

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 224

CG 015 207

AUTHOR Cornille, Thomas A.; Harrigan, John
TITLE Social Individualism.
PUB DATE 29 Oct 79
NOTE 31p.: Best copy available.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Concept Formation; *Existentialism; *Human Relations; *Individual Needs; Intergroup Relations; Interpersonal Relationship; *Models; *Need Gratification; *Social Influences; *Socialization; State of the Art Reviews

ABSTRACT

Relationships between individuals and society have often been presented from the perspective of the social institution. Social psychology has addressed the variables that affect the individual in relationships with larger groups. Social individualism is a conceptual framework that explores the relationship of the individual and society from the view of the individual's internal needs, desires, and drives to determine the role that society will fill in the interaction. The role of the individual in directing and determining the shape of social relationships is critical. Social individualism has philosophical (existentialism, phenomenology), sociological (symbolic interactionism), and psychological (Neo-Freudian, Gestalt, Humanistic, Assertive, Libertarian) roots. Central concepts to the theory of social individualism, many of which have been culled from Carl Rogers, include awareness, perception, self, self-directedness, other-directedness, self-actualization, needs, alienation, frustration, congruence, cognitive dissonance, locus of evaluation, unconditional positive regard, inner nature, ideal self, threat, growth, distortion, defense, openness to experience, and perceived locus of control. The formation of a conceptual framework such as social individualism may help existential and humanistic social scientists approach their work from a more conceptually organized perspective. (NRB)

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SOCIAL INDIVIDUALISM

Thomas A. Cornille
John Harrigan
Suzanne Steinmetz, Ed.

University of Delaware

October 29, 1979

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to clearly and succinctly describe the intention of this paper, we have found that the basic assumptions and concepts underlying Social Individualism are so diverse and wrapped up in the language of several major disciplines that a simple definition is not readily accessible. As a result, the following format will be utilized to familiarize the reader with the conceptual framework of Social Individualism. First of all, our basic purpose in examining this field will be laid out, describing the parameters of the paper. Second, a brief review of our recent history will be done, in order to put the timing of this examination within some perspective. Finally, we will describe briefly some of the contributions of various disciplines in addressing this position.

After this background has been presented, the basic assumptions and concepts will be presented and placed in the context that they have been used by the original authors. Since we are faced with different disciplines using different terms to mean the same thing and similar phrases to mean different things, this rather indirect method is necessary.

At the risk of oversimplifying, the philosophical and scientific theories that have addressed social relations since the beginning of written history will be grouped into three basic categories.

1. The relationship between the individual and society has been

presented from the perspective of the social institutions, and have attempted to understand the roles and functions of the individual within those institutions. The actions of the individual in this case are interpreted only from the contribution that they offer to the continuation of the larger group. Certainly, any macro-level methodology within the social sciences reflects this perspective. The most basic example of this category would be the general study of economics, with its focus on the interaction of parts of the whole as they contribute to the structure of the larger economic system.

2. The field of social psychology, both in the realm of psychology and sociology has addressed the variables that affect the individual in his relations with larger groups. The focus has primarily been on these influences external to the individual that modify the direction that the individual takes in trying to attain some generally defined state of equilibrium. For example, the concepts of social communication, leadership, and organizational behavior reflect this interest.

3. The final method of examination has been to view the individual as the center or focal point of the theory, with social relations perceived as either an aid, an obstacle or non-existent in the individual's quest for satisfaction of some internal needs or drives. It is this perspective that broadly bounds the

conceptual framework of Social Individualism. Certainly the most simple example of this perspective can be found within the tenets of psycho-analytic theory, which interprets the behavior of the individual as a reflection of attempts to satisfy the internal drives of Eros and Thanatos. The relationship with society is determined by the assistance or constraints that the society puts on the individual in this quest. Social Individualism can then be broadly described as that conceptual framework which explores the relationship of the individual and society from the view of the individual's internal needs, desires and drives determining the role that society will fill in that interaction. It needs to be recognized that this framework clearly incorporates several other, more specific statements, e.g. nihilism, anarchism, humanism, and many others. This overlapping will be addressed in more detail later in the historical presentation. For now, the most important factor is that all of these systems of thought emphasize the role of the individual in directing and determining the shape of social relationships. Although it is generally thought that humanism and anarchism are oppositional in nature, they do both contain the common link of the central role of the individual in each framework.

Recent Changes. Presently, social changes seem to be occurring more rapidly than the means available to communicate them. This has led to a gap between life experiences and the description and evaluation of their significance. As a result, there has been a great deal of concern voiced regarding the development of a new

view of society. This view has put a great deal of importance on the ability of the individual to evaluate and direct his own destiny, not apart from the structure of society, but as if it does not exist. This power has been promoted especially within the context of self help writings, (e.g. "Looking out for #1") which are directed at the support and encouragement of the individual to react to and control the relationships he has with other individuals. This group of writings has been typified by an emphasis on assertive psychology.

This trend is consistent with at least two significant social phenomena. The generation of the 70s, historically may become best known for the flourishing of the I'm #1 attitude, particularly among those involved in the turmoil of the 60s. Given the growing mistrust of economic and political institutions, this trend should not be unexpected. In addition, the diverse rights movements of the 60s and 70s have under-scored the importance of the rights of individuals to attain their highest level of ability, not restrained or channeled by society's needs. This trend implies "a blessed commonwealth in which men and women think and speak freely, criticize their government, live under just and equal laws, cultivate the arts and sciences, deal honorably and generously with one another, cherish human dignity as sacred, and leave a heritage of knowledge and beauty for those who come after." (Schlesinger vii *The Nature of a Humane Society*, 1976).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As mentioned in the introduction, there appears to be a great deal of overlap between the various disciplines that have addressed the issue of the individual and his growth within his environment. The concepts that will be presented later in this paper need to be placed within the context of the various disciplines that have used different names to describe similar phenomena. A brief review of the historical development of this body of knowledge will be presented within the context of three major systematic groupings. It is not intended that this description be exhaustive, but rather lay the ground work for later examination of the fit between different methods of presenting the nature of social relations. In order to understand the commonalities shared by psychology and sociology in this realm, it will first be necessary to review the philosophical atmosphere that has had such a pervasive effect on both fields.

The development of two branches of modern philosophy will be presented, namely, existentialism and phenomenology. Sociological work in this area of theorizing has been found within several groups. Historically, the most noted has been Symbolic Interactionism. In addition to this framework, the efforts of the counterculturalists and the Humanistic Sociologists need to be taken into account. Finally, the growth of Ethnomethodology

as a means of exploring the interaction of individuals needs' to be considered.

The field of psychology has naturally promulgated the greatest amount of writings in the area of individual growth. A review of this area must include Neo-Freudianism, Gestalt Therapy, Humanistic Psychology, "Assertive" Psychology, and the Libertarian Movement.

One of the consequences of this review has been an increased awareness that the underlying assumptions of these different schools gravitate toward the two extremes that seem possible, when the relation between the individual and the external social world are presented. It seems that the two extremes cannot be labeled in a single word, but rather hinge on the basic way society is viewed from the individual's perspective. One extreme is an anarchistic stance that suggests that the basic rule in social relations is "Look out for #1". The other extreme takes a humanitarian posture, that emphasizes the need for cooperative social relations for the individual to grow and develop into his highest potential. This tendency will be more evident as the different schools are described and as the basic assumptions are presented.

Philosophy.

Following from the works of Locke, Hume and Comte, (Weinstein, 1974:119), the empirical school of philosophy has emphasized the role of science in describing and exploring the physical observable world, by examining the key ingredients of objects. This frame of

reference, however, stressed stable facets of life. In response to the perceived rigidity of pragmatism and empiricism, Husserl developed the beginnings of modern day phenomenology. He posited that the nature of life is process, rather than objects and that views of man must reflect the subjectivity of that experience (Natanson, 1968:11, 65). More recently, the existential school of philosophy has extended the phenomenological way of viewing the world to examine and explain the motives and goals of life. Sartre has probably been the most prolific and blunt author about the nature of selfhood. The basic premise of this philosophy is that " Man is forced to define himself, since he has no permanent self upon which to rely...We, are, for Sartre, condemned to be free. The individual, reacting to this condition, can choose himself as authentic or inauthentic" (Natanson, 1968:66). As a partial result of this stance, the various theories of individual and social life focus heavily on mankind as goal directed in a process sense, rather than a deterministic one. It is this emphasis on the subjective nature of social life that has shaped that frameworks both in sociology and psychology.

Sociology has been heavily influenced by the quest for scientific status, with a heavy emphasis on "value-free" restrictive empiricism (Weinstein, 1974:119). As a natural consequence of this direction, sociology has come to face some basic issues about the determined nature of man, either by the powers of socialization

(Wells, 1978:8) or by the restraints imposed by role acting (Goffman, 1956:17). To counterbalance this heavy emphasis on empiricism, the originators of the school of Symbolic Interactionism, particularly C.H. Cooley and G.H. Mead, developed some explanation of the relation between the self and society. Both of these theorists are credited with stressing the need for always considering situations from the point of view of the actor (Cosser, 1971: 340).

Ethnomethodology is still in need of further description, but has been well presented in the seminal work by Garfinkel. The main point of interest for this paper is the nature of social order. Rather than viewing social order as something that exists outside of the interaction of individuals, it is the view of this frame of reference that individuals create social order through their interactions. It is the role of research to identify this way that people make it possible for each other to interact in orderly ways (Skidmore, 1975:260).

Psychology, by definition, has focused its attention on the individual. The view of the individual as either active agent or reactive respondent, however, was the focus of the earlier writers. The deterministic views of behaviorism and Freudian theory have both undergone modification during this century. The neo-Freudians, including Reich, Frankl and Adler, have emphasized the role of the

individual in defining the relation he has with the world, based on the subjective interpretation of the environment as either a friendly or hostile surrounding. An example of this is the basic guidelines postulated by Adler as a lifestyle. It is a statement of "The world is ... Therefore " (Allen, 1971:5).

The broad area of humanistic psychology has been presented by Maslow, Rogers, Perls and May. This broad branch of psychology was originally presented by William James and G. Stanley Hall in the 19th Century, "both of whom advocated a psychology that would leave the wholeness, passion and uniqueness of the individual intact. (Shaffer, 1978:3). Maslow reiterated this hope in the 1930s and the American Psychological Association created the Division of Humanistic Psychology in 1970 (Shaffer, 1978:4).

Assertive Psychology is that collection of self help, self defense, and growth orientated books that have become rather popular during that past two decades. Probably the most direct example of this type of writing has been Ringer's "Looking out for #1". The emphasis of this group of writings has been on the importance of the growth and freedom of the individual, unrestrained or unhampered by the powers of organizations.

Finally, the works of Thomas Szasz (sp)? have emphasized the the beliefs of the libertarian movement. Basically, the rights of the individual to act in any fashion which is comfortable for him is OK and should not be controlled or regulated by society. The

only limitation to this stance is that the person does not have the right to infringe on the rights of others in so doing. As long as he respects the options of others to express themselves, his actions should be unlimited. These basic tenets are reflected in the "Myth of Mental Illness" and other sources by the same writer.

In conclusion, it would appear that there has been a growing attention given to the rights and autonomy of individuals, particularly in the past century. This is not meant to ignore the basic individualistic underpinnings of this country, but rather to draw attention to the current directions that this has taken in the fields of psychology and sociology. We will now move into an explication of the key concepts and assumptions, which we believe are consistent throughout this diverse body of writings.

FOCI OF STUDIES

We believe that the early stages of theory development reflect both the major strengths and inherent weaknesses of it as a system of thought. As was indicated earlier, the efforts of a diverse group of social scientists generally can be included within this general framework. In order to briefly describe this body of knowledge, we will attempt to somewhat artificially group authors either by academic discipline or general substantive area.

The major writers within the discipline of Humanistic Psychology have especially given attention to the exploration of the individual. This has been both from a developmental and psychopathological focus. The energies of Maslow, Rotter, Shaffer, and Brown have emphasized the growth and enhancement of the self. Bernd and Rogers, have focused on the free growth of self from problems into more actualized positions through supportive therapeutic settings.

The general field of sociology has yielded three basic foci. One group of writers have attended to a general humanistic philosophy of social research. This group includes Wrong, Etzioni, Lee, Staude and Glass. It appears that this group does not view this perspective as a theory or a method, but rather an underlying value system that influences the foci and concerns of research.

Another group has given the bulk of their attention to the area of social interaction, especially the ways in which a society can assist or enhance the development of the individual. Most concerned with this perspective have been Weinstein and Weinstein, Holland, Kurtz and Miller.

The final group have taken the opposite tack and have explored the ways in which the present society has disabled or frustrated the development of the individual. Roszak and Goodman have led the way in the exploration of the counter-culture and have been joined by "social therapists" who have attended to the ways that society has taken away the rights of expression and freedom unjustly from the individual. This libertarian focus has been led by Szasz and Ringer.

Although this introduction does not do justice to the diversity among these authors, we believe it at least provides us with a general departure point for further exploration of this framework.

MAJOR CONCEPTS

In dealing with a theory of social individualism, one is faced with a variety of concepts from which to choose. Some of the most functional and well known concepts are found in existential and humanistic writings. The immediate difficulty in using the original form of these concepts is with their ambiguous nature and the fact that the names of similar concepts may change as they pass from author to author. In this present paper, we have attempted to use the most functional and clearly presented concepts of previous publications. Where the preexisting concepts were too ambiguous or cumbersome, we have improvised our own definition. We have also added a few new concepts that we felt were needed.

The central concepts to the theory of social individualism will be presented first. Where appropriate, there will be a short discussion of the concept after its definition is presented. After the central concepts are presented, additional concepts will follow to help with the overall understanding of the theory.

1. Awareness: "the symbolic representation of some portion of our experience" (Rogers, 1959:198).
2. Perception: our subjective awareness and interpretation of impinging stimuli (adapted from Rogers, 1959).

The concept of perception has, primarily, phenomenological roots and is concerned with definition of the situation. Perception is, therefore, a key and crucial concept in the social individualism framework. It is the point of departure or point of decision that directs an individual to be self-directed or other-directed in their social interactions and development.

3. Self: the composite character of an individual that arises from the ability to act socially towards oneself and others. (Meltzer, 1964)

The self as a concept has evolved from earlier phenomenological and existential writings. This concept could also include the self-concept. Within the framework of social individualism, emphasis is placed on the process, the ongoing defining and redefining, that is the self.

4. Self-Directed: the predominant orientation where a person's behavior, or self-actualization, is directed without regard for others.

On a macro level, the extreme of this orientation would result in anarchy. It is noted, however, that a certain amount of self-directed behavior is necessary on a day to day basis to ensure that the human organism is maintained at the minimal level of survival.

5. Other-Directed: the predominant orientation where a person's behavior is directed with positive regard for others.

The extreme of this orientation would be people whose behavior is directed toward the benefit of others without

regard for their own life or well being. The martyr, war hero, or parent who sacrifices their own benefits of life for their children may be in this category.

Within the context of the self-directed and other-directed orientations, the paradox of social individualism is defined. It is the necessity of being both self-directed and other-directed in a social world, and the ongoing struggle to maintain a balance between these everpresent orientations.

6. Social Individual: the individual whose behavior reflects a balance between other-directed and self-directed where both the individual and society are mutual beneficiaries.
7. Self-Actualization: the inherent process by which the organism develops "all its capacities in ways which serve to maintain or enhance the organism" (Rogers, 1959:196).

This concept is an adaptation of Roger's "actualizing tendency". It includes the physical, emotional and intellectual needs mentioned in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy. This concept was originally presented by Goldstein (1939) as an outgrowth of his work with brain damaged patients. Goldstein postulated that one human motivation was the motivation toward unity and wholeness (or the motivation toward self-actualization). At a more basic level, the motivation toward self-actualization can be seen as the "will to survive."

8. Needs: conditions that are necessary for the maintenance, growth and self-actualization of the human organism.

A. Basic Needs: the needs for survival and simple maintenance of the human organism. In a hierarchical order, these needs are: (1) physical needs, (2) safety needs and (3) the need for belongingness and love (Maslow, 1954).

These are the needs necessary to actualize the potentials at the basic level of species survival.

B. Growth Needs: the needs necessary for the actualization of the "higher" potentials of human beings. These needs are more unique and specific to the individual. They include: (1) the esteem needs to achieve, be competent, and gain approval and recognition, (2) the cognitive needs to know, understand and explore, (3) the aesthetic needs of symmetry, order, and beauty, and (4) the need to find self-fulfillment and realize one's unique potential (Maslow, 1954).

The basic and growth needs are taken directly from Maslow's "hierarchy of needs." The needs are considered as a hierarchy because some basic needs such as physical nurturance must be met before the higher or growth needs can be fully actualized. The hierarchy, however, is not rigid. Some people may value certain needs more than others. More correctly, perhaps, the hierarchy can be thought of as a system where needs are feedback to the individual, who, in turn, decides which needs will be acted upon. If we are working on higher needs for aesthetic expression, we still must deal with feedback from the need for physical nurturance.

The significance of human needs is their influence on the individual's decision to choose between the continuum of

self-directed and other directed behavior. The individual who perceives a dearth of resources to meet the physical needs of nurturance and survival is more likely to be self-directed than the individual who has never known hunger or homelessness. In addition, the individual who perceives that they lack the ability or skills to acquire available resources will be more likely to exhibit self-directed behavior than people.

9. Alienation: the perceived separation from resources and conditions needed for self-actualization.

10. Frustration: the resultant effect of alienation.

Alienation and frustration have both appeared in discussion on humanistic and anarchistic topics. However, they do not seem to have previously appeared in a conceptual framework.

11. Congruence: the congruence between one's subjective experiences and their self-concept. The unity between subjective feelings or experience and the way we define ourselves (Rogers, 1959:206).

For example, if our self-concept does not include anger toward our spouse, there will be incongruence when we get upset with our spouse. Another concept, authenticity, is often found in humanistic writings (Child, 1973:19). Its meaning is closely related to congruence.

12. Cognitive Dissonance: the anxiety that occurs when our behavior is incongruent with our self-concept.

This concept is borrowed from the social-psychological theory of cognitive dissonance. There is a substantial body of

literature devoted to this theory (Child, 1973:90). Cognitive dissonance is closely related to and can be conceptualized as a behavioral counterpart to incongruency. For example, if it didn't fit with our self-concept. Congruency is a psychotherapeutic concept that is concerned with the relationship between feelings and self-concept, while cognitive dissonance is a social-psychological term that considers the relationship between behavior and self-concept.

13. Locus of Evaluation: the source (i.e., internal external) that one uses in establishing one's values (Rogers, 1959:210).

This concept is not to be confused with locus of control (to be defined later) although the two are related. Locus of evaluation has more of a psychotherapeutic origin, and has consequently received less empirical attention than locus of control.

14. Unconditional Positive Regard: positively valuing a person "irrespective of the differential values which one might place on his specific behaviors" (Rogers, 1959:208).

It is emphasized here that the regard is for the person, not the person's behavior. It would be incorrect to interpret this concept as an "anything goes" or "do your own thing" sanction.

"B-love," a term of Maslow's (1968:42), is closely related to unconditional positive regard. B-love is the "love for being of another person, unneeding love, unselfish love." Contrasted

to B-love is "D-love" which is "deficiency love, need love, self-ish love" (Maslow, 1968:42).

The preceding concepts were felt to be most functional in developing a generalized theory of social-individualism. The following concepts, however, may assist in the general understanding of the conceptual framework.

15. Inner Nature: the inherent potential of an individual, both actualized (expressed) and unactualized (unexpressed). This inner nature is, in part, biologically based and intrinsic to the individual. It is, partially, unchanging (Maslow, 1968:3).

The inner nature could also be thought of as the deep self.

16. Ideal Self: "Ideal self (or self-ideal) is the term used to denote the self-concept which the individual would most like to possess, upon which he places the highest value for himself. In all other respects it is defined in the same way as the self-concept" (Rogers, 1959:200).
17. Threat: "the state which exists when an experience is perceived or anticipated as incongruent" with one's self-concept (Rogers, 1959:204).
18. Growth: "the various processes which bring the person toward ultimate self-actualization" (Maslow, 1968:26).
19. Distortion: the process by which an experience is denied or distorted to agree with one's self-concept. The experience is distorted in a way that does not agree with objective reality (Rogers, 1959:204).

Distortion is a response to threat, and the behavior that results from distortion is Defense.

20. Defense: "the behavioral response of the organism to threat, the goal of which is the maintenance of the current structure of the self. This goal is achieved by the perceptual distortion of the experience in awareness" (Rogers, 1959:204).
21. Openness to Experience: "When the individual is in no way threatened, then he is open to his experience. To be open to experience is the polar opposite of defensiveness" (Rogers, 1959:206).
22. Perceived Locus of Control: the perception of events as being controlled by one's own actions (internal control) or by events unrelated to one's own behavior (external control) (Rotter, 1966).

In summation, we have culled many of our terms from the extensive conceptual framework developed by Rogers (1959). It was felt that many of Roger's terms were representative of the phenomenological, existential and psychoanalytic influence that has given rise to the social-psychological humanistic movement. We attempted to select only the terms that appeared relevant to a general framework. These terms were often modified or trimmed to their most functional form. Where necessary, we added new terms that had previously been used only in a discursive manner.

Further refinement of this conceptual framework is needed if it is to be easily understood and of value to a diverse field of researchers. The main emphasis, however, has been to conceptualize and clarify the modern and popular humanistic-therapeutic framework that has the potential to emphasize the individual's development at both the expense and the benefit

istic-therapeutic framework that has the potential to emphasize the individual's development at both the expense and the benefit of one's social environment.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In developing this section, we have attempted to review a broad base of writings to identify those basic value statements that seem to be consistent with this present framework. In so doing, we will try to order them in such a way so that the reader does not find it necessary to refer back or ahead to understand the significance of a particular statement. Many of these basic assumptions seem to be common to other theoretical orientations. These will receive less attention than those that seem to be unique to this set.

1. People are a unity with nature as an open process, influenced by movement toward the common good.

This extremely general statement refers to sense of community that exists among people who have adapted a style of relating to others and nature in such a way that respects their uniqueness and, at the same time, the common goal that is a sense of achievement and completion.

2. Human beings are self preserving and self-enhancing (Rogers, 1959).
3. Human beings tend toward preservation and enhancement of their species.
4. The nature of the person is a process, motivated toward a balanced relationship with the environment. This process, therefore, is inclined toward good.
5. The person is intrinsically social by nature, rooted in the desire for significance or self-esteem. This growth process must take place within social relationships.

6. People have certain needs that must be met if they are to successfully self-actualize (Maslow, 1959).
7. People are in great part motivated by the desire to self-actualize.
8. The desire for self-actualization is motivated by the concept of what the self hopes to become (Miller, 1967:177).
9. People choose behavior (self-directed or other-directed) which they perceive as best actualizing their potential.
10. The means that people employ to satisfy their needs and self-actualize are in part learned and in part unique manifestations of an internal process.
11. Self-actualization at all levels of needs (basic and interpersonal) is a process that is continuing rather than satisfied or finalized.
12. Perception is subjective, always mediated by the level of actualization of the person at the present time.

The individual's perception of food will be quite different, if he is operating at a basic need level, than if that level is comfortably actualized.

13. One's perception of their abilities and resources to fulfill their needs will influence their behavior.
14. People have basic universal rights, e.g., to actualize their greatest potential.
15. There are approved ways of achieving, known as belief systems, and these are included in what we call the traditional, the cultural (Miller, 1967:179).

However, these approved ways should not be seen as the only ways for actualization.

16. Extreme self-directed or extreme other-directed behavior on a continual basis is not beneficial to the individual behaving or the society within which the individual resides.
17. The social-individual who is a balance between the extreme self-directed and extreme other-directed is beneficial to both society and the individual.
18. If individuals, through social relationships perceive social institutions as facilitating self-actualization, they will incorporate a set of values, attitudes and behaviors that will lead toward further growth within society.

It seems important that acceptance of the role of social institutions not be seen as a static commitment. Rather, it is a recognition that society should only do what needs to be done in preparation for self-development.

19. If individuals perceive social institutions as blocking actualization, they will adopt a set of values, attitudes and behaviors that will lead to "anarchistic" philosophies.
20. People will always attempt to maintain congruence between their values, attitudes and behaviors.

This congruence necessitates changes in life positions if one's view of larger society changes. This is usually expressed in terms of authenticity.

DISCUSSION

In overview, we have presented the rough outline for a conceptual framework of social individualism. The impetus of this undertaking was to explore the conceptual implications of the large body of literature that has contributed to a contemporary philosophy of individualism. In this exploration we have hoped to probe the question of whether this philosophy is inherently anarchistic and antisocial or if it is, in purest form, a framework capable of dealing successfully with the complex problems of our present society. To answer this question, more extensive explorations of the literature along with conceptual and propositional developments will be needed.

If the conceptual framework of social individualism is to be developed, empirical propositions will need to be generated and tested with past and present research. There is a fair body of research on self-actualization, self-concept, therapeutic technique, etc., that may assist this task.

In addition, new instruments may need to be constructed. At present, however, there is a need for further clarification and logical organization of assumptions and concept.

There is overlap between some concepts along with ambiguity of meaning. More discrete and objective definitions would improve this situation and facilitate the generation of empirical propositions from the assumptions.

empirical propositions from the assumptions.

There is also the need to take a closer look at the framework of social individualism as it fits with other conceptual developments. Where does it overlap and what are its unique attributes and contributions?

In particular, there is the need to examine the explanatory and predictive breadth of social individualism. How does it handle seemingly undirected and impulsive behavior? Can it speak for the macro as well as the micro levels of interaction? These are all questions that will need to be addressed if social individualism is to approach refinement and generate adequate theoretical propositions.

In final analysis, the phenomenological, existential and humanistic social scientists and therapists will need to approach their work in a more conceptually organized perspective if their labor is to be accurately understood and utilized. There is the need to go beyond the present level of value speculation to a unified propositional examination of this substantial field. The present conceptual framework is a formal effort in this direction.

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