

Conversation Hour with Richard Shweder:

Is There Really a Unity to Science?

Sponsored by Division 1 (General Psychology)

Date & Time: Thu 8/7/2014 9:00 AM - 9:50 AM

Location: Convention Center Room 146B

Chair: Henderikus J. Stam

Department of Psychology
University of Calgary

Participant: Richard A. Shweder

Harold Higgins Swift Distinguished Service Professor
Department of Comparative Human Development
University of Chicago

Summary

This Conversation Hour offers an opportunity for psychology to engage in a dialogue with Richard Shweder, one of the most influential researchers in cultural psychology. Those who value critical thinking will find much food for thought in Shweder's talk, which deals with issues that concern psychology deeply-- unification of knowledge, the relationship between science and the humanities, the difference between science and scientism, and what has culture got to do with all these questions in psychology? To plumb the depth and scope of the issues that range from the perennial question of the compatibility between "two cultures" (i.e., science and the humanities) to the timely topic of the STEM model of psychology, Shweder will engage in a conversation with four Discussants, who weigh in with their expertise in critical theory, creativity, cultural psychology, and indigenous psychology, respectively. Through participation in these conversations, the audience may come to see the unification question in psychology in a new light-- or else come up with new arguments for holding on to the views they already have.

Abstract: Objects, Subjects, and the Study of Unphysical Things: Is There Really a Unity to Science?

The topic of the conversation hour is the proposition that research on what I shall dub "the unphysical sciences" (including the study of psychological or mental processes such as knowing, thinking, feeling, wanting and valuing things as good or bad) calls for the use of methods, procedures and ways of knowing that distinguish it from the methods, procedures and ways of knowing required to study physical things (including the study of neurons or genes). The talk will touch on several related issues: the scope and limits of the "consilience" or unification of knowledge agenda, the relationship between science and the humanities, the question of whether a science of subjectivity is even possible and how or whether humanistic psychology can or should fit into the STEM model, the difference between science and scientism. The philosopher Thomas Nagel has noted "There is a tendency to seek an objective account of everything before admitting its reality. But often what appears to a more subjective point of view cannot be accounted for this way. So either the objective conception of the world is

incomplete, or the subjective involves illusions that should be rejected.” The incompleteness of the “object matter” conception of the science of psychology will be explored.

Discussants:

1. Henderikus J. Stam, Ph.D.

Department of Psychology, University of Calgary

2. Dean Keith Simonton, PhD.

Department of Psychology, University of California, Davis

3. Grant J. Rich, PhD.

Editor, International Psychology Bulletin, Juneau, AK.

4. Louise Sundararajan, Ph.D., Ed.D.

Regional Forensic Unit, Rochester, NY.

For the rest of the announcements, attach each program to its schedule below:

Sponsoring Division: Cross Divisional Program

Session Type: Symposium

Session Title: **Beyond Trauma---Ethnic Minority Groups on Death and Dying**

Date & Time: Sat 8/9/2014 10:00 AM - 11:50 AM

Location: Convention Center Room 151B

Sponsoring Division: 01 (General Psychology)

Symposium: **Mind, Body, and Creativity---Cognitive**

Mindfulness and Its Cross-Cultural Extensions

8/09 Sat: 12:00 PM - 1:50 PM

Convention Center Room 202B

Sponsoring Division: 08 (Personality and Social Psychology)

Session Type: Symposium

Session Title: **New Frontiers in Emotion Regulation---Flexibility, Context, Cognition, and Culture**

Date & Time: Sun 8/10/2014 12:00 PM - 13:50 PM

Location: Convention Center Room 154A