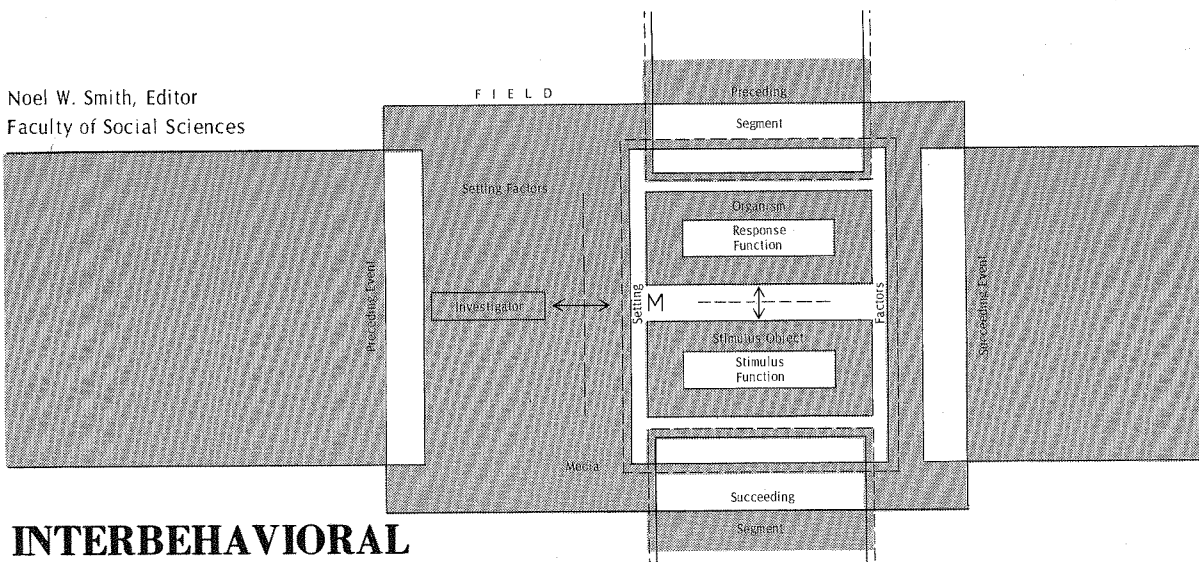


Noel W. Smith, Editor  
Faculty of Social Sciences



## INTERBEHAVIORAL PSYCHOLOGY

# NEWSLETTER

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In this 'interactional' approach, Kantor makes use of the language of stimulus and response. He distinguishes his technique from that of others by using the double-pointed arrow to connect "S" with "R". This is no mere formality, but the positive characteristic of his whole attack. "S" and "R" are alike activity, one as much as the other. Stimulus never enters his system in the form of a sharp isolation or abstraction of some form of physical energy. Response never occurs as a biological product or by-product caused or excited by a train of physical energy. ...If the organism shows activity--function--in 'perceiving' the object, the object in its turn shows activity, or function, to just the same extent in 'being perceived'....

The 'things', namely, organism and object, enter this construction as 'existing' in the same preliminary common-sense way in which they enter into any natural science. What psychology studies is their 'interaction'--not their physical interaction, and not their physiological interaction, but positively and definitely their psychological interaction; it is exactly here that the differentiation of the psychological from the physical and the physiological can be secured. The psychological interaction requires both organism and object, and it requires both of these in action such that without their mutual participation, the expressly psychological would not appear.

A. F. Bentley: BEHAVIOR, KNOWLEDGE, FACT

## THE AGORA

In answer to the query in the last issue of whether any other current courses are devoted solely to interbehaviorism Henry Pronko replies that such is the case for his introductory psychology course involving two sections of 50 freshmen. His list of topics might be of interest to readers: (1) misunderstandings

about psychology: "The Universe"; (2) science, scientific method, and delimitation of our field; (3) psychological events, their properties; (4) the behavior segment; (5) stimulus function and medium of contact, interactional setting; (6) the nervous system in relationship to psychology; (7) heredity in

relation to psychology and comments on race and psychology; (8) instincts, imprinting, tropisms, pheromones, etc.; (9) reactional biography; (10) foundation stage of reactional biography; (11) classical conditioning; (12) operant conditioning; (13) basic stage of reactional biography; (14) societal stage of reactional biography.

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Steven Brown writes that a volume entitled SCIENCE, PSYCHOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION: ESSAYS HONORING WILLIAM STEPHENSON was presented at ceremonies on May 4 at the University of Missouri. All royalties go to a William Stephenson Prize for outstanding dissertations in psychology and communication at Missouri. The table of contents lists a bibliography of Stephenson's works. Publisher is Teachers College Press. "Young might be interested in knowing that a journal emphasizing Q methodology may soon be in the offing. Stephenson formally retires in August and may then be able to devote more time to this: it has been under consideration for several months. Stephenson's more recent interests in the foundations of communication theory are evidenced in the winter issue of Psychological Record. He and I are collaborating on an edited book of original essays on Intensive Analysis in the Social Sciences in which the importance of the single case--as opposed to the survey approach--will be given emphasis." The Winter issue 1972 contains the article "Application of Communication Theory: I. The Substructure of science" and Spring issue "Applications of Communication Theory: II. Interpretations of Keats' 'Ode on a Grecian Urn'". This series shows the means by which subjective behavior can be measured objectively. His article in the October 1968 Record perhaps expresses the point: "Consciousness out--Subjectivity In". The spooks of consciousness are abjured while the concrete activity of subjective behavior is emphasized as an important matter of scientific investigation. In "Postulates of Behaviorism", Philosophy of Science, 1953, 20, 110-120, the following points may be singled out as of interest to interbehaviorists: (1) Hunter, Skinner, and Kantor "did not reject verbal report on proto-postulatory grounds, but merely provisionally" until "reliable operations became available; (2) "Kantor's efforts" and "John Dewey's notions about experience" leave doubt about the objectivity of starting with "immediate experience"; (3) the positions of Mace, Farrell, and Ryle concerning "mentalistic fictions of psychologists" have been "long sustained by Kantor"; (4) the systematic approach to the study of behavior" should begin with simple segments of behavior as held by Kantor and Skinner and emphasize interactions as indicated by Skinner, A.F. Bentley, Cantril, and others; (5) Kantor "grasped the need for a monistic space, the same for all empirical propositions"; (6) Kantor's interactionism includes self-observation as well as observation by others and the historical connections of these behavior segments all being concrete behavior--but excluding "psychisms" such as experience and phenomenal or private worlds which are not; (7) "What seems important is concrete behavior, including the concrete subject...as Kantor has been saying almost alone, for many years."

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The following paper by Jim Herrick consists of two chapters from his master's thesis. The thesis consists of 16 chapters and 118 pages and was completed in 1971 in anthropology. He obtained his B.A. at Plattsburgh. The paper by A. Mitsorg is his second in the Newsletter. The first appeared in the fifth number of volume 1, 1970.

THE COLLECTIVE MIND CONSTRUCT AND ITS INFLUENCE UPON CULTURE--PERSONALITY  
RESEARCH: AN APPLICATION OF THE INTERBEHAVIORAL MODEL

James W. Herrick\*

XIII. An Interbehavioral Approach to the Relationship Between Post-  
Childhood Development and the Processes of Culture

As Kantor (1924) points out, it is extremely difficult to draw a line between the "Basic" stage and "Societal" stage of development. There can be no exact or correct way of doing this, since the use of stages is merely a way of trying to show that particular types of behavioral reactions are more characteristics of certain ages or phases in the development of the individual than are others. One must therefore realize that any discussion of classes of conditioning stimuli (physical, personal, and social) during the "Basic" stage differ from the conditioning stimuli of the "Societal" (adolescence-adulthood) stage only in availability; i.e., an adult or adolescent is subject to a greater range of physical, personal, and social stimuli than a child. With this in mind, we may consider these three classes of conditioning stimuli, concentrating on social stimuli since we are concerned with similarities in cultural behavior.

Kantor (1924: 167) places under the heading of social and cultural stimuli "social situations...and social objects or institutions." Social situations include such things as famines, epidemics, etc., and social institutions consist of "any thing or conditions which operate as a common stimulus to a definite group or series of individuals" (1924: 167). There are, according to Kantor (1924: 167), two types of cultural stimuli: "those comprising the common reactions of members of a group, such as the institutions we call manners and customs, or the products themselves of social behavior, as buildings, roads, distinct wearing apparel, etc." All of these stimuli are presented to the child in the "Basic" (primarily familial) stage, and he is "brought to conform to the practices and ideals of the group in which he lives by the authority of the group"--the group in this case being the family (1924: 168).

We shall now consider what is termed the "Societal and Cultural" levels of personality development.

At the social and cultural stages of development the individual acquires all sorts of equipment which are reactions to the social institutions with which the child next comes into contact. These institutions are the objects, situations, and conditions serving as common stimuli to groups of individuals as well as customs, manners, and other ways of acting of people (Kantor 1924: 82).

As the child advances to adolescence and adulthood, interactions with social stimuli increase. Since each culture or sub-culture or society or even community will have either its own unique institutional stimuli, we begin to see similarities in their behaviors--not because each of them has something inside of them which guides their behavior (a personality or, when considered as a group, a group personality), but rather because they are interacting with the same cultural or institutional stimuli.

Although cultural responses are not concerned essentially with the preservation of the individual, we find that much of our cultural behavior constitutes the functioning of the organism in a very fundamental and elementary manner. For it is such action that comprises a very large part of the distinctly human activities. This means to say that although

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\*State University of New York at Albany

cultural reactions are arbitrary and artificial they do constitute the intimate adaptations of persons to most of the specific conditions and objects of their surroundings. Not only do such activities comprise the more elaborate responses that correspond to historical institutional stimuli; such as religious, aesthetic and mythological things, but they also have to do with the intimate details of personal and private life. For instance, our cultural behavior involves methods and manners of eating, of sexual activity, methods of breathing, bodily carriage, etc. In such adaptations to cultural stimuli our anatomical and physiological equipment constitute the same means and instruments of adjustments as in every type of response. Cultural conduct is therefore a very fundamental feature of the person's total behavior equipment. As such these reactions have a large and central place in the person's behavior life (Kantor, 1924: 201).

If we adhere to the interbehavioral approach and consider interactions with institutional stimuli as that which accounts for similarities in cultural behavior, then we are not faced with any great dilemma when we discover that not everyone conforms to our postulates of homogeneity. We must simply realize that in more complex societies, there may be one particular institution with which certain people interact more than others (e.g., old people and religious institutions), while in less complex cultures (where, for example, a religious institution may play an important role in the lives of everyone--young and old) we may easily observe a higher degree of homogeneity in behavior. Of course, the functions of various cultural institutions may be interdependent (as they often are) and we could therefore select out of the interactions with these interdependent institutions certain behaviors which seem to be dominant in all institutional interactions (e.g., older males assume leadership roles). In this case, we could rely upon an abstraction such as a "theme" (as proposed by Opler 1946a who, incidentally, cites Kantor's notion of institutions as stimuli as influencing him in his [Opler 1946a, 1946b] theory). One should realize, however, that "themes" must (as Opler's approach indicates) be derived from overt behavior (he calls them "expressions"). One cannot postulate a theme and then go in search of support for it.

One final quotation from Kantor (1924: 203, 204) should conclude our argument for the interbehavioral approach to the study of culturally-similar patterns of behavior. It deals further with the notion of institutions serving as stimuli for cultural behavior.

The stimuli for cultural reactions differ from those of our ordinary individual responses in that the objects or conditions constituting the bases for cultural stimulation, are in a sense officially or authoritatively, though not deliberately, determined by the activities of the group. In other words, the functional character of the objects is determined not by the manner in which the individual left alone responds to these objects but by the fact that these objects already have some kind of stimulatory function. They already have called out standard reactions in other members of the group. The individual at present is merely building up similar reactions to the same stimuli and therefore his reactions are like the reactions of the other individuals. This means that he is merely attaching the same reactions to institutional stimuli in the identical way that his predecessors have done.

## XIV. Recapitulation II.

If we accept Spiro's (1951) notion that personality and culture are two ways of looking at the same process, and if we reject traditional conceptions of culture influencing the psyche or mind which then manifests itself in overt behavior; and, if we further reject the unsupported contention that early childhood experiences are most important in developing the "personality structure" of an individual, then we are left with the ideas that: (1) the relationship between culture and personality is one of interaction (with neither "causing" the other, since an interaction assumes a two-way process); (2) the process of personality development is an interactive process which may not be ascribed to any one particular stage of development; and (3) after we have observed an individual or group of individuals interacting with the various stimuli in their environments (objects, personal, institutional), we must not reify this behavior (e.g., aggression), place it within the organism, and then use it as a "determiner" (a personality structure) of behavior. When considering group personalities specifically, we are dealing primarily with institutional stimuli ("any thing or condition which operates as a common stimulus to a definite group or series of individuals" [Kantor 1924: 167]). Of course, a thing or a person could also serve as a common stimulus (e.g., hospital or policeman).

Certain problems arise when, after observing groups or cultural behavioral interactions with institutional stimuli, we attach a name to this behavior (even if we do not place it within the organism, but merely describe such and such behavior as, for example, "aggressive"). These problems, of course, relate to questions of cultural relativism--what is considered aggressive in one culture may not be considered so in the culture under investigation or to other cultures. This problem was discussed in Section II.

It is therefore suggested that some sort of stand be taken when the interactions of the people of Culture X with their institutional stimuli are considered. That is, are the people of Culture X "aggressive" according to our standards, to their standards, or to whose standards? Or perhaps, we might do away with such labels altogether and confine ourselves to descriptions of interbehaviors--thus avoiding the projection of our standards of "aggressive," "witty," "paranoid," "sly," "guilt-ridden," etc., etc.; while at the same time being in possession of more exacting accounts of why the people of Culture X behave as they do (i.e., their behavioral patterns are, in some cases, highly homogeneous because they are interacting with such and such an institutional stimulus or stimuli). We must not shy away from exacting descriptions of human behavior (which may eventually be converted into event-bound theories or laws)"...on the ground that such problems require higher powers than science commands" (Kantor 1962: 326, 327).

A final word on the subject of labeling observed interbehaviors is given by Kantor (1924: 167, 168) in the following quotation.

Let us not slight the fact that each name for social behavior, such as awe or shame, must, if it is to mean anything at all, stand for some concrete and specific action which of necessity is absolutely different for each person [and also culturally-defined], and also varied within the different periods of the individual's life. An act of charity, mercy, faith, hope, shame, or resentment is a specific, factual behavior situation and we must by no means overlook the fact that, because for descriptive purposes we apply a conventional term to such reactions, there is anything but a conventional similarity in such behavior situations. ...Social

conduct, we repeat again, consists of behavior segments developed through contact with actual institutions or common stimuli; and the nature of the behavior is a direct derivation of the stimulating circumstances in which the person acquires it.

If the above propositions are held, then it remains to make use of Harris' (1968) argument that we provide a "material" base for the investigation of cultural phenomena--institutions and the concomitant institutional inter-behaviors being a large part of what constitutes these cultural phenomena. A knowledge of the foundation conditions upon which various institutions arose and the subsequent evolution of these institutions is crucial to the understanding of why things and events are the way they are today. It is hoped that this point has been made in the tracing of one area of that vast institution called "science"--namely, that dealing with anthropology's culture and personality approach.

In effect, this thesis could be considered as an attempt to attach a group label to those scientists called anthropologists. The label would read "Dualistic," while Harris' label would read "Idealists." It is hoped that support has been given for these labels on other than a priori grounds. It must be remembered, however, that science is but one institution and that one could also deal with religious, familial, economic, etc., etc. institutions, all of which may be seen to be the product of divergences from pristine cultural-ecological conditions. What cannot be emphasized enough is the idea that group labels must be derived from the institutional interactions carried out by the people of a particular culture, and that these institutions are not to be assumed to exist on a priori grounds.

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## Nevertheless, the Earth is Flat

### A Review of a Review

Fundamentalists who persistently maintain that the earth is flat bear witness to the great power of infallible intuition to outweigh the claims of meticulous observation. That unfailing power is the essence of fundamentalism, a trait which is manifested on every intellectual level. Psychologists no more than other professionals escape the contagion of fundamentalism. The burden of their faith is the existence of mind. Overtly and covertly they paraphrase the New York editor; "Yes, Virginia, there is a mind", though in the succession of generations the same entity is dominated by different nouns.

Clear as day are the mechanisms that fortify faith. At bottom is ignorance concerning the nature of things believed, and next is the vigor of established cultural institutions when encapsulated in an amber of words. Names support the conviction in the existence of nothings.

All the above is effectively illustrated in a recent book review by Professor Neisser<sup>1</sup> who comments upon three books on Mental Imagery. He waxes approvingly of the change of fashion in psychology which makes possible a renewed commerce with mental processes despite the demise of introspective psychology. He says, "In the last ten years....the behavioristic taboos have been broken and the mind seems worth studying after all" (p.628).

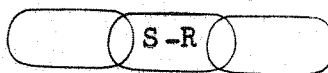
As is only to be expected Professor Neisser follows closely in the footsteps of the early detractors of behaviorism and reiterates that "what contemporary.....psychologists mean by "the mind", however, is very different from what their predecessors meant. The definition is no longer in terms of conscious, introspectively given phenomena. Instead it is in terms of a flow of information in the organism. Theoretical terms like 'storage', 'retrieval', 'recoding', and 'selection'....refer to hypothetical stages of activity or processing" (P. 628).

Note the glaring contradictions. If behavioristic taboos have been broken, what are the referents of the terms 'storage', 'retrieval', 'recodings', and 'selection'? Can they be other than the conscious, introspectively given Noumena? So where is the shift in the meaning of mind? Can the juggling with synonyms transform the transcendental into something else? Can nonbehavioral imagery be anything else than supernatural processes disguised by other names? The camouflage fails to conceal. The reviewer states that one of the three books is organized entirely in the classical mode, another includes papers from both sides of the [mental-behavioral] watershed, while the third is written from the perspective of associationism. The reviewer even points out that in one of the three books, images "have become the psychological correlate of linguistic deep structure" (p. 630).

What else can one conclude but that the stream of psychological thinking is heavily polluted by transcendental fallout? Though the labors of a Hercules may not suffice to clear it, one is tempted to point out (1) that to ignore the fact that imagery has only been rejected by reflexological behaviorism, is really a sign of being influenced by supernaturalism, (2) that though behaviorism is simply antimentalism in every form, it need not be Pavlovian reflexology, and (3) that antibehaviorism despite verbal camouflage holds to "mind" as the age-old mystical conscious known only through introspective intuitions. It is only the prevalence of scientific work and achievements of the other disciplines that influences psychologists to presume that mind can be nonbehavioral and at the same time nonsupernatural.

A striking feature of the clinging to the flat-earth type of fundamentalism in psychology is the misinterpretation of the behavioral movement. Instead of regarding it as an admirable attempt to comply with scientific demands to deal only with the actual behavior of organisms, it is looked upon as a fad in psychology to avoid the recognition of mentalistic imagery, thinking, and other noumena. Those who unwittingly accept the dogmas of the Church Fathers concerning the existence of two worlds, two essences-minds and bodies, as well as other mentalistic dualisms decry behaviorism despite the fact that their observations and experiments never concern anything but the cognitive and affective interactions of organisms with concrete objects through the mediation of direct or substitute stimulation. By disregarding this fact they find it easy to delude themselves that by a curtain of words they can conceal their adherence to the fundamentalistic belief in the existence of the supernatural.

A. Mitsorg



"... 'science' is... a procedure of observation and postulation, with all observation recognizing that it takes place under postulation, and with all postulation recognizing that it arises out of observation."

A. F. Bentley: "Kennetic Inquiry",  
Science, 1950, CXII, 775-783.