

# Culture and Psychology

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# Agenda

- The relationship between culture and psychology: Which role does this play in Aarhus – the **what**.
- Educational considerations about culture and psychology – the **how**.
- My impressions – not the result of a careful analysis.



# The relationship between culture and psychology - neglected

- “When I hear the word culture, I reach for my gun” (Johst - *Schlageter*).
- For the majority, the notion of culture does not play any significant role.
- Psychology is a Natural Science.
- *Man is a primate. He is a tool-making, culture-creating ape, highly engaged in competition, cooperation, and communication with his fellow flock members, just as the rest of his relatives.*



# The relationship between culture and psychology - fragmented

A rather fragmented approach to culture and psychology (single researchers):

- A cognitive approach: Researching cultural life scripts and life stories.
- Studies of how living conditions of late modernity (autonomy) influence our psychological well-being and developmental processes.
- Projects of re-integrating potential terrorists in every day life (tilværelsespsykologi)

# The relationship between culture and psychology – historical changes

- A way to understand how different theories within educational psychology is being produced within different stages of modernity (overview and difference).
- Early modernity (1900-1950). The assembly line: behaviorism.
- High modernity (1950-1980). The computer: Cognitive psychology.
- Late modernity (1980-). The global network: focus on human relations. Social constructionism etc.



# The relationship between culture and psychology – struggles of becoming

- A focus on participation in various everyday practices. Cross-contextual participation.
- A socio-ontological perspective. Identity. How the “I” is produced by the “we” in everyday life.
- Ex 1: How ethnical minorities participate in a Danish majority culture.
- Ex 2: The relationship between learning in an academic institutional culture and participating in a workplace culture.
- A focus on barriers/exclusion/inclusion.



# Educational considerations about culture and psychology

- In most cases: Lectures about culture and psychology – a bit of paradox.
- This is not ideal – a matter of resources and structure.
- A large number of students are introduced to a large variety of subject matters within psychology.
- The students learn about culture from the “outside”.
- It is easy to transmit knowledge about different cultures through lectures.

# Educational considerations about culture and psychology

- However, learning about cultures from the “inside” is important for psychologists.
- “Inside”: to understand how processes of becoming are embedded in contextual processes are important.
- To learn about different cultures through participation (the “inside”) is time consuming, slow, and hard to examine.
- Encourage students who are writing bachelor, master or a PhD thesis to understand culture and psychology from the “inside”.



# Where we want to go 😊

- Jean Luc Godard: *Whenever I hear the word culture, I bring out my checkbook.*