

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of American Intelligence Testing

Leila Zenderland

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

This book offers the first complete study of the origins of American intelligence testing. It follows the life and work of Henry Herbert Goddard, America's first intelligence tester and author of the most popular American eugenics tract, *The Kallikak Family*. Leila Zenderland traces the controversies surrounding Goddard's efforts to bring Alfred Binet's tests of intelligence from France to America and to introduce them into the basic institutions of American life – from hospitals to classrooms to courtrooms. She shows how testers used their findings to address the most pressing social and political questions of their day, including poverty, crime, prostitution, alcoholism, immigration restriction, and military preparedness. The book also explores the broader legacies of the testing movement by showing how Goddard's ideas helped to reshape the very meaning of mental retardation, special education, clinical psychology, and the “normal” mind in ways that would be felt for the rest of the century.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of
American Intelligence Testing

Leila Zenderland

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Measuring Minds

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of American Intelligence Testing

Leila Zenderland

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge Studies in the History of Psychology

GENERAL EDITORS: MITCHELL G. ASH AND
WILLIAM R. WOODWARD

This series provides a publishing forum for outstanding scholarly work in the history of psychology. The creation of the series reflects a growing concentration in this area by historians and philosophers of science, intellectual and cultural historians, and psychologists interested in historical and theoretical issues.

The series is open both to manuscripts dealing with the history of psychological theory and research and to work focusing on the varied social, cultural, and institutional contexts and impacts of psychology. Writing about psychological thinking and research of any period will be considered. In addition to innovative treatments of traditional topics in the field, the editors particularly welcome work that breaks new ground by offering historical considerations of issues such as the linkages of academic and applied psychology with other fields, for example, psychiatry, anthropology, sociology, and psychoanalysis; international, intercultural, or gender-specific differences in psychological theory and research; or the history of psychological research practices. The series will include both single-authored monographs and occasional coherently defined, rigorously edited essay collections.

Also in the series

Gestalt psychology in German culture, 1890–1967

MITCHELL G. ASH

Constructing the subject: Historical origins of psychological research

KURT DANZIGER

Changing the rules: Psychology in the Netherlands, 1900–1985

TRUDY DEHUE

The professionalization of psychology in Nazi Germany

ULFRIED GEUTER

Metaphors in the history of psychology

edited by DAVID E. LEARY

*Rebels within the ranks: psychologists' critique of scientific authority
and democratic realities in New Deal America*

KATHERINE PANDORA

Inventing our selves: Psychology, power and personhood

NIKOLAS ROSE

Crowds, psychology, and politics, 1871–1899

JAAP VAN GINNEKEN

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of
American Intelligence Testing

Leila Zenderland

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Measuring Minds

Henry Herbert Goddard and the
Origins of American Intelligence Testing

Leila Zenderland



Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of
American Intelligence Testing
Leila Zenderland
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Leila Zenderland 1998

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1998
First paperback edition 2001
Reprinted 2001

Printed in the United States of America

Typeface Times Roman

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data is available

ISBN 0 521 44373 3 hardback
ISBN 0 521 00363 6 paperback

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of
 American Intelligence Testing
 Leila Zenderland
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

Preface	<i>page</i> vii
Introduction: Motives, Meanings, and Contexts	1
1 Spirit and Science: Faith, Healing, and Mission	16
2 “A Little Child Shall Lead Them”: Educational Evangelism and Child Study	44
3 “Psychological Work among the Feeble-Minded”: The Medical Meaning of “Mental Deficiency”	71
4 Psychological Work in the Schools: The Statistical Meaning of “Subnormality”	105
5 Causes and Consequences: The Kallikak Family as Eugenic Parable	143
6 The Biology and Sociology of “Prevention”: “Defectives, Dependents, and Delinquents”	186
7 Psychological Work and the State: Reformers, Professionals, and the Public	222
8 Psychological Work and the Nation: The Political Meaning of Intelligence	261
9 Leaving Vineland: Popularity, Notoriety, and a Place in History	301
Epilogue: Psychological Legacies, Historical Lessons, and Luck	348
Abbreviations Used in the Notes	365
Notes	366
Major Manuscript Collections Consulted	440
Publications by Henry Herbert Goddard	442
Index	449

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of
American Intelligence Testing
Leila Zenderland
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Preface

Writing about the life of Henry Herbert Goddard has made me appreciate the ironies of history. On a more personal level, nothing seems more ironic in hindsight than my reason for choosing to study Goddard in the first place. As a graduate student, I had become fascinated with the history of intelligence testing after reading Leon Kamin's study, *The Science and Politics of I.Q.* However, since I was already juggling my coursework with a job as an editor, I thought it unwise to undertake such a massive project for a dissertation. So instead I chose to focus on Goddard. After all, I asked myself, how long could it take to explicate the ideas of the author of *The Kallikak Family*? And besides, the broader framework for understanding Goddard's science, the heredity-environment debate, had largely been worked out. At the time, I had only one serious reservation: was it fair, I asked my advisor Charles Rosenberg, to write a biography of a subject whom my reading had already led me to dislike? "Don't worry," I remember him replying. "In studying Goddard, you'll come to see the world as he saw it, and then you'll understand him."

Far too many years later, I have finally completed what was supposed to be a short study. The life of Goddard led me into the history of intelligence testing. Both subjects proved far more complex, more surprising, and more intellectually challenging and rewarding than I had ever imagined. Trying to see the world through Goddard's eyes reoriented my perspective. Moreover, the heredity-environment framework, which seemed so clear when I began, soon proved of relatively little explanatory value. Instead, I had to find new frameworks to explain both Goddard and his science. The result is this book.

Working on such a long project also means incurring a long list of debts. This is especially true in my case, for in order to understand the history of testing, I also had to understand the histories of psychology, medicine, and biology – fields far removed from my own background in American cultural history. Fortunately, I was able to find both institutional support and generous individuals willing to share their expertise.

My experiences as a graduate student in the University of Pennsylvania's Department of American Civilization proved invaluable in preparing me for

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00363-6 - Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of
American Intelligence Testing
Leila Zenderland
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

this study, for its chairman, Murray Murphey, strongly believed that the social sciences and the humanities could be, and should be, interconnected. Since this department encouraged interdisciplinary scholarship, I was able to work closely with faculty from other departments including those of History and the History and Sociology of Science. Bruce Kuklick, Henrika Kuklick, and Charles Rosenberg all profoundly influenced my approach to the history of ideas. Influential as well were graduate students from all three departments doing related research, among them Janet Tighe, Lou Zanine, John O'Donnell, Nancy Tomes, Jim Capshew, and Jack Pressman.

I owe a large debt to the members of Cheiron, the International Society for the Study of the Behavioral and Social Sciences, who willingly shared their expertise in the history of psychology. Although members who helped me are too numerous to name, I am especially grateful to John Burnham, Don Dewsbury, Ben Harris, Horace Marchant, and Kathy Milar, as well as to the supportive community of scholars with special expertise in the history of testing: John Carson, Steven Gelb, Henry Minton, Jim Reed, Peter van Drunen, and Richard von Mayrhauser. Mike Sokal proved a wonderful resource in more ways than I can mention. Historians of biology were generous as well; I thank Hamilton Cravens, Dan Kevles, Phil Pauly, and especially Diane Paul. My efforts to balance the history of science with American social history were also helped by the Los Angeles Social History Study Group; among its members who commented on several chapters of this book are Hal Barron, Phil Ethington, Doug Flaming, Nancy Fitch, Darryl Holter, Sandy Jacoby, John Laslett, Margo McBane, Jan Reiff, Steve Ross, Bob Slayton, and Frank Stricker. Finally, I am especially grateful to Ray Fancher and Franz Samelson, who read this manuscript for Cambridge, and to the series editors Mitchell Ash and Bill Woodward; all four made astute suggestions for revisions that challenged my thinking in the best of ways.

Financial support proved crucial in allowing me to conduct the archival research necessary for this study. I began my work with a summer grant from the Archives of the History of American Psychology at the University of Akron. Summer stipends from both the National Endowment for the Humanities and the History and Philosophy of Science Division of the National Science Foundation, as well as several research grants from California State University, supported additional visits to archives. Numerous archivists, librarians, psychologists, and historians helped me locate and interpret materials used in this study. Marion White McPherson and John Popplestone were unfailingly supportive and extremely resourceful in retrieving archival records during my many trips to Akron. I also thank John Miller and Sharon Ochsenhirt, as well as Bob Zangrando for his hospitality. John Rose of the Vineland Training School helped me locate historic photographs. Pnina and Z'ev Kronish made it possible for me to find numerous materials in New

Preface

ix

York City. Mrs. H. Weiss of the Department of Records, Israelitische Kultus-gemeinde of Vienna, tracked down the fate of Goddard's friends, the Krenbergers. Clinical psychologists Richard Flaten and Chris Milar helped me understand contemporary diagnostic methods, while Marie Skodak Crissey shared her memories of Goddard's methods. And I am especially grateful to the people of East Vassalboro, Maine, among them Betty Taylor, Margaret Cates, the relatives of Rufus Jones, and above all Esther Holt, who introduced me to their community and to their Quaker meeting, and who helped me to reconstruct the world Goddard would have known as a child.

Support I received from my own institution, Cal State Fullerton, proved invaluable as well. Barbara Campbell was a wonderful research assistant; other graduate students also helped me track down library materials. Staff members Jo Ann Robinson, Giulii Kraemer, and Doug Temple went out of their way to help me on countless occasions; I also thank Nancy Caudill from Interlibrary Loan and Mike Riley from Photographic Services. Colleagues from other departments generously shared their expertise, among them Chris Cozby and Richard Lindley in psychology, Nancy Fitch in History, Jill Rosenbaum in Criminal Justice, and Brad Starr in Religious Studies. Above all, I know I am very fortunate in working with an exceptionally talented group of colleagues in the Department of American Studies: Allan Axelrad, Jesse Battan, Wayne Hobson, John Ibson, Karen Lystra, David Pivar, Terri Snyder, Michael Steiner, Pam Steinle, and Jim Weaver. I thank them all for their friendship, their thoughtful responses to my work, and their unwavering faith that my often-arcane studies in psychology, medicine, and biology did indeed form an important part of American cultural history. Wayne, David, Allan, and Karen deserve special thanks, for they valiantly read this entire manuscript at different points; I am deeply grateful for their incisive suggestions, many of which are now a part of my text.

I owe a particular debt to family and friends who repeatedly offered me support and advice over the many years it took to write this book, especially Debbie Forczek and Leo Ribuffo. Finally, I thank my parents, Harry and Sylvia Zenderland, who taught me to love history and to know that it matters.