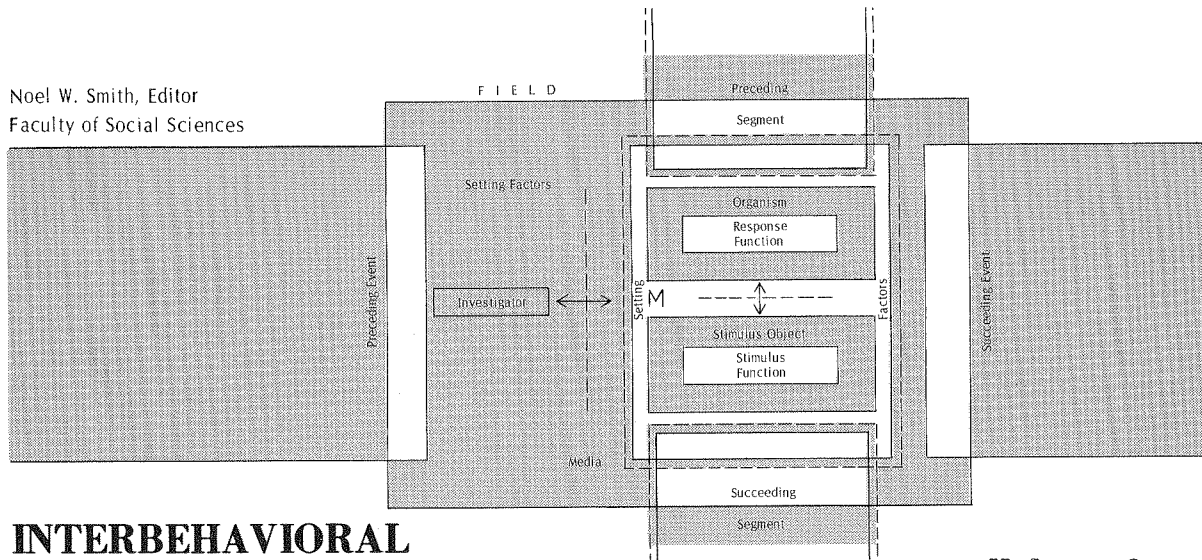


Noel W. Smith, Editor  
Faculty of Social Sciences



# INTERBEHAVIORAL PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

Volume 2  
Number 2  
April 1971

State University College of Arts and Science, Plattsburgh, New York

From my earliest professional concern with psychology I have been a reprobative witness of the spiral development of the discipline from pure mentalism couched in language that perpetuates a psychotic mode of thinking. What was plain consciousness, self, mind, or ego has recently become cognitive behavior.

--J. R. Kantor: THE AIM AND PROGRESS OF  
PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHER SCIENCES, 1971  
(from the Preface)

Since the notions of soul and consciousness undoubtedly were derived from an interest in one's own person and its destiny, they became developed into the doctrine of absolute uniqueness and individuality. In modern times this doctrine has taken the form that one can only have knowledge of his own mind. The existence of minds in others and the nature of what goes on in those minds can only be matters of indirect inference. The famous and perennial argument that only the possessor of the aching tooth could have direct experience or knowledge of the toothache is simply the product of the evolution of psychic doctrine. Those who accept the doctrine have always become influenced by the dogma of mind to overlook the fact that all events are unique. What A is digesting is not being digested by B. The fall of A is not the fall of B. Nor does the fact that neither A nor B can see what the other is digesting nor observe the fall of the other, unless both happen to be in a favorable situation, indicate that psychic stuff or principle is involved. Again, the subtlety of events lends no basis to their mentalization unless background institutions demand this. Privacy no more helps to establish transcendental mind than any of the other factors we have considered.

--J. R. Kantor: THE SCIENTIFIC EVOLUTION  
OF PSYCHOLOGY, vol. 1, 1963, Pp.291-292

Crude Data

Investigative Contact

Scientific Construction

The Principia Press of Granville, Ohio, announces the early publication of a new book of over 600 pages by Dr. J. R. Kantor to be entitled THE AIM AND PROGRESS OF PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHER SCIENCES. The volume will consist of 36 papers classified into eleven sections each covering important issues within the general scientific or specialized psychological domain. In the case of each of the articles which has appeared in an American or foreign journal during an interval of almost half a century the aim has been to indicate the direction psychology and the other sciences should move in order to reach a genuinely naturalistic status.

\*\*\*\*\*

A recent book by Arthur L. Blumenthal: LANGUAGE AND PSYCHOLOGY: HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF PSYCHOLINGUISTICS, Wiley, 1970 (paperback) contains a major portion of Kantor's, "Can Psychology contribute to the study of linguistics?", Monist, 1928. Blumenthal notes that few except Roback, Kantor, Esper, and Carroll have cited the early work in psycholinguistics. He holds that Kantor established a behaviorism more radical than Watson or Meyers, expunged both mind and physiological explanation, confined psychology to "input-output relations," held to a descriptive approach to language and rejected "any underlying mechanisms or explanations" along with Bloomfield, always maintained a greater interest in language than any other aspect of behavior, and showed unusual acquaintance with philological literature of Europe which possibly accounts for his remaining isolated from "the mainstream of American psychology" although an intense supporter of behaviorism. He considers AN OBJECTIVE PSYCHOLOGY OF GRAMMAR to be mistitled because it contains little of grammar and to be preoccupied with criticisms but to effectively and distinctively show the American objections to the Wundtian approach--a denial of language as symbol or as outward expression of inward cognition. While Blumenthal's treatment has a few misinterpretations it is an unusually satisfactory account on the whole and bears reading.

\*\*\*\*\*

All five back issues of the Newsletter of 1970 are still available. Price: \$2.00 for the five or 50¢ each ( $\frac{1}{2}$  those prices for students). Number five might be of special interest to new subscribers, for it contains a selected list of readings in five areas of interbehavioral psychology.

\*\*\*\*\*

"A reply to Thornton's 'Socrates and the History of Psychology'" by Mountjoy and Smith mentioned in the Newsletter, vol.1, No. 5, appeared in The Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, April 1971. Offprints may be obtained from either author. Thornton did not offer a rebuttal.

\*\*\*\*\*

Correction: The January 1971 number should have given the Psychological Reports instead of the Psychological Record for Swartz's "Stimulus evolution in problem solving behavior: an interbehavioral analysis."

\*\*\*\*\*

There will be a Summer Institute on the History of Psychology June 22 to July 31, 1971 at Lehigh University directed by Josef Brozek and supported by NSF. In 1969 it was held at the University of New Hampshire. A presentation on interbehaviorism was made by Sam Campbell, Wayne Lazar, and Noel Smith and was tape recorded.

\*\*\*\*\*

The feature article in this issue is "A Case of Reactional Dissociation (Hysterical Paralysis)" by Jerry Carter described in the last number as a technical employment of interbehavioral principles. The "summary of history" portion is by Jacqueline Farrington.

A CASE OF REACTIONAL DISSOCIATION  
(HYSTERICAL PARALYSIS)\*

Jerry W. Carter, Jr.

"To a surprising extent current psychiatric thought appears to misconceive and over-simplify its data and then compensate for this shortcoming by unctuously elaborating its description and procedure. Remedial to this, it is submitted that Kantor's Organismic Concept in Mental Pathology<sup>1</sup> and the Meyer school in psychiatry<sup>2</sup> afford a purely behavioral approach of more substantial service than the pseudo-realities of mentalistic dialectics by placing emphasis on inquiry into the individual's developmental history. Abnormal behavior studied from such an objective standpoint makes possible descriptive terms derived from actually observed behavior conditions rather than from medical or psychological traditions."

"The writer considers the case of reactional dissociation (hysterical paralysis) presented here to be so ideally commonplace as to make up for its spectacular deficiencies. It is possibly of more than usual interest for this reason particularized as follows: first, the pertinent developmental history of the patient's pathology is complete and distinct; second, the initial ease and suddenness with which this history was brought out is noteworthy; and finally, the patient's response to planned treatment was ideal."

Summary of History:

Kate, a 13-year old female with a medical history of excellent health, was admitted to the hospital presenting the following symptoms: (1) partial paralysis of the left leg, (2) extreme nervousness, (3) marked loss of appetite. Symptoms had occurred intermittently over a period of nine months, increasing in severity. Medical examination had suggested possible diagnoses of (1) hysterical paralysis, (2) post-poliomyelitis, (3) post-polioencephalitis.

Inasmuch as no emotional conflict prior to the onset of difficulties was related during the initial psychological interview, Kate was requested to recount all of her experiences up to the time of the initial seizure. Over a period of several interviews, the patient related having learned of problems between the parents, including extra-marital relationships on both

---

\*Copyright, the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Inc. Reproduced by permission from American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1937, 7, 219-224. Originally publication of the Indiana University Psychological Clinics, Ser. II, Number 12.

<sup>1</sup>Kantor, J.R., Principles of Psychology, A. Knopf, New York, 1926, vol. ii, p. 452 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Kanner, Leo, Child Psychiatry, Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1935.

sides. Considerable disagreement, hostile behavior and discussion of divorce between the parents, as well as an attempted shooting of the father by a third man, a friend of the mother's paramour, had been witnessed by Kate. During this time, an older sister had threatened suicide. The patient related these events with considerable agitation and emotionality.

Although the parents had evidently been successful in returning the home to normal conditions, the patient had continued to react to this period of extreme stress by refusal to accept her parents' behavior. She had experienced feelings of "oppressive melancholy," engaged in compulsive behaviors and become fearful and withdrawn in situations of social intercourse both at home and at school. The initial incident of paralysis had occurred while in school, where she was an excellent student.

#### Diagnosis and Psychopedagogy:

"A diagnosis of hysteria of the reactional dissociation type was made on the basis of the above findings...."

"It was considered essential that the patient return, figuratively speaking, to the situation of the parental triangle and learn to meet it with complete acceptance. This, it was believed, would eliminate the basis of her hysteria and redirect her reactional biography towards a more normal behavior picture. To this end a frequent and thorough review of the domestic scene in question was prescribed, along with physical and occupational therapy for the duration of hospitalization." (Carter, 1937).

Kate was instructed to think frequently about what had occurred and to do so as objectively as possible. During each visit to the clinic, she was requested to describe the previous domestic strife in more detail, the purpose of doing so being made clear to her. After a period of three visits in two weeks time, all symptoms had disappeared and the patient was discharged with instructions to continue thinking about the events in question, telling them either to a confidante or aloud to herself.

Follow-up visits of one month and four months later demonstrated that behavior had returned to normal. During the final visit, Kate was able to recount the experiences with composure. She reported that she had done as instructed and that while it was still unpleasant, it no longer disturbed her.

#### Discussion:

"In the following discussion of the Fox case we will attempt to illustrate the efficacy of the organismic viewpoint when applied to abnormal behavior of biographic origin.<sup>3</sup> It will be noted that the only limitations imposed by this logical technique are our powers of observation and breadth of empirical experience.

---

<sup>3</sup>Abnormal behavior of biographic origin, e.g., Dementia Praecox, Mania, Melancholy, Hysteria, etc., as distinguished from abnormal behavior of organic origin, e.g., Paresis, Arterio-sclerosis, etc.

"A refined objective description of our patient's behavior pathology must first take into account the complexity of her developmental history, for, therein lies the whole story of her difficulty. An adequate knowledge of the developmental history leads to an understanding of the behavior equipment which the patient used in interacting with various persons, objects and situations. More specifically, her abnormal behavior may be described as a maladjustment between her behavior equipment and the situational surroundings. Prior to the violent domestic disturbances we find the patient's behavior equipment developed well within a normal adjustment range for a girl of ten years, as evidenced in that period by her excellent health, school progress and general societal adjustment."

"Then, into her developing reactional biography there intruded a parental triangle situation which was wholly foreign to and at violence with anything previously experienced. From this point on this individual was precipitated into an environment in which the various objects, persons and situations did not constitute a homogeneous unity. The result was that in the two years following she built up additional behavior equipment that did not hang together very well. Then, under the stress of a specific fear of social intercourse (the recess period) a part of her reactional equipment sejoined, a specific reaction system (her left leg) became non-functional. Hence our descriptive term, reactional dissociation.<sup>4</sup>

"Our plan of treatment for the patient was of course in accordance with the above general and diagnostic observations. Since it was determined that the patient had built up behavior equipment maladjusted to her later normal surroundings, and had, as a result of this, later suffered a loss of part of this equipment, our problem was more fundamental than merely restoring the lost reaction system. The real task was to replace the undesirable part of the patient's behavior equipment with equipment directed towards more satisfactory adjustment in the future. It is apparent that a mere laying of the symptoms would have offered only temporary relief to the patient.

"With this end in view, the patient was required to re-experience the incidents basic to her abnormal behavior equipment under conditions more favorable to building up a hygienic basis for personality adjustment. As already indicated, this was done in a figurative manner by having the patient relate the disturbing incidents in detail, and, by guiding the subsequent development of the new additions to her behavior equipment. Due to the limited number of interviews, this procedure was reënfoced by furnishing the patient a logical technique with which she could continue treatment by herself over a long period of time with occasional help from the writer."

---

<sup>4</sup>"...one of the special characteristics of this type of abnormality is that the so-called lost equipment may be readily reinstated, and become functional again." Kantor, J.R., op. cit., p.495.

Readers of the Newsletter might wish to subscribe to:

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RECORD

Regularly there are articles of interest to inter-behavioral psychologists. (Inexpensive reprints of some of these, e.g., by Kantor, Kellogg, Homme, Bijou, Lichtenstein, are also available for classroom use.) A continuing feature in each issue is a short provocative paper by OBSERVER written from the interbehavioral point-of-view. The RECORD is a low cost journal with each volume containing approximately 600 pages.

Institutions     \$10.00  
Individuals     \$ 6.00  
Students         \$ 4.00

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RECORD  
Denison University  
Granville, Ohio 43023