

PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA

PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA IS A DYNAMIC FIELD THAT ENCOMPASSES THE STUDY OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR, MENTAL PROCESSES, AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING. WITH A RICH HISTORY AND DIVERSE CULTURAL INFLUENCES, PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA IS CHARACTERIZED BY A UNIQUE BLEND OF APPROACHES THAT REFLECT THE COUNTRY'S MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY. THIS ARTICLE WILL EXPLORE THE EVOLUTION OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA, THE VARIOUS BRANCHES AND SPECIALIZATIONS, THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PATHWAYS FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS, AND THE CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND TRENDS SHAPING THE FIELD TODAY. WE WILL ALSO DELVE INTO MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES AND THE IMPACT OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE. BY THE END OF THIS EXPLORATION, READERS WILL GAIN A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN ADDRESSING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF THE POPULATION.

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HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA

THE ROOTS OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA CAN BE TRACED BACK TO THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES, WHEN THE FIRST PSYCHOLOGISTS BEGAN TO EMERGE IN THE ACADEMIC AND CLINICAL SETTINGS. THE INAUGURAL PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT WAS ESTABLISHED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY IN 1926, MARKING A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PSYCHOLOGY IN THE COUNTRY. INITIALLY INFLUENCED BY EUROPEAN PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES, AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY BEGAN TO CARVE OUT ITS IDENTITY BY INTEGRATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND LOCAL CONTEXTS.

THROUGHOUT THE MID-20TH CENTURY, PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA EXPERIENCED SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH, PARTICULARLY AFTER WORLD WAR II. AS SOLDIERS RETURNED HOME, THERE WAS A RISING DEMAND FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO ADDRESS ISSUES SUCH AS PTSD. THIS LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VARIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS, FURTHER LEGITIMIZING THE PROFESSION AND FOSTERING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTITIONERS DEDICATED TO ADVANCING PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE. BY THE 1980S, PSYCHOLOGY GAINED RECOGNITION AS A VITAL COMPONENT OF HEALTHCARE, AND THE AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY (APS) PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ADVOCATING FOR THE PROFESSION.

KEY MILESTONES IN AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY

SEVERAL KEY MILESTONES MARK THE JOURNEY OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA:

- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENTS IN UNIVERSITIES.
- THE FORMATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY IN 1966.
- THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HEALTH INSURANCE ACT IN 1975, WHICH INCLUDED PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES.
- THE RECOGNITION OF PSYCHOLOGY AS A DISTINCT PROFESSIONAL FIELD BY VARIOUS LEGISLATIVE ACTS.
- THE INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE IN RECENT YEARS.

BRANCHES AND SPECIALIZATIONS OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA ENCOMPASSES A WIDE ARRAY OF BRANCHES AND SPECIALIZATIONS, EACH FOCUSING ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND MENTAL HEALTH. UNDERSTANDING THESE BRANCHES IS ESSENTIAL FOR BOTH ASPIRING PSYCHOLOGISTS AND INDIVIDUALS SEEKING PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES.

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY IS ONE OF THE MOST RECOGNIZED BRANCHES, DEALING WITH THE ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS. CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS WORK IN VARIOUS SETTINGS, INCLUDING HOSPITALS, PRIVATE PRACTICES, AND COMMUNITY HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS. THEY EMPLOY THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES SUCH AS COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT) AND PSYCHODYNAMIC THERAPY TO HELP CLIENTS MANAGE THEIR MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES.

COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGISTS FOCUS ON PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS DEALING WITH EVERYDAY LIFE ISSUES, RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. THEY OFTEN USE TALK THERAPY TO HELP CLIENTS DISCOVER COPING STRATEGIES AND IMPROVE THEIR OVERALL WELL-BEING. THIS BRANCH EMPHASIZES A HOLISTIC APPROACH, CONSIDERING THE CLIENT'S ENVIRONMENT AND PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS SPECIALIZE IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF LEARNING AND EDUCATION. THEY WORK WITH SCHOOLS TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING AND ADDRESS DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES. THEIR ROLE OFTEN INVOLVES ASSESSING STUDENTS' LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND COLLABORATING WITH EDUCATORS TO CREATE SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.

INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

THIS BRANCH FOCUSES ON WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR AND THE APPLICATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS CONDUCT RESEARCH ON EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR, ENHANCE WORKPLACE CULTURE, AND DEVELOP TRAINING PROGRAMS. THEY PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN ADDRESSING ISSUES LIKE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND PRODUCTIVITY.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING PATHWAYS

BECOMING A PSYCHOLOGIST IN AUSTRALIA REQUIRES A STRUCTURED EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY, TYPICALLY INVOLVING SEVERAL KEY STEPS. THE JOURNEY BEGINS WITH OBTAINING AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY, WHICH PROVIDES FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES AND RESEARCH METHODS.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

MOST ASPIRING PSYCHOLOGISTS START WITH A THREE-YEAR BACHELOR OF PSYCHOLOGY DEGREE. THIS PROGRAM INCLUDES CORE SUBJECTS SUCH AS DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, AND COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY. IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE A STRONG ACADEMIC RECORD TO PURSUE FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

AFTER COMPLETING UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES, STUDENTS MUST UNDERTAKE POSTGRADUATE TRAINING TO SPECIALIZE IN THEIR CHOSEN AREA OF PSYCHOLOGY. THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH VARIOUS PATHWAYS:

- MASTER OF PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS, WHICH USUALLY LAST ONE TO TWO YEARS AND INCLUDE SUPERVISED PRACTICAL TRAINING.
- DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY (PSYD) PROGRAMS, WHICH FOCUS ON CLINICAL PRACTICE AND TYPICALLY REQUIRE A LONGER COMMITMENT.
- PHD PROGRAMS IN PSYCHOLOGY, EMPHASIZING RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC CAREERS.

REGISTRATION AND LICENSING

AFTER COMPLETING POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION, GRADUATES MUST REGISTER WITH THE PSYCHOLOGY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA (PSYBA) AND FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BECOMING A LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST. THIS OFTEN INVOLVES COMPLETING A PERIOD OF SUPERVISED PRACTICE AND PASSING A NATIONAL EXAMINATION. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS ALSO ESSENTIAL FOR MAINTAINING REGISTRATION.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND TRENDS

IN RECENT YEARS, PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA HAS FACED SEVERAL CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND TRENDS THAT ARE RESHAPING THE PRACTICE AND PERCEPTION OF THE FIELD. THESE INCLUDE A GROWING AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH, THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY, AND A FOCUS ON CULTURAL COMPETENCE.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS IN AUSTRALIA, DRIVEN BY CAMPAIGNS AIMED AT REDUCING STIGMA AND PROMOTING HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR. INITIATIVES LIKE MENTAL HEALTH MONTH AND R U OK? DAY HAVE

ENCOURAGED INDIVIDUALS TO DISCUSS MENTAL HEALTH OPENLY AND SEEK SUPPORT WHEN NEEDED. THIS CULTURAL SHIFT HAS LED TO INCREASED DEMAND FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES.

TECHNOLOGY AND TELEPSYCHOLOGY

THE RISE OF TECHNOLOGY HAS TRANSFORMED THE WAY PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES ARE DELIVERED. TELEPSYCHOLOGY, WHICH INVOLVES PROVIDING PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING AND ONLINE PLATFORMS, HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY POPULAR, ESPECIALLY IN THE WAKE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. THIS TREND HAS EXPANDED ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, PARTICULARLY FOR INDIVIDUALS IN REMOTE AREAS.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

AS AUSTRALIA BECOMES MORE CULTURALLY DIVERSE, THE NEED FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS TO PRACTICE WITH CULTURAL COMPETENCE HAS BECOME PARAMOUNT. THIS INVOLVES UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECTING THE DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS OF CLIENTS AND ADAPTING THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES ACCORDINGLY. TRAINING PROGRAMS NOW EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL AWARENESS IN EFFECTIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE.

MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

AUSTRALIA HAS IMPLEMENTED SEVERAL MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES AIMED AT IMPROVING THE MENTAL WELL-BEING OF ITS CITIZENS. THESE INITIATIVES REFLECT THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS AND ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY TO PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES.

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

THE NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACROSS AUSTRALIA. IT FOCUSES ON PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION, AND THE INTEGRATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES INTO PRIMARY HEALTHCARE SETTINGS. THIS HOLISTIC APPROACH AIMS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES.

HEADSPACE

HEADSPACE IS A NATIONAL YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION THAT PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12 TO 25. IT OFFERS SERVICES SUCH AS COUNSELING, HEALTH ADVICE, AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES. HEADSPACE CENTERS ARE LOCATED ACROSS THE COUNTRY, MAKING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES MORE ACCESSIBLE TO THE YOUTH POPULATION.

BEYOND BLUE

BEYOND BLUE IS ANOTHER KEY INITIATIVE FOCUSED ON MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND SUPPORT. IT PROVIDES RESOURCES FOR MANAGING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, AND SUICIDE PREVENTION. THE ORGANIZATION OFFERS A 24/7 HELPLINE AND A WEALTH OF ONLINE RESOURCES, MAKING IT EASIER FOR INDIVIDUALS TO SEEK HELP.

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES IN PSYCHOLOGY

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZED IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA. ACKNOWLEDGING THE UNIQUE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES IS ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND RELEVANCE

PSYCHOLOGISTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO INCORPORATE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES INTO THEIR WORK. THIS INVOLVES UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY, SPIRITUALITY, AND CONNECTION TO LAND IN INDIGENOUS WELL-BEING. CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES ARE VITAL FOR BUILDING TRUST AND RAPPORT WITH INDIGENOUS CLIENTS.

COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES

COLLABORATION WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE THAT PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES MEET THE NEEDS OF THESE POPULATIONS. ENGAGING WITH INDIGENOUS LEADERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN HELP DEVELOP PROGRAMS THAT ARE RESPECTFUL AND RELEVANT TO THEIR CULTURAL CONTEXTS. THIS APPROACH ENHANCES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS.

FUTURE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA

THE FUTURE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA IS PROMISING, WITH CONTINUED GROWTH EXPECTED IN BOTH THE DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND THE EVOLUTION OF PRACTICE. AS MENTAL HEALTH BECOMES AN INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZED PRIORITY, PSYCHOLOGISTS WILL PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN SHAPING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE POPULATIONS.

FURTHERMORE, ADVANCEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY WILL LIKELY LEAD TO NEW THERAPEUTIC MODALITIES AND RESEARCH METHODS. THE INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DATA ANALYTICS INTO PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE MAY ENHANCE ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT PROCESSES, PAVING THE WAY FOR MORE PERSONALIZED CARE.

IN ADDITION, THE ONGOING EMPHASIS ON CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES WILL ENSURE THAT PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA REMAINS RELEVANT AND EFFECTIVE FOR ALL COMMUNITIES, FOSTERING A SENSE OF INCLUSIVITY AND UNDERSTANDING.

CONCLUSION

PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA IS A VIBRANT AND EVOLVING FIELD THAT REFLECTS THE COUNTRY'S RICH CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND COMMITMENT TO MENTAL HEALTH. FROM ITS HISTORICAL ROOTS TO CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES, PSYCHOLOGY HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN ADDRESSING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF AUSTRALIANS. WITH ADVANCEMENTS IN EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND AN INCREASING FOCUS ON CULTURAL COMPETENCE, THE FUTURE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA LOOKS BRIGHT. AS WE CONTINUE TO NAVIGATE THE COMPLEXITIES OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND MENTAL HEALTH, THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGY WILL REMAIN VITAL IN PROMOTING WELL-BEING AND FOSTERING RESILIENCE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

Q: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGISTS IN AUSTRALIA?

A: PSYCHOLOGISTS IN AUSTRALIA PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN ASSESSING AND TREATING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, PROVIDING COUNSELING, CONDUCTING RESEARCH, AND PROMOTING MENTAL WELL-BEING. THEY WORK IN VARIOUS SETTINGS, INCLUDING PRIVATE PRACTICES, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

Q: HOW CAN I BECOME A PSYCHOLOGIST IN AUSTRALIA?

A: TO BECOME A PSYCHOLOGIST IN AUSTRALIA, YOU NEED TO COMPLETE AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY, FOLLOWED BY POSTGRADUATE STUDIES (SUCH AS A MASTER'S OR DOCTORAL DEGREE). AFTER THAT, YOU MUST REGISTER WITH THE PSYCHOLOGY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA AND COMPLETE SUPERVISED PRACTICE.

Q: WHAT ARE THE MAIN BRANCHES OF PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICED IN AUSTRALIA?

A: THE MAIN BRANCHES OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA INCLUDE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY, COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, AND DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, AMONG OTHERS. EACH BRANCH FOCUSES ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR.

Q: WHAT INITIATIVES EXIST TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH IN AUSTRALIA?

A: AUSTRALIA HAS SEVERAL INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY, HEADSPACE FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH, AND BEYOND BLUE, WHICH FOCUSES ON ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION AWARENESS. THESE INITIATIVES AIM TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SERVICES AND REDUCE STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.

Q: HOW DOES TECHNOLOGY IMPACT PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA?

A: TECHNOLOGY HAS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA BY FACILITATING TELEPSYCHOLOGY SERVICES, ENHANCING RESEARCH METHODS, AND ALLOWING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT. THIS HAS IMPROVED ACCESS TO SERVICES, ESPECIALLY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

Q: WHY IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE IMPORTANT IN PSYCHOLOGY?

A: CULTURAL COMPETENCE IS ESSENTIAL IN PSYCHOLOGY TO ENSURE THAT PRACTITIONERS UNDERSTAND AND RESPECT THE DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS OF THEIR CLIENTS. THIS UNDERSTANDING ENHANCES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS AND FOSTERS TRUST AND RAPPORT BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGISTS AND CLIENTS.

Q: WHAT CHALLENGES DOES PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA CURRENTLY FACE?

A: SOME CHALLENGES FACING PSYCHOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA INCLUDE THE ONGOING STIGMA SURROUNDING MENTAL HEALTH, THE NEED FOR GREATER ACCESS TO SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS, AND THE INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES INTO PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE. ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES IS CRUCIAL FOR IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS.

Q: HOW DOES AUSTRALIA ADDRESS INDIGENOUS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES?

A: AUSTRALIA ADDRESSES INDIGENOUS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES BY PROMOTING CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES, COLLABORATING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES, AND INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE INTO PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES. THIS APPROACH AIMS TO PROVIDE RELEVANT AND EFFECTIVE SUPPORT TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT

Q: WHAT FUTURE TRENDS ARE EXPECTED IN AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY?

A: FUTURE TRENDS IN AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY MAY INCLUDE THE INCREASED USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THERAPY, A GREATER EMPHASIS ON MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTION AND AWARENESS, AND THE CONTINUED INTEGRATION OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE INTO PRACTICE. THESE TRENDS WILL HELP MEET THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF THE POPULATION.

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