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Three Psychologies: Perspectives from Freud, Skinner, and Rogers

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Abstract

Originally published in *Contemporary Psychology: APA Review of Books*, 1997, Vol 42(7), 575–578. Who is Erik Erikson in *Childhood and Society* (see record 1950-15013-000)? What is he trying to say? From where I perceive psychology's standing at century's end, I encounter three different Eriksons in the text—three different voices. The voices are like the stages he made so popular. At any given time, all can be heard at once, but still each voice seems to have its own special moment in the text when it rises to the fore. The reviewer contends that the voices he hears when he listens to *Childhood and Society* today are the psychoanalytic apologist of Chapter 2, the 1950s cultural anthropologist in the middle of the book, and, in the last 150 pages, a muted, hesitant version of a

cognitive psychologist who seems taken with but unsure of how to address the concept of narrative in human lives. The third voice has its origins in the monumental Chapter 7, wherein it would seem that Erikson is unable to capture the fullness of the entire life cycle without crafting, unwittingly perhaps, a grand narrative of the self's development—a story complete with stirring scenes and engaging plots, with heroes and villains, turning points and epiphanies; glorious battles and passionate love affairs, romance, tragedy, comedy, redemption; and the exploration of the self. It is the story that makes Chapter 7 in *Childhood and Society* Erikson's most enduring gift. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2006 APA, all rights reserved)

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