

# THE INTERBEHAVIORIST

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## QUOTATION

In conclusion, I want to stress one important implication of the field advance in psychology, namely, the cooperative interrelations of psychology with the other sciences...From the standpoint of the reacting organism, cooperation with the biologist in his various branches is called for. Certainly, the psychologist must keep alert to the latest findings of the physiologist concerning the organic processes participating in the complex psychological response. Needless to add, this cooperation will be different from the traditional game of tossing to each other the ball of imaginary brain powers.

- J. R. Kantor

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A Quarterly Newsletter of  
Interbehavioral Psychology

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The Interbehaviorist is a quarterly publication of news, discussion, and articles pertaining to interbehavioral psychology -- a natural science of psychology from a contextualistic, integrated-field perspective. The Interbehaviorist serves as a newsletter committed to professional communication that falls between informal letters and colloquia, and formal archival publication. As such, the newsletter supplements contemporary journals in the behavioral sciences dedicated to basic and applied research and to the history and philosophy of the behavioral sciences. The newsletter actively encourages reader submission of articles, book reviews, commentaries on publications of interest, observations on current practices and trends in the behavioral sciences, convention and conference notes, bibliographies (annotated or not), and news of interest about the professional activities of interbehaviorists.

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Contributions should be submitted to the editor in triplicate and should conform to the style described in the publication manual of the American Psychological Association (3rd ed., 1983). Submitted articles will undergo a regular review process through the members of the editorial board. For other submissions, the editor reserves the right to make minor editorial and stylistic changes.

\* \* \*

The support of the faculty and staff of the Department of Human Development at the University of Kansas is gratefully acknowledged.

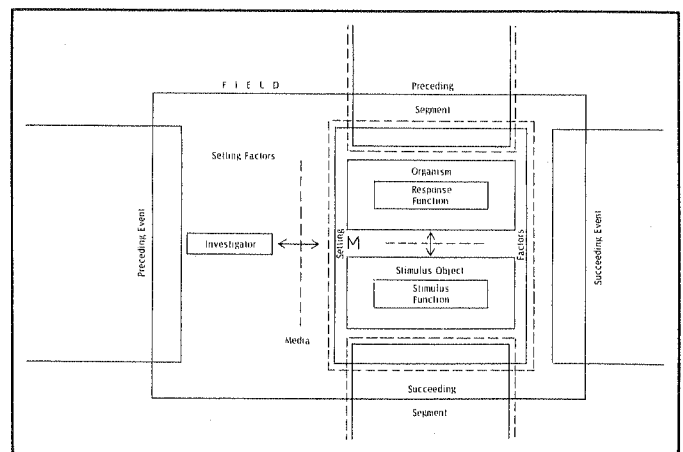
NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Our first note in this issue is the unofficial, official announcement of a new book by PROFESSOR J. R. KANTOR, entitled Selected Papers (1984). It is listed in the Principia Press section of The Agora. In a related bit of unofficial news, which is on the distaff side, the warehouse holding much of Principia Press's stock burned down. Professor Kantor's books, however, remain available, though some will have to be re-printed in order to maintain availability in the future. Apparently, as Steve Larsen quipped, Professor Kantor's books have been a hot item lately.

In another note, LOUISE KENT-UDOLF has completed her second book -- Shop Talk: A Prevocational Language Program for Retarded Students. It is dedicated to Jacob Robert Kantor. Dr. Kent-Udolf is a special education consultant to the public schools at the Region II Service Center in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Finally, we would like to make note of an article published by LINDA J. PARROTT (West Virginia University) in the last issue of The Psychological Record (1983, Vol. 33, No. 4) -- "Defining Social Behavior: An Exercise in Scientific System Building." That issue of The Record was devoted to the experimental analysis of human operant behavior, and was edited by William F. Buskist (Auburn University).

The quotation on the front cover of this issue comes from Kantor, J. R. (1946). The aim and progress of psychology. American Scientist, 34, 251-263. The article is also reprinted in Kantor, J. R. (1971). The Aim and Progress of Psychology and Other Sciences. Chicago: Principia Press (see p. 18 of text).



THE AGORA

As promised -- a second issue of The Interbehaviorist before the new year. As plans now stand, we expect to publish issues of Volume 12 in March (Spring), June (Summer), and September (Fall). Volume 13 will begin with the 1985 Winter issue. That volume and all subsequent ones will have four issues each.

Many of you wrote us notes of support in regards to the form and substance of the last issue. Thank you. More important, though, some of you had excellent suggestions for improving the newsletter (e.g., layout and content). Although we would like to make some of these suggested changes, we regret that we cannot do so at the present time because of our financial situation; these changes will have to wait until the next volume.

As mentioned, our financial situation is not a strong one; however, we are, as they say, viable. Our finances, though, will keep us from publishing more than twelve pages per issue throughout the rest of the present volume, and may cause us to cut back to eight pages on occasion. In addition, we will have to raise subscription rates for the next volume in order to cover costs. We thought it prudent, first, however, to strengthen the distribution and substance of the newsletter before asking subscribers to pay increased rates. Noel Smith (SUNY-Plattsburg) kindly sent us his extra back issues of the newsletter. Having these will help reduce our reproduction costs for back issues for a while.

We would like to thank those of you who have renewed your subscriptions to the newsletter. If you have not yet renewed, but intend to, please do so at your earliest convenience -- renewals are lagging a bit. We would also like to welcome those who are new subscribers and to thank those who have assisted us in securing new subscriptions. The number of new subscriptions is quite gratifying, especially those from students. The small advertising campaign launched by Doug Ruben seems to have had some effect, especially with the members of the Association for Behavior Analysis (ABA). A number of you also submitted gift subscriptions for colleagues, which is an excellent idea. We would, of course, be pleased to send a trial issue to anyone. At our own instigation, we did send out

about 100 gratis copies to colleagues throughout the social and behavioral sciences. In addition, we are attempting to arrange for interbehavioral psychology to have some presence at the May, 1984, ABA meetings in Nashville, Tennessee. We expect there to be some interbehavioral papers or symposia, a meeting for those interested in interbehavioral psychology, and some interbehavioral hosts at the social hours. We will let you know about the specifics of these matters as soon as they are available to us.

Before getting on to the business of the newsletter, we do have one issue we would like to raise. Despite all the very strong and positive promotion that has been done on behalf of The Interbehaviorist over the past several months, we do not think that the newsletter will be able to sustain the readership we are acquiring, and would like to acquire, if it focuses too narrowly on mere news and notes about a small group of interbehaviorists. The informality of the newsletter and the function it serves in keeping us informed about interbehavioral psychology, and about each other's work, are characteristics we do not want to lose. However, we should move beyond this if interbehavioral psychology is to influence the behavioral and social sciences in ways commensurate with a natural science perspective.

In this regard, the newsletter can promote and strengthen the role of interbehavioral psychology by serving as a resource and an outlet for scholarly work. Although the number of pages we can publish this year is limited, we would like to devote a greater percentage of them to substantive papers and book reviews than we did in our first issue. We realize that writing articles for a newsletter may not seem a practical way to achieve academic success, but it is not a bad first step, especially for students. Moreover, the newsletter can serve as a useful outlet for convention papers that might not otherwise be published and for briefer versions or shorter parts of longer manuscripts, chapters, and grant proposals. In addition, book reviews are especially welcome. They are important educational resources for our readers.

All of this is not to suggest a change

in editorial policy or in the general nature of the newsletter. Rather, we would like to make a move towards strengthening the newsletter so that it has the broadest possible appeal and usefulness for the readership. Thus, in addition to submitting news and notes, please also consider submitting some short but substantive manuscripts and book reviews.

More space could be devoted to such articles, of course, if the editor would editorialize less, so let us move on. In this issue, we feature some information about the Principia Press, we provide a list of presentations given by interbehaviorists at the recent ABA meetings, and we provide a list of the new and renewed subscribers to this volume of the newsletter. We are also pleased to have a book review by Linda J. Parrott (West Virginia University) of Kantor's (1983) Tragedy and the Event Continuum and a brief research report by Douglas H. Ruben (Western Michigan University). Finally, we are carrying an advertisement for The Psychological Record (The Record) inside the back page. Again, if you do not already subscribe to The Record, we recommend it as an excellent general-purpose journal that adheres to perspectives consistent with interbehavioral psychology.

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### The Principia Press

Because The Interbehaviorist has quite a few new subscribers (see subscription lists at the end of the newsletter), a word or two about Principia Press and the availability of Professor Kantor's books seems to be in order. The Principia Press (5743 Kimbark Ave., Chicago, IL 60637) has a booklet available that describes the current texts in stock. The inside cover of the booklet contains a description of the company and its publishing practices. This description reads as follows:

The Principia Press was organized as a company of scholars for the purpose of publishing meritorious works of learning. From its inception, the Press has operated on a nonprofit basis. Income from the sale of books is used to subsidize new books.

Originally, the Principia Press was

founded to serve primarily the needs of faculty members of Indiana University. But soon it became enlarged to serve as a national medium of publication and was incorporated in 1932. During the following decades, the list of publications grew to include a number of books in various fields by authors from other institutions and states. However, in 1954, the company was divided and the corporation dissolved. Most of the titles were distributed under other company names, while a new private venture under the name Principia Press became a specialized outlet for books of permanent worth in psychology, philosophy, and education.

Throughout the career of the Principia Press, it has been operated as a cooperative enterprise with the unique feature that orders for books are usually processed and shipped the day they are received. The Principia Press maintains a policy of keeping prices as low as economic conditions allow. Changes are made only in response to changing production costs.

The booklet describing the Press and its offerings is available from the address provided above. The books described and outlined are primarily Professor Kantor's. Although space limitations do not allow us to provide these descriptions in this newsletter, the titles of the books and their prices are listed below. Checks or money orders should be made out to the Principia Press. The currently available books and their prices are as follows:

1. Kantor, J. R. (1984). Selected Writings. \$20.00.
2. Kantor, J. R. (1983). Tragedy and the Event Continuum. \$15.00.
3. Kantor, J. R. (1982). Cultural Psychology. \$15.00. (Replaces An Outline of Social Psychology, Kantor, 1929).
4. Kantor, J. R. (1981). Interbehavioral Philosophy. \$27.50.
5. Kantor, J. R. (1977). Psychological Linguistics. \$15.00.
6. Kantor, J. R. and Smith, N. W. (1975). The Science of Psychology:

An Interbehavioral Survey. \$14.00.  
(Replaces A Survey of the Science of Psychology, Kantor, 1933).

7. Kantor, J. R. (1971). The Aim and Progress of Psychology and Other Sciences: A Selection of Papers by J. R. Kantor. \$15.00.
8. Kantor, J. R. (1963, 1969). The Scientific Evolution of Psychology, Vols. I and II. \$35.00/set.
9. Kantor, J. R. (1959). Interbehavioral Psychology: A Sample of Scientific Theory Construction. \$10.00.
10. Kantor, J. R. (1953). The Logic of Modern Science. \$10.00.
11. Kantor, J. R. (1945, 1950). Psychology and Logic, Vols. I and II. \$25.00/set.
12. Kantor, J. R. (1947). Problems in Physiological Psychology. \$20.00.
13. Kantor, J. R. (1936). An Objective Psychology of Grammar. \$10.00.
14. Kantor, J. R. (1924, 1926). Principles of Psychology, Vols. I and II. \$30.00/set.

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#### Interbehavioral Psychology at ABA

As mentioned in the last issue of the newsletter, the annual ABA meetings have for the past five years provided excellent opportunities for interbehavioral psychologists to present papers on interbehavioral psychology and related matters. The names of interbehaviorists (and interested parties) who have presented papers at these meetings, and the titles of their presentations, are listed below alphabetically and by year.

#### 1979

Edward K. Morris  
Some Relationships between Kantor and Skinner

Paul T. Mountjoy  
Assumptive Base of Radical Behaviorism

Paul T. Mountjoy & Linda J. Parrott, Chairs  
Open Meeting for Interbehaviorists in the Association for Behavior Analysis

Linda J. Parrott  
Modifying the Behavior of an Audience

Linda J. Parrott  
Verbal Behavior and Women's Liberation

William S. Verplanck  
Danger: Theory Construction Ahead

#### 1980

Sidney W. Bijou  
Circumstances for Bringing Behavior Analysis to Child Behavior and Development

Dennis J. Delprato  
Interbehavioral Psychology as a Palliative to the Excesses of Cognitivism

Peter A. Holmes and Dennis J. Delprato  
Behavior Modification by any Other Name Is Not Necessarily a Rose

Peter A. Holmes, Chair  
Radical Behaviorism and Interbehavioral Psychology. Invited symposium with with papers by Delprato, Morris, and Mountjoy.

Edward K. Morris  
The Evolution of Interbehavioral Psychology and Radical Behaviorism

Edward K. Morris  
Traits and Situations: A Behavior Analysis

Paul T. Mountjoy  
Individual Organism Research and Group Design in the History of Psychology

Paul T. Mountjoy  
The Interrelationship Between Interbehavioral Psychology and Radical Behaviorism

Linda J. Parrott  
Beyond Radical Behaviorism: The Interbehavioral Alternative

Linda J. Parrott  
Radical and Interbehavioral Perspectives on Knowing

Linda J. Parrott  
Science and Scientific Philosophy

#### 1981

Sidney W. Bijou  
Child Development and Interbehavioral Psychology

Donna M. Cone  
Behavioral Applications: Complexity of the True State of Affairs

Jackson Marr  
Behaviorism and Modern Physics: Parallels and Antiparallels

James T. McKearney  
Organism-Environment Relations in the Analysis of Behavior

Jay Moore

On Mentalism, Methodological Behaviorism,  
and Radical Behaviorism

Jay Moore

On Molar and Molecular Analyses of  
Behavior

Edward K. Morris, Stephen T. Higgins  
and Warren K. Bickel

The Influence of Kantor's Interbehavioral  
Psychology on Behavior Analysis

Edward K. Morris, Chair

The Relevance of Interbehavioral  
Psychology for Behavioral Research.  
Invited symposium with papers by Bijou,  
Cone, McKearney, and Morris, Higgins,  
and Bickel

Paul T. Mountjoy

Some Continuua of Verbal Behavior

Linda J. Parrott

Interbehaviorism: Analysis of Implicit  
Interbehaviors

Linda J. Parrott

On the Difference Between Social and  
Verbal Behaviors

#### 1982

Sidney W. Bijou

Three Stage Analysis of the Beginning  
of Language Behavior

Jackson Marr

Conceptual Approaches and Issues [in  
EAB]

Jay Moore

Molar and Molecular Contributions to  
Avoidance

Jay Moore

On Behaviorism, Knowledge, and  
Explanation

Edward K. Morris, Stephen T. Higgins,  
and Warren K. Bickel

Cogniphobia and Cogniphobia in the  
Behavioral Sciences

Paul T. Mountjoy

Private Events Revisited: There Ain't  
No Such Thing

Paul T. Mountjoy and Alan Lewandowski

A Dancing Horse, A Learned Pig, and  
Muscle Twitches

Paul T. Mountjoy, Douglas H. Ruben,  
and Terry Bradford

Recent Technological Advancement in  
Treatment of Enuresis: Theory and  
Commercial Devices

Douglas H. Ruben

Methodological and Philosophical  
Adaptation in Assertiveness Training  
Programs Designed for the Blind

Linda J. Parrott

Rule-Governed Behavior: An Implicit

Analysis of Reference

Linda J. Parrott and Don F. Hake

Uses and Abuses of History

William N. Schoenfeld

Avoidance Revisited

Robert Wahler and James J. Fox

Setting Events in Applied Behavior  
Analysis

#### 1983

Sidney W. Bijou and John Umbreit

Initial Language Development: The  
Fourth Stage

Dennis J. Delprato

Interacting Behavior Patterns and  
Behavioral Decrements

Steven E. Larsen and Edward K. Morris

On the Usefulness of the Setting Event  
Concept in Behavior Analysis

Sam M. Leigland

Three Empirical Stages in the Functional  
Analysis of Verbal Behavior

Jack Marr

Behaviorism and Mathematical Thinking:  
Some Issues of Scientific Verbal  
Behavior

Jay Moore

Causal Issues in the Analysis of Privacy

Linda J. Parrott

A Conceptual Analysis of Social Behavior

Linda J. Parrott

Second Thoughts on Skinner's Verbal  
Behavior

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#### Subscriptions

Listed below are the names of new subscribers and those who have renewed subscriptions to The Interbehaviorist for 1983-1984 (Vol. 12). The letters in parentheses following each name refer to subscription categories: S = Student, R = Regular, F = Foreign, and I = Institution. Those subscribers whose names are followed by an asterisk are those interested in exchanging reprints of interbehavioral publications and related material with other subscribers. A mailing list is available from the editor. If you have paid for your subscription and your name is missing from the list, or if your subscription category is inaccurate, or if you would like an asterisk to designate your interest in reprint exchange, please let us know.

New Subscriptions

- Athabasca Univesity Library (I)
- Jane B. Atwater (S)\*
- Donald M. Baer (R)
- David Barns (S)
- Ramon Bayes (RF)
- Warren K. Bickel (R)
- Donald A. Bloomquist (S)\*
- Bill Bryson-Brockmann (S)
- Louis Burgio (R)
- David Chlubna. (S)
- Lynne Anne Daurelle (S)
- Robert Epstein (R)
- James J. Fox (R)
- Roderick K. Fox (S)
- Albert F. Haas (R)
- Robert P. Hawkins (R)
- Catherine Hunker (S)
- Matthew L. Isreal (R)
- Lisa M. Johnson (S)\*
- William Kaiser (S)
- Kimberly C. Kirby (S)
- Jennifer Lamarre (S)
- Steven E. Larsen (S)\*
- Janet R. LeFrancois(S)
- Maria A. Matos (RF)
- Gerald C. Mertens (R)
- Theresa Mettell (RF)
- David W. Nelson (S)
- Robert O'Neill (S)
- R. Pisacreta (S)
- Shirley L. Poe (S)
- Peter Pondofino (S)
- Ely Rayck (RF)
- Emilio Ribes (RF)
- William T. Sanfilippo (S)
- Mary Anne Scafasci (S)
- Joseph R. Scotti (R)
- Lee Ann Selman (S)
- Norman A. Skypakewyck (S)
- Mary Spence (S)
- Krystallo Stylianou (S)
- James T. Todd (S)\*
- Yoshikazu E. Tomiyasa (RF)
- Paul Whitley (S)
- Barbara Whitney (S)
- Elga B. Wulfert (S)

Renewed Subscriptions

- Steven R. Brown (R)
- Sidney W. Bijou (R)
- William M. Gardner (R)
- Arthur Kahn (R)
- J. R. Kantor (R)
- Craig W. Knapp (R)
- Robert W. Lundin (R)
- M. A. and B. R. MacRoberts (R)
- Marion W. McPherson (R)
- Edward K. Morris (R)\*

- Paul T. Mountjoy (R)
- N. H. Pronko (R)\*
- Albert E. Roberts (R)
- Douglas H. Ruben (S)
- Noel W. Smith (R)
- David W. Zimmerman (R)

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Journal Notes

Doug Ruben calls our attention to several articles of interest to interbehavioral psychologists. These articles, and his commentary on them, are as follows:

Herrick, J. W. (1983). Interbehavioral perspectives on aging. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 16, 95-123.

This article presents a long and exhaustive analysis of the implications of interbehavioral psychology for geropsychology. Herrick places his analysis both in relationship to traditional legacies about aging and to the matrix of today's society. An excellent piece of scholarship.

Morawski, J. C. (1982). On thinking about history as social psychology. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 8, 393-401.

In The Scientific Evolution of Psychology, Kantor (1963, 1969) argues for the critical importance of understanding history and conceptual errors made in the past. With this understanding comes an appreciation for historiography. Morawski calls historiography a practical method for research. Her plea is that many problems in social psychology are reconcilable on a metatheoretical level by considering the historical data within a culture as part of a legitimate discipline. This proposition is agreeable with interbehavioral psychology. Those who are skeptical of it are unaware that social psychology has been and still is the study of evolutionary contexts.

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These journal notes complete The Agora for this issue. The remaining material are the articles by Parrott and by Ruben.

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Book Review:  
J. R. Kantor's (1983) Tragedy and  
the Event Continuum

Linda J. Parrott

West Virginia University

Kantor begins his analysis of tragedy by noting how numerous and significant events of this type are in the realms of both nature and culture, a circumstance giving rise to an enormous literature on the nature and conditions of tragedy. Traditional expositions and analyses of these events are found wanting on two counts, however. First, literary and philosophical studies of tragedy are confined to anthropic events, ignoring catastrophies occurring in the absence of human intrusion. Secondly, human tragedies are formulated on psychological opinion and in accordance with some variant of metaphysical philosophy, leaving them void of scientific value. It is Kantor's objective to correct this situation, and he does so in a familiar manner. The events to be examined are identified and the postulates of a scientific psychology and philosophy upon which an adequate interpretation of tragic events may be articulated are described. A critical review of historical interpretations arising from literary, philosophical, moral, and religious sources follows. His objective here is to reach a synthesis "built upon the observation of actually occurring events as well as a consideration of the variant ways [tragic events] have been intellectually treated" (p. 1). The details of this critical study I shall leave to those inclined to read the book, so as to leave space for what, to me, constitutes the most interesting aspect of this work: Kantor's reformulation of the concept of tragedy.

Tragedy is defined as the truncation of event potential (p. 37, 51). It is a definition requiring further elaboration and explanation, however, because event potential is essentially a construction pertaining to a future state of affairs, and it is uncharacteristic of Kantor to regard a construct as a basic datum. To understand Kantor's definition of tragedy, then, we must understand the nature of potentiality and of the kinds of potentialities subject to tragic ends.

As previously mentioned, the future condition of some event, in as much as it has not yet obtained, cannot serve as a stimulus with which an explicit perceptual response may be coordinated. Reactions to future conditions may still occur, however, through the operation of substitute stimuli. The substitutional functions of stimuli are derived from their relations with other stimuli in the experiences of particular individuals. Relations among stimuli in the present case have their sources in two sets of circumstances. First, all events are definite processes of change and development, having their origins in earlier events. To the extent that trends or patterns in the direction of event changes have been observed in their previous evolutions, their subsequent evolutions may be expected to follow a similiar course. That is, the future conditions of some event may be regarded as continuous with its past conditions and, on this basis, previous developments may substitute for future developments.

Secondly, while all event fields are unique configurations of factors, the course of development of one event may be sufficiently like that of other events of the same general type to allow the developments of these other events to substitute for the future conditions of the event of interest. In short, one may react to the future condition or potentiality of an event, despite its absence from a current event field, through the operation of substitute stimulation arising from the previous evolutions of that event, as well as from the entire course of development of similar events. It is by virtue of implicit reactions of this sort that the truncation of event potential has meaning. A judgement of truncation depends on an appreciation of the difference between the terminal condition of an event, as explicitly perceived, and its uninterrupted development, as implicitly imagined.

While it is true that the course of



development of any event may be interrupted by untoward circumstances, not all occurrences of this sort are properly regarded as tragic. Tragic ends are peculiar to events having potentialities of particular value, raising the issue of what "value" means in this context.

Contrary to popular philosophical opinion, values are not regarded as epiphenomena by Kantor, nor are they seen as aspects of anthropic circumstances alone. Values constitute the quality, necessity, or fittingness of events and, as such, they are factors in most situations. For example, things have value in the sense of being suitable or required for particular purposes. Persons, like things, possess serviceable qualities in specific situations, known as their abilities and intelligence. More generally, the value of any event, or of its potential condition, is simply one of its stimulatory functions.

When a change in the composition of an event field occurs, as when the development of some event is abruptly curtailed or terminated altogether, the post-change composition of factors may lack the properties required for continuance toward some end anticipated in the absence of such curtailment. The curtailed event is thereby one of great potential in this situation. Its truncation, therefore, may be regarded as a tragedy. An example may help to illustrate this point. Scientific achievements are features of complex circumstances involving the conjoint

evolution of many factors. However, not all of these factors have equal weight in the eventuation of achievement. The untimely death of a prominent scientist on the verge of discovery may serve to delay scientific advancement for many years, while the termination of many other factors, lacking in the property of fittingness or necessity, may have a lesser impact. Under these conditions, only the death of the scientist may be regarded as tragic. Tragedy is not simply the curtailment of events or their termination; it is the truncation of their potential toward some end, imaginable on the basis of their previous developments. Similarly, the destruction of a forest by fire is not itself a tragedy. What is tragic about this event is the truncation of the potential of the forest to provide lumber for human use, or a habitat for other life forms.

Kantor's analysis of tragedy is essentially an exercise in system building. All events in the continuum of natural happenings are subject to naturalistic interpretations, and tragedy is no exception. Further, the concept of tragedy is particularly worthy of this attempt given the prevalence of tragic happenings in the event continuum. The value of Kantor's naturalistic formulation of tragedy is to be found in its potential impact on spiritistic interpretations of this concept arising from nonscientific sources, including philosophy, literature, religion, and ethics.

\* \* \*

Assessment of Setting Events  
and Interbehavioral History for  
Dispelling Myths about Aging in  
The Residential Elderly

Douglas H. Ruben, M.A.

Center for Independent Living

and

Western Michigan University

Herrick's (1983) re-appraisal of the assumption that behavioral, mental, or cognitive incompetence automatically accompanies the biological aging process

illustrates the negative stereotypes that underlie geropsychological research. His interbehavioral approach, which uses Kantor's overall system and Kantor's

analysis of psychological thought, dispells many of these stereotypes or "myths."

This present case report illustrates an application of Herrick's interbehavioral analysis with five residential elderly women who strongly believed the degeneration of their psychological abilities (e.g., emotion, motivation, and memory) was due entirely to their advanced biological age. Through an assessment of their current setting events, past interbehavioral history, and immediate social environment, residents were able to find suggestive evidence that their psychological losses were attributable not to biological change, but to changes in socio-environmental settings.

#### Method

##### Subjects and Setting

Five residential women with varying IQ's and good vision, 67 years and older, participated in this study. All women were widows and had recently moved from larger houses or apartments to efficiency or one-bedroom apartments in a seven-floor building. Their socio-cultural and economic backgrounds varied greatly from rural to urban, and from lower- to middle-class. All the residents voluntarily participated in weekly group educational and therapy sessions held by the author on different topics related to independent living adjustment.

##### Assessment Procedure

Seven ability-inability dichotomies were drawn from Herrick's (1983) category of stereotypical myths. These dichotomies are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1

<u>Category A</u> (Abilities)	<u>Category B</u> (Inabilities)
Emotional	Unemotional
Motivated	Unmotivated
React Fast	React Slow
Learn Fast	Learn Slow
Remember	Forget
Creative	Uncreative
Solve Problems	Ignore Problems

Clinical assessment involved four phases. First, the residents ranked the transition between each of the dichotomies (i.e., from ability to inability) as due to either "psychological and social" or "biological." Second, residents were asked to write down two activities from

their past for each of the seven abilities listed in Table 1. Third, residents identified the activities currently available to them in the apartment building (opportunities) or in which they participated (performance) for each of the abilities. Fourth, the residents and the author correlated these activities with the transition from ability to inability that had developed during their current residence.

#### Results

For the first phase of the clinical assessment, all transitions in ability were said to be due to biological factors except for the emotional-unemotional dichotomy (N=2). The second phase of the assessment showed that many of the past activities in the abilities category involved group participation, extended durations of interaction, and more response effort (e.g., cooking for families and shopping). As for the currently available activities, bingo games and recreational and occupational therapy presented the most ability opportunities, whereas the activities actually being performed were brief, effortless, and solitary. Finally, many of the salient discrepancies between past and current activities corresponded with those abilities that residents strongly argued were biological (viz., memory, motivation, etc.). Residents did state that the demands of "social and competitive" stimulation in current activities were far less intense and frequent than in activities during their youth. Available activities simply lacked the "time-pressure" and "sense of accomplishment" that residents felt were necessary in order for emotion, motivation, and reaction time to improve or be restored. The residents, however, cited examples of performing these past activities whenever opportunities currently arose, despite claims that their biological (e.g., visual-motor) deficits would discourage them.

#### Discussion

The assessment of setting events and interbehavioral history involves the entire psychological and biological field of human interaction. Current settings and past history both play a significant role in this interbehavioral field, as do the influence of stimulus events present at the time of assessment. The elderly residents in this study realized that

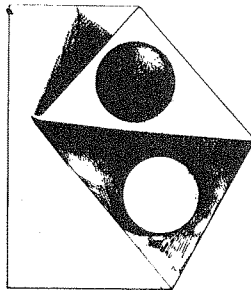
while aging is both a biological and psychological process, loss of particular abilities may be due more to environmental change than to biological deterioration.

One solution to the problem of perceived decreased ability is to increase daily activity. Residents could plan a more adaptive activity schedule by including various important features in each activity: (1) time-limitations or deadlines, (2) achievable goals, (3) contingencies for these goals, and (4) peers who compete to achieve these goals (see Ruben, in press). Such restructuring of the current context of behavior-

environment interactions could be both preventative as well as corrective of deterioration in personal and interpersonal functioning.

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