Michael L. Wehmeyer · Karrie A. Shogren
Todd D. Little · Shane J. Lopez *Editors*

Development of Self-Determination Through the Life-Course

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For Shane

Preface

The self-determination construct is one of the foundational constructs in the discipline of positive psychology. The millennial issue of *American Psychologist*, published in January of 2000, was dedicated to introducing the science of positive psychology and included articles on optimism, hope, creativity, and self-determination (Ryan and Deci 2000). In their landmark contribution, Ryan and Deci noted that the "fullest representation of humanity show people to be curious, vital, and self-motivated. At their best, they are agentic and inspired, striving to learn; extend themselves; master new skills; and apply their talents responsibly" (p. 68). The article's synthesis of how Self-Determination Theory (SDT) describes the impact of social contexts on self-motivation and the optimizing of a person's development, performance, and well-being firmly established the construct's importance to the new discipline of positive psychology.

As SDT grew into an important motivational metatheory, another movement embraced the self-determination construct in configuring strength-based approaches. That movement was the disability rights movement, and research and theory development in that field examined the importance of self-determination to enable people with disabilities to achieve better quality lives. The applied disciplines of special education and rehabilitation, among others, developed interventions informed by theory and research on self-determination in motivation, including research on creating autonomy-supportive classrooms, but that provided interventions that were, in essence, autonomy supportive as well and intended to promote self-determination.

This text provides a comprehensive examination of the development of self-determination in the context of two related theories of self-determination emerging from these two uses of the self-determination construct: SDT and (from the disability sphere) Causal Agency Theory. The intent is to provide a theoretical frame in which SDT and Causal Agency Theory are used to describe a lifespan approach to the development of self-determination. The text examines how organismic efforts to fulfill basic psychological needs to maintain autonomous motivation lead to causal action, which in turn leads to greater psychological need fulfillment, repeated experiences with causal action, and, ultimately, greater self-determination.

The text is structured into parts with chapters that go into depth on themes and topics pertinent to motivation, causal action, and the development of self-determination. The first part (Overview of Self-Determination and Theories of Self-Determination) provides an overview of the self-determination construct itself (Chap. 1) and of human agentic theories (Chap. 2), within which both SDT and Causal Agency Theory situate the self-determination construct. Chapter 2 culminates with the description of a theoretical model of the development of self-determination (Fig. 2.1) that forms the basis for later chapters examining such development in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Chapter 3 provides a look at how the development of self-determination is situated in the context of overall adolescent development and other theories pertinent to adolescent development. Chapters 4 and 5 provide detail about the two major theories covered in the text, SDT (Chap. 4) and Causal Agency Theory (Chap. 5).

The second part (Developmental Origins and Life-Course Trajectory of Self-Determination) examines issues pertaining to the development of self-determination across the lifespan utilizing the theoretical frame described in Chap. 2. Chapter 6 examines the development of self-determination during childhood, describing the development of foundational skills leading to later self-determination across childhood and, specifically, overviewing the development of foundational skills that enable children to make choices and express preferences, solve problems, engage in making decisions, set and attain goals, self-manage and self-regulate action, self-advocate, and acquire self-awareness and self-knowledge. Chapter 7 examines developmental milestones in knowledge, skills, and beliefs that emerge during adolescence and lead to enhanced self-determination, including choice making, self-initiation and planning, problem solving, decision making, goal setting and attainment, and self-regulation. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of issues in adolescent development as it pertains to motivational aspects of self-determination. In Chap. 8, attention is turned to the educational context to examine autonomy-supportive practices that lead to the development of autonomous motivation and greater self-determination. Chapter 9 examines what is known about self-determination in the disability context, while Chaps. 10 and 11 focus on self-determination in adulthood and aging life stages. This part is concluded with a chapter examining issues of culture and self-determination.

Chapters in the third part (Self-Determination Theory and Healthy Psychological and Physical Development) explore the role of self-determination in healthy psychological development, with chapters focused on the role of parenting in promoting children's psychological health (Chap. 13) and on identity development in adolescence (Chap. 14). Chapters in the final three parts address development of causal action, beginning with the fourth part (The Development of Volitional Action), which includes chapters that focus on the development of preference and choice expression (Chap. 15) and self-initiation and planning (Chap. 16). The fifth part (The Development of Agentic Action) includes chapters on the development of self-regulation (Chap. 17), goal setting and attainment (Chap. 18), problem solving (Chap. 19), decision making (Chap. 20), and pathways and agentic think-

ing in the development of hope (Chap. 21). The final part (Action-Control Beliefs) has a single chapter (Chap. 22) focused on the role of action-control beliefs in causal action.

Reference

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*, 68–78.

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missing data treatments, indicator selection, parceling, modeling developmental processes) as well as his substantive developmental research (e.g., action-control processes and motivation, coping, and self-regulation). In 2001, Little was elected to membership in the Society for Multivariate Experimental Psychology, and in 2009, he was elected President of APA's Division 5 (Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics). He founded the internationally renowned "Stats Camps" (see statscamp.org). He is a fellow in APA, APS, and AAAS. In 2013, he received the Cohen award from Division 5 of APA for distinguished contributions to teaching and mentoring, and in 2015 he received the inaugural distinguished contributions award for mentoring developmental scientists from the Society for Research in Child Development.

Shane J. Lopez, Ph.D., was Gallup Senior Scientist in Residence and Research Director for the Clifton Strengths Institute. As chief architect of the Gallup Student Poll, he measured hope in over a million people. His research focused on hope, engagement, and wellbeing, particularly on links between strengths development, academic success, and overall wellbeing, and he directed the annual Gallup Wellbeing Forum. Dr. Lopez is the editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology* and *Positive Psychological Assessment: A Handbook of Models and Measures*, as well as more than 100 articles and chapters. He is the author of the well-regarded book, *Making Hope Happen: Create the Future You Want for Yourself and Others*. Dr. Lopez is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

Part I
Overview of Self-Determination and Theories of Self-Determination

Synopsis

The chapters in this part provide a comprehensive overview of the self-determination construct. Chapter 1 overviews the historical meanings and uses of the self-determination construct in philosophy, psychology, social welfare, education, and disability rights. Self-determination is framed, in this chapter, within the context of overarching theories of human agentic behavior. Human agency refers to the sense of personal empowerment involving both knowing and having what it takes to achieve goals. Human agentic theories share the meta-theoretical view that organismic aspirations drive human behaviors. An organismic perspective of self-determination portrays people as active contributors to, or "authors" of their behavior, where behavior is defined in terms of self-regulated and goal-directed actions. Chapter 2 reviews the major theories of human agentic behavior and examines the role of self-determination in each. This chapter culminates with the description of a theoretical model of the development of self-determination (Fig. 2.1) that forms the basis for later chapters examining such development in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Chapter 3 discusses adolescent developmental theories, first reviewing neurological growth and restructuring that occurs in the brain during adolescence. Next, cognitive and affective processes, including metacognition, self-regulation, and self-determination are described. Finally, identity development and agency and their role in adolescent development are described, followed by discussion of the role of culture and context in adolescent development. Chapters 4 and 5 provide detail about the two major theories covered in the text, SDT (Chap. 4) and Causal Agency Theory (Chap. 5).

Chapter 1
Introduction to the Self-Determination Construct

Michael L. Wehmeyer, Karrie A. Shogren, Todd D. Little, and Shane J. Lopez

Abstract Self-determination is a construct with a rich history in philosophy, social welfare, psychology, and education. This chapter overviews the origins of the self-determination construct, beginning with its application in philosophy, it's linkages to discussions of free will and volitional action, and continuing through to its implementation in motivation and personality psychology. The chapter introduces and overviews the origins of Self-Determination Theory and briefly introduces Causal Agency Theory.

This text provides a comprehensive examination of the development of self-determination in the context of two related theories of self-determination. We begin with an introduction to the self-determination construct and its historical uses in philosophy and psychology and other disciplines related to human development and behavior (education, social welfare, etc.). At the onset, it is important to understand that we position self-determination as a general psychological construct within the organizing structure of theories of human agentic behavior. Human agentic theories are discussed in Chap. 2, but at a general level, self-determination, as a psychological construct, refers to self- (vs. other-) caused action—to people acting volitionally, based on their own will. Individual chapters in this first section discuss how self-determination is defined in specific theoretical models, so the intent of this chapter is to trace the development of the construct over time, and to provide a general understanding of the construct.

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Self-Determination in Philosophy

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (Simpson and Weiner 1989) identified the earliest use of the term *self-determination* as occurring in the year 1683 and defined the term as referring to the "determination of one's mind or will by itself toward an object" (p. 919). A second meaning of the term identified by the *Oxford English Dictionary* is "the action of a people in deciding its own form of government" (p. 919), with the first use of that meaning of the construct occurring in 1911. It is the first sense of the term (e.g., the personal sense) that we explore in depth in this text. As the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition shows, this personal sense of the term pertains, at its fundamental level, to issues of *human action* as a function of mind, will, and/or volition. Other definitions illustrate this basic emphasis. *Webster's Third New International Unabridged Dictionary* (Gove 1967) defined self-determination as the "determination of one's acts or states by oneself without external compulsion" (p. 2059). Similarly, the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1992) defined self-determination as the "determination of one's own fate or course of action without compulsion; free will" (p. 814). Self-determination, in essence, refers to *acting* based on *one's own mind or free will*, without external compulsion. Finally, the *American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology* (VandenBos 2007) defines self-determination as "the control of one's behavior by internal convictions and decisions rather than by external demands" (p. 829).

These definitions provide an indication of the basic intent of the construct called 'self-determination' and reflect the sense of its historical antecedent, the philosophical doctrine of *determinism*. The self-determination construct emerged from centuries-old debates about free will and determinism and to understand the intent of the self-determination construct as used today one must begin with an examination of issues pertaining to determinism.

Determinism posits that events, in this context human behavior and actions, are effects of preceding causes. There are generally two forms of the philosophical doctrine, hard and soft determinism. Hard determinism is the doctrine that *every* event and *every* action is caused in accordance with causal laws that account completely for the event's or action's occurrence. Hard determinists believe that even when human actions are posited to result from mediating determinants or causes, such as wants, wishes, desires, motivations, or feelings, those same wants, wishes, desires, motivations, and feelings are, themselves, caused by specific antecedent conditions that ensure their occurrence. Alternatively, the soft determinism position argues that an act can be both *caused* and *free*. This is because, according to the soft determinist, the hard determinist mistakenly equates "caused" with "forced" or "compelled." The soft determinist believes that every action is caused somehow; but not *every* action is compelled. The indeterminist's or anti-determinist's position differs from both hard and soft deterministic positions by positing that there are *no* causes for events or actions, and that humans act completely from *free will*.

This question of *free will* verses *determinism* is generally identified by philosophers to be one of the most enduring philosophical problems of all time, bound inextricably with religious theologies about the free will of man versus the control and authority (determinism) of God. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (Herbermann et al. 1914) stated the dichotomy as such:

> On the one hand, does man possess genuine moral freedom, power of real choice, true ability to determine the course of his thoughts and volitions, to decide which motives shall prevail within his mind, to modify and mold his own character? Or, on the other, are man's thoughts and volitions, his character and external actions, all merely the inevitable outcome of his circumstances? Are they all inexorably predetermined in every detail along rigid lines by events of the past, over which he himself has had no sort of control? This is the real import of the free-will problem.

In his important work, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, published in 1690, John Locke provided a synopsis of the "free will problem." Trying to illustrate the importance of connections in human thought to understanding, Locke wrote

> this proposition "men can determine themselves" is drawn in or inferred from this, "that they shall be punished in the other world." For here the mind, seeing the connexion there is between the idea of men's punishment in the other world and the idea of God punishing; between God punishing and the justice of the punishment; between justice of punishment and guilt; between guilt and a power to do otherwise; between a power to do otherwise and freedom; and between freedom and self-determination, sees the connexion between men and self-determination (Locke 1690).

Locke is considered a soft determinist, someone who saw both causality and free will at work in human behavior. Elsewhere in the *Essay*, which was intended to establish the foundations for a new science of human understanding and knowledge, Locke hypothesized that all human thought comes from *sensation* and *reflection* and, consequently, all human action comes from human thought. Writing in an "*Abstract of the Essay*" published in 1688, he stated:

> In the thoughts I have had concerning the Understanding, I have endeavoured to prove that the mind is at first *rasa tabula*. The mind having been supposed void of all innate characters, comes to receive them by degrees as experience and observation lets them in; and we shall, upon consideration, find they all come from two originals, and are conveyed into the mind by two ways, viz. *sensation* and *reflection*. The mind, taking notice of its own operation about these ideas received by sensation, comes to have ideas of those very operations that pass within itself: this is another source of ideas, and this I call *reflection*; and from hence it is we have the ideas of *thinking*, *willing*, *reasoning*, *doubting*, *purposing.* From these two originals it is that we have all the ideas we have; and I think I may confidently say that, besides what our senses convey into the mind, or the ideas of its own operations about those received from *sensation*, we have no ideas at all (Locke 1688).

As illustrated above, Locke adamantly opposes any notion that ideas are innate as had been suggested by other philosophers, most noticeably in Descartes' declaration that we are born with the *idea* of God planted in us *by* God. All human ideas and knowledge, according to Locke, emerge from experience (sensation) and from reflection on that experience or sensation. That is, Locke's view places

self-determination as a developmental phenomenon – as a guiding feature of development and as an outgrowth of developmental experiences.

Locke classified ideas as simple and complex, with complex ideas derived from relations between simple ideas, generated by reflection. Among these complex ideas were what Locke called "Modes" or ideas that combine simpler elements to form a new whole that does not exist except as a part or feature of something else. For example, we understand the 'idea' of infinity without ever having to see it exist as an actual object that can be counted. Mixed modes, which combined both sensory and reflective elements, were especially important to Locke since they encompassed the ideas of *human actions*, including the ideas of power, volition, and liberty. Locke defines power as the ability to make (active power) or receive (passive power) change (Kemerling, 2000–2001). According to Locke, the human mind has the *active* power of beginning or ceasing its own operations as activated by a preference. The exercise of that power is volition or will. Freedom or liberty (a complex mixed mode idea) is "the power to act on our volition, whatever it may be, without any external compulsion or restraint" (Locke 1690; Chapter II, XXI). Locke avoids entanglement in the free will problem by noting that the cause of the volition is irrelevant, since it is the agent, not the will, which is free. Human beings act freely just insofar as they are capable of translating their mental preferences to do or not to do into their actual performance of the action in question (Kemerling 2000–2001). Locke writes:

> Every one, I think, finds in himself a power to begin or forbear, continue or put an end to several actions in himself. From the consideration of the extent of this power of the mind over the actions of the man, which everyone finds in himself, arise the ideas of liberty and necessity. All the actions that we have any idea of reducing themselves, as has been said, to these two, viz. thinking and motion; so far as a man has power to think or not to think, to move or not to move, according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a man free. Wherever any performance or forbearance are not equally in a man's power; wherever doing or not doing will not equally follow upon the preference of his mind directing it, there he is not free, though perhaps the action may be voluntary. So that the idea of liberty is, the idea of a power in any agent to do or forbear any particular action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either of them is preferred to the other: where either of them is not in the power of the agent to be produced by him according to his volition, there he is not at liberty; that agent is under necessity. So that liberty cannot be where there is no thought, no volition, no will; but there may be thought, there may be will, there may be volition, where there is no liberty (Locke 1690; Book II, Chapter XXI).

Freedom (from the Latin *libertas*), a frequent target of hard determinists like B.F. Skinner, is conceptualized as the human capacity to act (or not to act) as we choose or prefer, without any external compulsion or restraint. Freedom in this sense is usually regarded as a presupposition of moral responsibility: that is, the only actions for which I, as an autonomous person, may be praised or blamed, rewarded or punished, are just those that I perform freely (Herbermann et al. 1914). This view is the crux of the free will problem in determinism; that an omnipotent being (God) can only hold humans accountable for their behavior and actions if, indeed, those humans had the autonomy and free will to act based on their own volition as opposed to all actions being predetermined by God.

Locke's proposals about the causes of human action as both caused and volitional are important as the foundation for understanding the modern sense of the term *self-determination*. Note Locke's soft deterministic distinction that it is the *agent* (the person him or herself) who is free to act, not the action itself (since it is 'caused' by perception or sensation). From Locke and onward, determinism was gradually decoupled from the sole form of determinism considered to that point, theological determinism. Today we recognize numerous 'determinants' of human behavior, including physiological, structural, environmental, and/or organismic factors. Theories of human behavior recognize the impact on human actions and behavior of biological or genetic determinism (behavior as an effect of biological functions such as genes or neurochemicals), familial or relative determinism (human behavior as an effect of family or parental influence or treatment), environmental determinism (behavior as an effect of the environment), psychological determinism (behavior as an effect of how we perceive or understand situations), economic determinism (action as an effect of economic forces or circumstances) and so forth.

With the turn of the twentieth century and the emergence of psychology as a discipline distinct from philosophy, the philosophical discussion of determinism and self-determination as it pertains to human action and behavior becomes overshadowed by discoveries and theories in biology, psychology and anthropology. Nevertheless, even as the meaning or sense of the construct changes as it is used in other disciplines, it is important to remember that the construct's roots lie in the *free will problem* that was the basis of philosophic discussions for centuries. That is, is human behavior the effect of human thought, free will, and volition or are such actions predetermined and indeterminant? As discussed subsequently, the scope of the question altered somewhat during the twentieth century and there is currently less focus on theological determinism and more on biological, psychological, environmental or other forms of determinism. Nevertheless, self-determination still refers fundamentally to and its meanings derive directly from the philosophical debates around determinism.

Self-Determination in Psychology

In the last half of the nineteenth century the rapidly growing discipline of psychology brought its empiricism and experimentalism to bear on questions that had previously been the sole domain of introspective philosophers and, in so doing, changed the question posed by the *free will problem* slightly, from whether human behavior is the effect of free will or is predetermined to whether human behavior is caused by internal versus external forces. In essence, the anti-determinist or indeterminist view espoused in philosophy was never adopted by psychologists, leaving only the hard versus soft determinism perspectives. This separation is likely a function of several factors. The earliest psychologists were heavily influenced in the early 1900s by the perceived explanatory power of the 'new biology' which featured the merger of Darwinian evolutionary theory with the newly rediscovered mechanisms

of Mendelian genetics (Cravens 1978). To the pioneers trying to establish psychology as a viable science, the new biology could, seemingly, explain the *causes* of human behavior through mechanistic and deterministic means without having to resort to the introspective techniques that dominated philosophy. Psychologists looked toward these biological models of determinism to begin to explain human behavior, focusing first on what were identified as social problems, like mental deficiency, feeblemindedness, crime, pauperism, and so forth. This focus was no more clearly in evidence then in the establishment of the field of mental measurement in the early 1900s. While Binet and Simon held what might be seen as a soft determinist position regarding intelligence, crediting both nature and nurture, the field of intelligence testing in America, led by Goddard, Terman, and Yerkes, rapidly became firmly associated with a hard determinist perspective of the hereditary nature of intelligence and, indeed, with the strong determinist position of eugenicists, which claimed social ills like crime, prostitution, and poverty were attributable almost exclusively to heritability in intelligence (or the lack thereof, feeblemindedness). Even Edward Thorndike, the founder of the mental measurement movement in education, held strongly eugenic, and thus deterministic, beliefs. The field was not exclusively hereditarian and deterministic, of course. William Bagley, in his 1925 text *Determinism in Education* rails against the assumptions of hereditarian determinists' conception of intelligence, writing:

> It is the purpose of the present paper to show that the sanction which mental measurements apparently give to this particular variety of determinism [note: referring to the hereditarian position in intelligence] is based, not upon the facts that the measurements reveal, but upon the hypotheses and assumptions that the development of the measures has involved; that these hypotheses and assumptions, while doubtless justified for certain purposes, are at basis questionable in the last degree; and that the present tendency to extend them *ad libitum* beyond a very restricted field is fraught with educational and social dangers of so serious and far-reaching a character as to cause the greatest concern (Bagley 1925, pp. 11–12).

Nevertheless, a hard deterministic view of human behavior held sway in early psychology. Skinnerian psychology rejected the claim that behavior is a function of volitional thought or ideas or, indeed, any internal mechanisms. In *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* Skinner challenged the existence of "autonomous man" and labeled as myths, illusions, or 'prescientific superstitions' all such constructs associated with 'autonomous man,' including reason, mind, values, concepts, thought, judgment, volition, purpose, memory, independence, or self-esteem. Skinner's hard deterministic position is, in essence, that all human behavior is governed (caused) by laws of operant conditioning – all functions that other psychological perspectives apply to 'autonomous man,' including volitional thought, can be explained by reinforcement contingencies. Skinner (1971) stated:

> To be for oneself is to be almost nothing. The great individualists so often cited to show the value of personal freedom have owed their successes to earlier social environments. The involuntary individualism of a Robinson Crusoe and the voluntary individualism of a Henry David Thoreau show obvious debts to society. If Crusoe had reached the island as a baby, and if Thoreau had grown up unattended on the shores of Walden Pond, their stories would have been different. We must all begin as babies, and no degree of self-determination, self-sufficiency, or self-reliance will make us individuals in any sense beyond that of single members of the human species. (pp. 123–124.)

Not surprisingly, modern behaviorists continue to hold this perspective with regard to the self-determination construct. Baer (1998) noted, in discussing "problems in imposing self-determination" (p. 50), that proposals with regard to promoting self-determination are, fundamentally, ideologies (such as personal autonomy or freedom) as opposed to behavioral science, and that if the goal of practitioners is to ensure that people with disabilities (the topic of the special issue of a journal he was commenting on) have greater choice opportunities and experience greater control, then the course of action to follow is to arrange the environments of people in ways that they want them arranged. Baer explained that this environmental control can be achieved through the use of a concurrent schedules approach, where the intervener creates two environments that differ in only one dimension, provides the person with the disability access to those environments, and measures how much time the person spends in each environment.

It was not until the establishment of the field of personality psychology as a discipline distinct from general psychology in the late 1930s that issues pertaining to self-determination were addressed with any systematic focus by psychologists. Just as the free will problem had been one of the dominant themes in philosophy in the preceding centuries, issues pertaining to causation of human behavior became central to the emerging discipline of personality psychology. In his early text titled *Foundations for a Science of Personality*, Angyal (1941) proposed that an essential feature of a living organism is its autonomy, where autonomous means self-governing or governed from inside. According to Angyal, an organism "lives in a world in which things happen according to laws which are heteronomous (e.g., governed from outside) from the point of view of the organism" (p. 33). Angyal stated that "organisms are subjected to the laws of the physical world, as is any other object of nature, with the exception that it can oppose self-determination to external determination" (p. 33). Angyal suggested that the important task for developing a *science* of personality was in identifying principle(s) of the *biological total process* – the movement of organisms from undifferentiated parts to an organized whole. He defined the "biological total process" as a trend toward autonomy and argued that the *science of personality* is, in essence, the study of two essential determinants to human behavior, autonomous-determinism (or self-determination) and heteronomous-determinism (other-determined). He noted that "in the realm of *organismic happenings* we find neither entirely autonomous nor entirely heteronomous determinants" (p. 21), and suggested a psychology of individual differences by noting that, within nature, there are marked variations in the importance and balance of autonomous and heteronomous determinants to behavior. Nonetheless, Angyal places primary importance for laying the foundation for a science of personality in the fact that a central process of an organism is the movement toward autonomous-determination. He showed this by stating:

> It would probably be generally agreed that without autonomy, without self-government, the life process could not be understood. Selection, choice, self-regulation, adaptation, regeneration are phenomena which logically imply the autonomy of the organism. Selection, that is the search for certain environmental conditions, is only possible in a being capable of self-directed activity (p. 34).

Angyal's links to issues arising from biological determinism are evident here (e.g., [natural] selection, [species] adaptation), and the central problem he poses is the degree to which human behavior is *caused* by *internal* versus *external* factors. Nonetheless, autonomous-determination, or self-determination, as described by Angyal returns the discussion to the issues characterizing the discussion of self-determination in philosophy; that of human action as both internally-determined and *volitional*. Themes of choice and autonomy that are today accepted as primary to defining the construct appear in Angyal's proposal for the new science of personality psychology, though without the baggage of philosophy's free will problem. Self-determination had moved from its philosophical alignment with the problem of free will versus *theological* determinism to one of autonomous-versus heteronomous-determination. Furthermore, Angyal's use of the term moves away from the hard determinism that dominated the psychology of previous decades toward a soft determinism that considers the importance of both nature and nurture. He noted:

> …the autonomy of the organism is not an absolute one. Self-determination is restricted by outside influences which, with respect to the organism, are heteronomous. The organism lives in a world in which processes go on independent of it. The organism asserts itself against the heteronomous surroundings (p. 38).

This use of the construct not only typifies a soft deterministic perspective, but also embodies Locke's distinction of the person being free to act, but not the action itself being free from causality.

Self-Determination in Motivational Psychology The most influential use of the self-determination construct in psychology emerged from the work of psychologists Edward Deci, Richard Ryan, and colleagues. Although Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is covered in detail in subsequent chapters, given the importance of this work in moving the application of the self-determination construct forward, it is relevant to highlight some of Deci and Ryan's early work as critical to the general or overall understanding of self-determination. Edward Deci, in an early text, *The Psychology of Self-Determination* (Deci 1980), discussed, as we have in this chapter, distinctions concerning self-determination, will, and free will. Deci argued that, despite the lack of a focus in psychology on issues of freedom and self-determination evident at that time, movement away from mechanistic theories and the recognition that "[i]nternal, mental events ... have been shown to be useful in explaining behavior, and numerous phenomena have been investigated that are relevant to the larger issue of the interplay of freedom and boundedness in human behavior" (p. 3). Such developments, suggested Deci "set the stage for an extended discussion of self-determination" (p. 3). He argued that in focusing on self-determination, "we are really raising the question, 'To what extent can people decide their own behaviors'" (p. 4). Deci (1980) answers this question as such:

> People have considerable capacity for self-determination, and the operation of will—that capacity to choose behaviors based on inner desires and perceptions—is the basis of self-determination (p. 5).

At this juncture in the development of the self-determination construct, Deci proposed that "will is the capacity of the human organism to choose how to satisfy needs" and that "self-determination is the process of utilizing will" (p. 26). Will is the "capacity for conscious choice to determine behavior" (p. 26) and is "inextricably involved with the intrinsic need for competence and self-determination" (p. 26). Further, Deci (1980) argued, "the conceptualization of intrinsic motivation as a basic human need for feeling competent and self-determining provides a framework for studying self-determination and will…" (p. 27).

In 1980, Deci and Ryan articulated a formal theory of intrinsic motivation that incorporated a central role for self-determination, and in 1985 they expanded this to be a theory of both intrinsic motivation and varied forms of extrinsic motivation. Working from White's (1959) proposal of an innate, *intrinsic* energy source, labeled by White as effectance motivation, which was theorized to motivate a wide variety of human behavior, and also building on work by cognitive theorists on personal causation and perceived locus of causality (deCharms 1968; Heider 1958), Deci and Ryan (1985) proposed that intrinsic motivation and self-determination were "necessary concepts for an organismic theory" [of motivation] (Deci and Ryan, p. 7).

In fact, Self-Determination Theory has gradually expanded over time. In 1980 Deci and Ryan presented a formal theory to explain empirical findings concerning the effects of external events on intrinsic motivation. Called *Cognitive Evaluation Theory*, it contained three primary propositions: (1) intrinsic motivation requires a sense of autonomy or self-determination; (2) intrinsic motivation also requires a sense of competence and mastery; and (3) events relevant to the initiation and regulation of intrinsically motivated behavior have three aspects (informational, controlling, and amotivating) that can be differentially salient to people, thus enhancing or undermining their motivation. Deci and Ryan (1985) later expanded SDT to include a theory of internalization and the development of autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation and self-regulation (*Organismic Integration Theory* or OIT). Still later they articulated a need based theory of well-being (BPN; *Basic Psychological Needs Theory* Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000). These formulations, along with other mini-theories are collectively described as *Self-Determination Theory* (see Chap. 4, this volume).

Importantly, Self-Determination Theory has continuously asserted the importance for modern psychology of concepts of autonomy and volition, arguing that these are not in any way problematic for a thoroughly deterministic understanding of behavior. Indeed, SDT suggests that both autonomous and controlled behaviors have distinctive neuropsychological underpinnings, and both harness both implicit and explicit mental processes (e.g., Ryan and Deci 2006).

Today *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT; Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000, 2011) represents the most extensive use of the self-determination construct in the field of psychology during the second half of the twentieth century to the present, and subsequent chapters will provide more detail on the current status of the theory. Meanwhile, other disciplines were applying the construct to their fields as well.

Self-Determination in Social Welfare

For much of the 20th Century a guiding principle of social work was the client *right* to self-determination (Biestek and Gehrig 1978; McDermott 1975). Owing much to the sense of the term as a national or political right, which emerged in the early twentieth century and which is discussed subsequently, the emphasis in social work on client self-determination became a principle that guided the way in which services should be provided by social workers. More than just a right of people in general, however, the use of the construct in social work embodies a respect and value for the rights of individuals to make choices and decisions and to, in essence, live autonomous lives.

Corporate or National Self-Determination

As mentioned previously, an alternate meaning of self-determination is as a national or political construct referring to the rights of peoples to self-governance. In his examination of national self-determination Heater (1994) attributed much of the notoriety for self-determination and its relative importance in 20th Century politics to Woodrow Wilson's famous "Fourteen Points" speech to a joint session of Congress on January 8, 1918. In this speech, Wilson outlined fourteen points for a postwar settlement that would lead to world peace. Six of the 14 referred specifically to ensuring that nations who were defeated in the war would be assured the opportunity for national self-determination. Heater noted that the twentieth century preference for national self-determination emerged from twin eighteenth century notions that the people, not monarchs, are sovereign and that the people are to be thought of as "the nation." Through the nineteenth century, the belief that a people should have the right and opportunity to determine their own government spread and gained wide acceptance, and by the twentieth century became a principal of international justice. As the twentieth century went on, this sense of the 'right of a peoples of a nation to self-governance' was adapted by other groups of people who were not identified as being the citizens of a country, but instead were self-identified by some factor (racial identity, disability status) that, in turn, was seen to result in the loss of a corporate right to self-governance. For example, one of the days of the African American holiday Kwanzaa is self-determination, referring to the rights of African Americans to shape their own corporate destinies instead of having some other group (e.g., the majority culture) shape that destiny.

Self-Determination in Disability

In the latter years of the twentieth century, the self-determination construct was applied to another civil rights cause; namely, the rights of people with disabilities for self-governance. This sense of the term is captured best by Robert Williams (1989),

a national leader in the disability rights effort and a man with a disability, who stated:

> But, without being afforded the right and opportunity to make choices in our lives, we will never obtain full, first class American citizenship. So we do not have to be told what self-determination means. We already know that it is just another word for freedom. We already know that self-determination is just another word for describing a life filled with rising expectations, dignity, responsibility, and opportunity. That it is just another word for having the chance to live the American Dream (p. 16).

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the notion of a right of people with disabilities to self-determination was first raised by a philosopher, Swedish philosopher Bengt Nirje, who in 1972 authored a chapter titled *The Right to Self-Determination*, and, in the opening paragraph of that chapter, stated:

> … the choices, wishes, desires, and aspirations of a handicapped person have to be taken into consideration as much as possible in actions affecting him. To assert oneself with one's family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, other people, or vis-à-vis an agency is difficult for many persons. It is especially difficult for someone who has a disability or is otherwise perceived as devalued. But in the end, even the impaired person has to manage as a distinct individual, and thus has his identity defined to himself and to others through the circumstances and conditions of his existence. Thus, the road to self-determination is both difficult and all important for a person who is impaired. (p. 177)

Nirje's chapter appeared in the same book in which Robert Perske (1972) called for the opportunity for people with disabilities to experience the 'dignity of risk':

> The world in which we live is not always safe, secure and predictable.... Every day that we wake up and live in the hours of that day, there is a possibility of being thrown up against a situation where we may have to risk everything, even our lives. This is the way the real world is. We must work to develop every human resource within us in order to prepare for these days. To deny any person their fair share of risk experiences is to further cripple them for healthy living. (p. 199)

Self-Determination as Empowerment As illustrated by Williams, Nirje, and Perske, within the context of the disability rights and advocacy movement, the construct as a personal characteristic has been imbued with the empowerment and "rights" orientation typically associated with the sense of the term as a national or political construct. Empowerment is a term usually associated with social movements and typically is used, as Rappaport (1981) stated, in reference to actions that "enhance the possibilities for people to control their lives" (p. 15), as such, the articulation of a right to self-determination, drawing on an amalgamation of the national or corporate sense of the term and a more personal sense, has become a theme within the disability rights movement.

Self-Determination, Strengths-Based Models of Disability, and Quality of Life As the disability rights movement matured, and as civil and legislative protections (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act) began to ensure equal access to life in the community for people with disabilities, understandings of disability that focused on defects and pathology began to wane, replaced, slowly, by person-environment fit models (Wehmeyer 2013). A strengths-based approach to disability

has developed roughly parallel with the growth of positive psychology as a subdiscipline, and for most of the same reasons (Shogren 2013), just as within positive psychology (Ryan and Deci 2000) self-determination took on a central role in research and practice. This central role was further enhanced by the field's shift toward models of supports delivery to people with disabilities that focused on enhancing quality of life, with enhanced self-determination conceptualized as an outcome of such a focus (Wehmeyer and Schalock 2001).

Self-Determination in Education

In the early 1990s, the growing emphasis on self-determination in the disability rights movement entered into national efforts to educate students with disabilities. Over the course of 25 years, researchers and interventionists in special education have examined the role of self-determination, and efforts to promote self-determination, on the lives of students with disabilities (see Wehmeyer et al. 2003 for overview). Many of these interventions were conceptualized more by the rights-based language used in the empowerment or disability rights movement (e.g., rights to make decisions, control one's life, live independently, etc.). Causal Agency Theory, discussed in a subsequent chapter, is one such theoretical model, conceptualizing self-determination as a dispositional characteristic (and not explicitly within a motivational framework), but drawing from and aligning with the organismic nature of SDT.

Conclusion

From its initial use in philosophy to modern usages pertaining to volitional action and autonomous motivation, the self-determination construct has proven to be a useful heuristic across multiple disciplines. The following chapters will further the examination of the construct in the larger context of human agentic theories and in adolescent development.

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