

Multiple critiques of Multiple Intelligences (MI)

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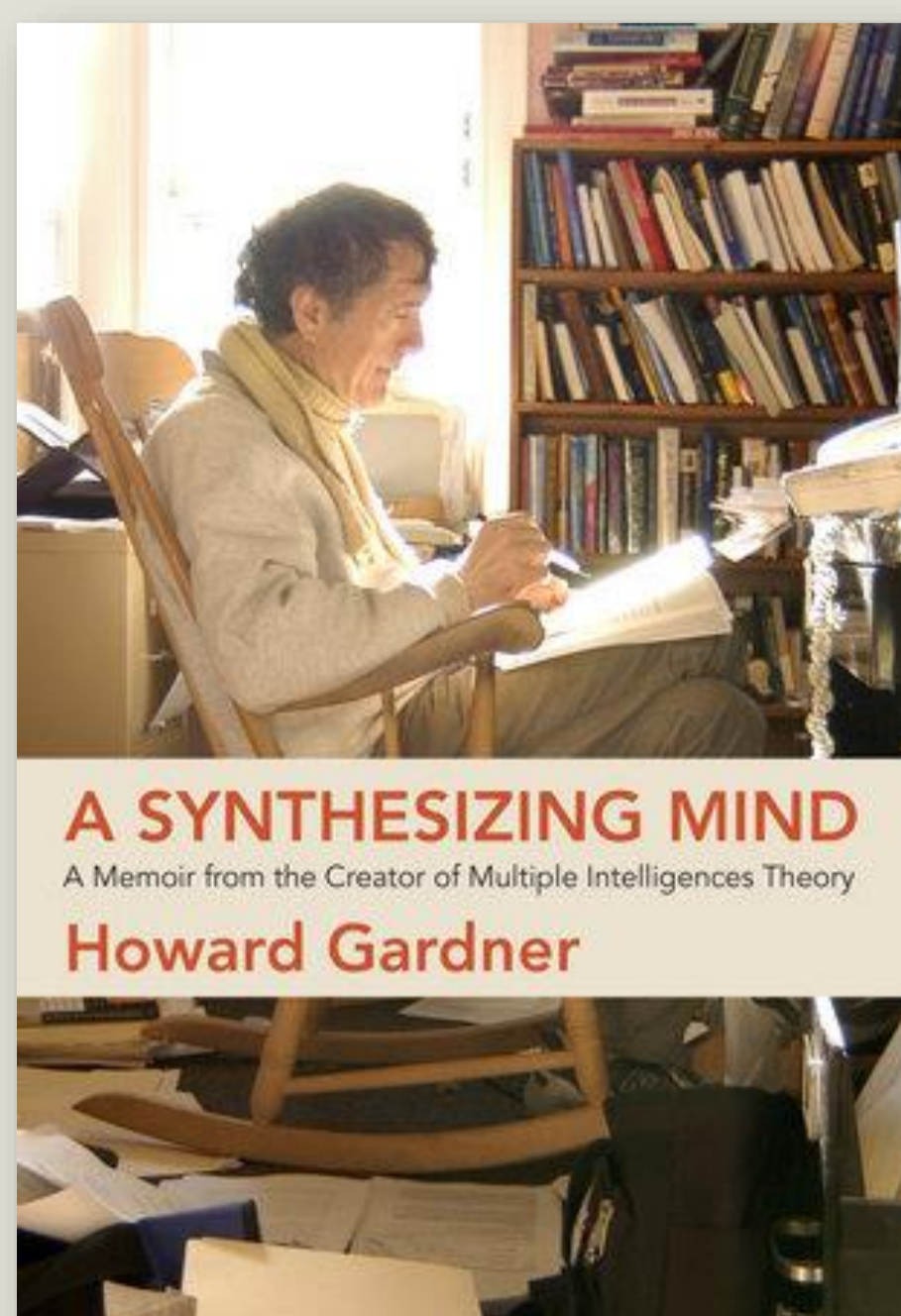
Howard Gardner 2020



HARVARD GRADUATE
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Howard Gardner 2020
Howard Gardner, the John H. and Elisabeth A. Hobbs Professor in Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education received the 2020 Distinguished Contributions to Research in Education Award – in the very year when his alma mater celebrated its centennial.



The Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Professor Gardner, whose academic career started as that of a psychologist, received this award for his outstanding achievement and success in education research concerning his theory of multiple intelligences – MI, which suggests that human intelligence should be differentiated into modalities, rather than be accepted as a general ability.

Every person has every single intelligence as it is a human capacity and each of us has a unique intelligence profile.

Intelligences are productive, culture specific operations.

Modalities may interfere but not necessarily and in various possible ways.

Intelligences are not fixed but may be developed.



Widening the horizons of giftedness

Activities of the Diversity research group within the In-Service Student Teacher's Society and its prior forms at the University of Pécs (UP)



Attitudes towards Critiques

"There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about." (O. Wilde 1890) paraphrased

"For a scholar, a fate worse than being criticized is being ignored." (H. Gardner – S. Moran 2006)

Growth mindset vs. Fixed mindset – the essential roles of critiques and praise (Dweck 2006)

Reasons behind the research of MI critiques

Although the gardnerian theory is well-known, accepted and applied in every day educational venues world-wide, it has met several critical comments throughout the past four decades. The aim of this presentation is to give an overview of these critiques for the educationalist audience applying MI theory – as literary review may prove to be a perfect scholarly activity during the Pandemic.

I am referring to the concept of intelligences, using plural, due to the theorist's initial intentions.

My analysis outlines the main sources of relevant international literature in order to widen the related professional horizon of educationalists, especially in the Carpathian Basin, about the critical phenomena related to MI.

Sarcasm related to "Under Fire" "

Howard Gardner's work is astonishingly diverse, imaginative, occasionally improbable, always engaging – the kind that calls for conversations deep into the night over good brandy. Howard Gardner Under Fire is the next best thing, showing from many perspectives how rich a dialogue he has provoked." (Murray 2006 - Co-author of The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life)

„Howard Gardner is some kind of phenomenon, make no mistake about it! And this book explaining his message is a lot of book for its modest price. I expect it will (and certainly should) enter into every college library." (Jensen 2008)

Nature of critiques

Paradigmatic: Myths and Reality (White J. from 1984 on; Gardner 1995 – and their aftermath: collected in Armstrong from 1994 on; Eysenck 1994; Morgan 1996; Klein 1997, 1998; Collins 1998; Gottfredson 2004; Willingham 2004; Murray 2006; Visser et al. 2006a,b; Waterhouse 2006a,b; Jensen 2008; De Bruyckere et al. from 2015 on; Ritchie 2015)
Neutral / Friendly / Peer / School-founding: Sternberg from 1985 on; Demetriou et al from 1993 on; Goleman from 1995 on; Dweck 2006; Schaler 2006; Holmes 2016; White L. A. 2019)
Progressive: Eberstadt 1999/2002; Kincheloe, 2004

Myth	Reality
1: Now that seven intelligences have been identified, one can - and perhaps should - create seven tests and secure seven scores.	MI theory represents a critique of "psychometrics-as-usual." A battery of MI tests is inconsistent with the major tenets of the theory.
2: An intelligence is the same as a domain or a discipline.	An intelligence is a new kind of construct, and it should not be confused with a domain or a discipline.
3: An intelligence is the same as a "learning style," a "cognitive style," or a "working style."	The concept of style designates a general approach that an individual can apply equally to every conceivable content. In contrast, an intelligence is a capacity, with its component processes, that is geared to a specific content in the world (such as musical sounds or spatial patterns).
4: MI theory is not empirical. (OR: MI theory is empirical but but has been disproved)	MI theory is based wholly on empirical evidence and can be revised on the basis of new empirical findings.
5: MI theory is incompatible with <i>g</i> (general intelligence), with hereditarian accounts, or with environmental accounts of the nature and causes of intelligence.	MI theory questions not the existence but the province and explanatory power of <i>g</i> . By the same token, MI theory is neutral on the question of heritability of specific intelligences, instead underscoring the centrality of genetic/environmental interactions.
6: MI theory so broadens the notion of intelligence that it includes all psychological constructs and thus validates the usefulness, as well as the usual connotation of the term.	This statement is simply wrong. It is the standard definition of intelligence that narrowly constricts our view, treating a certain form of scholastic performance as if it compassed the range of human capacities and leading to disdain for those who happen not to be psychometrically bright.
7: There is an eighth (or ninth or 10th) intelligence.	Eight exactly - see pie chart. Other "candidates" have not proved to fit the criteria set for a gardnerian intelligence – for the time being, 2021.

Gardner 1995: 202-206