

Diffraction when standing on the shoulders of giants: With and beyond Holzkamp

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Abstract

Foucault once articulated his relationship with Marxist theory, suggesting that he uses the master without authenticating, lauding or eulogizing his significance and that, if an intellectual pioneer is important, his or her ideas should be integrated into current work. I suggest that we adapt Holzkamp for current intellectual and practical purposes, interfering with and diffracting traditional ways of understanding his work. Using examples from different phases of Holzkamp's work, I show how pre-critical, critical, and subject-scientific ideas have been incorporated into my own psychological thinking without submitting to a standard interpretation of his work. I show the ways in which Holzkamp's analyses on the relationship between experiment and theory have inspired my work on epistemological violence; how his discussion of the relevance of psychology needs to be extended; and how his subject-scientific studies can be used as a starting- and counterpoint for current reflections on subjectivity. I argue that Holzkamp's theory remains an important tool for critical, theoretical, and philosophical psychology.

Keywords

epistemological violence, relevance, nature, subjectivity.

Some aspects of Marxist theory and practice have been caught within a cult of (male) personality, instead of focusing on the innovation of ideas. Arguably, theoretical advances should not be accomplished for the sake of novelty, but because they do more justice to (psycho)social reality. Ironically, the focus on persons and calcified ideas runs counter to the statements of the *masters* themselves. Marx and Engels rejected their own thoughts as doctrine, dogma, or

credo. Engels argued that the analyses of Marx do not present “final dogmas, but pointers for further investigation” (MEW 39, p. 428).¹ Further, Engels considered their “theory to be a theory that develops, not a dogma that one learns by heart, and reproduces mechanically” (MEW 36, p. 597). He criticized Marxist groups that turn into cults (MEW 38, p. 422) and that interpret Marxist theory as orthodoxy (MEW 39, p. 245).

Foucault (1980) advanced this argument: “I often quote concepts, texts and phrases from Marx, but without feeling obliged to add the authenticating label of a footnote with a laudatory phrase to accompany the quotation” (p. 52). He criticized the habit of Marxist journals and intellectuals to revere Marx, while he himself used “Marx without saying so, without quotation marks” (p. 52). He compared his practice to a physicist who does not feel obliged to quote Newton or Einstein and does not need a “eulogistic comment to prove how completely he is being faithful to the master’s thought” (p. 52). Foucault identified a form of secular religiosity that has taken over certain intellectual circles, which is not limited to Marxism, but must be overcome if one conceives of truth as dialectical.

20th century critical theory accepted the historical nature of knowledge. Horkheimer (1937/1992) argued that objects, methods and books have a historical character and that it would be absurd within critical theory to assume a trans-historical *Truth* (including the truths found within critical theory) (see also Horkheimer & Adorno, 1982). Holzkamp understood this as well: When I interviewed Holzkamp in the late 1980s (see also Teo, 1989), and asked him about a passage in his book *Laying the Foundations of Psychology* (Holzkamp, 1983), he told me that some of the ideas in the book were several years old, and that therefore some parts would be outdated. The answer itself surprised me. Today I do not remember what part of the book I was referring to, or the specific question I posed, but I strongly recollect his attitude towards his own work (it was not part of the interview). If one looks at the whole oeuvre of Holzkamp, this attitude is not surprising, given that he has undergone *radical* shifts in his own intellectual development. What is then the best usage of Holzkamp’s ideas? I submit that the best practice is not to reproduce mechanically what is written in *Laying the Foundation for Psychology*, or in other books and articles, but to use, adapt and modify the ideas of Holzkamp (or Marx, or any other great thinker) as stepping stones for further investigations. Ideas need to be contextualized, and turning historically constituted knowledge into dogma does not serve knowledge, or praxis, for that matter, well.

¹ MEW refers to Marx Engels Werke (Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels Werke, 43 volumes, edited by the Institut für Maxismus-Leninismus, published by Dietz Verlag in Berlin). Translation into English by the author.

Feminist epistemologists have provided perhaps the clearest articulations of this idea. In applying terms such as interference and diffraction, Barad (2006) promotes a methodology beyond reflection that includes, in my reading, an ethical, respectful, and engaged understanding, but not a submissive or deferential understanding – but an understanding that is based on visible entanglements, that acknowledges relevant differences, and from which new ideas can emerge. Geerts and van der Tuin (2013) (drawing on Barad and Haraway) reject the inherent representationalism of identity politics, which in my view extend to scientific identities (such as critical psychology) and recommend instead *interference* in structures that define such categories. Holzkamp's theory in that sense can be understood as both hindering and enabling, as allowing for the possibility of agentic diffraction in the development of critical psychology. In my own work, I have tried to advance Holzkamp, not by being faithful, but by critically incorporating and modifying his ideas into my work.

In the following, I articulate how I have used works from different phases of Holzkamp's work in my own thinking. My ideas were sometimes closer to, and sometimes more remote from, his ideas. Holzkamp's works can be divided for heuristic purposes into different phases that indicate intellectual shifts in orientation (Teo, 1998, 2013). The pre-critical period began with his first experimental and theoretical writings and continued until 1968, the year in which he published the final monograph of this period on *Science as Action* (Holzkamp, 1968), but in which he also began to write his first critical-theoretical articles. The critical-emancipatory period lasted from 1968 to 1972, the year in which he published *Critical Psychology: Preparatory Works* (Holzkamp, 1972). The critical-conceptual period dates from 1973 to 1983, from the publication of *Sensory Knowledge* (Holzkamp, 1973) to *Laying the Foundation of Psychology* (Holzkamp, 1983). Since 1984 and until his death in 1995 one can characterize the subject-scientific period of Klaus Holzkamp, which focused on a psychology from the standpoint of the subject.

Underrepresentation and the concept of epistemological violence

In 1964, Klaus Holzkamp (1964/1981) published the book *Theory and Experiment in Psychology*, in which he discussed the relationship between experimental arrangements and theoretical conceptualizations and demonstrated that theoretical statements are not determined by experimental data. He further argued that the theoretical interpretation of experimental results is not binding, and that psychology does not provide criteria for deciding whether a particular theoretical interpretation is correct. This problematic relationship between theory

and experiment in psychology was understood as a *problem of representation*, in that it referred to the ways in which experimental statements are representative (or not) of theoretical statements (and vice versa).

For any given experimental result, theoretical statements can be developed through interpretations, and because each experimental result has many theoretical meanings, there can be no one-to-one relationship between experimental result and theoretical interpretation. Psychology provides no methodological principles that force a researcher to interpret a specific experimental result in a particular way. Conversely, theoretical statements allow for a variety of experimental designs. Thus, the connection between theoretical and experimental statements is to a certain degree arbitrary, or must always be selective, as both elements in the research process have plural meanings. Holzkamp clarified the issue: *Subject-representation* refers to the problem of whether participants in an experiment are representative for making theoretical statements about humanity (this is not a sampling but a theoretical problem); *environmental representation* refers to the problem of whether the environment in an experiment is representative for making theoretical statements about the world; and *behavioral and experiential representation* refers to the issue of whether experimental statements regarding a psychological topic represent the problem in the real world of persons. Holzkamp's argument was that these problems are completely ignored in psychology, leading to a gap between theory and experiment. Holzkamp provided a set of recommendations for achieving a higher degree of representation of experimental and theoretical statements (see also Holzkamp, 1968), from which he distanced himself in his later writings, arguing that the solution cannot be found within experimental psychology.

Holzkamp's arguments are attributed in the English-speaking world to Pierre-Maurice-Marie Duhem (1861-1916), who had suggested that experiments in physics always contain observations and theoretical interpretations, and to Quine's (1969) underdetermination thesis that theory is underdetermined by data. Later, Holzkamp (1978) would describe the research process as a circle between theory and empirical research: Theories lead to empirical research, the results of which are interpreted within the original theory. The problem is that results are not explained outside the original theory, although alternative theories might be better candidates for explaining phenomena. This leads to stagnation in the body of knowledge of psychology. Traditional psychology, even to this day, offers no solution for overcoming the problem of underdetermination, although it has remained obsessed with methodology and method.

My work on epistemological violence is partially based on this stream of thought (Teo, 2008; 2011a, 2011b). Holzkamp understood that experimental and empirical psychologists cannot operate without theoretical backgrounds and

interpretations, which are based on understandings of the meanings of results, but he did not discuss the *ethical* consequences of this epistemological problem. The history of psychology has shown that a wide range of ideas – theoretical interpretations of empirical data – that are racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, ableist, and so on, are presented as facts or knowledge to the scientific community or public. The fact that empirical statements about race differences, for instance, contain speculations and theoretical interpretations is not conveyed to the public. An empirical result regarding race differences in psychological characteristics depends on the questions asked, the instruments and methods used, and the assumptions made, but also on the meaning that is given to those differences, and whether they are attributed to an essence, nature, or culture. The discussion of the results is not determined by data and requires a hermeneutic process that is undervalued and not taught in the discipline of psychology.

Moreover, if a researcher chooses an interpretation of empirical results that is detrimental to a group or person, thus constructing them as a problem, inferior, or difficult, then a context of interpretation emerges that I have named *epistemological violence*. The term was also inspired by the postcolonial thinker Spivak (1988) who suggested that Western works on the colonial *Other* has the quality of *epistemic violence*. I suggested that for an empirical science such as psychology, this term, although not inaccurate, was too unspecific and would likely not convince psychologists who work within naïve empiricism (Teo, 2010). The violence needs to be located at the core of the empirical enterprise itself – not within the context of discovery (what questions are asked), but within the context of the interpretation of data, which is considered an important issue within traditional methodology.

Given that empirical data do not determine interpretations, if “I” choose an interpretation of data that is harmful to a group of persons, knowing that equally valid alternative theoretical interpretations are possible, and if “I” present that interpretation as fact or as knowledge, then a form of epistemological violence has been committed. For instance, if a researcher finds differences in IQ scores between two groups, X and Y, and suggests that group X is by nature less intelligent than group Y, without debating the constraints of the concept of intelligence, without problematizing the marginalization and exclusion of particular groups, or without providing alternative interpretations of that empirical result – and if this researcher presents the interpretation as a fact – then a form of violence, epistemological violence, harmful to groups and individuals, has been committed. Historical studies make the case that harm has been done based on interpretative speculations. The concept of epistemological violence is an example of how one can move with Holzkamp beyond Holzkamp, taking international streams of critical thought into account.

Rethinking the relevance of (critical) psychology

In the critical-emancipatory period (1968-1972), Holzkamp, who was influenced by German critical theory, attempted solutions to psychology's problems by articulating an emancipatory psychology that included critical reflection on traditional psychology. In 1972 he published the book *Critical Psychology: Preparatory Works* (Holzkamp, 1972) that included previously published journal articles and laid the groundwork for an emancipatory project. Among the topics, Holzkamp questioned the relevance of psychology for practice in arguing that advances in experimental methodology and statistics in research had led to a particularization and reduction of reality in which practitioners had to act. In contrast, the real world of psychologists working in practice consisted of a complexity of problems that emerged when individuals lived their actual social lives. Holzkamp argued that the variables that had been controlled in the laboratory came into play in this real world. Consequently, psychology could hardly achieve technical relevance (in working for the powerful in society), but certainly not emancipatory relevance, which would mean that psychologists collaborate with persons to obtain knowledge about their societal dependencies (alienation, capital, humiliation, anxiety, etc.). Holzkamp (1972) also questioned whether the traditional research model in psychology, borrowed from physics, was applicable or relevant to psychology. He identified a basic ontological difference between the subject matter of physics and psychology: Whereas physics operates based on a *subject-object* relationship in research, where it is clear who takes on the role of the researcher, research in psychology must be understood in terms of a *subject-subject* relationship, where the role of experimenter is reversible. The experiment depends on a willing and cooperative subject. Thus, in Holzkamp's view, the conceptualization of psychology as a natural science was misguided.

Although Holzkamp challenged the relevance of experimental psychology for an understanding of human mental life taking place in concrete societies, and challenged the relevance of experimental psychology for practice, he did not challenge the relevance of European or German critical psychology for other regions of the world. In addition, his argument regarding the relevance of psychology has been contradicted by developments in North America, where psychology has become one of the most successful academic disciplines. Though psychology began with a small number of individuals, it has become one of the most popular majors at universities with large departments. In fact, psychology has been very adaptive and relevant to the varying demands of society (e.g., Ward, 2002). Although its critical-emancipatory relevance may be missing, and although part of its success may have been based on unfulfilled promises, it has

produced a great deal of subjective relevance for powerful, but also powerless, groups.

The personal relevance that psychology has achieved is based on the psychologization of American and Western culture, to the degree that psychology has been expanding around the world. Modernization is associated with a renewed focus on the mental life of the subject. Psychology, and the psydisciplines more generally, have become (or are made) relevant to many people, and although societal dimensions are lacking within modern psychology, the promise of personal emancipation has made psychology attractive. Elias (1978) pointed out that the process of civilization works on inner psychological processes, and that psychology has been available to focus on those inner workings, and has provided conceptual frameworks that grasp the interior, seemingly better than seminars about societal liberation. Holzkamp, in my view, did not focus on the dialectics of freedom and restriction when, for instance, an individual is diagnosed and labeled with a clinical category, which gives voice to their problems, and allows them to work with their inner life, public or private insurance agencies, and employers, while at the same time, productive engagement with the societal dimensions of their problems is stifled.

My argument is not about the role of psychologization and the power associated with it (see De Vos, 2012). Rather, it is about rethinking the global relevance of psychology and critical psychology (see also Long, 2016). Holzkamp was not aware of indigenous psychologies, postcolonial theory, or cultural studies as we know them today. The abstract subject in an experiment or in an empirical study is not only abstracted from its societal but also its cultural contexts. When Holzkamp began his emancipatory analyses, critical psychologists from the periphery began to challenge the dominance of European and American thought styles in psychology (Enriquez, 1992, Martin-Baro, 1994). These critical psychologists outside of the North rejected the idea of a psychology imported from the colonizer or the West.

Martin-Baro (1994), for instance, rejected the notion of a primacy of theory, which still highlighted Holzkamp's work, because of the immediate needs of action in Latin America. Enriquez (1992) rejected the idea that American psychology can be imported to the Philippines without radical changes. Liberation psychology meant for him the liberation of an indigenous culture from the yoke of American imperialist psychology. An important argument centered around the idea that American psychology itself is an indigenous psychology that cannot be exported without questions or significant modification to the rest of the world, a sentiment also shared by some German critical psychologists. But does this argument hold true for critical psychologies as well? How indigenous are critical psychologies and is there an indigenous dimension to Holzkamp's work?

In my analyses (Teo, 2013), I have tried to reconstruct the indigenous moments in German critical psychology from an historical point of view. Indigenous studies of psychology need not only point to the indigenization of psychology, as occurred at the beginning of the 20th century, when German psychology was indigenized in the United States, after students returned home from their training in Wundt's laboratory, or as occurred during the latter part of the 20th century, when Piaget was indigenized to fit an American research landscape. Rather, indigenous studies of psychology also need to identify the indigenous character of any psychology. This does not apply only to sampling and organizational issues, but also to the forms of intuition and psychological categories that are used in each context, which have historical as well as cultural dimensions (Teo & Febraro, 2003).

How could concepts on human mental life, developed by concrete humans, not reflect cultural and historical traditions? Why is epistemic subjectivity not assumed to play a role in the research context when it comes to critical psychology? I understand that power needs to be incorporated into such an argument, given that the determination of which psychological concepts become recognized is not a random process. Indeed, I often ask my students what kind of psychology we would have if Germany or Japan had won WWII, or what kind of psychology we would have if all psychologists in the past had been women (e.g, if all men had died at the age of 18). Multicultural students, which represent a substantial proportion of the student population at my university, tend to have a sensitivity and a pre-knowledge that one's culture influences one's categories. Moreover, academics that have lived and worked in more than one cultural context have identified indigenous dimensions in other's but also in their own work (Bhatia, 2017; Danziger, 1997).

Such studies imply that one's own psychological publications need epistemic reflexivity, diffraction, modesty, and sensitivity—qualities that are rarely found within Holzkamp's work or that seem out of step with the foundational character of most of his books. The need for theoretical foundations stems from a modern as well as a German tradition (Teo, 2013). In contrast, I have reconstructed the contexts, intellectual sources, traditions, expressions, and historical and personal trajectories of German critical psychology under the historical reality of a dominance of American psychology. My analysis of the indigenous character of Holzkamp's psychology has included a reconstruction of the decline of the role of German psychology after WWII, when German psychology moved from the center to the periphery. Thus, German critical psychology can be understood as an indigenous response to the Americanization of German psychology.

In doing so, I have intended to go beyond analyses of theory development that traditionally address the post-WWII German experience, the Cold War, the isolation of West Berlin, the enduring class system that survived the war, the “Wirtschaftswunder,” the partitioning of Germany, and the politicizing of the university system, to consider indigenous dimensions in Holzkamp’s ideas that are embedded in unique German intellectual histories and cultures. This indigenous nexus made Holzkamp’s critical psychology immediately relevant for a local subculture, such as the student movement, and for psychologists dissatisfied with psychology, but not relevant in a North American context that has largely ignored this psychology, with a few exceptions.

Dialectics of nature and society

Already during his critical-emancipatory period, Holzkamp (1972) pointed out that traditional psychology falsely detaches the individual from society, resulting in a bourgeois ideology of the individual. From a Marxist perspective, however, the notion of an individual is not at all *concrete* but is highly *abstract*, especially when traditional psychology removes the individual from her or his historical-societal contexts and positions. This point was further developed in Holzkamp’s critical-conceptual period, in which he attempted to develop scientifically qualified categories for psychology by reconstructing the evolutionary, natural, and social histories of the *psychological*, following the reconstructions of the cultural-historical psychologist, A. N. Leontjew.

The conceptual period began with Holzkamp’s (1973) book on perception, which demonstrated that a thorough understanding of a psychological concept requires natural, social, and psychological (historical) reconstructions. The interdisciplinary and multilateral works that developed in a group of German critical psychologists, tracing the development of psychological functions, were integrated in Holzkamp’s (1983) book, in which he tried to lay the foundations, not of critical psychology, but of psychology in general. Without describing all the outcomes of this book, I suggest that one of the most important reconstructions led to the notion of a societal nature of humans. Humans are by nature equipped to live, to participate in, but also to change societies and to transform the societal structure over time. An individual existence is mediated by the whole of society. This understanding goes beyond the idea that humans are social, which is a long-established idea, as well as beyond the idea that humans are determined by the environment, because human beings have the ability to change their lifeworlds and societies.

Holzkamp justified, from evolutionary, cultural-historical, and political-economic points of view, what it means to be human. Critical psychologists fundamentally agree that human mental life is culturally, historically and socially embedded. This means that the construction of society as an external environment or an external variable is conceptually incorrect, and that we must conceive of contexts not as *outside* mental life, but rather as historically changing structures that co-constitute mental life. Even more, the distinction between outside and inside is not helpful. Humans are not determined by social structures but can relate, act, and change them. Holzkamp provided a clear articulation of the relationship between society and individual life and the degree to which history and society enable human beings to engage with their faculties (i.e., the ways in which human consciousness is sublated in these contexts). He also pointed out that unsocialized subjectivity is a false imagination. Yet, he did not specify sufficiently what it means to live in a concrete and particular society.

In short, critical psychologists need theories of society in order to understand human subjectivities. Holzkamp gave primacy to a Marxist theory of society that puts “labor” (political economy) at the center of its analyses. While not disagreeing with that idea in principle, in my view this classical theory is too unspecific to understand the varieties and complexities of human mental life taking place in the world (see Teo, 2016), because of the intricacies that societies exhibit. Since the 19th century the social sciences have accumulated a plethora of theories on society, culture and history, and it is insufficient to describe a society as capitalist or bourgeois when there exists several other worthy theoretical descriptions of society, including neoliberal, multicultural, patriarchal, neocolonial, communicative, information-based, technological, and postmodern analyses. In the Marxist tradition alone one finds a set of new theories that would elucidate subjectivity-in-context (current examples include: Boltanski, 2012; Hardt & Negri, 2009; Karatani, 2014). Psychological analyses and an understanding of mental life, motivation, cognition and emotion will differ, as will visions for resistance, based on social and political theories.

Holzkamp also left out the socially-constructive nature of concepts (see Teo, 2010b), looping effects, and the power that comes with concepts (Hacking 1994). In short, Holzkamp operated within a mirror-metaphor of knowledge and a representational notion of language, both of which would have benefited from social constructionist insights on the language of psychology (Danziger, 1997), without requiring the abandonment of a realist perspective (see also Bhaskar, 1998; Barad, 2006). I am not suggesting that one abandon a realist position, but rather demanding that we need to account for the real cultural-historical nature of psychological concepts. Not doing so made *Laying the Foundation for Psychology* an easy target as an example of an outdated grand theory. Yet, I

agree with Holzkamp that not all descriptions and not all concepts are equally valid. It should be epistemologically obvious to critical psychologists that we need to include some of the more recent critical debates in the social sciences and humanities from around the world in constructing counter-concepts in psychology. I believe that Holzkamp would have agreed with this statement.

Subjectivity and the standpoint of the subject

Holzkamp's (2013) final phase focused on the development of a psychology from the standpoint of the subject. He moved subjectivity back into the center of psychology, provided an important analysis on learning (Holzkamp, 1993), and developed the idea that we need to analyze psychological processes and contents in the conduct of one's own life. Accordingly, one's life is lived in concrete societies and individuals have locations and positions in this society, from which they act and engage their agency. Sharing this premise, I suggest that Holzkamp's concept of the standpoint of the subject is overly mentalistic, as it is focused on consciousness and reasons. I agree that the idea of a *standpoint* does more justice to subjectivity than the idea of a *perspective* as expressed in phenomenology (Teo, 2016), but what about move-points and do-points? Sometimes we have no standpoint but only an unarticulated, pre-conceptual, pre-cognitive, pre-linguistic embodied feeling.

Holzkamp positioned "meaning structures" and "reason discourses" as mediating between social structure and the conduct of everyday life. I have suggested that laying out the problem in this way is indebted to a philosophy of consciousness, and that perhaps "subjective reasons" are not final and that the body and embodiment are equally important. In order to make this argument, I have suggested incorporating the concepts of habitus (Bourdieu, 1984), gender performativity (Butler, 1990), and privilege (McIntosh, 2014) into a theory of subjectivity. Holzkamp did not focus on such categories but I believe that his theory can accommodate them. The idea that subjectivity can be body-based and "is" not in the mind may be counter-intuitive. But embodying classed distinctions, gender, and privilege makes the case that something pre-conscious is part of our subjectivity. We live our subjectivity not only as conscious and practical but also as feeling and embodied entities. The experience of sublime art, dancing, or experiencing nature provides us with remnants of what it means to conduct life in a pre-linguistic, pre-conceptual, and pre-cognitive context. I believe that Holzkamp would have been open to this argument.

In order to understand the vast literature on subjectivity, it might be helpful to distinguish among socio-subjectivity, inter-subjectivity and intra-subjectivity

and reflect on how they are related. *Socio-subjectivity* is contextually embedded in the world, cultural-historical, socio-economic; *inter-subjectivity* is relational, dialogical, empathetic; and *intra-subjectivity* refers to internal and personal psychological processes. Socio-subjectivity and intra-subjectivity may be mediated through inter-subjectivity (e.g., language). I suggest that we need not give primacy to any of these three concepts (see Teo, 2017). In addition, we need to focus on contexts of subjectivity, such as working, interacting, and practices of the self. We also need to clarify the degree to which a theory of subjectivity needs to include not only what happens in human mental life but also what is possible. Holzkamp (1983) implicitly made that point when he distinguished between generalized and restrictive agency, but he did not articulate the ontic status of this category in a theory of subjectivity.

Although I use Holzkamp's concept of a generalized agency in my own work (Teo, 2017), it is not apparent that Holzkamp understood the historical, social and relational shifts of agency. Agency has a historical dimension that needs to be studied: How has agency changed in the last 50 years? It seems to me that agency has not increased but rather has been constrained one-dimensionally in the past few decades of neoliberalism (e.g., as seen in the rise of precarious work). Agency has turned into its opposite, namely, requirements that are internalized, while individuals might rationalize the decline of their freedom as free choice. Some of Foucault's work on subjectification, governmentality, and responsabilization is relevant to this point (Holzkamp included Foucault in his book of learning), as are the many ways power works on subjectivity – not only in the political-economic sphere but also in interactions and in processes of the self (see Papadopoulos, 2008). Holzkamp's theory of subjectivity is a starting point but not an end-point, for further investigations. This theory may also provide the basis for a general theory of subjectivity that does not exhaustively include all the intricacies of mental life, but studies the (Kantian) conditions for the possibility of a theory of subjectivity.

Conclusion

It is important to take Holzkamp seriously; but no theory or theorist is without entanglements, which would otherwise make it unnecessary to continue critical research. There is no end to history (unless there is an end to the world) and there is no end in critical psychology. I am convinced that we need to incorporate more, different, and recent traditions in critical as well as regular work, including critical thought from the periphery. Traditions in feminist theory, critical race theory, critical disability studies, queer theory, the humanities, the concept-driven

social sciences, post-human theories, and the arts, all have the potential to enhance our conceptualizations and understanding of human subjectivity. The conceptual sensitivity and attitude that Holzkamp demonstrated is a shoulder on which all critical psychologists can stand; but we need to look beyond such giants and into the next generations, acknowledging and engaging with interferences and diffractions.

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