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Dan Hocoy, PhD, is a licensed clinical psychologist and higher education administrator. Dr. Hocoy has worked in psychiatric hospitals as well as private practice and has served as president of Antioch University in Seattle, SUNY Erie Community College in Western New York, Metropolitan Community College (Longview) in Kansas City, and Goddard College in Vermont. With a grandmother from Jamaica, mother from Malaysia, father from China, and having been born in Trinidad and Tobago and raised in Canada, Dan has had a longstanding interest in the psychological basis for intergroup understanding as well as the importance of culture in theory, research, and practice. His dissertation was the first to examine the impact of apartheid on Black people in South Africa and was used by the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission to structure its processes. Dan's development work (in Ghana and Guyana) has endeavored to mitigate the legacy of colonialism, and his international service (in Italy and India) has worked toward facilitating interreligious dialogue. Dan has authored numerous publications that intersect art, culture, therapist training, and transpersonal psychology. He is particularly fascinated by the power of art, ritual, and story to heal as well as the notion of synchronicity and spends an inordinate amount of time trying to get the cosmos to conform to his personal desires. Dan holds a BSc from the University of Toronto and both a MA and a PhD in psychology from Queen's University in Canada.

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Eugene Mario DeRobertis, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Brookdale College in New Jersey. He completed his education at Duquesne University, where he received his initial training in the phenomenological method as adapted for psychological research. He has been teaching at the college level since 1996. Prior to committing himself to teaching full time, Professor DeRobertis worked as a developmentally oriented psychotherapist, an academic counselor, and an addictions counselor. He has published numerous peer-reviewed works in the areas of phenomenological psychology, existential-humanistic psychology, psychological theory, and developmental psychology, with an emphasis on childhood. His publications include *Humanizing Child Developmental Theory: A Holistic Approach* (2008), *The Whole Child: Selected Papers on Existential-Humanistic Child Psychology* (2012), *The Phenomenology of Learning and Becoming: Enthusiasm, Creativity, and Self-Development* (2017), and *Profiles of Personality: Integration, Paradox, and the Process of Becoming* (2021). He is a member of Division 32 (Society for Humanistic Psychology) and the Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology within Division 5 (Quantitative and Qualitative Methods) of the American Psychological Association, and is currently serving as review editor for the *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*.

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Introduction

The need for humanistic and existential approaches to psychology is critical in contemporary times, whether considering research, psychotherapy, or broader social and cultural interventions. While challenges to human existence are a perennial reality, the contemporary world is facing heightened risks associated with increased polarization, growing racial tensions, war and other violent conflicts, threats to the future of democracy, and significant environmental threats. Polarization and racial tensions connect with dehumanizing tendencies in which many people are viewed in a manner that does not respect the fullness of their humanity. A psychology that addresses these serious issues from a holistic perspective is needed. Recent publication trends in humanistic and existential psychology demonstrate that it can be a vital part of the answer to these threats that humanity is facing.

Brent Robbins (2016) maintained that humanistic psychology is rooted in the dignity of all people and a hermeneutics of love, which provides a robust response to many challenging issues in the contemporary world. Skye Cleary (2022), drawing from the work of Simone de Beauvoir, emphasized that an existential understanding of ethics and authenticity necessitates a recognition that each individual's freedom, dignity, and humanity is inherently connected to the freedom, dignity, and humanity of others. Shifting the framework of psychology to one rooted in a hermeneutics of love, dignity, and an ethics of authenticity that recognizes our interconnectedness brings profound implications. For example, Kirk Schneider (2013, 2020) applied principles of depth psychologies, principally existential and humanistic psychology, with individuals displaying conflicted and polarized relationships in political and social contexts. Through helping individuals with contrasting perspectives listen and empathize with others, a rehumanizing occurs. However, it is critical to not idealize or simplify these processes. For example, encouraging dialogue between a perpetrator and victim, or oppressor and individual who is oppressed, could be retraumatizing, unproductive, or otherwise harmful. Discernment is needed. At times, a restorative justice or similar process is needed before seeking dialogue (see Schneider, 2023; Volume 2, Chapter 27, this handbook). In some situations, it is important to recognize healthy or productive dialogue may not be possible; therefore, it is best to avoid engagement to prevent further harm.

A reengagement with the works of Frantz Fanon, who wrote on themes relevant to humanistic and existential psychology in the 1950s and 1960s, may deepen the

rehumanizing process, particularly across racial and ethnic differences. Today, it is likely that Fanon would still be critical of much in contemporary psychology, including trends to move toward constructive resolutions prematurely (see Volume 1, Chapter 9, this handbook). Fanon (1952/2008) noted, “Before embarking on a positive voice, freedom needs to make an effort at disalienation” (p. 206). In particular, for Fanon, this included disalienation of marginalized and oppressed groups. This was the basis of his “new humanism”—a humanism that recognized all people as fully human and not “the Other”¹ and treated them accordingly. Today, over 60 years after Fanon (1952/2008) spoke of this new humanism, the struggle to fully achieve this sadly remains. Humanistic and existential psychology can—and should—be important voices in the ongoing struggle to achieve Fanon’s vision. To do this, however, humanistic and existential psychology must continue to engage in their own continued critical reflections on where they have failed to actualize the values represented in this new humanism (see Hocoy, 2020; Jackson, 2020; Volume 2, Chapters 2 and 11, this handbook).

Schneider (2019) also addressed the risks and dehumanizing implications of robotics and transhumanism, calling for “a new humanistic/awe-based era” (p. 21). With the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, humanity is witnessing constant challenges to what it means to be human, particularly as technology advances more rapidly than the ethics about these technological advancements (see Gergen, 1992). It seems likely that what it will mean to be human in 20 to 30 years will be dramatically different than what it means today. This has profound implications for psychotherapy. Elsewhere I noted,

AI is rapidly developing in a manner that allows it to be more flexible in its informed responses to human input. As such, it seems inevitable that in the near future, AI will be able to apply psychotherapy with a greater technical precision than human psychotherapists. (Hoffman, 2024)

If we believe that the techniques of therapy and technical precision are more important than what Elkins (2016) calls “the human elements of psychotherapy,” then psychologists ought to consider whether courses, or maybe a second degree, in computer programming and AI might be warranted.

Those contributing to this book, however, are unlikely to believe that the human elements of psychotherapy will ever be able to be replaced by AI. What is needed is a deepening of our understanding and valuing of humanity alongside technological advancement without being subsumed by it. Ilene Serlin (Serlin et al., 2007, 2019), for example, championed whole-person perspectives on health care that counter dehumanizing possibilities inherent in reductionist approaches. There is some evidence, such as more people seeking out complementary health approaches (National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, 2024), that whole-person modalities such as these are being revitalized. The holistic approaches of Schneider, Serlin, and Elkin advance ideas that harken back to the 1964 Old Saybrook conference that helped establish humanistic psychology and create an initial agenda for the movement (Elkins, 2000).

¹Cleary (2022) noted, “‘Other’ is capitalized when a person’s subjectivity is denied, when they are treated as an Other only and not a subject also” (p. 8).

However, what is needed is not just a return to the ideals and roots of humanistic psychology, but an expansion and, at times, reconsideration of these ideas in the context of the contemporary world (see Hocoy, 2020; Jackson, 2020; Volume 2, Chapter 2, this handbook).

Humanistic and existential psychologists are advancing new perspectives on biological issues and neuropsychology. Varela (1996), for example, introduced the concept of *neurophenomenology*, which bridges phenomenology and neuropsychology while allowing for a perspective in which biological and neuropsychological contributions can be taken seriously without resorting to purely reductionistic methods that do not recognize the fullness of being human (see Volume 1, Chapters 2 and 29, this handbook). Building from Varela, contemporary humanistic and existential psychologists are making meaningful contributions shaping a new, holistic understanding of neuropsychology (Robbins & Gordon, 2015).

Creativity, in many forms, has long been valued in humanistic and existential psychology (see May, 1975, 1985). Natalie Rogers (1993, 2011), the daughter of Carl Rogers, developed a person-centered approach to creative arts therapy (see Volume 2, Chapter 8, this handbook). Similarly, Bruce Moon (2009) created an approach to existential art therapy, and Rich Furman (2003, 2007) integrated existential therapy with poetry therapy. Expanding beyond the realm of psychotherapy, Ruth Richards (2007) applied creativity more broadly to psychological health and well-being in what she refers to as *everyday creativity* (see also Volume 1, Chapter 19, this handbook). Everyday creativity utilizes innovation and creativity to seek one's full human potential and address challenges ranging from physical and mental health problems to social, organizational, and political challenges.

Humanistic and existential psychology also contributed to advancement in psychotherapy through integrative work rooted in holistic perspectives. Cooper and McLeod (2010) developed an approach to pluralistic counseling and psychotherapy. While this is an integrative approach that seeks to avoid privileging any particular school over another, they state that the pluralistic approach “is rooted in a set of ethics. These can be described as pluralistic but, beneath that desire to celebrate diversity, lies a more fundamental ‘humanistic/existential’ commitment to ‘conceptualizing and engaging with people in a deeply valuing and respectful way’” (p. 17). Kirk Schneider (2008) advocates for existential–integrative psychotherapy utilizing a different integrative strategy, which is an assimilative integrative approach that draws from the common factors of psychotherapy (see Volume 2, Chapter 18, this handbook). As an assimilative approach, Schneider uses an existential–humanistic foundation as appropriate based upon the client and presenting issue while integrating other psychotherapy approaches and assuring that what is integrated fits or is adapted to fit the foundations of existential–humanistic therapy. For Schneider (2018), an existential–humanistic base for psychology provides an honest appraisal of the paradoxical human condition, including limitations and potential related to being human. Leading outcome researcher Bruce Wampold (2008) advocated that existential–integrative therapy “adds a perspective that might . . . form the basis of all effective therapies” (p. 6). While Schneider's (2008) approach is an assimilative approach, it may be good to build from this toward a critical assimilative approach, particularly in the context of multiculturalism. The addition of “critical” in the assimilative approach represents an intent to seek a true dialogue in which existential–humanistic approaches engage in critical reflection in the assimilative process. This still

seeks an internal consistency while allowing for an openness for existential–humanistic psychology to reject, change, or adapt essential aspects of its theory and application based on engagement with different perspectives, in particular, different cultural perspectives (see also Hocoy, 2020; Jackson, 2020; Volume 2, Chapters 2 and 11, this handbook).

This selective review of humanistic and existential contributions to contemporary psychology, along with some challenges, demonstrates that these remain vibrant and needed influences on the contemporary field of psychology. Furthermore, they give a taste of the breadth of contributions that range from philosophical to research methods to clinical applications. Significant diversity is evident within the rubric of humanistic and existential psychology, which includes emotion-focused therapy, Gestalt psychology, phenomenological psychology, person-centered therapy, and many approaches to constructivist psychology (see Volume 1, Chapter 2, this handbook). While professional psychology benefits from the diverse schools and branches of psychology all existing with respect for each other, it could be maintained, as Wampold (2008) and Schneider (2008) do, that an understanding of the foundations of humanistic and existential therapy are beneficial for all psychotherapists and counselors. I would add that an understanding of these findings is also beneficial to all psychologists in research, education, and consultation (see Volume 1, Chapter 29, this handbook).

HISTORY

Humanistic and existential psychology embody complicated histories that led them to come together with other streams of research and practice as “the third force of psychology” (see Volume 1, Chapters 1, 2, and 29, this handbook). Humanistic psychology emerged in the United States, coming into prominence in the 1950s and 1960s. Abraham Maslow served as the primary organizing force, creating a mailing list of individuals interested in an alternate approach to psychology focusing on nonreductive and holistic approaches that avoided pathologizing individuals falling outside the norms of society (Grogan, 2013).

As the humanistic movement formed in the United States, Rollo May, who was established as an influential psychologist, was deepening his interest in existential perspectives (Abzug, 2021). May already revealed existential proclivities in his earlier writing; however, the publication of *Existence* (May et al.) in 1958 threw May into the role of being the primary representative of existential psychology in the United States. Ludwig Binswanger, and later Medard Boss, had been developing an existential approach to psychology in Europe beginning in the 1920s (Craig, 2019). *Existence* included several translated chapters of Binswanger and other early existential writers; however, it was May’s introductory chapters that captured the attention of most readers in the United States (Abzug, 2021).

In 1964, May was one of the speakers at the Old Saybrook Conference, which brought together leaders of the fledgling humanistic psychology movement. While other representatives, including Rogers and Maslow, had an interest in existential thought, May’s presence and joining with the movement signified the beginning of a close, though at times tenuous, relationship between humanistic and existential psychology. Throughout his association with humanistic psychology, May vacillated between being drawn toward the potential of this new movement and serving as a gadfly voicing concerns about its limitations and, in particular, its wanderings toward less rigorous

topics and presentations (Abzug, 2021; Grogan, 2013; see also Volume 1, Chapter 20, this handbook).

Humanistic psychology's connection with the human potential movement, popular in 1960s and 1970s culture, generated opportunities and challenges. While this association garnered increased interest, many, like May, voiced concern about the lack of rigor and sophistication in some elements of the human potential movement, which often capitalized on the 1960s' countercultural spirit (Grogan, 2013). Some leaders in humanistic psychology also were part of the human potential movement, which further blurred the boundaries. While there were some benefits, too, the distracting presence of the association with the human potential movement created confusion that caused some practitioners to avoid affiliating with humanistic psychology.

After a vibrant birthing of humanistic and existential psychology in the 1950s through 1970s, its influence began to fade in the 1980s and 1990s. With some important exceptions, humanistic psychology often became stuck, repeating many of the same ideas with little innovation through this period. As early as 1979, Rollo May warned that the Association of Humanistic Psychology, then the most influential humanistic psychology organization in the United States, was not engaging with the critical social and political issues of the day (Abzug, 2021). This trend continued and the movement was increasingly dominated by White male perspectives. Despite sharing many values with civil rights movements and later social justice movements (Grogan, 2013; Hoffman, 2016), Black psychology (Jackson, 2020), and multicultural psychology, humanistic perspectives failed to actualize its values around multiculturalism and inclusion. There were some notable exceptions in which humanistic and existential therapists made valiant efforts at addressing multicultural issues, but these would not flourish until the last 10 to 15 years. In the late 1990s, the possibility of humanistic psychology fading away seemed a real possibility.

In the early 2000s, the tide slowly began to turn. The publication of the first editions of Schneider, Bugental, and Pierson's *Handbook of Humanistic Psychology* (2001) and Cain's *Humanistic Psychotherapies* (2002) provided comprehensive evaluations of the state of humanistic psychology along with a foundation for renewed scholarship. The first Society for Humanistic Psychology Conference—held before the American Psychological Association's Annual Convention in 2007—provided a forum for rebuilding a vibrant humanistic community in the United States. The first conference, however, remained dominated by older White male presenters, which led to many students, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ individuals wondering if there was a place for them in the humanistic community (Hoffman, 2016). While the Second Annual Society for Humanistic Psychology Conference in 2008 was much smaller, there were seeds of movement toward embracing multicultural and other diverse perspectives. The next conference in 2009 brought even greater embracement of multicultural perspectives, signifying the beginning of a transformation in humanistic psychology—a transformation that would continue to grow, with a few brief regression periods, for several years to follow. Similarly, the second and third conferences intentionally sought to involve and appeal to students, which played an energizing role by bringing more youthful perspectives to the movement. Students, too, were not just attending and learning; they were presenting, leading, and playing an essential role in the embracement of multicultural and social justice perspectives (Bargdill, 2011; Hoffman, 2016; Rubin, 2011).

But new challenges for humanistic psychology materialized in the early 2000s. The emergence of positive psychology reinvigorated inaccurate narratives about humanistic

psychology. From the outset, positive psychology sought to distinguish itself from humanistic psychology, partially from its deeply flawed view that humanistic psychology was not rooted in research (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). While on the surface, positive psychology and humanistic psychology share many similarities, important differences exist as well. In the early years of positive psychology, it was rooted in a narrow epistemology strongly favoring quantitative approaches and avoided dealing with more difficult issues, such as the psychology of evil, suffering, and the darker sides of humanity. Conversely, humanistic psychology tends to prefer qualitative measures and epistemological pluralism that embrace a dialogue between different ways of knowing. As humanistic and existential psychologists intentionally engaged positive psychology, healing between these divisions began to materialize, allowing for open dialogue between the approaches. While important differences remain, tensions have decreased while collaborations increased (cf., Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Through recognition of how humanistic, existential, and positive psychology can be complementary, a potential for the advancement of positive psychology emerged as evidence in second-wave positive psychology (Schneider, 2023; Wong, 2017; Volume 1, Chapter 26, this handbook).

While the history of humanistic and existential psychology is addressed in greater detail in Volume 1, Chapter 1, this abbreviated history contributes a foundation for the vision of the two volumes of the *APA Handbook of Humanistic and Existential Psychology*. For this handbook to be a true state of the art contribution, it must take seriously the history, contemporary practice, and future of these psychologies.

CONTEMPORARY STANDING OF HUMANISTIC AND EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The contemporary standing of humanistic and existential psychology is complex, with strikingly different appraisals. Grogan (2013), in her important history of humanistic psychology, claimed that contemporary humanistic psychology has been assimilated into other approaches and suggested that it no longer stands as an independent force in psychology. While there is a good basis for this argument, Grogan did not adequately review or consider contemporary trends in humanistic psychology that reflect renewed, vibrant interest and emergent innovations (Hoffman & Rubin, 2013).

Shahar and Schiller (2016) bring a different interpretation of humanistic and existential psychology's assimilation into other approaches, referring to it as "a conqueror by stealth" (p. 1). They maintain that the breadth of influence of humanistic and existential psychology has, in effect, taken over the field. I agree that many foundational ideas and approaches developed within humanistic psychology have been integrated into other approaches; however, these ideas and approaches have been changed, often reduced, when integrated into other approaches (Hoffman, 2024). While Grogan's view may be overly pessimistic, Shahar and Schiller appear overly optimistic. In reality, humanistic and existential psychology remains an important independent force, often acting as a critical consciousness pressing psychology on vital issues, such as treatment guidelines, stigmatizing and the proliferation of diagnosis, and, increasingly, social justice.

A strong argument can be made that many humanistic and existential contributions to the broader field have been assimilated to the degree that they are no longer recognized as coming from humanistic or existential psychology, while at the same time, honoring

that these modalities remain independent psychologies making vibrant contributions to the field. It is not an either/or, but rather a both/and. Humanistic and existential psychology can—and should—embrace both. When embracing the assimilation to other approaches, this can be done while advocating that those other approaches, such as positive psychology, should do better at acknowledging the historical legacy and influence of humanistic psychology and avoiding reducing, or shallowing, the concepts that are integrated. It is not acceptable that other modalities assimilate humanistic and existential contributions without offering credit.

THE VISION OF THE *APA HANDBOOK OF HUMANISTIC AND EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY*

In recent years, a number of articles and books addressed the future of humanistic psychology (DeRobertis, 2016; Elkins, 2009; Feltham, 2018; House et al., 2018; Kamens, 2021; Rubin, 2011; Serlin, 2011). The future is filled with challenges and opportunities. To remain a forceful influence, humanistic psychology must engage other prominent branches of psychology and theoretical diversity (see Volume 1, Chapter 29, this handbook). Like all approaches, humanistic and existential psychology, too, must be rooted in humility—cultural humility as well as theoretical, philosophical, and scientific humility. It is not necessary to assert that humanistic therapy, for example, is superior to other approaches to maintain its valued place among the varied psychotherapy orientations. All modalities can and should learn from each other. It is time for the field of psychology to end the destructive debate about which approach is superior or “the best” and instead shift to strategies rooted in humility and openness to learning from each other in order to best serve the consumers of psychological services. The debate about superiority does more harm to psychology’s standing as a profession than benefit. Many individuals outside of psychology readily recognize that this debate is more about ego than serving humanity. As approaches rooted in valuing the dignity of all people, humanistic and existential psychology should model humility and openness to the profession and prioritize helping those in the world who are suffering or struggling to actualize their potential.

The vision for the *APA Handbook of Humanistic and Existential Psychology* is comprehensive and ambitious, as should be in any undertaking of this magnitude. It is also a vision for the future of humanistic and existential psychology. It is intended to be the most comprehensive and rigorous text on contemporary humanistic and existential psychology available. While it is imperative to address history and provide an inclusive overview of the state of the field, the intention also is to help shape the future of humanistic and existential psychology. To accomplish this, several themes that will be considered for most, if not all, chapters are elucidated below.

Demonstrating the Unique, Enduring, and Ongoing Contributions of Humanistic and Existential Psychology

Contemporary psychology has been profoundly influenced by the unique contributions of humanistic and existential psychology to the degree that if you were to remove these influences the field of psychology would be barely recognizable. These contributions are not just a matter of history; they are part of an enduring legacy of ongoing contributions. Despite this evident reality, humanistic and existential approaches frequently are

misrepresented and misunderstood, such as claiming there is no research basis for these approaches or that they are merely supportive psychotherapy. Scholars and practitioners from these schools need to reflect upon what contributed to these misunderstandings and how to clarify and rectify these misrepresentations. For example, some third-force scholars utilize a separatist approach wherein they publish only in humanistic and existential journals without engaging in the broader psychological literature or keeping up with important contemporary themes and issues. Without engaging other branches of psychology, misunderstandings will not be rectified.

Openness to Reflection and Rethinking Foundations

No approach to psychology should remain static in an ever-changing world and the context of advancing research, theory, and cultural understanding. For example, historically, many people of color who are students and early career therapists initially drawn to humanistic psychology did not retain their affiliation with it (see Reynaga-Abiko, 2020). As humanistic and existential psychology engaged in reflection about this and increased dialogue with multicultural scholars and perspectives, it made great strides and is increasingly showing leadership in advocating for multicultural and social justice perspectives.

Similarly, humanistic and existential approaches often are viewed as highly individualistic (see Volume 1, Chapter 24, this handbook). In part, this is a misrepresentation from oversimplified caricatures of these approaches that do not adequately understand the history and theory of these psychologies and their underlying philosophies. However, this appraisal of humanistic and existential psychology also reflects that some scholars have gravitated toward more extreme individualistic perspectives. The COVID-19 pandemic helped expose the weaknesses of excessive individualism, which often breeds a self-centered or even selfish approach to living (Gao, 2021; Hoffman, 2021; Luiggi-Hernández & Rivera-Amador, 2020). Additionally, highly individualistic approaches lack cultural sensitivity and humility when applied with people from collectivist cultures. In recent years, humanistic and existential psychology have reclaimed historical roots that counter the individualist bias and further addressed how humanistic and existential practice is adapted in collectivist contexts (Chan, 2019; Hoffman, Yang, Kaklauskas, et al., 2019; Hoffman, Yang, Mansilla, et al., 2019; Thrash et al., 2019; Zhang, 2019). This includes theoretical advancements, such as considering coactualization alongside self-actualization (see Volume 1, Chapter 14, this handbook). Coactualization, like de Beauvoir's recognition that our freedom and dignity are connected, seeks collective actualization, not just an individual's actualization.

Embracing Multiculturalism, Diversity, and Social Justice

The founders of humanistic and existential psychology were predominantly White males, and early people of color who contributed to existential and humanistic psychology, such as Cereta Perry and Adelbert H. Jenkins, have too often had their contributions overlooked. Similarly, the seminal contributions of women, such as Charlotte Bühler and Eleanor Criswell Hanna, have too often been neglected (see Volume 2, Chapter 13, this handbook). The integration of multicultural and social justice perspectives must be more than representation, and it must go beyond assimilation to include a critique of existing theory and research from multicultural and social justice perspectives and a dialogue with different cultural perspectives (see Hocoy, 2020; Jackson, 2020; Volume 1, Chapters 4, 9, and 28, this handbook; Volume 2, Chapters 2, 29, and 31, this handbook).

Humanistic and existential psychology made important strides in embracing multicultural perspectives (Hocoy, 2020; Hoffman et al., 2014, 2016, 2020a, 2020b; Jackson, 2020; Johnson, 2001; Members of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* Editorial Board, 2020; Quinn, 2013). In these volumes, all authors were encouraged to engage with relevant multicultural and social justice issues and perspectives. The associate editors and contributors were intentionally selected to be broadly representative of diverse social positions and perspectives. Through including associate editors who are familiar with the current scholarship on multiculturalism and diversity, the intention is to assure that relevant multicultural scholarship is integrated into every chapter.

Embracing Theoretical Diversity

Contemporary humanistic and existential psychology reflects a breadth of different approaches. While this could be critiqued as a weakness, this also can be viewed as a strength. In constructing these volumes, the associate editors and I were intentional about representing different perspectives within humanistic and existential psychology. In reading the chapters in the handbook, the careful reader will notice there are different perspectives and interpretations, even disagreements, among the contributors. At times, there were disagreements between the contributors and the editors of the handbook, and at times there were disagreements among the editors. Robust dialogue and, when necessary, debate are critical to advancing the field. Therefore, we embraced these differences and believe they contribute to enriching the humanistic and existential literature.

Embracing the Role of a Critic

Humanistic psychology began, in part, as a rebellion. It was revolting against reductionist, pathologizing, and narrowly focused trends in the mainstream psychological perspectives of the time. This was not intended to negate the psychoanalytic and behavioral approaches but to expand the foundations and scope while identifying problematic limitations that need to be corrected.

Humanistic and existential psychology continue this role of critic in contemporary times but now approach this role from a more empowered position. The most notable example is the Society for Humanistic Psychology's development of an open letter to the American Psychiatric Association (2013) delineating concerns about the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.), which led to organizing the Summit on Diagnostic Alternatives in 2014 (see Raskin & Farley, 2015) and four special issues of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* on diagnosis (Kamens et al., 2017, 2018, 2019a, 2019b; see also Volume 1, Chapter 15, this handbook). This attracted the attention and support of many organizations nationally and internationally, including several divisions of the American Psychological Association, the British Psychological Society, and the American Counseling Association.

Engagement With Other Disciplines and Branches of Psychology

Engaging other perspectives within psychology, as well as interdisciplinary engagement, is vital for advancing humanistic and existential psychology. Any psychology unwilling to learn from other perspectives limits itself, potentially to its eventual demise. There is much to learn from cross-modality and interdisciplinary engagement, similar to how other psychological approaches benefit from integrating core humanistic and existential

concepts. These dialogues, as represented in the integrative work of Schneider (2008) and Cooper and McLeod (2010), deepen humanistic and existential perspectives and are considered throughout these volumes (see, in particular, Volume 2, Chapter 18, this handbook).

Advancing Theory, Research, and Application

A primary intention of any handbook of this scope is to build from the current state of knowledge to advance theory, research, and application. In the 1980s and 1990s, as mentioned, the influence of humanistic and existential psychology diminished, in part due to not keeping up with the times. This is a perennial risk for any approach to psychology. As humanistic psychology began embracing emergent trends with greater frequency and depth in the early 2000s, it reasserted its position as an important force in psychology. Through emphasizing the advancement of theory, research, and application, not just an overview of the current state of the field, this volume seeks to avoid this pitfall.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

In the United States, it is typically implicit that existential psychology, particularly existential–humanistic psychology, is part of the broader field of humanistic psychology. A survey of humanistic psychologists revealed that the two most common affiliations within humanistic psychology were (a) person-centered therapy and (b) existential–humanistic therapy (Paige et al., 2018). However, some third-force psychologists choose to identify more specifically with one or the other (i.e., humanistic or existential). Furthermore, in some other parts of the world, including Europe, there often is a greater distinction between humanistic and existential psychology. Including both humanistic and existential in the title is intentional to advocate for greater inclusivity across these approaches. However, at the same time, important differences should not be diminished. After all, Rollo May, despite his early leadership in and embracement of humanistic psychology, retained his reservations about aspects of humanistic psychology throughout his career (Abzug, 2021).

The use of different labels or categorizations also can be confusing. The broad categorization of this school of thought is alternatively referred to as the third-force psychologies, humanistic–existential psychology, or simply humanistic psychology. Thus, humanistic psychology is sometimes used as a broad umbrella in the United States and, at other times, used to refer to a subset of approaches derived primarily from the works of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers that fall under the broader umbrella. The label “humanistic psychology” therefore can have different meanings or intentions. A similar challenge can be seen in the language “humanistic–existential” and “existential–humanistic.” Generally, humanistic–existential refers to the broader category of third-force psychologies while existential–humanistic refers to a specific existential approach that began with the writings of Rollo May and James F. T. Bugental in the United States. Existential–humanistic psychology, then, is both a branch of humanistic psychology and a branch of existential therapy (see Cooper, 2016; Paige et al., 2018; van Deurzen et al., 2019). While occasionally humanistic–existential has been historically used to refer to a narrow subset of humanistic psychology, typically there are differences between the use of humanistic–existential and existential–humanistic.

While some improved consistency in terminology in the humanistic and existential literature would be beneficial, it is also unlikely that such uniformity will occur. We did try to bring some consistency of usage in this handbook while also giving freedom to the contributors to use their preferred language. Humanistic and humanistic–existential are used interchangeably in the broader sense of the third force psychologies. This generally saves from writing out “humanistic and existential” throughout the handbook, though if this was the contributor’s preference, we did allow for this variation. Existential–humanistic is always used to refer to a specific branch within humanistic and existential psychology.

The *APA Handbook of Humanistic and Existential Psychology* is divided into two volumes. The first volume focuses on history, research, philosophy, and theory while the second focuses on application. In humanistic and existential psychology, it is difficult to distinguish theory and research from practice. Many of the chapters could readily fit in either volume.

Volume 1 is divided into four parts: Part I: History and Structure; Part II: Research; Part III: Philosophy and Literature; and Part IV: Psychological Theory. Part I orients readers to the foundations of these psychologies. Frederick J. Wertz, a long-time leading figure in humanistic psychology, provides a history of humanistic and existential psychology in Chapter 1. Despite this chapter being fairly comprehensive, the extensive history of these psychologies cannot be contained within a single chapter. Therefore, difficult decisions were necessary in determining the most critical aspects of the history of humanistic and existential psychology to include. In Chapter 2, Zenobia Morrill and José G. Luiggi-Hernández took on the difficult task of providing an overview of the branches within humanistic and existential psychology. This chapter highlights the diversity of approaches within humanistic psychology while giving particular attention to emergent perspectives, particularly through the integration of multicultural, liberatory, and social justice approaches that are increasing their presence and influence within the field.

Part II focuses primarily on research methodologies. The first two chapters seek to broadly cover many of the most utilized qualitative methods. Again, space limitations preclude being able to offer in-depth coverage of all methods. Scott D. Churchill (Chapter 3), who has long been an important voice in qualitative research, along with Amy Fisher-Smith identified and briefly introduced the most influential qualitative methods, while Susan James and Helene Lorenz (Chapter 4) focused on participatory and relational methods, which are essential for integrating cultural humility into research. Although quantitative research historically has not been as prevalent in humanistic psychology, there is a long and important history with quantitative methods as well. In Chapter 5, Cathy R. Cox, Thomas B. Sease, and Francesca Gentea cover some of the most significant quantitative research in humanistic psychology.

Part III considers many of the most prominent philosophical contributions that provide a foundation for humanistic and, in particular, existential psychology. Literature is also considered briefly in this section. Many existential philosophers also make important contributions to literature, often making it difficult to separate philosophical and literary contributions. Given the breadth of philosophical influences, it was difficult to determine which philosophers and literary figures to include. Certainly, there are important contributors, such as Camus, Kafka, and others, who deserve more attention than given in this section. Their limited consideration is due to a limitation of space,

not a devaluing of their contributions. While most of the philosophers highlighted in this section are familiar (Chapter 6, by Susi Ferrarello and Francesca Brencio; Chapter 7, by Daniel Sullivan; and Chapter 8, by Claire Arnold-Baker, Simon Wharne, and F. Jak Icoz), some may be surprised by the inclusion of a chapter specifically focused on Frantz Fanon. Yet, as Leswin Laubscher (Chapter 9) articulates, the neglect of Fanon in the existential and phenomenological literature is problematic and in need of rectification. Indeed, it was one of the intentions of this handbook to rectify the neglect of Fanon, who is given consideration in nearly half of the chapters.

The final and largest part of Volume 1 addresses psychological theory. In addition to chapters that focus on specific philosophers, it is essential to consider human science, which serves as a philosophical foundation of humanistic psychology and has its own chapter (Chapter 10, by Christopher M. Aanstoos). While there are many topics not covered that could have been considered in Part IV, it includes many of the most vibrant and influential topics in humanistic psychology, including perspectives on the self (Chapter 12, by Fred J. Hanna and Joel Givens), anxiety and guilt (Chapter 13, by Claire S. LeBeau, Amanda B. Lowe, and Heather Macdonald), self-actualization and coactualization (Chapter 14, by Andrew M. Bland), diagnosis (Chapter 15, by Anthony J. Pavlo), the psychology of evil (Chapter 16, by Stephen Arthur Diamond), freedom (Chapter 18, by Emmy van Deurzen), peak and plateau experiences (Chapter 19, by Ruth Richards and Stanley Krippner), myth (Chapter 20, by Jason Dias and Justin J. Underwood), isolation and alienation (Chapter 21, by Louis Hoffman and Sabah Islam), and authenticity and genuineness (Chapter 23, by Todd DuBose). These topics are mainstays in the humanistic psychology literature and the chapters review the history as well as the contemporary research and applications related to these topics.

Additionally, there are chapters focusing on essential emergent themes. For example, in Chapter 11, Will Wadlington considers the vital role of Otto Rank in the development of humanistic and existential psychology. Despite his influence upon Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Ernest Becker, and other influential figures, Rank is often neglected in the contemporary literature.

In Chapter 27, Xuefu Wang discusses zhi mian, Confucianism, and Taoism. Zhi mian has been identified as an Indigenous Chinese existential psychology (see Dueck & Wei, 2019; Hoffman, Yang, Mansilla, et al., 2019). Over the past 15 years, zhi mian has been increasingly considered in the existential psychological literature in the West. Zhi mian, Confucian, and Taoist perspectives challenge some of the “blind spots” in the Western humanistic literature. Similarly, in Chapter 24, Micah Ingle provides an important critique of the influence of individualism and neglect of collectivist perspectives. In Chapter 25, Oksana Yakushko considers the influence of critical psychology, and in Chapter 28, Helene Lorenz and Susan James consider liberation psychologies. Critical and liberation psychology perspectives have been vital in helping humanistic psychology deepen its engagement with multicultural, Indigenous, and liberatory perspectives.

The neglect of humanistic influences is evident throughout psychology. In Chapter 22, Eugene Mario DeRobertis addresses this neglect in developmental psychology. In many ways, the emergence of positive psychology began with neglect and dismissal of humanistic contributions. In Chapter 26, Paul T. P. Wong addresses this and advocates for an existential positive psychology. While an existential positive psychology may appear paradoxical on the surface, Wong’s contributions on this topic have led to him becoming

one of the most influential positive psychologists. Chapter 17, by Tom Pyszczynski and Moussa Diarra, focuses on one of the most empirically supported theories within existential psychology: terror management theory. Despite the plethora of research supporting this approach, it often is not considered within the broader existential literature, in part because it emerged from social psychology. In the final chapter of Volume 1, Chapter 29, Brent Dean Robbins takes a different approach to addressing the neglect of humanistic psychology by working to reclaim psychological approaches that are often not recognized as connected with humanistic psychology.

Volume 2 is divided into two parts: Part I: Psychotherapy; and Part II: Social and Systemic Applications. Drake Spaeth, in Chapter 1 of this volume, provides a comprehensive overview of humanistic and existential therapy. This is followed by Chapter 2, on integrating multicultural perspectives, by Makenna Berry Newton and Theopia Renee Jackson. These chapters serve as a foundation for Part I of Volume 2. Following this, chapters provide comprehensive current overviews of essential topics in humanistic and existential psychotherapy, including collaborative assessment (Chapter 3, by Hadas Pade and Alea Holman), couples therapy (Chapter 4, by H. Luis Vargas and Lindsay L. Edwards), child/play therapy (Chapter 5, by Dee C. Ray and Elizabeth V. Aguilar), group psychotherapy (Chapter 6, by Francis J. Kaklauskas and Farooq Mohyuddin), the use of research (Chapter 7, by Hein Zegers and Siebrecht Vanhooren), expressive arts therapy (Chapter 8, by Sue Ann Herron), meaning interventions (Chapter 9, by Pninit Russo-Netzer and Joel Vos), religious and spiritual considerations (Chapter 10, by Daryl R. Van Tongeren), trauma (Chapter 11, by Theopia Renee Jackson and Marguerite Elise Pintauro), LGBTQIA+ considerations (Chapter 12, by Madeline R. Stenersen and Sara K. Bridges), women's perspectives (Chapter 13, by Vanessa F. Brown, Courtney D. Cabell, and Gina S. Belton), sex therapy (Chapter 14, by Shanae Adams), animal-assisted psychotherapy (Chapter 15, by Betz King and Veronica Lac), and somatic psychotherapy (Chapter 16, by Eleanor Criswell Hanna). In Chapter 17, Heidi M. Levitt and Zenobia Morrill provide an important discussion of power dynamics in therapy, which includes integrating feminist and multicultural perspectives. These authors have been making essential contributions to the literature relevant to power issues that can serve to transform the field of psychotherapy (Levitt & Whelton, 2023; Morrill, 2021). Next, Siebrecht Vanhooren and Kirk J. Schneider provide an overview of approaches to humanistic and existential–integrative therapies in Chapter 18. In contemporary psychotherapy, no modality should be an island. Purist approaches are increasingly rare—and for good reason. It is critical to recognize the value of different therapy approaches and to strive to find ways to integrate aspects of different modalities in a thoughtful, consistent manner.

The final chapters consider some of the important branches of humanistic therapy and related approaches, including emotion-focused therapy (Chapter 19, by Zoë Goldstein, Rhonda Goldman, and Danaë Rollet), gestalt therapy (Chapter 20, by Samuel Kohlenberg and Ian Wickramasekera II), constructivist psychotherapy (Chapter 21, by Sara K. Bridges and Jonathan D. Raskin), and contemporary psychoanalysis (Chapter 22, by Rebecca Marcelina Gimeno). These chapter topics were selected because they are sometimes neglected in the broader humanistic and existential literature. The final chapter in Part I focuses on humanistic and existential supervision (Chapter 23, by Mark C. Yang and Xian Zhang), and it seeks to integrate Taoist perspectives with an existential–humanistic framework.

Part II of Volume 2 addresses social and systemic applications. Particularly in regard to multicultural and social justice issues, Hoffman et al. (2020b) stated, “Furthermore, we are suggesting that one cannot be multiculturally competent or proficient without engaging in advocacy and/or activism beyond the therapy room” (p. 7). In a world that is full of various forms of trauma, it is increasingly clear that therapists must give consideration to applications beyond the therapy room to provide holistic care. In Chapter 24, L. Xochitl Vallejos and Nathaniel Granger, Jr., two leading voices for multicultural and social justice perspectives, discuss social justice issues. In Chapter 25, Joel Vos addresses issues of meaning in life and society. For Vos, meaning perspectives are vital for expanding social justice considerations as well as reducing the harm often caused by the influence of capitalism. In Chapter 26, Apryl A. Alexander, Hannah Klukoff, and Bronwyn Neal delineate humanistic and existential approaches to activism and advocacy. Alexander has increasingly become a leading voice in the field of psychology, including being given numerous awards and recognitions for her many contributions to the psychological literature and her effectiveness in bringing change through advocacy and activism.

In Chapter 27, Kirk J. Schneider, the leading contemporary voice in existential–humanistic psychology, discusses polarization and the experiential democracy approach that he developed. In a time of growing polarization and violence, this provides a path for existential perspectives to facilitate social and political dialogues drawing upon the wisdom of the depth psychologies. In Chapter 28, Derrick Sebree, Jr. and Gina S. Belton bring a humanistic perspective to the emerging field of ecopsychology with particular consideration of social and ecological justice. In Chapter 29, Sayyed Mohsen Fatemi considers how to apply humanistic perspectives in international psychology. Relatedly, Louise Sundararajan, in Chapter 31, considers Indigenous psychology perspectives and how these can inform and be integrated with humanistic approaches. Sundararajan has become an international leader in Indigenous psychology, including founding the Indigenous Psychology Taskforce of the Society for Humanistic Psychology comprised of leading scholars from around the world. In Chapter 30, Gary S. Metcalf, one of the editors of *Handbook of Systems Sciences* (2021), reviews humanistic approaches to systems theory and applications, along with Teresa A. Daniel. Finally, in the last chapter of Volume 2, Chapter 32, Robert Garfield McInerney, Hannah Felix, Tea Johnson, Sam Merhaut, and Autumn Redcross explore existential–phenomenological applications of community psychology. Drawing from existential and community psychology perspectives, McInerney has been providing impressive, heartening leadership in initiatives that are powerfully impacting his community in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

CONCLUSION

The *APA Handbook of Humanistic and Existential Psychology* brings together many of the foremost scholars in the field, reclaiming and asserting the place of humanistic and existential psychology as a force in professional psychology. In selecting contributors, the associate editors and I intended to be inclusive of established and emergent scholars, which better represents where the field is and where it is going. Often, collaborations were encouraged in order to engage the breadth of perspectives—including multicultural perspectives—on chapter topics.

The contributors and chapter topics demonstrate the breadth of the voice and relevance of humanistic and existential psychology. Most importantly, though, the contributors bring a foundation of human dignity and compassion to their work. These chapters seek to impact the profession of psychology, and they pursue the intention of positively impacting the world through advancing humanistic values so dearly needed in professional psychology and the world at large.

IN MEMORIAM

During the final stages of publication, two contributors to these volumes died: Dr. Eleanor Criswell Hanna and Dr. Paul T. P. Wong. Eleanor was an early pioneer of humanistic psychology, though her many contributions have not been adequately acknowledged. She was instrumental in starting multiple training programs in humanistic psychology and remained active in training others until her death. She also published numerous books and articles. Eleanor was a friend, colleague, and mentor to myself, many contributors to this volume, and many others in the humanistic community. Her death is a sad loss for the humanistic psychology community. I am thankful that we were able to include her chapter (Volume 2, Chapter 16) as her final publication.

Paul founded the International Network of Personal Meaning and for many years organized the International Meaning Conference that drew in many influential scholars from around the globe. Like Eleanor, he was scholar, trainer, mentor, and friend to many in humanistic and existential psychology. He was recognized as one the most influential positive psychologists from his contributions to Existential Positive Psychology and Positive Psychology 2.0. Paul's chapter (Volume 1, Chapter 26) provides a glimpse of his contributions to positive psychology. His many books, articles, and conference presentations have been highly influential and well-cited in the professional literature. Paul was also one of the advocates for increasing quantitative research in humanistic and existential psychology to complement the rich history of qualitative research. I am pleased to have been able to present him with the Society for Humanistic Psychology's Carl Rogers Award in 2016. Paul and Eleanor will be deeply missed.

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—Louis Hoffman, Editor

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