experience of self as the subject and agent of one’s powers, by the grasp of reality inside and outside of ourselves, that is, by the development of objectivity and reason” (Fromm, 1955, p. 69).

Societal insanity occurs when the social environment does not allow for the fulfillment of these conditions.

Erich Fromm & *The Sane Society*

- Fromm analyzes Western capitalism and its relationship to these five, basic human needs.
 - Connection (Relatedness versus Narcissism)
 - Transcendence (Creativeness versus Destructiveness)
 - Rootedness (Brotherliness versus Incest)
 - Identity (Individuality versus Herd Conformity)
 - Orientation (Reason versus Irrationality)



Collective Psychology

- Underused and underrepresented term
- Associated with, but distinct from social and community psychology
- Solves many of the issues that critical psychology charges “mainstream psychology” with
- Asks:
 - What happens when individuals, saddled with their own ideologies, attitudes, and emotions, aggregate into groups and systems?
 - Will these psychological faculties project onto these larger social structures?

Collective Psychology

Question: What historical events illustrate collective psychology?



Joseph Gone & *When Healing Looks Like Justice*

- Professor of Anthropology and Social Medicine at Harvard University
- Member of the Aaniiih-Gros Ventre tribal nation



Joseph Gone & *When Healing Looks Like Justice*

- Part of a broader study of generational/historical trauma
 - Relevant framework for many marginalized groups
- Social change and restoration of justice as psychologically healing



A Case Study

