

n e w w o r l d o r d e r s

millennialism in the western hemisphere

The Missing Perspective: Psychology and Millennial Studies

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In the distant future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be based on a new foundation, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation.

Charles Darwin, **The Origin of Species**, 1859, page 449.

My time with you today will be a kind of update, or a progress report, on the exciting new developments taking place in evolutionary psychology, and I want to sketch out how this has begun to change the approach to millennialism and new religious movements (NRMs).¹ But as I face this task, I find that I am distinctly aware of not wanting to step on any scholarly toes (any psychoanalytic toes in particular) and so I will attempt to do this as gingerly and as carefully as possible.

The other big problem in presenting this topic is the sheer breadth of the convergence of disciplines that has begun to emerge over the past 10 years under the banner of evolutionary psychology -- anthropology, sociology, human ethology, social and group psychology, behavioral ecology, evolutionary primatology etc. The list is long and daunting.²

¹ Following Richard Landes, "I use the term *millennialism* (also *millenarism*, *millenarianism*, *chiliasm*) in the extended sense developed by social scientists: movements that expect the radical transformation of *this world* by the overthrow of the present order and its replacement with a new order of justice, peace and plenty. ... These scholars include in the definition a sense of the imminence of the transformation" (Richard Landes, "Literacy and the Origins of Inquisitorial Christianity: The Exegetical Battle between Hierarchy and Community in the Christian Empire (300-500)," in *Social History and Issues in Human Consciousness: Some Interdisciplinary Connections*, ed. A. E. Barnes and P. N. Stearns (New York: New York University Press, 1989), 162, note 44.

Other writers who have anticipated trends in evolutionary psychology regarding new religious movements (NRMs) include: Marc Galanter, *Cults, Faith, Healing and Coercion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) which stresses an early sociobiological view point, and G.H. Mead's idea of a social mind; Marc Galanter, ed., *Cults and New Religious Movements* (Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1989), an official report on cults and NRMs. See also Charles Lindholm, *Charisma* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990) for a focused look at the issue of charisma in the context of NRMs.

² The extent to which evolutionary psychology has become an umbrella discipline is astonishing. Disenchanted scholars from linguistics, genetics, psychiatry, neuroscience, in addition to those already mentioned, have found a rallying point in EP from which to mount attacks on the *status quo*.

References to the torrent of articles, books and web sites devoted to evolutionary psychology are numerous and growing. See Richard Milner, *The Encyclopedia of Evolution: Humanity's Search for Its Origins*, foreword Stephen Jay Gould (New York: Facts on File, 1990). Milner provides a good general introduction to the terms of evolutionary biology, and many fascinating tidbits and anecdotes concerning the origins of evolutionary theory and its controversies.

See especially J. Barkow, L. Cosmides, and J. Tooby, ed., *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). Cosmides and Tooby are prominent figures in evolutionary psychology, based at the University of California, Santa Barbara. For other introductory material, see: Gregory R. Bock and Gail Cardew, ed., *Characterizing Human Psychological Adaptations* (Chichester, NY: J. Wiley & Sons, 1997); David R. Rosen and Michael C. Luebbert, ed., *Evolution of the Psyche* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999). This text includes an introductory article by

But it is a natural expectation, I think, that we have of a scientific paradigm which seeks to explain human nature and human behavior (as psychology does) that it should have something to say, something to contribute, to the study of millennial movements and NRMs. But what strikes even the most casual observer of millennial studies is the extent to which psychology is missing from the current discussion.

Who is to blame? Certainly, part of the problem is the general malaise underlying much of psychology today. Although we are now expecting much more from psychology, it is clearly not meeting our expectations. John Horgan argues in his recent book, *The Undiscovered Mind*,² that the mind is still waiting to be discovered by science. Or take James Hillman's *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy -- And the World's Getting Worse*.³

Fortunately, I don't have the time or the background to address these concerns. Instead, I start by looking at how in the past psychology has reacted to the rise of National Socialism – a time when psychology seemed to stand in mute silence, wrapped in wonder at the rise of the Nazism.

Carl Jung, who was at one time Freud's foremost disciple, was himself swept away by the phenomenal rise of Nazism. While Jung could triumphantly point to goose-stepping German soldiers as a concrete and living demonstration of his great discovery, the collective unconscious, he was also subtly influenced by racial theory and myth. Although Jung was never a Nazi, he did accommodate himself to its power structure within the psychoanalytic movement, and throughout his life, he was never able to acknowledge this lapse on his part.⁴

About the same time, the Frankfort School, which prided itself on its grasp of the situation of the common man, was soon sent scrambling in retreat, trying to explain Nazism. Eventually they settled on an “F – scale” which they said could test and measure susceptibility to authoritarianism; it would find out whether their subjects were potential fascists or not. (The answer was that, yes, they were.) However, this work has now been all but forgotten.⁵

David M. Buss, now at the University of Texas, Austin (“Evolutionary Psychology: A New Paradigm for Psychological Science,” 1-33), and articles by Anthony Stevens and John Price, whose ideas are essentially the focus of this paper. Also, Jeffrey A. Simpson and Douglas T. Kendrick, ed., *Evolutionary Social Psychology* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 1996).

An especially early evolutionary psychologist is Paul MacLean, whose ideas about the human tripartite brain initiated a resurgence of interest in cognition, consciousness and the modular-brain idea. See Gerard G. Neumann, ed., *Origins of Human Aggression: Dynamics and Etiology* (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1987).

³ John Horgan, *The Undiscovered Mind: How the Human Brain Defies Replication, Medication, and Explanation* (New York: Free Press, 1999). See also, John Horgan, “In Studying the Stubborn Mind, What is the Upside?” in the October 8, 1999 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (<http://chronicle.com/free/v46/i07/07a07a7201.htm>) and James Hillman, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy – And the World's Getting Worse* (SF: Harper Collins, 1993). Also, James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).

⁴ By far the most thorough treatment of this controversy is Aryeh Maidenbaum and Stephen A. Martin (ed.) *Lingering Shadows: Jungians, Freudians, and Anti-Semitism*, “A C. G. Jung Foundation book,” (Boston MA: Shambhala, 1991). See especially pages 124-125, and 377. Jeffrey Masson, *Against Therapy* (New York: Atheneum, 1988), Chapter 4, “Jung Among the Nazis”, 94-112, also covers the same topic, but is more shrill in its denunciation of Jung. “By not speaking out, [Jung] was eloquently silent for the Nazis.” (100). See also Kurt Gauger, “Psychotherapy and Political World View,” in George L. Mosse, ed., *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural, and Social Life in the Third Reich* (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), 215-227, which is a good example of the kind of Nazi propaganda in psychology at that time. Gauger, who spoke as “an SA man” (215) at the May 10-13, 1934 Medical Congress for Psychotherapy in Bad Nauheim, was effusive in his praise of Jung, and Hitler, and just as condemnatory of Freud. When this speech and others like it were published in 1934 in the *Journal for Psychotherapy and Related Disciplines* (*Zentralblatt fuer Psychotherapie und ihre Grenzgebiete*, Vol. 7), Jung was the editor-in-chief. Jung's own comments, both during and after World War II, can be found in C.G.Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, Collected Works Vol. 10, Bollingen Series (New Jersey: Pantheon / Princeton University Press, 1969). See especially, “Wotan” (1936), 179-193, and “After the Catastrophe” (1945), 194-217.

⁵ There are a number of excellent studies that deal with various aspects of the Frankfurt School. See, for example, Rolf Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994). Wiggershaus is an indispensable reference for background information and history, faultlessly researched, but lacking a general critique or assessment of the contribution of the Frankfurt School. A pointed assessment of the F-Scale initiative can be found in

Ironically, the psychologist who was arguably the most sensitive to the dangers and the religious millennial core of Nazism (as a substitute gratification for suppressed sexuality) was Wilhelm Reich. Not only was he the first psychoanalyst to recognize the dangers of Nazism, but he was also the best equipped to deal with it. Reich recognized, as his fellow Communists did not, that the Nazis had successfully transmuted Marxian class consciousness into racial consciousness (Volksgefuehl). Reich's contribution to understanding the mass appeal of Nazism was based on his recognition of the emotional power of the symbols and myths used. However, Reich's theories of the late 1920s and 1930s gradually became more and more eccentric, until, at the time of his death in prison, he was frankly psychotic. For this reason, his ideas were completely rejected and never made it into mainstream psychoanalytic thought.⁶

On the other hand you have someone like Erik Erikson, who does not become psychotic, but continually stumbles trying to understand the appeal Nazism had for the masses. Erikson struggled for many years to account for Hitler's success, by going back to the German family, for example, where he wanted to place the blame for Nazism. But, as others have pointed out, this is just another way of saying that the Germans were plain stupid for following Hitler.⁷

Robert D. Smither, "Authoritarianism, Dominance, and Social Behavior: A Perspective from Evolutionary Personality Psychology," *Human Relations* 46 (1993): 23-43. For an excellent overall discussion of the Frankfurt School, and its influence in the US, see F. Samelson, "Authoritarianism from Berlin to Berkeley: On Social Psychology and History," *Journal of Social Issues* 42 (1986): 191-208. (Also in the same volume, N. Sanford, "A Personal Account of the Study of Authoritarianism: Comment on Samelson": 209-214.) See also, T.W. Adorno, E. Frenkel-Burnswick, D.J. Levinson, and R.N. Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1950) and Max Horkheimer, ed., *Authoritaet und Familie* (1936) Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan. For an in-depth scholarly commentary on the Frankfurt School in its own context, and in connection with the context of social thought in general, see Michael Billig, *Ideology and Social Psychology: Extremism, Moderation, and Contradiction* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982).

Initially, Erich Fromm was a psychoanalyst closely aligned with the Frankfurt School, but he gradually separated from it. Fromm was relentless in his pursuit of an understanding of Nazism from the psychoanalytic point of view. He is especially well known for his *Escape from Freedom* (New York: Avon Books, 1941/1965), and *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973). In the latter, for example, Fromm relies heavily on Wilhelm Reich's prior work in characterological analysis, but does not mention him at all. In addition, Fromm's characterological analysis of the 1933 election results (Fromm 1973: 292) is contradicted by actual election results [cf. Below, Reich (1933) and Merkl (1975).] Fromm also came up with a new psychoanalytic diagnosis based on Freud's *thanatos*, which he calls "necrophilia." The new diagnostic category is then applied to Hitler and Himmler, and, according to Fromm, provides a psychological explanation of the "Nazi Syndrome." But there are many problems with this. For one thing, the death instinct, which was an imaginative creation by Freud in his later years, and is now forgotten by psychology, plays a central role in Fromm (Fromm 1973). Himmler's attempt to introduce rituals, Arthurian myth, and an SS religious cult at the refurbished Wewelsburg Castle goes unnoticed, and therefore need not be explained by Fromm [Cf. "The Deadly Chatelain of Wewelsburg," Chapter Six in David K. O'Rourke, *Demons By Definition: Social Idealism, Religious Nationalism, and the Demonizing of Dissent* (Lang, 1998).]

⁶ The definitive biography of Wilhelm Reich is Myron Sharaf, *Fury On Earth*, (New York: St. Martin's Press / Marek, 1983). Of Reich, Sharaf writes, "He was the most charismatic speaker I have ever heard" (131). See also David Boadella, *Wilhelm Reich: The Evolution of His Work* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), which is an early and sympathetic treatment of Reich's life work. Reich's essays from this early period can be found in: Wilhelm Reich, *Sex-Pol Essays 1929-1934*, ed. by Lee Baxandall, intro. by Bertell Ollman (New York: Random House, 1972). See especially Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, trans. Vincent R. Carfagno (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1933/1970).

⁷ Erik H. Erickson's initial essay on Hitler and the German Family appears in "Hitler's Imagery and German Youth," *Psychiatry* 5 (1942): 475-493. In 1950, this same paper appeared in revised form under the title "The Legend of Hitler's Childhood" in *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950/1963). See also Robert Coles, *Erik H. Erikson: The Growth of His Work*, DaCapo Series in Science (New York: Plenum Publishing Corp., 1970): 84-99; and Richard Evans, *Dialogue with Erik Erikson* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1969): 64-71.

But it is the German, Klaus Theweleit, who provides the ultimate attack on the inadequacy of psychoanalysis in the face of fascism, while at the same time desperately trying to salvage something that resembles a (psychoanalytic) theory of fascism in these post-modern, deconstructionist times. See Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies - Volume One: Women, Floods, Bodies, History*, trans. Stephen Conway, foreword by Barbara Ehrenreich (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), and *Male Fantasies - Volume Two: Male Bodies, Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, trans. Erica Carter and Chris Turner (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). I cannot say enough good things about Theweleit's irreverent and shocking evocation, or calling forth, of the fascist reality, which he shows to be quite beyond our ability to describe and frame theoretically. Theweleit gives an impassioned but deeply shattered and fragmented response to Michel Foucault's question, "How

Well, this doesn't help us, and we are still left with the enigma of Nazism. It is quite obvious that we are in need of other tools, and new approaches for answers to these difficult questions. The Neo-Freudian, Weston LaBarre, likewise muddies his approach to the Ghost Dance by trying to fit shamanic experience into the categories of the Oedipal Complex. His attempt to place shamans in a Freudian interpretive framework results in charges that the Ghost Dancers were "frightened and infantilized," and had embraced "paranoid" visions of "psychotic" shamans. The shamans themselves were childlike, insane and feminized. No matter, since for LaBarre, "Each conscious mind reigns over a raging lunatic within."⁸ (That's good to know!) And, so, with this long list of failures to consider, I want to draw our attention to a major paradigm shift that is now occurring within psychology. I am, of course, talking about the advent of evolutionary psychology. The problem here is that although the empirical foundation upon which Freud's edifice stands has been undercut by modern neuroscience, he is still very influential and pervasive, and has not yet been superseded.

Freud's ideas, of course, have been influencing Western culture for the past 100 years, and so it is ironic that evolutionary psychology seeks to go back a full fifty years before Freud for its inspiration. Thus, it is to the paradigm of the biological sciences originated by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace in the 1850's that evolutionary psychology must go. And so, it is with a certain subtle humor that Anthony Stevens and John Price have subtitled their groundbreaking text in evolutionary psychiatry: "A new beginning," because it really is a new beginning in the sense of "starting over." And it is to these ideas, and the excitement they are generating, that I want to turn now.⁹

does one keep from being fascist, even (especially) when one believes oneself to be a revolutionary militant? How do we rid our speech and our acts, our hearts and our pleasures, of fascism? How do we ferret out the fascism that is ingrained in our behavior?" [Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane, preface by Michel Foucault (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), xiii.]

In this connection, Claudia Koonz, *Mothers In The Fatherland: Women, The Family, and Nazi Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), effectively brings this period alive and focuses on the role of women and the churches in supporting Hitler. But the best source of original material for this period, and the mind-set of those active at the time, is Theodore Abel, *Why Hitler Came to Power: An Answer Based on the Original Life Stories of Six Hundred of His Followers* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1938), and Peter H. Merkl, *Political Violence Under the Swastika: 581 Early Nazis* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975). The Abel archives provide a rare glimpse into the inner psychological reality of Hitler's early followers, which is then comprehensively analyzed by Merkl in his monumental work. Lastly, the continued popularity of Francis Parker Yockey, *Imperium* (Sausalito CA: Noontide Press, 1948/1969) shows us just how pervasive and enduring these Nazi ideals can be, in this "Bible" of Neo-Nazism.

⁸ These comments can be found in Weston LaBarre, *The Ghost Dance: The Origins of Religion* (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1970), 107, 43. In contrast to LaBarre, I much prefer Joel W. Martin, "Before and Beyond the Sioux Ghost Dance: Native American Prophetic Movements and the Study of Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* LIX/4 (Winter 1991): 677-701. Martin's essay is especially noteworthy not just because it is the most exciting writing about the Ghost Dance today, but because it advocates the kind of change in perspective (away from denigrating bias) that evolutionary psychology is now achieving. Also, Joel W. Martin, *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogee's Struggle for a New World* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1991).

Prof. Martin's work also seeks to incorporate the observations of the late Victor L. Turner, the anthropologist, into this discussion, with significant results. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Co., 1969), and the posthumous entry "A Few Definitions" in the "Rites of Passage" article in Mircea Eliade, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 12 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 386-7. Turner's graduate assistant at the time of his death, Robert L. Moore, has extensively elaborated the main ideas of his mentor in a Jungian context, and his work in this area has helped to spawn the contemporary "Men's Movement." See, especially, the seminal essay, "Ritual Process, Initiation, and Contemporary Religion," in Murray Stein and Robert L. Moore, ed., *Jung's Challenge to Contemporary Religion* (IL: Chiron Publications, 1987), 147-160. The biosocial basis for initiation and ritualized transitions points to the same cultural-biological matrix that is now being studied by evolutionary psychologists. Note, as well, that there are a number of Jungian and archetypal psychologists heavily involved with evolutionary psychology. This no accident, since there is a natural affinity between the study of the role of the instincts in daily life (Jung), and the study of the evolution of the instincts resulting in daily life (Darwin, human ethology, etc.).

⁹ Anthony Stevens and John Price, *Evolutionary Psychiatry: A New Beginning* (New York: Routledge, 1996). See also Michael T. McGuire and Alfonso Troisi, *Darwinian Psychiatry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Darwin's dynamic view of nature - the development of new species and the extinction of old ones - is described by his theory of natural selection, which is now being used to form a new scientific paradigm for understanding humans and human behavior. Thus, evolutionary psychology seeks to situate human behavior in an evolutionary context by placing behavior in an adaptive or functional setting, where that behavior can be understood to enhance the survivability of the group or species in different ways. Sociobiology, for example, was an early form of evolutionary thinking that emerged in the 1970s, and focused primarily on reproductive fitness, that is, the fitness of the species for reproducing itself. Evolutionary psychology, however, will identify a number of other heritable and adaptive benefits. (See Note 2.)

One of the important methods for evolutionary psychology is the use of primatology and the primates in the wild as a reference point for the interpretation of human behavior (human ethology). It is in this connection that you find the use of a common EP buzz word: the environment of evolutionary ancestry (EEA), which refers back about 6 million years, to the African savannah where the early hominids first emerged. Behavioral ecology is another methodology that examines the interactions between the environmental and the individual, where the resulting behavior is understood to be either a facultative or obligatory adaptations. Obligatory behavioral responses are thought to be unchanging, whereas the facultative behaviors can be highly variable. An adaption is defined to be any physical, morphological, or behavioral change that enhances species' survival.¹⁰

But the key distinction in evolutionary psychology is going to be between two forces, namely those that work for cohesion and unity within groups, by supporting affiliation, conformity, and those that facilitate group splitting and renewal. Now, the exciting thing is that on the side of group splitting, this is where the evolutionary psychologists are working to locate schizophrenia, psychosis and borderline states, as well as various attention getting behaviors of charismatic leaders of NRMs.¹¹

¹⁰ John C. Avise, "Definitions" of *The Genetic Gods* (MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 261. It is worth noting the work of an early Jungian concerning the instincts and the adaptive function of behavior, Erich Neumann, has been reprinted: "The Psychological Meaning of Ritual," *Quadrant: Journal of the C.G. Jung Foundation for Analytical Psychology* 9, no. 2 (Winter 1976): 5-34.

The adaptational aspect of behavior also figures prominently in modern Disaster Theory. As Frederick L. Bates and Walter Gillis Peacock remind us in their book, *Living Conditions, Disasters, and Development* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1993): "All animal species survive by employing behavior as a means of adaptation and as the mechanism to draw needed resources from the environment. ... The important point is that culture may be regarded as a set of behavioral patterns that have evolved to provide a human population's adaptation to an environment by reducing its vulnerability to uncontrolled, unexpected transactions with the environment" (11). But "the concept of vulnerability ... means that every adaptive pattern is subject to increased vulnerability as its environment changes or as rare and unusual events occur in that environment which its culture does not predict and for which it does not provide adaptive responses" (12). Thus, disasters and development are seen to complement one another in essential ways (3-19), and the impact of disaster events falling outside the scope of societal adaptations of modern cultures is greatly magnified (plagues, famines, wars, car accidents, etc.).

This adaptive approach to human behavior is echoed by collective behaviorists, such as Joseph B. Perry, Jr., and Meredith David Pugh, *Collective Behavior: Response to Social Stress* (New York: West Publishing Co., 1978). "As the title of the text suggests, we felt it useful to view collective behavior as an adaptive response of social groups. It seemed to us that collective behavior is often a search for new situational definitions and organizational structures; structures that meet the unfulfilled goals of individuals in groups and cope more successfully with the realities of changing natural and social environments" (289).

¹¹ See Kelly Morris, "Viewing the mind's maladies through Darwin's eyes," *THE LANCET*, 354, no. 9174 (July 17, 1999) in connection with the attempts to understand mental pathology in the context of evolutionary adaption. Schizophrenia and psychosis represent difficult challenges to the evolutionary psychological paradigm, since the reproductive fitness of the mentally ill is considerably diminished. On the other hand, it has been pointed out that successful leaders of NRMs are exceptionally prolific (i.e., Joseph Smith Jr., David Koresh, Jim Jones, etc.). See also the discussion in Stevens/Price (1996), as well as Paul Gilbert, *Human Nature and Suffering* (New York: Guilford Press, 1992) concerning SAHP (social attention holding potential) and RHP (resource holding potential) appeals for mate and leader selection. See also, Philip L. Wagner, *Showing Off: The Geltung Hypothesis* (Austin TX: University of Texas Press, 1996), and John Price and Anthony Stevens, "An Evolutionary

But on the cohesive side, the ethologist Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt has been developing the idea of indoctrinability over the past 20 or 30 years, and evolutionary psychologists are very excited about indoctrinability because it proposes a genetic basis for the need and the innate capacity to affiliate with groups, and the capacity we have to be persuaded that the beliefs of groups are true in order to form a common 'social reality'.¹²

Now, since the 1950's and 1960's social psychologists have engaged in experiments that show the great extent to which groups engender conformity, and how very difficult it is to maintain a non-conformist stance. By using group pressure, for example, Solomon Ascher was able to manipulate student volunteers into saying that a smaller line was longer than it really was. Milgram's experiments, that used an electrical shock administered by volunteers, really were 'shocking' examples of social conformity -- to which the social psychologists assented, and said, yeah, yeah, we all conform to groups, but there was no larger, overarching theoretical framework in which to make sense of these results.¹³ Instead, evolutionary psychology wants to view these kinds of experiments as a way of revealing the character of our genetic heritage.

Long ago, Aristotle announced that man was by nature a herd animal, and this affiliativity has long been recognized as part of the nature of mankind.¹⁴ In the context of human ethology, Eibl-Eibesfeldt has proposed that the capacity for indoctrination should be understood as part of this group nature and our social reality. As Stevens and Price argue, how else can we explain incredible gullibility of the general public, and the proliferation of urban myth? (For example, you may have heard the rumor among college students, that Mountain Dew soda pop has contraceptive powers?)¹⁵ This, then, would be viewed as part of an innate capacity, as part of the human genome that helps to sustain groups and make survival more probable.

I am going to mention one other area where group cohesiveness has important practical implications. Some psychologists are beginning to look at depression as a purposive adaption for maintaining group cohesiveness and solidarity in the face of changes in the dominance structure and hierarchy of the group. They hypothesize that depression is 'nature's way' of managing changes in the structure of groups, that is, in group rank and ordering. And, so, someone who has been at the top of the heap (Alpha Chimp), and now suddenly loses status (to Beta Chimp), is going to have an inborn mechanism that renders that individual non-aggressive, in order that they can fit back into the group hierarchy. This is seen as functioning in a way that ensures group integrity throughout these changes, and psychiatrists are now using this evolutionary model to treat patients with depressive disorders. These evolutionary psychiatrists are looking at depression as having a primary adaptive or functional role that, for one reason or another, has become dysfunctional.¹⁶

Approach to Psychiatric Disorders: Group-Splitting and Schizophrenia," in David R. Rosen and Michael C. Luebbert, ed., *Evolution of the Psyche* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), 196-207.

¹² Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Frank K. Salter, ed., *Indoctrinability, Ideology, and Warfare: Evolutionary Perspectives* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998). See also, John Price and Anthony Stevens, "An Evolutionary Approach to Psychiatric Disorders: Group-Splitting and Schizophrenia," in David R. Rosen and Michael C. Luebbert, ed., *Evolution of the Psyche* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), 196-207.

¹³ See Irvin Rock, ed., *The Legacy of Solomon Asch* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum Associates, 1990), and Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

¹⁴ Aristotle, *Politics* I.i.9.

¹⁵ *Wall Street Journal*, October 14, 1999 : A1 and A8.

¹⁶ See also Jane Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1971), Chapter 10, "The Hierarchy," pages 112-130, for a hilarious account of the hierarchical ascent by Mike the chimp through the inventive use of a pair of empty kerosene cans. Mike noisily banged the empty cans together while charging to displace Goliath, the dominant chimp. See Stevens/Price (1996) and various articles in P. Gilbert and B. Andrews, ed., *Shame, Interpersonal Behaviour, Psychopathology and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Now, this same kind of functional approach is going to also be applied to schizophrenia and psychosis, where some of the most important insights concerning group splitting will emerge.

Now, I want you to imagine, for a moment, that your group of early hominids, back in the EEA, has grown to the point where your territory can no longer support you, and some of you must migrate to survive. But, with all the pressures for group cohesion, how can this happen? Nature's answer, of course, is that the group must break into incompatible subgroups, and part of it must form around a new leader that will inspire the group with a sense of mission, bind to that leader, and then be motivated to leave and find its own 'promised land' .¹⁷

But in order to have this kind of group process (which is unique to humans), your group needs someone who will stand out in some way, someone who can stand out with great charisma, and who can maintain his or her point of view and separateness in the face of overwhelming opposition and criticism. (Say, someone like Joan of Arc.) Now, from the point of view of overcoming the powerful forces working for group cohesion, the answer is simple: the person you want to start this process – must be crazy! And this is exactly what Stevens and Price are proposing by placing the emergence of genotypic schizoid traits in an evolutionary context.

To produce a leader like this, you must induce an intense inner state that completely dominates individual awareness, and becomes real for that person. And, perhaps, you will create a unique language, create a unique way of expressing oneself and unique mannerisms, a unique cosmology. But you also want to give them a powerful need to share and explain their inner vision, and to convince others of its validity. This, then, is what gives them the courage to go their own way, to split off from the main group. In short, they must be crazy.

This is, in fact, a common observation regarding the charismatic leaders of millennial groups; they are, indeed, borderline personalities, and may eventually shift into overt psychosis.¹⁸ Indeed, for outsiders, the followers of charismatic leaders may themselves appear to become borderline, absorbed by the bizarre ideation of their leaders. But evolutionary psychology views this as part of a process of constructing a new social reality through the differentiation of groups. And it is to this process of group splitting that the extreme polarization necessary for group splitting and occasional catastrophic outcomes can be traced.¹⁹

Chimpanzees are well known for their extensive repertoire of grooming and display rituals for establishing rank and maintaining social harmony. Humans characteristically lack these means of bonding and maintaining group solidarity. Most recently Robin Dunbar has hypothesized that human speech can be profitably understood as an extension of these grooming rituals. His work attempts to set the phenomenon of language on an evolutionary footing, with promising results. See Robin Dunbar, *Grooming, Gossip, and the Evolution of Language* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

¹⁷ Especially Anthony Stevens and John Price, *Evolutionary Psychiatry: A New Beginning* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 143-151 in a section entitled "The Group-Splitting Hypothesis of Schizophrenia." Also, Jeffrey Satinover, M.D., "Jung's Relation to the Mother," *Quadrant: Journal of the C.G. Jung Foundation for Analytical Psychology* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1985): 9-22. A section of this article is called "Group Psychology and Individual Psychopathology" (10 – 16), and gave me my first introduction to the idea of group splitting, and described very well the instrumental role that the borderline personality plays in these splits – thus anticipating later views of evolutionary psychiatrists Stevens and Price, *et. al.* [See also on this point Charles Lindholm, *Charisma* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990).]

¹⁸ Cf. Marc Galanter, *Cults, Faith, Healing and Coercion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

¹⁹ Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination* (SF: Harper Row, 1986), presents us with a haunting collection of images that have served to reinforce splits between groups, and encourage genocide. Taken from across time, these powerful images of propaganda attest to the reality and power of the polarizing psyche. See also Irenaeus Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Frank K. Salter, ed., *Indoctrinability, Ideology, and Warfare: Evolutionary Perspectives* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998).

I believe that the concept of group splitting can be used in a number of contexts. The structure of scientific revolutions, for example, as described by Thomas Kuhn [*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969)] also follows this pattern. Kuhn examined science and scientific progress in terms of a 'sociology of groups,' and determined that scientific revolutions could well be described in terms of groups attaching themselves to scientific innovators. Newton, Harvey, Pasteur, Faraday, Darwin, Einstein, etc., were all scientific innovators. Each theoretician was able to

Whether or not evolutionary psychology turns out to be the Holy Grail for understanding millennial groups, I cannot say for sure. But one thing is certain: a subtle shift is taking place, and the tide has turned -- we are being asked to look at these millenarian group behaviors not from the point of view of pathology and illness (the dominant diagnostic mode of psychiatry and medicine), but rather in terms of something innate manifesting itself; as a part of the human problem solving set, that is, as something functional and adaptive.

Now, I already know that Ted Daniels disagrees with this approach, since he doesn't see anything adaptive going on here at all.²⁰ But this is good because it points out how different the EP approach is, and how it can help us better understand millennial phenomena and to comprehend it this way, instead of subjecting it to the same old battering by depreciatory interpretive methods. Thus, EP offers a way out of the hermeneutic loop, a new solution for the problem of approaching these difficult-to-comprehend groups (and those events that sometimes make headlines); that is, from the inside-out, instead of from the outside-in. EP represents, I think, an important change in our approach to NRMs and millennialism.²¹

This shift in perspective changes our basic understanding of millennialism, from millennialism being only over there and observable that way, to a growing subtle awareness of its utter pervasiveness, in culture, in history, in religion, and, lastly, as a personal category of existence itself.²²

The use of evolutionary psychology in approaching these social and religious phenomena eliminates this bias (or holds the promise of eliminating this bias) by beginning from a point of commonality. Situating the origin of a psychological approach to millennialism in the deep evolutionary roots of the collective psyche avoids the path through pathology, diagnosis and dismissal all together. Once we begin to see ourselves – maybe, our longings, our hopes – in

successfully persuade others in the group that 1) there was a crisis with the old theoretical model, and/or that 2) the newly proposed theory would solve these problems and apparent contradictions. *Successful theoretical innovators have been able to convince others to abandon their former affiliation, and their former beliefs, to accept the new theory and even to defend it.* This is the essence of scientific revolutions, according to Kuhn, and his description coincides with the process of group fission, or group-splitting at the core of millennialism.

²⁰ “On further thought I’m not persuaded that millenarianism is all that adaptive, since it hopes and pretends to govern change, to steer it in a desirable directions ... Instead, I think millenarianism by and large is a dysfunctional approach to the fear of change and the management of power.” Posted to Talk 2000 Forum on June 24, 1999 by Ted Daniels.

<http://www.escribe.com/history/2000ad/index.html?mID=1147>

²¹ We have already seen the important role played by Anthony Stevens, M.D., a Jungian Psychiatrist, in developing the ideas for a “evolutionary psychiatry.” Another very important figure, sadly recently deceased, is John Weir Perry, a student of Jung’s whose books and life work navigate the boundary between madness, health, and social change. See especially his *The Far Side of Madness* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1974). Here Perry elaborates 10 categories of images or mythemes that commonly present themselves during the active phase of psychosis. Some of these images or features are explicitly millenarian, suggesting an important psychical connection between the inner upheaval of individual psychosis, and the imagery of millennial NRMs. Perry makes these connections more explicit in *Roots of Renewal in Myth and Madness* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976), “Eros and History,” *Anima* 3, no. 1 (Fall 1976): 30-38, and “Societal Implications of the Renewal Process,” *Spring* 1971: 153-167. Perry presents the cultural and historical background supporting his two-fold (personal and collective) approach in *Lord of the Four Quarters: Myths of the Royal Father*, intro. Alan Watts (New York: Macmillan, 1966). Stevens and Price seem unaware that Perry’s work confirms their hypothesis that schizophrenia and psychosis originate at level of the psyche relating to culture and social living, and that this level of the psyche is of recent origin. Further exploration of this connection, I am sure, will reveal much about the origins of culture and millennial movements, as well as individual psychosis.

²² Lastly, I must note Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951). [See also, Eric Hoffer, *The Ordeal of Change* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963)]. It has been more than thirty years since I was first introduced to this book, and what still strikes me today is the depth of Hoffer’s sympathy for the plight of the marginal and the down trodden -- an understanding, no doubt, sustained by his personal experiences as a migrant agricultural worker during the 1930s in California. His openness to the experience of the “true believer,” sets his work apart from the other crowd psychologists, such as Gustave LeBon, [*The Crowd*, intro. Robert A. Nye, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1995)]. Also see Charles Lindholm, *Charisma* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990), Chapters 1 – 5 for an excellent overview of the history of “crowd psychology.”

these movements, there is a double benefit, that not only will we understand millenarian groups better, without a negative bias, but we will also come away knowing more about ourselves, and the groups and communities we make our home in. It is my hope that evolutionary psychology can be applied equally to these contexts in order to help to reinstate psychology as the “missing perspective” in millennial studies.