



In Science We (Should Not Always) Trust: Decolonizing the Science of Psychology

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This paper is intended as an introduction and a call for questioning psychological sciences. Western sciences, especially sciences that focus on racial and gender “differences,” have served among the most colonizing influences worldwide. Frantz Fanon’s (1959) term “shameful sciences!” especially applies to social Darwinism and eugenics as forms of scientific racism, scientific sexism, and scientific imperialism. In this contribution, I highlight my struggles as a scholar to recognize these scientific narratives, to decolonize my own praxis as a scholar and a psychology clinician, as well as to address the long standing impact of these ideologies in the academy and society. I argue that In Science We (Should Never) Blindly Trust, and share my suggestions for ways to learn, name, and resist racist and sexist ideological sciences.

PROLOGUE: a prologue sets the scene for the story to come...

In light of the recent Apology on Racism issued by the American Psychological Association (See link: <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/racism-apology>), this prologue serves to more directly link this article to potential next steps for psychologists moving towards anti-racist and non-colonial praxis.

Sciences of human experience, like all other areas of human cultural and narrative production (e.g., the media, art, religion, politics) are produced within particular contexts. Eugenics is a scientific movement that has provided the foundation for white supremacy and justification for numerous other forms of social injustice for over a century. Eugenic sciences (i.e., colonial science) became the cornerstone of American psychology and its related sub-disciplines (e.g., statistics, testing, vocational placement, use of experimental animals, psycho-educational policies, behavioral control practices) and remains a fundamental part of the American psychology and its key organizations such as the American Psychological Association (APA).

APA's recently released apology on racism, while a vital step toward recognizing the ideological uses of psychological sciences that

have supported varied forms of prejudice and social oppression, nevertheless fails to address and reject eugenic-based epistemologies, theories and practices that have laid the foundation and defined the science of American psychology. Historical and contemporary projects to address racism within the science and practice of psychology highlight that without concerted efforts to replace racist epistemological methods, tools, tests and concepts, racism in psychology will persist.

A decolonial view of science recognizes its positionality within a broader historical context, including that the term “science” denotes a limited way of knowing based within a Eurocentric timeframe. A historical recognition of harm done in the name of scientific pursuits is one of the most essential components of decolonizing epistemology. From this stance, decolonial science asserts and affirms varied voices of resistance, critique, dialogue, alternative knowledges, and engaged discussion in relation to any concept claimed to have been produced by scientists under supposedly neutral scientific conditions. This includes an active examination of types of epistemological practices for their past and present day impact on all communities, but especially those who have been the subjects of such

investigations.

For an example of decolonial sciences see:
<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20210602122154852>

Introduction(s)

This contribution details my path as a scholar, clinician, and citizen to decolonize myself in relation to ideologies presented via scientific rhetoric, including those couched in statistical normality curves, evolutionary theories, or empirical validity. Moreover, this contribution highlights alternative forms of evidence, including archival historical evidence, that showcases deep sustained engagement of Western psychology scholars in sciences that uphold and promote social oppression. I wish to counteract the notion, common in the contemporary Western world, claiming that science has become the only force, which is supposedly progressive, salvific, good and true.

The statement “according to research” appears often in justifications of human social differences and in support of social inequalities while racist scientists promote their ideas as “evidence based” not just in alt-right media but in mainstream spaces such as CNN or Wikipedia. If I mentioned terms such as “religion,” “cultural critique” or “politics,” the reader is likely to view my contribution with a skeptical stance because religion, cultural views or political opinions are assumed to represent multiple opposing perspectives and agendas. In contrast, the modern Western world, regardless of whether liberal or conservative, left or right, does not appear to question sciences or scientists. The “March for Sciences,” organized to rally against the Trump administration’s supposedly anti-scientific stance, appears to entirely ignore that this same administration justifies its acts and rhetoric via scientific scholarship (e.g.,

“immigration causing rise in crimes”). The National Public Radio, a supposedly progressive media group, routinely broadcasts such shows as “Science Friday,” where scientists promote all manner of research, typically without any discussion of alternative perspectives (find episodes on “positive psychology” scholarship) claiming that one’s environment does not matter to one’s happiness based on research with caged monkeys (Yakushko, 2019b). T-shirts and car bumper stickers show off slogans designed to pit “biased” religion against “non-biased” sciences: “In Science We Trust.” In contrast, this contribution is intended to share my personal account of decolonizing my own perspective in relation to sciences through an active immersion in critical readings of archival and contemporary psychology scholarship and its varied uses by groups that promote hate.

The Supposed Purity of Science

To most individuals engaged in any aspect of academia in the U.S., whether as students or scholars, Western sciences are revered as being a type of gold standard of justice, neutrality and good will. This perspective is not only promoted within the academy but is actively sold via national best-sellers on the salvific role of science in Western “civilization.” A recent example was offered by Steven Pinker (2018), a Harvard psychologist, a popularizer of “evolutionary” and “behavioral genetic” psychologies, who recently published best-sellers on the wholly salvific, liberating, and progressive role of science, in contrast to all other social endeavors. According to Pinker (2002, 2018), everything good in Western societies, and in fact around the globe, occurred only because of Western scientific developments and contributions, even if science and scientists, whom Pinker promotes, produced research identified by scholars as racist or sexist (Ruti, 2015; Tucker, 1996; Yakushko, 2019a). While

Pinker's books are filled with promotion of racism, sexism, and eugenics (just as his Twitter account posting), and although he is directly implicated in supporting the pedophiles such as Jeffrey Epstein (Flaherty, 2019), scientists like Pinker continue to enjoy protection and promotion by the very powerful in American society (Gates, 2018). In addition, I find that even within social activist circles discussions of "research," "evidence-based" community solutions, and the "importance of science" in building their arguments appear to have become common.

My growing awareness of the use and misuse of scientific rhetoric is based on my experiences of being raised in the former USSR, a culture, in which moniker "scientific" prefaced most educational offerings encouraging the appearance of credibility (e.g., "scientific socialism," "scientific atheism," or "scientific military education"). After immigrating to the U.S. and entering into its advanced educational systems, I was struck by how numerous ideological positions were similarly couched in rhetoric of being "empirical" or "research-based" or "scientific." For example, I was struck by numerous proclamations about gender roles or women's intellectual capacities that appeared entirely based on Western capitalist notions of gender norms.

During my doctoral studies in psychology I became aware of questioning clinical theories and practices, which were typical of totalitarian aspects of my Soviet upbringing (i.e., focus on cognitive and behavioral controls), seemed routinely touted as the only "empirically valid" approaches. While being taught that cognitive-behavioral and behavioral clinical treatments are the most rigorously researched, I became aware that clinicians and scholars elsewhere in the world, especially in former Soviet block countries as well as most parts of Latin America, Asia, and Africa embraced

contemporary psychoanalytic perspectives. In contrast, psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic treatments continue to be attacked as non-scientific within mainstream psychology circles. Dissatisfied with lack of qualitative and feminist forms of research training, I pursued doctoral-level Women and Gender Studies. In this intensive interdisciplinary graduate experience, I discovered a world of critical gender, critical race and anti-colonial scholarship, most of which also drew on psychoanalytic theories (e.g., Butler, 2004; Bhabha, 1984; Fanon, 1959). During one formative psychology conference on gender and race, which I attended as a graduate student, I also began to learn about liberation psychologies (Martin-Baro, 1994; Watkins & Shulman, 2008), critical psychology (Walsh, Teo, & Baydala, 2014), and participatory based community research (Fine, 2009). I read and attended lectures by Howard Zinn (2010), and pursued activist-scholarship positions in work with issues of recent migration and human trafficking. When I became a fledging Research I faculty member, I published on xenophobia and sexism, but still found myself timidly navigating dominant psychology via empirical studies, evocations of "multicultural competence," and citations of numerous Western-based empirical data.

Several recent experiences with U.S.-based psychology sciences further emphasized the need for me to decolonize my own view of the "empirical" assumptions in psychology. As I participated in presentations on historical and contemporary origins of xenophobia with historians from the Smithsonian Memorial Holocaust museum, I began to note intersections of xenophobic rhetoric, supposedly based in sciences, that continues to promote the view of immigrants as diseased, violent, unintelligent, and "alien" (Yakushko, 2018b). I also began to examine history of eugenics and social Darwinism in Western psychology, discovering a stunning

number of leading Western psychologists engaged in supporting these ideologies as central to their views of human beings (Yakushko, 2019a). Whereas scholars and historians in other disciplines have been naming the horrific impact of eugenicist and social Darwinian views on treatment of diverse human beings and experiences (Bannister, 2010; Bashford & Levine, 2010; Dimen, 2013; Lombardo, 2011; Ruti, 2015), I was enraged to discover that dominant psychology scholars, institutions, organizations, and publications openly promote these perspectives as “empirically valid” and even somehow socio-politically progressive. For example, during a recent convention of the American Psychological Association, a Wall of History, celebrating 125th anniversary of the APA, including as its opening panels openly celebratory proclamations of violently xenophobic, racist, and anti-Semitic scientists (i.e., H.H. Goddard) and studies (i.e., the Army Mental tests). In returning to those critical aspects of my Soviet and socialist education, as well as through my interests in critical psychoanalysis (e.g., F. Fanon, J. Derrida, H. Bhabha, G. Spivak, S. Ahmed, J. Butler), I began my own process of decolonizing. Recommendations, with which I end this contribution, stem from my own struggles to examine, to name, and to re-envision what is considered psychological sciences and practices.

In James Baldwin’s (1965) pivotal essay entitled *White Guilt*, history repeats itself by being lived on, unconsciously, by individuals and groups, and that in facing accurate historical accounts of self and society are a vital step of liberation. Fanon (1959), who accounted these histories in relation to colonization and enslavement of African peoples, specifically named the racist and imperialist brutality wielded in the name of “shameful sciences!” (p. 120). Thus, in this contribution I will invite you to abandon the

colonizing method of dispassionately reading about violent, oppressive, and often sadistic forms of sciences, past and present, without your human responses of anger, sorrow, guilt, and dismay (Laenui, 2000).

How the Assumptions of Science and Eugenics Shaped the Oppressive Nature of Psychology

Use of sciences to reify oppressive ideologies has long standing history in Western countries, including in the U.S. (Guthrie, 2004; Tucker, 1996; Yakushko, 2019a). Eugenics is a historic and contemporary science as well as a social movement grounded in Darwin’s theories of human evolution, which emphasize the survival of the fittest in the supposed struggle over resources, especially women (Bannister, 2010; Bashford & Levine, 2010; Lombardo, 2011). Supported by Charles Darwin (1872) himself, eugenics was first proposed by Darwin’s cousin Francis Galton, who termed it the “science of racial betterment” (i.e., based on Greek words “great” and “born”) (Galton, 1865, 1869, 1904; Popenoe & Johnson, 1935). Eugenics is primarily associated with Nazi Germany’s policies of racial purity and the Holocaust (Kuhl, 2002; Weikart, 2004). However, the past and present eugenics’ focus on scientific examination of human fitness via their fight for survival and control over procreation to produce supposedly evolutionary better subsequent generations (Bashford & Levine, 2010; Lombardo, 2011). Their slogan was that some people do not deserve to be born, and that human differences can be predicted and controlled.

The Enlightenment sciences, which including Darwinian evolutionary and Galtonian eugenic views, were grounded in cultural assumptions of the day, and indeed extended from histories of European cultural genocides, especially the witch-hunts, which swept both Europe and everywhere the

Europeans colonized (Wistrich, 2014; Yakushko, 2019b). Scholars note that what are known as contemporary social sciences developed in close tandem with sciences of racial and gender difference (Elias & Feagin, 2016; Jackson & Weidman, 2004) Replacing religious and early scientific efforts to identify which individuals and groups were prone to being possessed by demons, scientists shifted to other biological explanations that made the same determinations (e.g., superiority of Nordic white wealth men to all others) but in the language of germs-plasms (“genes”) or cranial measurements (“brains”). Religious tales that justified inequalities, such as the biblical Adam and Eve story, were replaced with mythic “cave men” accounts that supposedly led to the development of superior and inferior biological heredity. Moreover, Enlightenment psychologists’ search for legitimizing themselves as true sciences resulted in their promotion of what contemporary philosophers of sciences have termed scientism: the insistence on the use of exclusively natural or physical empirical tools to produce “facts,” which consist primarily of moralizing value-laden descriptions of human experiences (Sorell, 2013; Stenmark, 2018). For example, Stenmark (2018) emphasized that “scientism typically is a combination of certain scientific theories and a particular ideology or world view, namely naturalism or materialism... [which themselves] are not scientific but philosophical theories” (p. 4). Such scientific or scientistic efforts are not neutral but lead to varied forms of what Teo (2008) termed epistemological violence. For many historians and philosophers of sciences, Darwin’s theories of evolution as applied to human social differences serve as prime examples of ideological sciences or scientism that led to varied forms of epistemological violence.

Notably, Darwin’s primary work is nowadays only titled as *The Origins of the Species* whereas the actual title, which in fact is used

by contemporary eugenicists and White supremacists such as David Duke (1999), was *The Origins of the Species: Or, The Preservation Of Favoured Races In The Struggle For Life*. In this work, Darwin (1859) proclaimed that the “grade of civilization... [as] a most important element in the success of nations” (p. 239). Darwin’s (1872) next most celebrated book, *The Descent of Man in Relation to Sex*, is filled with eugenics as well as promotion of the British men as both an evolutionary superior race and gender. In his second most celebrated work, *The Descent of Man in Relation to Sex*, Darwin (1872) openly proclaimed that “at some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace, the savage races throughout the world” (p. 252). Throughout his works Darwin justified imperialist, racist, and sexist views as merely observations of the natural world or the evolutionary “truth” which should be dispassionately accepted and carried out. Darwin’s (1872) allusions include comparing his work and the works of eugenicists to those of a surgeon, who must impassively cut out sick tissue (e.g., non-Nordic racial minorities, the poor, “unchaste” women) from the ever-evolving body of humanity.

Francis Galton, Darwin’s colleague, friend, and cousin, began his work by similarly claiming to dedicate himself to extensive neutral scientific work (i.e., experimental statistical studies, empirical observations of other cultures), which he claimed to have verified Darwin’s theories. He compared wealthy, Nordic/British White males, including “great men in history” as well as Cambridge University graduates to non-British minorities, British poor, and women, making scientific pronouncements such as that “the average intellectual standard of the negro race is some two grades below our own” and that “the number among the negroes of those who we should call half-

witted men, is very large" (Galton, 1884, p. 338-339). Decrying the dysgenic dangers (i.e., evolutionarily problematic) of having these individuals live and have children, Galton became the first scientist to offer empirically designed "utopias" or the world that is filled entirely with socially engineered racially pure (i.e., Nordic White), highly intelligent (i.e., by Western IQ measures), physically perfect (i.e., lacking any illness or disability), emotionally and behaviorally self-controlled, and perpetually optimistic individuals (Cattell, 1987; Galton, 1869; Watson, 1914). From Galton to today eugenicists openly discuss their efforts to create a "Super Race" by "breeding" the "Super Man" (Nearing, 1912, pp. 25-26).

Among the main strategies undertaken by eugenicists, past and present, is demanding complete compliance with their ideas by shaming individuals for being non-scientific and offering "empirical" data on dangers of not following the eugenics with total blind faith. For example, in his popular book entitled *National Life From The Standpoint Of Science* Karl Pearson (1905), a founder of the field of statistics and British eugenicist, shamed his readers for following their feel-good inclinations to humanize "the evolutionary unfit" or care for their well-being. Rather than having "sympathy toward the Red Indian" by reading fiction, Pearson proclaimed that indigenous people's destruction reflected "the natural history view of mankind" because truth of Darwin's scientific theories was "verified...chiefly by way of war with inferior races" (p. 44).

In the U.S., numerous scientists, especially academic psychologists, took up the flagship of social Darwinism and eugenics and made these theories foundations of their work. The majority of leading psychology scientists who occupied top academic posts, scientific journal boards, and professional organizational leadership positions were also

leading multiple eugenic societies and the founding member of the American Eugenic Research Organization (*Eugenical News*, 1916-1924). For example, Robert Yerkes, who was Harvard based psychologist who founded the field of "comparative" or animal psychology, who served twice as the president of the American Psychological Association and served as a director of the National Research Council, was an avowed eugenicist. Yerkes (1923) produced such works as the *Eugenic Bearing of Measurements of Intelligence in the United States*, in which he stated that "eugenics, the art of breeding better men, imperatively demands reliable measurement of human traits of body and mind" (p. 225). According to Yerkes,

Eugenics needs accurate and reasonably complete descriptions of human behaviour as partial basis for methods of control. It may look to psychology hopefully for accurate descriptions of traits of mind and their expressions in action, for measurements of the manifold features of intellect, feeling, will, temperament, character-in fine for the scientific description of the human personality. (p. 226)

Similarly, Louis Terman (1916), a distinguished Stanford psychologist, and the developer of the most commonly used IQ tests routinely referred to eugenics as central to his work because "considering the tremendous cost of vice and crime...it is evident that psychological testing has found here one of its richest applications [in eugenics]" (p. 12). Terman regularly decried the "dullness" among certain groups of Americans, stating that [supposed lack of intelligence] "seems to be racial, or at least inherent in the family" and found with "extraordinary frequency among Indians, Mexicans, and negroes" (p. 91).

Among the first large and enormously

popularized studies by American psychologists were the Army Alpha and Beta tests, which were developed, conducted and published by top American psychologists, including Yerkes (Harvard), Brigham (Princeton), Thordniike (Columbia), Terman (Stanford), John B. Watson (Johns Hopkins), and many other notable psychology scholars (*Eugenical News*, 1916-1924; Tucker, 1996). Carl Brigham (1923), Princeton University psychologist who later developed the Scholastic Apperception Test (SAT) summarized the results of this study in a national best-selling book *A Study in American Intelligence*. Yerkes (1923) urged the American public “to consider their [study results’] reliability and their meaning, for no one of us as a citizen can afford to ignore the menace of race deterioration or the evident relations of immigration to national progress and welfare” (p. viii). The study was proclaimed to be unbiased, highly scientific, and one of its kind in providing bell-shaped “normality” results (the book is filled with statistics, data tables, and scientific discussions). Among its key results were conclusions such as the confirmation of “the marked intellectual inferiority of the negro” which was “corroborated by practically all of the investigators who have used psychological tests on white and negro groups” (Brigham, 1923, p. 190). These results were used then to discuss the importance of segregating African American children in schools for the supposed sake of Black children’s well-being because “the average negro child cannot advance through an educational curriculum adapted to the Anglo-Saxon child in step with that child” (p. 194). Other racist and xenophobic scientific discoveries by this all-encompassing and heavily funded study were such empirical assertions as “our figures... tend to disprove the popular belief that the Jew is highly intelligent” (p. 190) and that “our study of the army tests of foreign born individuals has pointed at every step to the conclusion that

the average intelligence of our immigrants is declining” (p. 197). These empirical results were openly promoted not only to the public but to its representatives, who in fact enforced such policies as to “only to admit those who are superior to the median American in mental endowment as far as this is shown by approved mental tests” (Evans, 1931, p. 16). Brigham (1923), however, offered an optimistic summary that “the deterioration of American intelligence is not inevitable, however, if public action can be aroused to prevent it. There is no reason why legal steps should not be taken which would insure a continually progressive upward evolution” (p. 210). These eugenic-based steps, according to Brigham, had to focus on the “prevention of the continued propagation of defective strains in the present population” (p. 210).

These stunningly racist and xenophobic empirical proclamations were profoundly disturbing to me, not only in relation to openly White supremacist and White nationalist ideology, but because these studies and sciences were produced by founding “fathers’ of psychology, whose works I was taught to accept as salutary. I also made myself aware of profoundly damaging and violent impacts on vulnerable communities, including decisions by the U.S. government to close American borders to all but a small number of Nordic immigrants or formalization of racial school segregation (Gould, 1996; Guthrie, 2004; Kuhl, 2004; Lombardo, 2011; Tucker, 1996).

Another example of scientific eugenics in U.S. psychology involved a famed psychologist, whose work became essential for biologically and genetically reductive perspectives in psychology and explanations of human social behavior in terms of hereditary traits: H. H. Goddard. During the early XX century Goddard ran of the most noted eugenic laboratories around the globe—the Training

School for Feeble-Minded Girls and Boys in Vineland, NJ (Bashford & Levine, 2010; Black, 2003; Goddard, 1912, 1917; Smith, 1999; Tucker, 1996). Goddard's main focus was on individuals determined to be "feeble-minded" who he claimed could appear "normal," thus necessitating specialized professional testing by trained psychologists. According to Goddard (1911), the feeble-minded individuals were treacherous for American society because while appearing to be average, "these are the people who cannot be taught decent living, and through their ignorance of things, which they have not the capacity to learn, they spread disease, through their person and their untidy surroundings. They are thus a menace to public health as well as to morals" (p. 263). Therefore, Goddard scientifically guaranteed that "the elimination of this grade of feeble-mindedness would result in an enormous improvement in happiness and possibilities of achievement in every community" (p. 262), specifically in his highly popularized Kallikak study (Goddard, 1912). The Kallikak study was central to the U.S. Supreme Court decision to uphold involuntary sterilization of Carrie Buck, a young woman who was raped by a nephew of her adoptive family but blamed and institutionalized as a feeble-minded prostitute (Lombardo, 2011). Moreover, the 1933 Nazi German book's second re-print named H. H. Goddard to be the most significant contributor to the "law for the prevention of sick or ill offspring" because Goddard demonstrated "just how significant the problem of genetic inheritance is" and that "no example shows so clearly as the Kallikak study" (in Kuhl, 2002, p. 41). Whether racist, xenophobic, sexist, homophobic or misogynist assumptions in these studies, I open myself to evidence of how detrimental and profoundly oppressive were their assumptions and influences.

Contemporary Eugenics By Many Other Names

My discoveries in reading both historical, including archival, and contemporary scientific publications by Western psychologists led me to affirm Baldwin's (1961) recognition that oppressive histories live on, often in renamed and rebranded formats. For example, American eugenic and socially Darwinism-oriented scientific groups persisted, evolved, or rebranded, such as "social biology," "evolutionary psychology" or "behavioral genetics" (Dusek, 1999; Eckland-Olson & Beicken, 2012). Many leading U.S. psychologists developed new strategies for promoting social oppression as scientific. H. E. Garrett, an APA president in 1946 and Columbia University professor, continued to openly support eugenics and its new iterations such as social biology and behavioral genetics (Tucker, 1996). Notably, Garrett served as the scientific expert witness who argued for maintaining racial segregation in American schools by providing empirical testimony on the supposed intellectual deficiencies of racial minorities in *Brown v. Board of Education* hearings (Tucker, 1996). Garret's (1952) scientific testimony in *Brown v. Board of Education* was filled with numerous studies and data, as well as his own statements on keeping schools segregated:

My prediction would be that if you conducted separate schools at the high school level for Negroes and whites, one of the two things might happen: that the Negro might develop their schools up to the levels where they would not mix, themselves; and I would like to see it happen; I think it would be poetic justice... the other would be in a mixed school where, as I said, a great many animosities, disturbances, resentments, and hostilities and inferiorities would develop. (p. 955)

Garrett also contributed White Supremacy publications as the *White Citizen Gazette* and served as the director of the Pioneer Fund, which was designated as “one of the most influential racist groups of the 20th century” and the “primary source of scientific racism” by the Southern Poverty Law Center (2017, online). Garrett (1961) was among the scholars who began to insist that the “true” sciences of racial differences were denied because scholars and non-scholars fell prey to what he termed “*The Equalitarian Dogma*” (title of the article). This ideology espoused that equality and social justice are feel-good non-scientific dogmas while “real” science “proved” superiority of Whites.

Many contemporary Western psychologists, whose studies continue to fill Western psychology journals and textbooks, such as A. Jensen, H. Eysenck, R. Cattell, and P. Rushton continued to promote hereditary, biological, genetic, and evolutionary bases of human social differences while attacking the notion of racial equality or racial justice as “dogmas,” “moralistic fallacies,” “political correctness,” and anti-scientific “chimeras” (Cattell, 1987; Gottfredson, 1994ab, 2005; Lynn, 2001; Rushton & Jensen, 2005). Whereas historical psychology eugenics were hidden behind terms such as intelligence testing, behaviorism, comparative (animal) psychology, eugenic psychologies developed new terms to hide ideologies. For example, Jensen and Rushton (2005) rebranded their racist studies as empirical “race realism” while attacking any efforts to question such promotion of racial inequality as a “moralistic fallacy” (p. 328). “Race realism” is one of the most widely used terms as the foundation for the scientific justifications of White Nationalism and White supremacy, such as in the racist underpinnings of the American Renaissance group (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019).

Facing my own privileging of my academic,

and thus, social position, I discovered that relegating representations of racist and White supremacist individuals as lacking in education and being non-scientific, I found that some of the most stunning examples of racist and sexist ideologies are produced and promoted by my colleagues who are fellow psychologists. White supremacy and White nationalism, just as slavery, colonization, and genocides against indigenous nations, were and continue to be justified as based in sciences (Kendi, 2015; Tucker, 1999; Zinn, 2010). Many openly racist Western organizations, such as the Pioneer fund, offers financial backing exclusively to scientists (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2017; Tucker, 1996; Yakushko, 2019ab).

Moreover, pop scientific books sold to the public continue to promote a view of science and scientists as always correct, salvific, and unbiased. Recent voluminous books by Steven Pinker (2002, 2018) offer a prime example of a psychologist promoting science of racial and gender “differences” while evoking need for eugenics. In my own stunned discovery that Pinker’s books are filled with promotion of Pioneer fund supported studies (e.g., Linda Gottfredson’s (1994ab, 2005) attacks on affirmative action and promotion of racist ideologies in regard to human intelligence), I was even more shocked to find that Pinker is openly celebrated by financiers such as Bill Gates, propelling his work to national best seller status. While quoting Obama and the Beatles, and claiming to be a “liberal” and a “gender” (i.e., non-equality) feminist, Pinker decries “scientific truth” being misrepresented and maligned by leftist academics, “anti-scientific humanities,” “jeering social justice mobs” of students, the media and even the United Nations, which, in his words, follow “dogmas” of human equality rather than true sciences of human differences. In his recent best-selling book Pinker (2018) admonishes those who critique eugenics for following “anti-scientific

propaganda” (p. 400). He attacks any critical historian or scholar as not only being “anti-scientific” but also “progressophobes” and “prophets of doom” (his list includes C. West, F. Fanon, M. Foucault, K. Marx, H. Marcuse, J. Derrida and others).

Pinker and other “race realism” and “gender feminist” scientists claim that their works only explain, but supposedly do not encourage racism or misogyny. However, White supremacists, White nationalists, and other hate groups openly celebrate and utilize their works to support their actions (e.g., the American Renaissance group or InCels – see Anti-Defamation League, 2019). For example, I discovered that David Duke’s (1999) *My Awakening: A Path to Racial Understanding*, considered the White supremacy manifesto by contemporary White nationalists and alt-right adherents, not only bases justifications for his “Aryan” KKK utopian vision of “White awakening” on works by Darwin, Galton and many contemporary psychologists, but is introduced by an academic psychologist. G. Whitney (1999), a psychologist and one time president of the American Behavioral Genetics Association, offered a lengthy introduction not only described how psychological sciences and scientists maintain racist stance while hiding it from “feel-good” equality promoters in psychology. He also used his scientific authority to vouch for Duke’s *My Awakening’s* scientific veracity and accuracy, stating “as a scientist who specializes in the field of Behavioral Genetics, I must tell you that I have gone over David Duke’s considerable data on genetics and race and find it in line with the latest scientific discoveries and knowledge in this area” (p. 5). Whitney asserts that “David Duke’s awakening is presented here in three interconnected major themes of his discoveries of honest truths that are politically incorrect. One of his honest truths is that from a thorough immersion in modern science he became convinced that racial

egalitarianism is the scientific equivalent of the flat-Earth theory. He rejects the smear of “racist” while maintaining that the true data are very different from those that most of us have been led to believe” (p. 6).

Thus, Duke’s empirical justifications of White supremacy is summarized in chapters with titles such as *A Question of Intelligence*, *Heredity and Environment*, *Race and Intelligence*, *The Roots of Racial Differences*, and *The Evolution of Race The History of Race*. Duke’s “Aryan vision” offers eugenic, genetic, and evolutionary utopias of an exclusive “White, Christian civilization”: “When our whole nation becomes a White community again, and when the media and our schools are a reflection of the highest of our Aryan ideals, the new millennium will truly arrive, and the Natural Order will commence” (p. 456). His “White strategy for victory” included “scientific” awakening of the White people:

“Every awakened White person becomes an Aryan, a racially conscious White person dedicated to our survival and evolutionary advancement... Our real strength can only come from our utter dedication to the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” (p. 470).

In summary, I have sought to become more aware of contemporary racist sciences that make appearances not only on CNN (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2017), and who are “marching for sciences” in places like Charlottesville, VA, where David Duke openly rallied for “Taking the Country Back” (NBC News, 2017). I listen for scientific justifications of closing borders and vilifying immigrants by far-right politicians and the media (Yakushko, 2018b). I have protested racist sciences which are promoted via speaker tours of campuses (e.g., tours by Charles Murray of Herrnstein & Murray, 1999 or Pinker, 2018). My own skills with archival

research, publishing, teaching and speaking leads me toward venues of responding to empirical justifications of continued oppression toward African Americans, recent immigrants, and women via evolutionary “theories” and dispassionate uses of statistical or genetic data. I try not to look away from the recognition that much of psychological “knowledge,” especially in regard to brains and behavior, is produced on tortured experimental animals and that such sciences are being used to torture human beings as “terrorists” (The Independent Report, 2015; Yakushko, 2019). I am dismayed that Western individuals are sold scientific utopias of perpetual happiness that claims that emotions such as anger, sorrow, guilt, shame, regret, or fear are a form of mental illness (Ahmed, 2004; Hedges, 2009; Yakushko, 2019b). I seek out scholars and writers, such as G. K. Chesterton (1922), whose book *Eugenics and Other Evils*, inspires me to recognize that the “thing that really is trying to tyrannize through government is Science... that creed... which began with Evolution and has ended in Eugenics” (pp. 77-78).

In search for courage, understanding, and vision for my personal epistemic decolonization, I turn to critical psychoanalytic scholars such as Fanon, Derrida, Bhabha, Said, Butler, Ahmed and Hook. Frantz Fanon (1959), a practicing psychoanalyst and a founder of anti-colonial movement in Africa, began to document the significance of using supposedly scientifically supported views of Black people as unintelligent, aggressive, impulsive, and amoral. He also emphasized that these scientific “facts” were used to colonize the minds of the African Black people themselves, leading to lives being “haunted by a galaxy of erosive stereotypes” (p. 129) that were unconsciously internalized. Works by Fanon and other social critics and activists have helped me recognize ways in which sciences

can be violent, insidious, and vicious while dehumanizing and inciting oppressive policies, norms, and stereotypes.

I would like to offer several other considerations, which I have found meaningful in my attempts to decolonize or offer a decolonizing perspective in psychology. Insist on questioning dominant historical accounts, especially in relation to sciences focused on human social differences. Taking an inspiration from Zinn (2010), rather than accepting the dominant cultural accounts I encourage and participate in efforts of re-examining Western sciences from the standpoint of those at whom such studies are directed and whom varied ideological sciences attack. Such critical work may require insistence on reading the original documents instead of summaries included in textbooks, peer review journals, or professional organizational accounts. I have discovered that majority of the original texts are found in libraries, Internet search engines, academic searches such as EBSCO, and White supremacy websites, which republish these works.

Make this history about real people, not just data, ideas, and academic/professional identities. Like with good literature, stories, myths, or films, I seek to compassionately imagine what it might have been like to be “Deborah Kallikak,” proclaimed to be the poster-child of feeble-mindedness; or Carrie Buck, who was raped and sterilized against her will based on Kallikak and other similar “science”; or an illiterate military recruit or a Jewish immigrant coming to Ellis island, who were tested and found evolutionarily unfit and “parasitic;” or a 9-month old “little Albert” on whom the eugenicist and behaviorist John B. Watson sadistically experimented; or an adolescent in studies on the amounts of “White blood” in relation to your intelligence and optimism; or a dog tortured in studies by the “happiness guru”,

and CIA consultant on human torture Martin Seligman on “learned helplessness.” Having empathy toward human and non-human creatures in these experiments may lead to feeling necessary sorrow, anger, guilt and shame – essential internal states that may lead to personal decolonization and change (Chilisa, 2012; Laenai, 2000).

Similarly, I attempt to enter into reading contemporary scientific works by holding these views from multiple perspectives and critical disciplinary paradigms. Whether justifications of eugenics, or abolition of affirmative action, or promotion that rape is merely characteristics of biological sex and not violence, consider the direct living impact of these ideas on people, toward whom such science is directed. If needed, be inspired by journalists who bravely document the misuses and impact of sciences on human communities. For example, learn more about Boston journalist Walter Lippman (1922) who took on paragons of eugenic American psychology and developed the term “stereotype”.

I strongly recommend reading the works that distress and sicken you, such as *A Study in American Intelligence*, or the *Bell Curve*, or *My Awakening*. To help you understand the impact of these publications, utilize support offered by those who pay attention to ways sciences and scientists are utilized by hate crime groups, such as by the Southern Poverty Law Center or historians of scientific racism (e.g., Guthrie, 2004; Tucker, 1996) and scientific sexism (e.g., Dimen, 2013; Ruti, 2015). These readings will inform you about terms, names, and fields to pay closer attention to, such as the Pioneer funded Gottfredson, Rushton, Bouchard, Herrnstein & Murray as well as “social biology,” “behavioral genetics” or “race realism.” Make a commitment to study those scholars, whom contemporary promoters of Social Darwinism and eugenics, such as Pinker, vehemently

attack as “anti-scientific,” as “prophets of doom” or “progressophobes” (e.g., F. Fanon, C. West, J. Derrida, S. Gould, M. Foucault, E. Fromm). I have had and continue to re-examine what I have been taught in my educational programs, including in regard to theories such as psychoanalysis, which have served as a foundation for critical theorizing for many of the aforementioned scholars.

I hope that all of us also make history and participate in its vital revolutionary changes. For example, we could begin by summarizing alternative and critical perspectives on sciences and scientists via informational Internet sites such as Wikipedia (which often represent either sanitized or misleading views of ideological sciences and scientists). We can write op-eds to our local paper when we see race scientists coming through our community and presenting their ideas as “truth” because of their supposed neutral unbiased empirical work. Whether we hold an academic position or a professional license, or act as a concerned citizen, we can contact news agencies and journalists who cite racist and sexist sciences.

Lastly, I hope we commit to making our own scholarly and professional work visible in regard to its sociopolitical, epistemological, and cultural values. No science, especially sciences of human social difference, can be neutral or unbiased. Passionately challenge the motto In Science We Trust, and become a conscientious resistor who marches against “shameful sciences!”

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