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#### Their method is flawed – its steeped in confirmation bias and elevates anecdotes into general behavioral laws – refuse it as non falsifiable

Kohut 86

(Thomas, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III Professor of History @ Williams, “Psychohistory as History”, *The American Historical Review* Vol. 91, No. 2, April 1986, JSTOR)

THE PSYCHOHISTORICAL METHOD has been variously defined and dissected by both the supporters and the detractors of psychohistory. Nevertheless, the method can be seen as having two essential characteristics that distinguish it from traditional approaches to the past. In the first place, the psychohistorical. method relies on theory, particularly psychoanalytic theory, to provide historical understanding and explanation. Figures and events from the past are not comprehended or made comprehensible on their own terms but are understood and explained primarily by psychological theory. Too often, when employing the psychohistorical method, the historian comes to the past with an understanding and explanation already in hand; the understanding and explanation do not emerge from the past itself but are the products of a theoretical model. In short, it is often less accurate to say that the model is applied to the past than that the past is applied to the model. In the second place, the psychohistorical approach defines acceptable evidence more broadly than does traditional historical methodology. Traditionally, historians accept only evidence from the past, but psychohistorians, when they rely on theory, also accept evidence from the present to validate their interpretations. When they apply a psychoanalytic theory to a historical subject, they usually make no attempt to prove the theory's validity with evidence from the past. Instead, by citing psychoanalytic literature, they use contemporary evidence to prove the theory's validity. The assumption is made that all people are the same regardless of time and place and that, if a theory can be proved on the basis of contemporary evidence, it is considered proved for human beings of the past. Thus, psychological theory has become a general law, and contemporary data have become historical evidence.

#### Their methodology is flawed – impossible to measure individual psychological and emotional reactions – their description patterns behavior onto groups, creating social control

Saurette ‘6

(Paul, Associate Prof. of Political Studies @ University of Ottawa, “You dissin me? Humiliation and post 9/11 global politics”, *Review of International Studies* (2006), 32, 495–522)

Investigating the role of humiliation in global politics is not, however, an easy task, and it is important to note a number of potential methodological challenges and solutions. For even if we do not accept the arid behaviouralist model of the social sciences, attempts to study and explore the influence of emotions and other psychological factors of interpersonal dynamics and interactions do face significant difficulties. It is not easy, even theoretically, to isolate specific emotions or other psychological considerations from one another. The emotional realm is, as it were, fuzzy. People are rarely self-conscious of the full slate of factors that are driving their thinking, their decision-making and their actions. In particular, individuals rarely explicitly monitor the precise emotions they feel and are perhaps even less able to accurately analyse their impact. Moreover, even if they are able to monitor and accurately analyse the impact of their emotions, they often do not want to openly express their influence. These difficulties are multiplied when we try to examine not only individual or interpersonal dynamics, but instead much more complex intergroup dynamics. For then we need to overcome not only the difficulties of understanding multiple individuals. We also need to consider the ways in which groups might also be said to experience and embody these emotional dynamics in ways that are more than simply the sum of its individual parts. And this situation is complicated even further when the situation is overtly political – and thus individuals and groups have many reasons not to reveal the real impact of certain emotional and psychological elements even if they were able to correctly analyse them in a group setting.

#### flawed description of nuclear institutions and decisionmaking means it causes error replication

Blight in ‘87

James Blight, Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University. American Psychologist. Vol 42, Issue 1. 1987.

“Toward a Policy-Relevant Psychology of Avoiding Nuclear War: Lessons for Psychologists From the Cuban Missile Crisis”. APA Psych Articles.

This point cannot be emphasized too much; its unravelling represents the critical thrust of this article: Nuclear depth psychology does not lead to policy-relevant conclusions. It is a conceptual cul-de-sac within which psychologists are likely to remain endlessly trapped, without a reasonable hope of contributing to the reduction of nuclear risks, the fear of which drove them into the nuclear arena in the first place. If psychologists seek a realistic hope of influencing nuclear policy, they must, as I argue in the last two sections, begin again after they have divested themselves of their spurious nuclear depth psychology. The nub of their central error was captured many years ago by William James. He called it, on one occasion, "the psychologists' fallacy par excellence," which consists in "confusion of ~~his~~ own standpoint with that of the mental fact about which ~~he~~ is making his report" (James, 1890, Vol. 1, p. 196). "We must," cautioned James, "be very careful, therefore, in discussing a state of mind from the psychologists' point of view, to avoid foisting into its own ken matters that are only there for ours" (James, 1890, Vol. 1, p. 197). But this is precisely what nuclear depth psychologists have not done. In Jamesian terms (James, 1890, Vol. 1, pp. 221-223), our nuclear policymakers are well acquainted with the fear of crises leading potentially to nuclear war, and thus they spend much of their time thinking about the determinants of strategic stability in such a way as to try to drive downward the probability that deterrence will fail. This, schematically, is the psychological reality of the nuclear policymakers. It bears no resemblance whatever to the "reality" that nuclear depth psychologists seek to attribute to them: Acquaintance with pathological suspicion and attention to arms "racing," each of which is ultimately attributable to superpower psychopathology. This, finally, is responsible for the policy irrelevance of the whole approach: Its premises are totally alien, psychologically completely unreal, to those who actually manage the nuclear risks.