



# Modernizing the Mind: Psychological Knowledge and the Remaking of Society

*Steven C. Ward*

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## **Modernizing the Mind: Psychological Knowledge and the Remaking of Society** Steven C. Ward

When did fidgety children begin to suffer from attention deficit disorder? How did frightened people come to be called paranoid? Why are we considered to have emotional intelligence and not simply caring personalities?

While psychological knowledge began in the relative isolation of laboratories and universities, it has since permeated various professions, institutions, and everyday life. Society and our conceptions of self have fundamentally changed with psychology's modernization of the mind. Ward provides a social and cultural history of the spread of psychological knowledge, assessing the way this proliferation has reconfigured society's meaning, and the way people view themselves and others.

Using ideas borrowed from science and technology studies, the sociology of culture, and the sociology of organizations, Ward examines how American psychology established itself as the central purveyor of truth about the mind and self in the 20th century. He examines how psychology has essentially become common knowledge, and his innovative account offers a novel theory about the growth and influence of numerous different knowledge forms.

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