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**PART III.   APPLICATIONS OF DESCRIPTIVE
PSYCHOLOGY WITHIN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY**

FOREWORD

Advances in Descriptive Psychology is the official annual publication of
the Society for Descriptive Psychology. The society was founded in 1979
by a group of psychologists, linguists, computer scientists, and theolo-
gians who had found Dr. Peter G. Ossorio's nonreductionistic, non-
mechanistic, systematic formulation of the concepts of "persons,"
"behavior," "language," and "reality" to be the first adequate account
of these concepts and their interrelations. The formulation has been
designated Descriptive Psychology. *Advances* is devoted to presentation
of original conceptualizations of behavioral phenomenon within the
framework of Descriptive Psychology and hence we give a greater prior-
ity to original conceptual work than is common in contemporary be-
havioral science. But, the annual publication is also intended to provide
an opportunity for the publication of original research that is derived
from a Descriptive Psychological framework and for the presentation
of new procedures for the conduct of clinical and consulting psychology

and for the conduct of behavioral research. Finally, comparative and conceptual analyses of Descriptive Psychological formulations and other systematic perspectives are appropriate.

The contents of this volume give a good idea of the range of appropriate material except that original research is somewhat underrepresented in this volume. Because of our concern to lay out the foundation of Descriptive Psychology and illustrate its application in new areas, these papers are both more conceptual and programmatic than we expect future volumes to be. While the editor solicits papers based on the advice of the Editorial Board, unsolicited papers that fall within the range of topics specified above are welcome. Potential contributors who have questions about the appropriateness of a manuscript should correspond with the editor at the address given below.

One of the pleasant duties of an editor is to acknowledge the assistance of others without which Volume 1 of *Advances in Descriptive Psychology* would be neither so prompt nor of such high quality. The editorial effort has been a cooperative one involving help from all members of the Editorial Board and from several other members of the Society but three persons deserve to be singled out for special recognition. They are Dr. Thomas Mitchell, Mary Shideler, and Jan Vanderburgh. Mitchell served in many respects as an associate editor, taking on a major role in the development of editorial procedures, the tasks of copy editing and reviewing of galley proofs, and in formulating suggestions for the revision of manuscripts. Mary McDermott Shideler graciously made High Haven available for our first editorial working session and contributed her wisdom with respect to good editorial and stylistic practices, indexing, and a number of matters in which the editor was a novice. The hostess of High Haven is a very talented person indeed. Jan Vanderburgh contributed not only her copy editing expertise but also her skills in graphics. She produced all the figures for Dr. Peter Ossorio's foundation papers. The working sessions at High Haven were a joyous occasion, and for that these three are responsible.

And finally, of course, it is fair to say that none of this would have happened without the dedication and genius of Peter Ossorio who has inspired us and who has gone far beyond the expectations that one has for a teacher, colleague, and friend.

Keith E. Davis
Series Editor

FOUNDATIONS OF

DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY:

PAPERS BY PETER G. OSSORIO

INTRODUCTION

Keith E. Davis

In these introductory remarks, I shall be primarily concerned to provide orientation for those readers who are relatively unfamiliar with Descriptive Psychology. Three kinds of orienting comments will be appropriate. First, I shall identify some of the novel features of Descriptive Psychology with a particular concern to draw the reader's attention to features, which, if not noted, may seriously interfere with understanding of the perspective. Second, I shall sketch briefly the historical evolution of the major concepts of Descriptive Psychology and note the time and place of first presentation and publication. Finally, I shall point out some of the major issues addressed in the five foundation papers that form the opening section of this volume.

Features of Descriptive Psychology

Descriptive Psychology is a systematic reformulation of the requirements for, and concepts intrinsic to, creating a coherent science of human behavior. It is to a large extent the creation of one man, Dr. Peter G. Ossorio, but its concepts and methodological principles have come to

guide the intellectual and practical work of a small community of psychologists, computer scientists, linguists, and theologians. The publication of *Advances in Descriptive Psychology* marks a transition in the life of this community of scholars, for it signals the existence of the community to the broader scientific and professional communities and constitutes an invitation for others to examine the system and to appraise some initial fruits of the community's labors.

By identifying some of the features of Descriptive Psychology that may pose problems for understanding and communication at first, I hope to encourage newcomers to hold in abeyance some of their very well learned tendencies which come into play when they encounter a new "theory." Descriptive Psychology's novelty lies in (a) its formulation of what human behavior and persons are, (b) its formulation of the relationship among persons, behavior, and the real world, and (c) its formulation of distinctive research paradigms and other methods for dealing with all of these. In this context, the standard questions, "Is it true?" "What are its assumptions?" and "What are the referents of the theoretical terms?" will lead one in entirely the wrong direction.

The task of presenting Descriptive Psychology is the task of presenting an interrelated set of concepts, especially the concepts of human behavior, persons, language, and real world, so that these relationships are exhibited. In doing this, one must use declarative sentences—not to assert facts or stipulate meanings—but to assemble reminders and give instructions in how to operate with the concepts in question. The system provides an explicit delineation of the subject matter of human behavior, but because it is a conceptualization (set of interrelated concepts), it does not assert, claim, or deny anything in the way that well known theories do. The goal is to make it possible to represent the range of possible facts—to provide a way of representing what can happen—so that the business of understanding and predicting what actually happens can proceed without the arbitrary and unrecognized exclusion of possibilities. The force of this difference lies in the difference between informally or intuitively knowing what can happen versus formally making a place for all genuine possibilities within the system.

One of the ironies of the current situation in the behavioral sciences is that none of the existing general formulations, models, or theories seems to be able to represent systematically and explicitly the fact of a person's describing and explaining behavior. Since the study of behavior is itself a form of behavior, a recognition of the force of this truism will have both methodological and substantive implications for formulations of human behavior. On the methodological side, it appears that any formulation must itself be reflexive or self-referring and that the system in which the formulations operate must be recursive or self-including. Without these features,

the system would not be responsive to the fact that the study of behavior is itself a form of behavior.

Substantively, the force of the truism may be found in the conceptual unpacking of the presuppositions involved in describing scientific behavior. At the minimum one needs to delineate three distinct *statuses* (the behaver, the observer-describer, and the critic or appraiser), *standards* for choosing among descriptions, particularly the standard of intellectual appropriateness or truth, *deliberate action* in contrast with other forms of behavior, the *social practice* of negotiating differences, and the paradigm case of the person as rational (self-regulating, acting on grounds). The conceptual complexity is substantial, but then doing justice to the phenomena often leads to that state of affairs. Some of the range of complexity can be seen in the third chapter in this section, "Outline of Descriptive Psychology."

Two other novel features of Descriptive Psychology are (a) the formulation of the relationship between language and behavior, and (b) the invention of a number of conceptual-notational devices for doing conceptualization. The standard attitude toward language is that words represent labels for reality that can be apprehended independently of the conceptual system that one uses and thus that it always makes sense to ask, "To what does that word refer?" The difficulties of such presuppositions have been dealt with at length in *Meaning and Symbolism* (Ossorio, 1969b) and *"What Actually Happens"* (Ossorio, 1978b). There he shows that apparently referential concepts, such as event, process, object, and state of affairs, have a structure of conceptual interrelationships among each other that makes it possible to give quite different descriptions of the same state of affairs without necessarily violating the reality constraints for that particular state of affairs (or object, etc.). Part of the central importance of these transition rules among reality concepts is that they make explicit the part-whole structure of states of affairs and hence allow one to grasp how partial or systematically incomplete description can be given. Another resource of the system of rules is a clear procedure for generating compositions (constructions of greater complexity) or decompositions (analyses of objects, processes into their components).

The development of informative pre-empirical conceptualizations of a domain requires that one has systematic procedures for accomplishing the goal. Prior difficulties make it clear that the traditional resources, definitions or noncommital theories, cannot generally do the job. Definitions have their limits because fundamental or "primitive" terms cannot be defined and because when given, definitions tend to be reductive and hence to lead one away from the subject matter to something else. In the case of theories it is the arbitrary relationship of what the theory is about to the subject matter of behavior that has generated the problem. Ossorio

has, from his earliest work, made use of four types of devices in present-
ing a subject matter. These are, (a) paradigm case formulations, (b)
parametric analyses, (c) calculation systems, and, (d) formulas including
some which are rules. The first three of these are presented, compared
and contrasted in the fourth paper in this section, "Conceptual-
Notational Devices." The fourth device is exemplified in the second
paper, "Explanation, Falsifiability, and Rule-following." In connection with
clinical practices, the devices of images and scenarios are used, and I
shall say more about these in the introduction to the third section.

While no short list of distinctive features will do the job of telling one
what Descriptive Psychology is—for a critical appreciation must be rooted
in understanding how the features of the system work together to make an
intelligible whole—perhaps enough has been said to alert the wary reader
to some likely stumbling blocks to his understanding. A related point may
also be worth mentioning. Neither the introductory material nor the
individual papers provide much information on the kinships of Descrip-
tive Psychology to other psychological and philosophical points of view;
nor is much attention devoted to scholarly-historical antecedents.
Although undoubtedly there are continuities between Descriptive
Psychology and some of the linguistic analytic philosophies, most notably
Wittgenstein (1953); Ryle (1949); and Austin (1961), the differences and in
aim and substances are sufficiently great that references to such kinships,
unless the points are quite specific and carefully delimited, can be quite
misleading. Kinship within psychology are distant, at best, but two
sources that appear quite relevant are Harré's *Social being* (1979) and
John Shotter's work (1975, 1980, in press). Shotter has been a particularly
telling critic of the causal-mechanistic model of man and the confusion
between empirical and conceptual questions in many areas of psychology.
But, as the primary aim of this volume is the presention of important
portions of Descriptive Psychology and certain elaborations, extensions,
and applications, we shall have to leave it to another occasion to engage in
systematic comparative analyses of related formulations.

Historical Comments

Many of the major conceptual distinctions central to Descriptive
Psychology were developed during an eight month period from the fall of
1964 through the spring of 1965. In general, the order and time of the
publication of major portions of the system are unrelated to the order of
their development. During the 1964–65 period, the transition rules of the
Reality System were developed, but publication of these did not come
until 1967 (Outline of Behavior Description) and were hardly known even
among Descriptive Psychologists until much later (Ossorio, 1971, 1978b).
The concept of behavior as intentional action and of "individual differ-
ences" as systems concepts were published immediately in *Persons*

(Ossorio, 1966). The concept of systematic forms of behavior descriptions originated in 1966–67 and was first published in "Notes on Behavior Description" (1969a and this volume). The relationship between types of behavior and individual differences, or personal characteristics, was also developed in this period and included in *Persons* (1966). While the insight that language did not function merely as a set of pre-existing labels for a separately apprehended reality had already been formulated in 1962–63 under the designation of the "Tinker Toy Model," it was developed only briefly in *Persons* (1966), and the major elaboration occurred in 1968–69 and resulted in a short monograph, *Meaning and symbolism* (1969b).

During the 1970–71 period, Ossorio made major advances in his formulation of status, relationship, and emotion concepts. These have subsequently been published in *Clinical Topics* (1976) and been central to a number of dissertation studies (e.g., Roberts, 1980).

The central concern of the mid 1970s was working on the interrelationships among major parts of the system so that these connections were more explicit and more readily understood as parts of a system. Also, the period saw extensive clinical work and greatly increased conceptual apparatus for handling clinical applications. Finally, although Ossorio had been self-conscious about the formulation of behavior descriptions as a calculational system, it was not until 1977 that the opportunity to work out the systematic relation among the conceptual devices—paradigm case formulations, parametric analyses, etc., became available and resulted in the paper "Conceptual-Notational Devices" (Ossorio, 1980).

A special note is in order about the Society for Descriptive Psychology's and the publisher's general policy with respect to reprinting previously published work. In general, the Society does not see this as an appropriate function for *Advances in Descriptive Psychology,* and our publisher has established the series of research annuals to bring new material into being. The primary reason for making an exception in the case of Ossorio's foundation papers is that, while these have been published and copyrighted by the Linguistic Research Institute and placed in the Library of Congress, they have been accessible primarily to "insiders"—to people who already knew about Descriptive Psychology. The publication of these papers within *Advances in Descriptive Psychology* makes them available to the broader community of scholars.

Foundation Papers

The selection of papers for reprinting was based on the views of members of the editorial board that the paper in question presented clearly and cogently a central component of Descriptive Psychology—one on which many other papers had built—and that the exposition was reasonably up to date.

Two papers in particular were nominated by almost everyone con-

sulted. These were "Notes on Behavior Description" (1969a) and "Explanation, Falsifiability, and Rule-following" (1967). The former paper develops the notion of intentional action as a parametric analysis of behavior and presents the results of taking intentional action to be a calculational system describable as an Element-Operation-Product structure. The phenomena of human creativity, flexibility, and capacity for novel responses appear to require a conceptual resource that can generate an unlimited variety of behaviors. The Intentional Action Calculation System does just that. Furthermore, it provides a systematic framework for distinguishing among the different sorts of "behavior" and behavior descriptions that are referred to in ordinary discourse, and thus in principle for adjudicating among apparently conflicting claims about the "same behavior." In my experience, I often encounter social psychologists who claim that "the same behavior" have dramatically different "consequences" when what they want to say can be reformulated more effectively as the recognition that the same performances (e.g., uttering the words, "Excellent point.") can be part of quite distinct actions, e.g., flattery, supporting a teammate, etc. Of course, the same performance/achievement combinations count differently as a function of the larger behavioral pattern they fit into. The explicit recognition of the major forms of Behavior Descriptions and their systematization as a calculation system gives any observer or critic a very powerful tool for being both clear and precise and hence increases his behavior potential.

If "Notes on Behavior Description" were rewritten in 1980 taking advantage of further insights and elaborations of Descriptive Psychology, some changes would be noted. What is called "Deliberate Action Description" is now designated as "Cognizant Action Descriptions," and Deliberate Action is reserved for the case in which the person not only knows what he has selected but also has selected it because it is the very behavior that it is. In common parlance, we often mark this case by saying that person is doing what he does "on purpose" or "intentionally." At the time this was written, "Symbolic Action Description" had not been formalized nor was the Significance parameter of international action distinguished. These distinctions are included in the third paper ("An Outline of Descriptive Psychology . . .") and the early recognition of their importance is attested to in *Meaning and Symbolism* (1969b). In a revision of the presentation of "Forms of Behavior Description," it would be useful to develop their explicit links to the Reality System and the transition rules of that system.

The second part of "Notes on Behavior Description" is a presentation of nine maxims for assessing the eligibility of a statement to count as an explanation of behavior or the acquisition of behavior potential. In other contexts, Ossorio (1966, 1978a) has shown that appeals to principles of

explanation that do the same logical work as one or more of these maxims is widespread in general behavior theories or personality theories. The maxims make clear that Descriptive Psychology is not primarily a mere classification system but is rather a system within which dynamic explanation can be generated. The maxims have implications for (a) the adequacy of skepticism as a general methodological policy and (b) the supposed necessity of taking causal explanations to be deterministic.

In "Explanation, Falsifiability, and Rule-following" Ossorio (1967) gives a critique of the common practice of performing experiments in order to test theories. In contrast, he develops the idea of a pre-empirical set of rules that serve as a descriptive-explanatory device that is not in need of empirical testing (indeed could not be falsified in that way) which serves to guide meaningful empirical research. The hueristic example is from the domain of angry or hostile behavior, but the rules have proved to be generalizable to other instances of emotional behavior by substituting a new appraisal term and to all interpersonal relationships via the Relationship Formula (see Ossorio, 1970, the third paper in this volume).

The third paper, "An Outline of Descriptive Psychology . . ." (Ossorio, 1970) was selected as the best brief source for an answer to the question, "What is Descriptive Psychology?" It should be the starting place for one who wants a quick overview of Descriptive Psychology, and it serves as a handy reference source for many of the explicit connections among major components of Descriptive Psychology.

Finally, we have two foundation papers, which, although they were prepared independently of *Advances in Descriptive Psychology,* were revised and adapted for presentation here. They will be unfamiliar to many members of the Society. In "Conceptual-Notational Devices," Ossorio (1980a) compares and contrasts definitions, paradigm case formulations, parametric analyses, and calculational systems as devices for introducing a domain of facts and exhibiting the systematic relations among aspects or elements of the domain. While these devices have been a part of Descriptive Psychology from its earliest days, the systematic exposition of the logical character of each device and the relations among device types puts us all in a position to engage in deliberate actions with respect to the use of such devices in our own work. The discussion of these types is particularly helpful in understanding how they enable one to accomplish a non-reductive systematization of a domain. Littman's (1979) use of the PCF device in her dissertation on humor shows how valuable such procedures can be to psychologists (and humanists) who are concerned to explain rather than explain away distinctive human practices and accomplishments.

In "Representation, Evaluation and Research," Ossorio (1980b) presents two novel research paradigms—the Precaution Paradigm and the

Simulation Paradigm—and illustrates their use in evaluation research. The paper makes use of the Actor-Observer-Critic Schema to derive the Precaution Paradigm as a special case of rational precaution taking on the part of a person who does not want to go wrong in his procedures or in his conclusions about a procedure or program. The second major resource is the representational formats developed in *"What Actually Happens"* (1978b), particularly Process Descriptions, though this is less well developed here than in the Precaution Paradigm. Both the Precaution Paradigm and the Simulation Paradigm are compared and contrasted to the standard paradigm of experimentation and its relation to statistical analysis.

With this background, some implications of Descriptive Psychology for problems in evaluation research are presented and a full scale hypothetical treatment-evaluation program is described in order to illustrate how the resources of the two research paradigms would be brought to bear on a common clinical evaluation problem. We look forward to an opportunity to publish non-hypothetical examples of these paradigms in future volumes.

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NOTES ON BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION

Peter G. Ossorio

ABSTRACT

The concept of Intentional Action is presented as a calculational system having an Element-Operation-Product structure. The IA formula is the initial Element and four Operations are introduced. Products of the system are forms of behavior description. The set of products is unlimited in variety and quantity. A set of maxims for giving person descriptions or behavior descriptions is presented. The maxims function as prescriptive, or rule-like, constraints on the giving of person descriptions and behavior descriptions. The force of the maxims reflects the conceptual structure of the Person Concept.

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EXPLANATION, FALSIFIABILITY, AND RULE-FOLLOWING

Peter G. Ossorio

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a critique of our ordinary scientific practice of performing experiments in order to bolster our confidence in the theories they "test." An alternative rationale is presented for the conduct of empirical research using non-falsifiable theories or other conceptual formulations. An alternative formulation of the problem of "generalization" is given. The new rationale is exemplified with some psychological research.

OUTLINE OF DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY FOR PERSONALITY THEORY AND CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

Peter G. Ossorio

ABSTRACT

This outline serves as an abbreviated reference or an annotated course outline for the presentation of the Person Concept in a form which is heuristic with respect to the subject matter of personality and psychopathology. Of the four major components of the Person Concept, two are emphasized (Person, Behavior) and two are not (Language, Reality).

CONCEPTUAL-NOTATIONAL DEVICES:

THE PCF AND RELATED TYPES

Peter G. Ossorio

ABSTRACT

Definition, Paradigm Case Formulation, Parametric Analysis, and Calculational System are presented as paradigmatic Conceptual-Notational Devices. Relationships among these are shown and production of other types of device is illustrated.

REPRESENTATION, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH

Peter G. Ossorio

ABSTRACT

In this paper two research paradigms are presented. These are the Precaution Paradigm and the Simulation Paradigm. They are derived from the person concept by means of representational schemas which are already a part of Descriptive Psychology. The use of these paradigms in evaluation research is discussed and illustrated.

DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY

AND CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS

IN PSYCHOLOGY AND

RELATED BEHAVIORAL

SCIENCES

INTRODUCTION

Keith E. Davis

In selecting papers for this section, I had two objectives. I wanted to show some of the variety of issues on which Descriptive Psychology could be successfully brought to bear and to give a priority to papers that dealt with difficult or intractable problems. In my view, intractable problems and long standing conceptual difficulties are best approached with Ramsey heuristic maxim "that the truth lies not in one of the two disputed views but in some third possibility which has not yet been thought of, which we can only discover by rejecting something assumed as obvious by both the disputants" (Ramsey, 1931, pp. 115–116). When Ramsey's heuristic is brought into play by investigators who have the powerful resources of a conceptualization as comprehensive as Descriptive Psychology and also have an intimate knowledge of a specific subject matter, then the opportunity is ripe for a significant reformulation of an issue. I think that all five of these papers contribute—to a greater or lesser degree—to such reformulation.

Mary Shideler's "The Lover and The Logician" treats a specific family of conceptual problems that have characterized Western thought and which

shows up in the tendency to treat "reason" and "emotion" as polar opposites. A result of this way of thinking is that emotional behavior is taken to be irrational. By rejecting the assumption that "reason" and "emotion" are polar opposites, Mary Shideler is able to reformulate the problem by drawing attention to actor versus observer/critic status, to the four major standards that guide behavioral choice, and to the difference between describing and appraising a state of affairs. Out of this reformulation, reason and emotion are seen as noncompetitive aspects of a common framework. "The lover and the logician are at odds not because the former is unreasonable and the latter reasonable, but because they have different reasons generated by the different perspectives and geared to different achievements" (Shideler, 1981). Her formulation of the conflict as one among perspectives, each of which involves feeling and thought, does not make the conflict among desires disappear, but it shows how no such conflict is purely one of reason versus emotion. And, seeing the conflict in that light, is the first step toward living one's life differently— not as the victim of irreconcilable forces in human nature, but rather as a person whose choices exemplify a certain way of life.

In Mitchell's "On The Interpretation of Utterances," we move to a thorny problem in linguistics, philosophy, and discourse analysis. His task is one of providing a systematic and coherent account of how a hearer can recognize that the same locution, "Can you reach the salt?" is part of two or more entirely different actions. In one case that of requesting information and in the other case that of acquiring the object. While it has been clear to most students of this problem that the observer distinguishes among these cases by reference to the context within which they occur, Mitchell has provided the first comprehensive formulation of contextual factors and how they operate to provide the differentiation needed. The fundamental device is the parametric analysis of intentional action with its explicit resources as a calculational system (Ossorio, 1981).

One stumbling block to grasping this solution to the problem of context has been the presupposition that the hearer's knowledge is inferential. As the task of formulating such inferential rules has not been accomplished, investigations have alternated between despair ("The problem is insoluble") and blind faith that such inferences could be worked out.

In treating contextual factors, Mitchell draws our attention to the fact that the only fundamental limit on the role that utterances play in an action is that of conceptual coherence of that particular type of action. Thus, it is not that the locutions usually determine the action accomplished by uttering certain words and that contextual factors sometimes determines how the speaker takes the locution, but rather that in principle the context is always part of what determines the action. There are two

categories of context, (1) those parameters of the Intention Action that deal with the speaker's behavior other than his locution, and (2) the circumstances in which he acts. Here again the criterion of relevance is that of the Intention Action paradigm and conceptual coherence. What counts as relevant circumstances is whatever makes a difference in the kind of action it is and the Intention Action parameters enumerate these categories.

Mitchell's paper points to the direction which work on automated processing of natural languages must take. We look forward to future reports on his research on this topic.

In thinking about computer interpretation of national language textual material, we prepared for the next topic, "A New Paradigm for Artificial Intelligence." In this paper, Jeffrey rejects the assumption that getting a computer to behave intelligently is tantamont to showing that human intelligence is nothing more than a very sophisticated tree-searching mechanism.

As a logical matter, he follows Ossorio (1978) in showing that the reductionistic move (the decomposition of the object or process into its elements or subprocess) has no priority over explanations in terms of part-whole structures or compositions of parts into broader wholes. In his view, the task for Artificial Intelligence is that of getting programs that perform calculations that human beings can successfully treat as instances of acting on concepts.

In the domain of automated document retrieval, he accomplishes this task by inputing expert judgments of the relevance specific technical vocabulary to a wide range of specific topics. Using factor analytic procedures, he sets up a judgment space expressing the relevance of certain vocabulary terms to specific content. A new document can then be indexed by calculating the values of the technical vocabulary in its abstract or summary.

All documents, whose content has been indexed, can be retrieved by use of a metric that is derived from the distance measures between the concepts in this document and those in other documents in the space. As Jeffrey observes, "by gathering numbers which are instances of acting on concepts (the original relevance judgments), and manipulating the number so that that relationship is maintained, we arrive at a mathematical object . . . such that we may appropriately treat the results of calculating that function, in these cases, as acting on the concept (of subject matter relevance)."

The empirical evaluations of such procedures appear very promising (Jeffrey, 1975; Johannes, 1977; Ossorio, 1966), and Jeffrey shows how such procedures are relevant, in principle, to such problems in "Artificial Intelligence" as significant feature selection, chess playing and problem-

solving. Clearly, considerable work lies ahead to get functioning pro-
grams that deal with the latter problems in ways derived from Descriptive
Psychology. But, a major step has been taken in showing how to approach
these topics.

Putman's "Communities" is doubtless the most ambitious paper in the
volume, for he provides a parametric analysis of the notion of community
in terms of six parameters—members, statuses, concepts, locutions,
social practices, and world—and illustrates the relevance of his analysis
to a number of topics within Descriptive Psychology. Particularly in-
teresting is that, in developing the notion of core social practices as those
practices which any member of the community must be capable of partici-
pating in if he or she is to continue as a member, he identifies observation-
description, criticism, negotiation, accreditation-degradation as core
practices. These practices have been independently identified as major
resources for doing Descriptive Psychology.

The originality and comprehensiveness of Putman's analysis makes it
difficult to say briefly what he has accomplished, for his paper leads
naturally into topics that have typically been the provence of anthropol-
ogists, sociologists, and other students of community. One potential ap-
plication that I find interesting is to the questions, What is Community
Psychology?, and What practices and procedures are distinctive to Com-
munity Psychology? A turf has been staked out by members of APA's
Division 27, but the rationale for the field appears ad hoc and unconvinc-
ing. Because Putman's analysis of the concept of communities is ex-
plicitly conducted within Descriptive Psychology and is explicitly
linked to concepts such as persons and behavior, it provides a starting
place for dealing with the two questions cited above.

Putman also makes an interesting observation on the relation between
community and consciousness. He draws our attention to the fact that the
community provides the context for one's consciousness *as* a particular
kind of person in a specific world (defined by the concepts and practices of
that community).

Plotkin, in his paper, "Consciousness," aims to clarify the nature of
consciousness by employing Descriptive Psychology to exhibit the rela-
tions among consciousness and other fundamental behavioral concepts.
He explicitly rejects the conception of consciousness that treats it as the
something added to the human organism that makes it fully human.
Rather, he starts with the features of deliberate action as the paradigm
case of human behavior and shows that consciousness is presupposed as a
logical feature of behaving deliberately. Plotkin identifies the content of
consciousness with the distinction that we notice ourselves to be making,
and hence he places it as a subset of the distinctions that we act on in
engaging in our ongoing behavior. The latter he designates as awareness.

He recognizes that the conceptual connections between "awareness" and "consciousness" are so strong that one might be tempted to treat these as equivalent notions, but he advances a number of considerations for recognizing a distinction between (a) those distinctions that one notices and takes to be central to one's own behavior and, (b) those distinctions that are taken for granted in the course of doing a particular thing but that could be brought into consciousness readily.

This is a subtle and demanding paper, but one well worth the effort. Among other things, he shows how Jayne's (1976) hypothesis that language appeared and was fully developed before the appearance of human consciousness rests on an incoherent argument. For Plotkin has already shown that the natural interrelatedness of (a) action language, (b) self-consciousness, and, (c) having the status of agent or human actor. The ability to use action languages presupposes having the status of a self-conscious agent, e.g., someone who knows what he is doing. Such knowledge is fundamental to a whole range of human practices such as holding people responsible for their actions, dispensing justice, making moral judgments of actions and doing one's duty. Other consciousness related abilities appear to be those of the critic role, performing internal dialogues, planning, and experiencing the flow of time. Plotkin makes one appreciate why early psychologists identified the subject of psychology with the phenomena of consciousness. I anticipate that this paper will provoke many comments from other members of the Society.

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THE LOVER AND THE LOGICIAN

Mary McDermott Shideler

ABSTRACT

Traditionally, it has been taken for granted that there is a fundamental disparity between reason and emotion, so that often they are in conflict. Basing my analysis on the work of Peter G. Ossorio, I propose that there is not and cannot be any conflict between thinking, no matter how rigorous, and feeling, no matter how passionate. Conflict indeed there is, both within and between persons, but that which has been misidentified as between "the lover and the logician," so to speak, is instead between or among the hedonic, prudential, ethical, and esthetic perspectives. When we recognize "reason" and "emotion" as allies, not antagonists, a wider range of behavioral possibilities becomes available to us than was the case when we saw them as polarized.

The division between the warm heart and the cool head, passion and reason, permeates our thoughts so deeply that we take for granted their polarity, if not their conflict. The lover, while he is deep in his infatuation,

is not rational about his beloved. The logician, while he is deep in his symbolic abstractions, has no concern for the emotional repercussions of his analysis upon others—or himself. In the first case, the arterial blood, so to speak, does not reach the brain; in the second, cerebral control is not exercised upon the viscera. Biologically, this would be an unsatisfactory state of affairs; philosophically and psychologically it is even more so. But how are we to establish a genuine integration of the heart and the head, of passion and reason?

Not, certainly, by assiduously pointing out to the lover the imperfections—obvious to us—in his beloved, or by pleading with the logician to take account of matters as remote from his proper task as the art of painting is from quantum mechanics. Nor by ascetic disciplines designed to subdue the "natural man," or psychotherapy to "release the elemental powers which are being suppressed." None of these probes deeply enough. They are all concerned with coordinating elements which are, on the face of it, incompatible, and coordination is a far cry from integrity. A bevy of quotations will suggest the scope of the problem.

"No amount of rational analysis can bring healing" (Luke, n.d., p. ii).

"Suppose one doesn't quite know which one wants to put first? Suppose . . . one is cursed with both a heart and a brain?" (Sayers, 1936, p. 179).

"She knew that this conflict would continue in her always: a battle between . . . the thing reasoned and the same thing imagined" (Morgan, 1936, p. 284).

"There are experiences which take the place of philosophy" (Morgan, 1932, p. 389).

"It is not at best easy to unite the world of intellect and the world of sensation; only perhaps in great art can they both be experienced at once. The movements of the flesh and of the mind pass along separated channels; philosophy can make roads by which we can pass to the banks of either great stream, but even philosophy itself can rarely dig canals along which the waters of both may mingle. Yet separate, they can hardly be justified" (Williams, 1935, pp. 81–82).

I have deliberately chosen my quotations from literature rather than philosophy or psychology, but one technical citation needs to be added.

"Virtually all personality theorists of whatever creed or persuasion assume that the personality contains polar tendencies that may come into conflict with one another" (Hall & Lindzey, 1970).

That there is a difference between emotion and reason is beyond dispute. But are they *polar* opposites, like north and south, so that the more emotional our behavior, the farther we depart from reasonableness? Are the lover and the logician at opposite poles of the same continuum? Or is the difference not polar, but of some other kind? And if—when—

there is conflict, what precisely is at issue, and between whom or what? These are problems which arise both within us individually and among us socially, and "lover" and "logician" are only two of the forms in which they may appear. The emotion may be not love, but fear or hostility or guilt or some other, and reason is not by any means limited to the extreme abstractions and technicalities of logic. But as Charles Williams once wrote in another connection, "On the achievement in the extreme all depends" (Williams, 1950, p. 157), so for my protagonists here, I am taking the infatuated lover, and the highly trained, zealous logician.

I.

As is usual with problems such as this, we must begin our formulation not with the complexities of the immediate, urgent situation as it surfaces in our daily lives, but with its structure: here, with the relationship between what we know, and what we want or have a reason for doing, and what we need. The first and third of these are, in themselves, relatively simple to deal with; the second is more intricate.

For lover and logician alike—and for everyone between and beyond—to know is to distinguish A from B, A' from A, A" from A' and so on: for example, persons from things, the person we happen to love from other persons, and that person from the concept "person." *What* distinctions we make is not—for the moment—our concern, or why we draw the lines where we do, or how subtle our discriminations. What *is* our concern is that knowledge is a matter of differentiating among objects, processes, events, states of affairs, relationships, and concepts, without weighting them or appraising their values except in special cases: e.g., to know something is dangerous *is* to make an appraisal.

Formally, what we want is for something to be the case, but since we cannot desire any state of affairs unless we can differentiate it from other states of affairs, what we want depends upon what we know. Thus wants are sharply separated from needs, which are conditions that, if not met, result in pathological states, but we may not be aware of a need at all—as we may need medical attention but not realize it, or need food yet be unable to discriminate between what is nourishing and what is not. There is no necessary relation, causal or otherwise, between what we need and what we know or want, whereas our wants are directly dependent upon what we know, and to want something is to have a reason or motive for trying to get it.

From this, we can take the first steps in untangling the relationship between knowing and wanting. Merely differentiating A from B carries no motivational significance, and provides no basis for choosing which we shall act on: either, or both, or neither. We act on reasons, and our

circumstances supply us with those reasons: the circumstances of the real world and what we know of it, who we are individually, and what we want and value. Merely wanting something can be a reason for acting; so also are all the hedonic, prudential, ethical, and aesthetic justifications we marshal when we are "being reasonable." From such reasons come our judgements, the choices we make, and ultimately whatever behavior follows upon our choices.

This formulation of knowing and wanting gives no more ground for conflict between reason and emotion than there is, for example, between description and appraisal. Paradigmatically, a description does not imply any appraisal or judgement; it is no more than an identification or portrayal, in as much detail as the circumstances require, of A as distinct from B, or of A' from A, and so on, with no valuational or motivational connotations. Mere description commits us to nothing, urges us to nothing. Given the description, we can of course appraise the meaning and importance of A, in its relation to B or to the rest of our lives or to any part of the world, but where is any occasion for conflict between these two operations of describing and appraising? And because description corresponds to knowing, appraisal to wanting, what occasion can there be for conflict between what we know and what we desire?

Since, however, conflict there is between the logician and the lover, the combatants must be other than those traditionally identified as reason and emotion. Let us return, then, to our lover and logician to hear more of what they say to each other, and to look for what they are doing by means of what they say.

II.

The logician here stands not only for himself, but for all those who in one tone of voice or another implore the besotted lover, "Be reasonable," or criticize him for his failure to be intelligent about his beloved. "Look, you're not even interested in the same things. . . . You really want a permanent relationship and that's the last thing he [or she—this to be understood throughout] wants. . . . If he were the kind of person you think he is, he wouldn't be doing what he does"—if X, then Y, and since Y does not occur, X cannot be the case. "For God's sake, be reasonable. *Think* of what you're doing!" To which the lover is likely to respond with "one brief, emphatic word unfit for publication," to the effect not that the critical logician is wrong, but that his critique is irrelevant. Common interests, permanence, consistency have nothing to do with the flaming passion which engulfs him. "They are not to the point," cries the lover, and if the logician replies, "They should be," the lover can retort unanswerably, "But they aren't. 'If he is sufficiently articulate and de-

tached, he may be more explicit. "What I want is to achieve a state of affairs in which I enjoy the presence of my beloved. And I can do that without all your picayune analyses. For that matter, these distinctions of yours interfere with my doing what I need to do in order to enjoy my beloved." And he is right. As every experienced craftsman knows, too close a concentration upon *how* he is doing what he does can impede his performance to the point where he can no longer work effectively. And as every philosopher knows, the introduction of concepts which are not germane to the issue serves only to confuse it.

But what concepts are germane here? Indeed, what is the issue? There are, in fact, two issues: for the lover, it is to achieve a satisfactory relationship with his beloved, for the logician, to clarify what is going on. That is, we have here two personages, an actor and a spectator, and the question of what—if anything—the spectator can contribute to the actor. Or more to the point, *when* can a spectator contribute anything of value to an actor? The answer is easy enough: nothing—when everything is going right and promises to keep on going right. But when something goes wrong, or threatens to, the critical spectator's attitudes and skills are indispensable. If going wrong is to be corrected or averted, the nature of the malfunctioning needs to be understood before a remedy can be found. It may be a failure in knowledge—the lover (as a special case of the actor) is not discriminating A from B, e.g., the state of mind of his beloved today from what it was a week ago. Or he may have changed his way of looking at the situation, his perspective, because his circumstances have changed. Or he may lack the requisite skills to sustain as intimate a personal relationship as he desires.

The lover has reasons for the way he feels, reasons which are firmly rooted in what he knows and what he wants to achieve, in his individual characteristics—his attitudes, values, states—and in his circumstances. A spectator may, for reasons of his own, appraise them as not "good" reasons, but this is crucially different from the claim that emotional reactions are inherently unreasonable or are inaccessible to reason. It is eminently reasonable to fear what is dangerous, be angry at injustice, love what is lovely, and feel guilty for having done wrong; and failure of a spectator to recognize what is dangerous, or wherein the beloved is lovely, in no way diminishes the validity and authenticity of those responses. The spectator is not, simply by virtue of his role, infallible in his judgements. His critiques are not exempt from criticism.

Because emotional states and emotional behavior *are* reasonable, the actor and the spectator have reason as a common meeting ground. But a ground on which persons can meet is one on which they can not only confer, agree, embrace, but also argue, disagree, and do battle. The parties to this specific meeting, however, are not reason and emotion, but

the different kinds of reasons generated by different perspectives: he-
donic, prudential, ethical, aesthetic—the last including not only the artis-
tic per se but also the intellectual and social domains, in all of which the
ultimate standard is coherence. A conflict between—for example—he-
donic and prudential reasons does not represent an emotion warring with
the intellect, but two perspectives, *both* involving reasons and *both* hav-
ing emotional values. Pascal to the contrary, if the heart has reasons that
the mind does not know, it is because the mind is not doing its job.

III.

Traditionally at least in western culture, "mind" has been identified with
the prudential, intellectual, and social perspectives, and almost by fiat has
been excluded from the hedonic, artistic, and sometimes the ethical
perspectives. It is as if to want and fear and love were unreasonable, as if
the mystical vision did not involve discriminations, as if our values had no
connection with what we know. Moreover, we have reified "reason" and
"emotion," establishing them in our thought as entities known by their
products and predicated because we observe those products. They can,
however, be seen in another way as two states of affairs—knowing and
feeling—and knowing *what* emotional state one is in and what circum-
stances occasioned it are genuinely knowledge. And there is nothing about
identifying the state which need interfere with it: joy is not diminished
merely because it is known to be joy, or love when it is admitted to
oneself and confessed to another. Yet the notion is abroad in the land that
the intellectual penetration of such states must destroy them. "Let us not
think about what love is," we are told, "or the vision of God, or the bases
for our principles, lest we lose them."

Beyond question, some uses of the mind are destructive to emotional
states—sometimes, it seems, the intellect is deliberately so used. The
"nothing but" ploy by which love is reduced to physiology, or behavior
to movement, or consciousness to cerebral processes, is only one case in
point. Unfortunately, it requires a fair degree of philosophical sophistica-
tion to hold one's own against such reductionism, although given that, the
ploy can be effectively counteracted.

What the reductionists are doing by what they say is to cleave reason
from emotion and appraisal from description, pursuing the thesis that
"pure" reason is that which has been purged of presumably fortuitous
emotional color. So doing, they leave out of account the fact that all
reasoning and all describing are motivated by what is important to us, by
what we want and value. Thus the effort to achieve "pure" reason is
undertaken for reasons, and the ostensibly detached, rational analyses
which the reductionists produce are as colored by those reasons as any

other polemics are. In other words, the relation between reason and emotion, description and appraisal, is by no means a simple one. Description indeed precedes appraisal *of that description,* but also, appraisal precedes description in that originally we must appraise whether we have sufficient reason to give a description of an object or process or event or state of affairs at all, and if so, of what kind and in how much detail.

In practice, describing and appraising are distinguishable but inseparable, as are reason and emotion. They appear to us contradictory principally because we have inherited a tradition in which they were reified and polarized, and because somewhere along the line we have forgotten—or have chosen to ignore—that it is *persons* who think and feel, and that all behavior of persons involves both thinking and feeling, not as two functions which are somehow associated—and only God knows how—but as the single complex function of judgement. And judgement is always in terms of what state of affairs one wants to achieve.

The presumed conflict between thinking and feeling, therefore, is in fact no such thing, but is instead a discrepancy between different wants supported by reasons, or different reasons supported by wants. The lover wants to achieve one state of affairs, the logician another. In both cases, feeling and thinking are conjoined, but in the one case serving the hedonic perspective, and in the other, the intellectual or social, perhaps, or the ethical or prudential. To the question, "Which perspective shall predominate in a given situation—or throughout a lifetime?" there can be only one answer: we choose among them, and those choices at once reveal who we are and create whom we shall become. There is no mystery here, nothing which is in principle inaccessible to intellectual examination, or which will be destroyed by an examination that takes account of the entire situation—notably, the individual's personal characteristics and circumstances. The lover and the logician are at odds not because the former is unreasonable and the latter reasonable, but because they have different reasons generated by the different perspectives and geared to different achievements. "You see, in this world there is one awful thing, and that is that everyone has his reasons" (Gilliatt, 1964, p. 63).

Thus when the logician begs the lover to be reasonable, in all likelihood he is calling on the lover to shift his perspective—and most certainly occasions do arise when such a shift is called for. Perhaps the lover cannot attain his beloved: she dies, or leaves him for another, or is already married. He need not cease loving her, but it is not reasonable by any standard or under any perspective actively to pursue what is known to be unattainable. Since his prior reasons for seeking fulfilment with her are no longer coherent with his circumstances, they are no longer reasons. Now he must change his wants, or live divorced from his real situation in an unreal world of wishes or dreams. Within the lover's own

framework, the concerned logician now has valid grounds for trying to persuade the lover to adapt his wants to those inexorable (on the hypothesis) circumstances.

It is a commonplace that lovers tend to be impervious to knowledge which conflicts with their vision of the beloved. This also the logician will take account of, knowing that the lover's appraisal of his beloved is a summary formulation, not an arithmetic sum. In effect, it is a status assignment, and status assignments, being non-factual in any case, are notably—and necessarily—resistant to change by the introduction of facts. Thus we are brought back to the relation of description to appraisal, and beyond that, to the relation of the various perspectives to one another.

IV.

The perspectives which generate our reasons are the hedonic, the prudential, the ethical, and the aesthetic (the last, as above, including the artistic, the intellectual, and the social). Logical economy might suggest that any three of them could be absorbed into the fourth, but conceptual clarity dictates their separation. It is not inevitable that they conflict—prudence with morality, or immediate pleasure with long-term consistency, or any other such combination—and when they do not, what results is that integrity which has been called "the feeling intellect." When they are at odds, however, when wants or values are irreconcilable—what then?

The infatuated lover cannot choose what he shall feel. But he does in fact, and he must, choose what he shall *do,* which of the perspectives he shall act on, and there is no need to complicate matters by interpolating a reified "will" which does the choosing. That the choice may be difficult goes without saying. That he may do what he does not want to do, as in acting on ethical or prudential or aesthetic rather than hedonic considerations, also goes without saying—or should—although in that case "want" carries a double meaning. If, for example, he chooses to do the "right" thing rather than what would give him more pleasure, his primary want clearly is for the ethical or prudential or aesthetic achievement rather than the hedonic.

The lover—or anyone—selects among his wants in the same way or lack of way that he selects among the 31 flavors offered in the local ice cream store. He chooses—and there is no *way* to choose. It is simply something one does. Before he makes his choice (and there is instruction in the idiom itself: a choice is *made*—fashioned, produced, brought into being)—before he makes his choice, he may consider what reasons the perspectives provide for and against alternative courses of action, whether some reasons relate synergistically, and the like. And he may

find some format like the one suggested here to be useful in reminding him of reasons which he otherwise might neglect. Preparation for choosing, however, does not belong to the act of choice. In the end, having balanced or synthesized as best he can, the lover simply acts in one way rather than another, and to one end or set of ends instead of any other.

All the perspectives are brought together in a way of life which has greater or less completeness and coherence. To be seriously deficient in any of the perspectives—significantly to lack prudence or a moral sense, or a sense of the fitness of things, or consistently to renounce all pleasures in an extreme asceticism—is to be incomplete, a defective person. And a series of choices which lead toward incompatible achievements, as marriage may be incompatible with a particular vocation, betrays some degree of incoherence in a way of life. Still, since reasons necessarily involve both discrimination and appraisal—knowing and feeling—the lover and the logician are associated with different perspectives, and not with emotion and reason.

To return to the first of the quotations at the beginning of this paper: indeed "no amount of rational analysis can bring healing," but without such analysis, the nature of the dis-ease will not be accurately diagnosed; therefore appropriate remedies will be identified only by accident. For example, the breach between the lover and the logician cannot be healed as long as they are identified respectively with the traditional concepts of emotion and reason. The conceptual analysis given here does not in itself heal that breach, but it does provide the condition necessary for healing: it brings the lover and the logician within a common framework where their differences *can* be worked out, as they *cannot* be in their traditional polarization.

The reason-vs-emotion formulation makes it look as if our only alternatives were an empty head or a hungry heart. In contrast, the perspectives formulation guarantees some satisfaction of both mind and heart, whichever perspective or combination of perspectives we ultimately act on. We do not have to disavow any of our powers, so that even in those excruciating decisions where what we lose, whatever we decide, is almost more than we can bear, we do not deny either the legitimacy of our passion or the illuminations of our intellect. We may be unhappy, but we are not crippled. Neither formulation will solve our problems for us, but the one narrows our options down to an arbitrary either-or, while the other opens out upon an infinite range of possible courses of action and, therefore, ways of life.

Now, when the logician confronts the lover, it is as an ally, not as a competitor, in our daily responsibility for clarifying who we are and choosing what we shall do.

NOTE

This paper was prepared and has been presented as a lecture to general audiences, where explicit reference to Descriptive Psychology would have generated confusion or suspicion. Anyone at all conversant with the work of Peter G. Ossorio, however, will recognize at once that it is based directly on his thinking. For specific material on the Perspectives, see Ossorio (1977, 1971/1978, 1969, 1981). Correspondence to the author should be addressed: 501 Sky Trail Road, Jamestown Star Route, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

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ON THE INTERPRETATION OF UTTERANCES

Thomas O. Mitchell

ABSTRACT

An analysis of the problem of the interpretation of utterances is presented from the point of view of Descriptive Psychology. The problem is stated basically as the problem of accounting for the hearer's differentiation among actions of the speaker. Such differentiation is accounted for by reference to the parameters of Intentional Action. It is pointed out that the hearer's knowledge is observational, not inferential. The requirement that the hearer's knowledge be coherent is discussed and related to the legitimate uses of inference in describing behavior. The locution is shown to involve the identification of concepts, which may include the concept of the speaker's own behavior and the concepts of relevant circumstances. Behaviors having the same locution as specification of the Performance parameter are differentiated by the other parameter values, and it is seen to be non-problematical that different actions involve the same locution. This analysis accounts for context, and suggests significant advances in problems such as automated language processing.

THE INTERPRETATION OF UTTERANCES

"Can you reach the salt?"

How is one to react to these words? By telling the speaker whether one can or cannot extend one's arm and grasp the container of salt? Or by passing the container of salt to the speaker?

Suppose that these words are uttered on two different occasions, and by two different speakers, as described in the following scenarios:

Scenario I: It is a cold winter day, and the streets and sidewalks are covered with ice. Inside a hardware store, a clerk leans against the checkout counter. He sees a boy standing in front of some shelves in the store. On the shelves above the boy's head are packages of rock salt. The clerk says to the boy, "Can you reach the salt?"

Scenario II: Several persons are seated at a table eating dinner. A woman tastes the meat on her plate, puts down her fork, and looks around the table. She sees the nearest salt shaker about six inches to the other side of the plate of the man next to her. She says to him, "Can you reach the salt?"

It seems clear that the appropriate reaction to the speaker in Scenario I is for the boy to tell the speaker whether he can grasp one of the packages of salt and lift it down. It likewise seems clear in Scenario II that the appropriate reaction is for the man to pass the salt to the woman.

The problem of interpretation of utterances illustrated here has been of great interest to linguists and philosophers in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s; see, for example, the papers collected in Bar-Hillel (1971), Cole and Morgan (1975) and Cole (1978). The centrally influential approaches to this general problem have been those proposed by Grice (1957, 1975, 1978), Gordon and Lakoff (1975), Katz (1977), Sadock (1974) and Searle (1969, 1975). Despite the effort devoted to the study of this problem, however, there are conspicuous lacunae and there is a lack of tangible success in applying such work to the interpretation of utterances besides short, hypothetical locutions used as examples in illustrating theoretical points.

As an example of the lacunae, take context, the importance of which is illustrated by the scenarios given here. Context is mentioned in the writings of those cited above as interested in the interpretation of utterances; for example, suggested interpretations or generalizations are sometimes qualified by such expressions as "in the appropriate context," or "given shared background information," and Gordon and Lakoff define a conversational postulate as applying in a particular context (1975, p. 84).

Despite the acknowledged importance of context and its frequent mention, however, there has been very little consideration of context itself.

Even Katz, who has dealt most extensively with context, has said little by way of investigation or explication of context beyond such examples as "features of the physical environment, the knowledge of the speaker about the beliefs, attitudes, and so on of the audience, and other aspects of context" (1977, p. 15) or "the convention that requires the speaker or audience [involved in using such words as 'bunny' or 'doggie'] to be a child" (1977, p. 21).

It is only fair to make it clear that Katz does state pointedly that it is not his aim to provide an account of the interpretation of context. Yet it is surely a conspicuous omission that no one is so concerned.[1] It is true that virtually anyone can recognize the difference that context makes in most utterances. The fact that the average person can deal with context in this fashion does not justify a neglect of the formal study of context, however, any more than the fact that the average person can distinguish one word from another justifies a neglect of phonetics and morphology.

As an example of the lack of successful application, take the case of the work in Artificial Intelligence on the processing of natural language by computer. Surely if the theories and investigations of linguists and philosophers account satisfactorily for the understanding of language, then they should be applicable as the framework for successful automated language understanding. But even the most recent and most successful efforts in this area (e.g., DeJong, 1979; Schank and Abelson, 1977; Walker, 1978) show little, if any, evidence of having been influenced by the concerns and accounts of researchers in the mainstream of linguistic and philosophical approaches to the interpretation of utterances.

The time thus seems ripe for a fresh look at the whole problem of the interpretation of utterances. I shall take such a fresh look here, beginning with a restatement of the basic issue, and developing an analysis of the problem that offers a fully sufficient in-principle account of context and also promises to permit a successful attack upon the problems of automated language processing. This analysis will be carried out from the perspective of, and couched in the terms of, Descriptive Psychology (Ossorio, 1966, 1973, 1969/1978a, 1971/1978b, 1972/1978c, 1981a, 1969/1981b, 1970/1981c).

THE PROBLEM: A REFORMULATION

Recall the two scenarios, in each of which a speaker uttered the words, "Can you reach the salt?". It was clear from the scenarios that it was appropriate for the hearers to treat the speakers in the two scenarios differently. It was appropriate to treat them as having carried out different actions: in the one case, the action of requesting information; in the other case, the action of trying to acquire an object.

Thus, the basic problem may be stated as follows: The problem of the interpretation of utterances is the problem of the hearer's differentiation of the action carried out by a speaker in speaking. It is this differentiation of actions that must be accounted for.

DIFFERENTIATION OF ACTIONS

In Table 1 the two actions carried out by the two speakers in the scenarios are described and differentiated by reference to the parameters of intentional action, the IA parameters (Ossorio, 1966, 1973, 1969/1978a, 1981a, 1969/1981b, 1970/1981c). Such description is appropriate since verbal behaviors are distinguished by reference to these parameters just as nonverbal behaviors are (Ossorio, 1969/1978a, pp. 105–107). The only difference between verbal and nonverbal behaviors as such is that in the case of verbal behaviors the process aspect (Performance parameter) of the action involves the use of words.

Further details could be added to the specification of the parameters provided in the Table. For example, although the Performance parameter is specified there only by the words spoken, the paralinguistic features of the utterance are also part of the complete specification of the Performance parameter of a verbal behavior (cf. Ossorio, 1969/1978a, p. 105).

In addition, the Achievement parameter is specified there only by the state of affairs involving the words "Can you reach the salt?" having been successfully uttered. This is an appropriate specification as far as it goes,

Table 1.

	Requesting Information	*Seeking to Acquire Salt*
Know	The hearer might want salt Speaker doesn't know if hearer can reach salt	The speaker wants the salt The hearer can reach the salt
Want	To find out if hearer can reach salt	To have the salt
Know How	To make request by uttering words	To ask for salt by appropriate words
Performance	"Can you reach the salt?"	"Can you reach the salt?"
Achievement	Completion of performance	Completion of performance
Significance	Social practice of clerking in a hardware store	Social practice of dining
Personal Characteristics	Status as a clerk in a store	Speaker's trait of politeness

since the fact that the process aspect of the behavior has been completed is part of the terminal state of affairs bounding the action. In an actual, ongoing behavior, however, it would probably be possible to add details concerning whether the speaker succeeded in achieving what he or she wanted, e.g., knowledge of the addressee's capacity to grasp the salt, or acquisition of the salt.

Nevertheless, the specifications stated in Table 1 suffice to make it intelligible that the speakers in the two scenarios should be treated as having carried out different actions: All of the IA parameters are specified differently for the two actions except for the Performance and Achievement parameters.

In general the IA parameters, particularly as employed in the calculational system permitting various transformations and operations to be employed recursively and reflexively (Ossorio, 1973, 1970/1981c), are collectively sufficient to individuate any action whatsoever from any other action. This is so even though it is generally possible to elaborate on descriptions of behavior, just as it would be possible to add further details to the specifications provided in Table 1. Any further specifications are further elaborations of the values for the list of parameters already given in Descriptive Psychology, and do not require the addition of more parameters.

Two further questions suggest themselves at this point. First, what account can be given of the hearer's knowledge of the values for the parameters of the speaker's action? Second, what difference does it make in the differentiation of verbal behaviors that the locution—the specification of the Performance parameter—is the same for two behaviors? I shall consider these questions next.

KNOWLEDGE OF ACTIONS

The hearer's knowledge of the speaker's action is fundamentally and ordinarily observational. That is, the hearer knows the speaker's action without having to find out or recall something else first on that occasion.

Thus the hearer at once observes a speaker (Individual) carrying out an action which is the expression of taking some state of affairs to be *this* state of affairs and not some other (Know), and which is an attempt to attain some desired state of affairs (Want) as a part of some on-going pattern of behavior (Significance) and in expression of some characteristics of the speaker (Personal Characteristics). The action involves some process (Performance), the execution of which is a matter of the speaker's skill (Know How), and which is bounded and defined partly by a terminal state of affairs (Achievement).

Now to give a description of the differentiation between actions in

terms of the IA parameters is thus to provide a logical reconstruction, not a process model, of the hearer's knowledge of the action. There is no implication that the hearer literally goes through a sequential process of assigning values to the IA parameters.

Thus the description of the hearer's knowledge as observational contrasts sharply with the description generally offered by linguists and psychologists that such knowledge is inferential. Since the inferential point of view is central to all of the accounts of language understanding put forward in the mainstream of current linguistics, philosophy and psychology, it seems appropriate to consider here at some length the arguments against taking inference to be the basic mode of the hearer's understanding, and to explore the extent to which inferential accounts have a usefulness in describing the understanding of language.

Against Inference

First, consider that knowledge must start with observation. If all knowledge were inferential, i.e., required the knowledge of something else first, then one could never know anything because one would always have to know something else first. Thus to say that all knowledge is inferential is to set up a vicious infinite regress (cf. Ossorio, 1969/1978a, p. 32).

Of course, those who characterize the hearer's knowledge of a speaker's actions as inferential do not say that all of the hearer's knowledge of the action is inferential. They say that the hearer observes some aspects of the speaker's behavior, usually the locution and some contextual factors, and from these infers the speaker's intentions and motives.

Closer scrutiny reveals that this move is not an escape from the regress, however. The postulation of the locution as that which is observed is ad hoc and arbitrary. Following the logic of the inferential accounts one should say that the hearer observes different sounds and infers words from these sounds. But in that case, wouldn't it be still more reasonable to say that the hearer observes different pitches and tones from which he infers sounds from which he infers words from which he infers the utterance? But why not then say that the hearer observes varying waves of air, from which he infers pitches and tones, etc.? But then why not say that what the hearer observes is pressure on the ear, from which he infers waves of air, from which he infers pitches and tones, from which he infers sounds, from which he infers words, from which he infers an utterance, from which he infers an action? And so forth. And the same line of argumentation applies, *mutatis mutandis,* to the observation of contextual factors, however they may be defined.

Consider now a different line of argumentation. The understanding of

language does not seem to involve an inference. For example, when we are engaged in conversation we do not generally seem to ourselves to be engaged in inference, and we are not conscious of drawing conclusions from premises. Rather, we experience ourselves simply as understanding what the speaker is doing by saying whatever he says.

That the understanding of language does not seem to involve inference is a powerful consideration against the inferential position. To treat things as *not* what they seem without sufficient reason is to violate the maxim: Take it that things are as they seem unless you have sufficient reason to take them otherwise (see Ossorio, 1969/1981a, p. 28). To violate this maxim is at least implicitly to espouse a radical skepticism which furnishes no basis for further action and no basis for any knowledge whatever.

Finally, the explanation in terms of inference is more complicated than the explanation in terms of observation, and it requires a much more complex operation to be attributed to the hearer. This being the case, it is a violation of the principle of parsimony to postulate the inferential explanation unless the simpler observational explanation is clearly inadequate to account for the understanding of actions.

At this point the proponent of the inferential position might say that there is reason to take understanding as being other than what it seems, and that there is a deficiency in the observational account that must be remedied by the postulation of the inferential account. According to this argument, in deciding difficult cases involving disagreement between observers or in justifying the description of an action, we must explain our observations in inferential terms; hence, knowledge of actions fundamentally requires inference.

According to this argument, for example, we can only account for our understanding of the speaker's desires in Scenario II (the dinner party) by a process of inference from our prior knowledge about what the speaker knows about the addressee's physical capacities already. We can put the inferential steps somewhat as follows: (a) one cannot be said to want to learn something he already knows; (b) but in Scenario II the speaker already knows that the addressee has the capacity to reach the salt; (c) therefore the speaker cannot want to learn the facts about the physical capacity of the addressee to reach the salt. It is just this kind of inference that is proffered by Grice (1975, 1978) and Searle (1969, 1975) to account for the understanding by hearers of the actions of speakers.

It is true that the inference just stated describes a logical relationship that holds between the values of the parameters involved, in this case the Know and Want parameters. The inference is not, however, the only possible description of this relationship, and it is not necessary to suppose that any inference ordinarily occurs in the hearer's knowledge of the

speaker's actions. An examination of the logical relationships that must obtain between parameter values will help to make this clear.

Conceptual Coherence

It is a fundamental logical requirement that for any description to be accurate it must be coherent. That is, the elements of the description must go together in a pattern that is consistent with the concept of the object, process, event, or state of affairs offered as descriptive of what is observed.

This is so because a description indicates how the one who gives the description is prepared to treat that which is described: The description partially specifies the Know parameter of any behavior the describer undertakes toward that which is described. An incoherent description, however, cannot be acted upon: It would require inconsistent or contradictory actions to be undertaken toward that which is described.

Action descriptions must be coherent just like any other descriptions. The values specified for the IA parameters must go together recognizably as the analytic elements of the concept of the action in question. Ossorio illustrates this point when he says, "The combination of wanting fame, knowing that Peking is the capital of China, knowing how to ride a bicycle, sucking one's thumb, and causing an explosion do not constitute a case of [intentional action]" (Ossorio, 1969/1978a, p. 124).

There are various ways of expressing the relationships that must obtain among the elements of a description by virtue of this requirement of conceptual coherence. The basic way is simply to state the typical features of the concept as its typical features. Table 2 provides just such a statement of the concept of requesting information (recall that this con-

Table 2. Parameter Specifications for the Action of
Requesting Information

Know	The speaker knows that he doesn't know something
	The speaker knows that he wants to know what he doesn't know
	The speaker knows that someone else at least possibly knows it
Want	The speaker wants to learn what he doesn't know
Know How	The speaker has the capacity reliably to carry out the performance of uttering words that conventionally signal the request for information
Performance	The speaker carries out a verbal process that recognizably counts as the process aspect of requesting information
Achievement	The speaker succeeds in carrying out the verbal performance
Significance	The ongoing behavior in which the speaker is engaged is a behavior in which requesting information is intelligible and a part of which can be asking the information
Personal Characteristics	Whatever characteristics might be expressed by requesting information, such as curiosity, caution, etc.

cept is instantiated by the action portrayed in Scenario 1 and described in Table 1).

The description presented in Table 2 provides logical limits on the values that can be specified for the IA parameters in describing an action and still have that action count as an instance of requesting information. For one thing, the value of the Know parameter must include the speaker's awareness that there is some item of information he does not already know and about which he wishes to become informed.

Consider, for example, the case in which the Know parameter of a speaker's behavior is partially specified by his awareness of the precise current outside temperature. In this case there is a clear restriction: He cannot coherently be said to want to learn what the precise current outside temperature is, and any behavior he carries out, the Know parameter of which is thus specified, cannot be an instance of requesting information about the precise current outside temperature.

Now, there are other ways besides a list of the type presented in Table 2 by which the logical restrictions on descriptions of any action may be represented. One way is to set up a series of conditions, each of which relates to one or more of the parameters of the action in question, e.g., requesting information. A way of generating statements of these conditions is to preface the specification of values for each of the parameters with the phrase, "If a person is requesting information, then the value of this particular parameter must be specified as . . . ."

For example, in the case of the Know parameter, one can say, "if an individual is requesting information, then the Know parameter of his action must be specified partially by his awareness that there is some information which he does not have, and it is about this information that he must make his request."

Thus it can be seen that the felicity conditions outlined by Searle (1969, 1975) represent a partial statement of the concept of the various actions he discusses, such as requesting, promising, and directing. This list he gives of the features of each of the concepts is partial, since only part of the full list of IA parameters is represented by his conditions: Performance, by the propositional content condition; Know, by the preparatory condition; Want, by the sincerity condition.

The status of Searle's essential condition is not clear. This condition, that the act "counts as an attempt to elicit this information [from the hearer]" (1969, p. 66), as he puts it in the case of the action of questioning, may be superfluous given the other IA parameters including those Searle does not otherwise mention. Or, this condition may refer to one of the acceptable versions of an action described in more significant terms than the specific process of actually uttering the words (cf. Ossorio, 1972/1978c, pp. 46–47).

Similarly, the conditions outlined by Gordon and Lakoff (1975) as sincerity and reasonableness conditions for the application of conversational postulates involve some of the IA parameters as applied to speaker and hearer, especially Know, Want, and Know How.

Conditions such as those stated by Searle and by Gordon and Lakoff make the sense that they do because they depend logically upon, or are one expression of, the logical relationships inherent in the concept as a whole. Furthermore, the dependence of the aspects of the concept one upon another is not temporally or logically sequential, i.e., none of the relationships among the parameters is prior to or more important than any of the others (contrary to the position taken by Searle, 1969, p. 63).

Usefulness of Inferential Explanations

There is a point to stating coherency constraints in terms of conditions. Such statements can, for example, facilitate explanation to persons who do not immediately understand the consistency or inconsistency of a description with a concept.

In the case of the action of requesting information, an individual who did not understand the interpretation of Scenario II (the dinner party) might be helped to understand it by presentation of the following line of reasoning: (a) if an action is the action of requesting information, then it must be the case that the speaker must know that she doesn't know something, and must want to learn what she doesn't know; (b) in Scenario II it is clear that the speaker knew that the man next to her was physically capable of reaching the salt shaker, since it was only six inches from his plate; (c) therefore the speaker's action cannot be a request for information about the addressee's physical capacity to reach the salt shaker.

This example illustrates that one can state coherency constraints in the form of a condition, as in step (a) above, as a tactic for getting another person to understand that fact first, from which the other person can then understand a logically related fact. But for a person to know one thing first, from which that person then knows another, is the general case of inference. Thus it clearly makes sense to use inferential explanations in describing and communicating the coherency constraints on particular concepts.

Similarly, there are times when a hearer can achieve understanding through the inferential process of examining items of information one at a time and exploring their logical relationships in that form. It is plausible, for example, that an individual might hear a speaker utter words which seem nonsensical; in that case, the hearer might ponder one by one the things he knows about the speaker and the situation in an effort to get it all straight.

Now to say that it is reasonable to use inferential explications in this fashion is not to say that the knowledge of the hearer is basically inferential. The order imposed upon the presentation of parameter values in an inferential explication is an order owing to a particular and special need of an individual first to understand one thing before he or she understands others. This ordering is not found in the logical structure of the concept: All parameters contribute simultaneously and coordinately to the concept of the action in question.

This last point may be clearer if one keeps in mind that the parameters are not synthetic elements that are put together to compose an action; they are analytic elements. They can be discussed and described separately, but always at least implicitly as components of the whole action. Therefore to specify one parameter, or to discuss it by itself, is to provide a partial description of the entire behavior of which that parameter is an analytic element (cf. Ossorio, 1966, Part I, Chapter III).

Furthermore, the knowledge required for the inference process cannot itself be inferential, because of the regress problem I mentioned earlier. Each of the items of information in the inferential statement outlined above could itself be explained in terms of an inference: Thus, one might offer an inferential account of the fact that the woman knew that the man sitting next to her had the physical capacity to reach the salt. And the knowledge involved in that understanding could similarly be described in terms of an inference. And so on, to the point where, if the regress is not infinite, it is so extended that it is implausible that a human being could ever work through so many inferences in the brief time it takes the hearer to understand the utterance in a setting such as that described in Scenario II.

Thus accounts of the interpretation of speakers' actions in terms of inference (e.g., Gordon and Lakoff, 1975; Grice, 1957, 1975, 1978; Searle, 1969, 1975) can be seen as mistaking a special tactic of communication or investigation, intelligible because of the logical relationships inherent in any concept, for the basic mode of understanding.

Summary

The hearer ordinarily observes immediately the action of the speaker. The hearer's understanding by observation is limited logically by the requirement of consistency with a concept: The hearer must understand the action as instantiating the coherent concept of some action. The requirement of consistency with a concept is demanded by the nature of the hearer's understanding as being itself a concept upon which the hearer must be able to act.

Accounts of the hearer's understanding in terms of inference can be

seen as secondary accounts. These inferential accounts derive their intelligibility from the non-sequential logical relationships of the elements of the concept, and have a use in special situations in which these logical relationships must be presented in sequential form, e.g., as when the hearer must understand one aspect of the action before another because of a difficulty in understanding the action as observed.

LOCUTIONS

Table 1 specified the Performance parameters of the action in Scenario I as being identical to the Performance parameter of the action in Scenario II: Both were specified by the locution "Can you reach the salt?". From the point of view of most conventional approaches to language this is a problem. These approaches all assume that the locution can determine an action so completely that the principal problem is one of accounting for instances in which the locution is not thus determinative.

What, then, is the status of the locution? As an ordinary matter can the locution be regarded as determinative of the entire action? Does a knowledge of the value for the Performance parameter for a verbal behavior enable one thereby to assign values for the other parameters?

It is clear that the locution has a special character not shared by the process descriptions that can specify the Performance parameters of nonverbal behaviors. A locution identifies, and stands in a one-to-one relationship with, a conceptual distinction (Ossorio, 1969/1978a, esp. pp. 100–102).

Of course, there is a limit to the concepts that can be identified by the locution in any particular action. This limit is provided by the logical requirement that the locution can identify only a concept that the speaker is acting on, i.e., a concept that can be part of the specification of the Know parameter of the speaker's action (Ossorio, 1969/1978a, p. 105).

The concepts that can be identified by the locution in a particular action can conveniently be considered under two headings: (a) the concept of the action that the speaker is carrying out; and (b) circumstances that are relevant to the action that the speaker is carrying out.

The Concept of the Speaker's Action

Speaking is a behavior restricted to persons and human behavior is paradigmatically deliberate (Ossorio, 1969/1978a, p. 75 and p. 79). The value for the Know parameter of any deliberate action includes the action itself which is deliberately carried out (Ossorio, 1973); this action can be distinguished by the acting individual under a complete behavior descrip-

Table 3. Distinctions That Can be Marked by Locutions in Action of Requesting Information Exemplified in Scenario I.

Parameter	Distinction	Locution
Know	Whether the addressee can reach salt	"I don't know whether you can reach the salt"
Want	To learn whether addressee can reach salt	"I'd like to know if you can reach the salt."
Know How	Capability of uttering appropriate words or not	"I don't know how to say this . . . ."
Performance	Conventional question vs. statement	"Can you reach the salt?"
Achievement	Finding out or not finding out if addressee can reach the salt	"If I ask you, will you tell me whether or not you can reach the salt?"
Significance	Clerking in a store vs. other social practices	"I'm here to help you if you need it."
Personal Characteristics	Status of clerk vs. other statuses	"I am a clerk here, you know."

tion in which values are specified for all of the IA parameters. Therefore all of the parameters of the action deliberately carried out in speaking can specify the Know parameter of the deliberate action of speaking.

Accordingly, the locution can identify any of the distinctions marking values of the parameters of the verbal action deliberately carried out. Table 3 illustrates such distinctions, and some locutions identifying them, in the case of the action of requesting information exemplified in Scenario I (the hardware store).

As a general principle, then, it is logically possible for a locution to identify any of the analytic elements of the concept of the very action being carried out. This principle has not been recognized in the literature on the interpretation of utterances. It does, however, make intelligible in a general and systematic fashion the reasonableness of Searle's observation (1975, p. 72) that the words uttered by a speaker may concern any of the felicity conditions (subject to certain conventional limitations). It also makes intelligible similar suggestions by Gordon and Lakoff, e.g., that one can convey a request by asserting speaker-based sincerity conditions or questioning hearer-based sincerity conditions (1975, p. 86). (Recall that such conditions are one way of representing the analytic elements of a concept.)

The Circumstances

The Know parameter of the speaker's deliberate action of speaking is only partially specified by the concept of the action the speaker chooses to carry out; it is also specified by the relevant circumstances. Ossorio elaborates this point only to the extent of saying, "For example, the general circumstances in which the behavior occurs are usually 'understood' and do not appear in verbalization, though they do appear in K" (1969/1978a, pp. 105–106).

Now, although the locution is not usually used to identify the concepts of circumstantial factors, it can. Since the topic of consideration here is the range of concepts that can possibly be identified by the locution, the question of the circumstances deserves more detailed consideration here.

Consider the example of the situation which is partly described in Scenario I (the hardware store). It seems a simple task to identify the principal elements that can be taken as the relevant circumstances for the action described there: the fact that the locution is uttered in a store, on an icy day; and the fact that there are bags of salt on the shelf before which the customer is standing. All of these elements of the total situation have been selected for explicit mention in the scenario because they are relevant.

There are, however, a large number of distinguishable aspects of the total situation which do *not* seem to count as relevant circumstances, and which accordingly have not been mentioned in the scenario. For example, one would probably not count among the relevant circumstances the name of the store, the size of the store, the time of day, the number of other customers in the store, the age of the clerk, the price of the salt, the brands of salt that are available, the temperature in the store, the address of the store, the exact date of the utterance by the clerk, whether the customer had already picked out other items for purchase or not, the distance from other stores that carry the same kind of salt, and whether it was actually snowing at the time or there was just ice on the ground. And, of course, the list could be extended much further; the limits to which it could be extended are a function mainly of the ingenuity and assiduity of the one making the list.

The inclusion of some of the features of the total state of affairs, including the speaker and his action, and the exclusion of others from that which is regarded as comprising the relevant circumstances of the speaker's action can be accounted for straightforwardly and systematically. The relevant circumstances are those aspects of the total state of affairs that make a difference in the speaker's assessment of the state of affairs on which he or she acts. And it is by reference to the IA parameters that such a difference is intelligible.

For example, it makes a difference in the speaker's Know parameter whether or not he recognizes the situation as one in which the hearer wants to buy the salt. The fact that it is an icy day is relevant to the distinction between wanting and not wanting to buy salt: Since salt can be used to melt ice, it is more likely that the hearer would want salt on an icy day than on one that is simply cold. The speaker can identify this relevant circumstance by uttering a locution such as, "This is the kind of day when you really need to put salt on your sidewalk." This is an understandable performance for the action of requesting information about whether the addressee can reach the salt: The addressee can reply, "Yes, but I can't reach it," or some such locution that is responsive to the speaker's desire to learn whether the addressee can or cannot reach the salt.

For another example, the height of the shelf makes a difference in whether the speaker can be assumed to know that the hearer can reach the shelf. The speaker can explicitly identify this relevant circumstance by uttering some locution such as, "That shelf is pretty high," or, "You need a stepladder, I think." Such locutions are reasonable performances in the action of requesting information: To the former the hearer might, for example, reply, "Not too high," or "Yes it is, I can't reach it;" to the latter, the hearer might, for example, reply, "No, I don't, I can get it," or "I need something—I can't reach it by myself." Any of these responses would obviously be responsive to the speaker's desire to have information about the addressee's capacities.

Limits on Locutions

The number of possible distinctions that may be identified in connection with an action, and hence the number of locutions that may intelligibly specify the Performance parameter of that action, is hence quite large. It is not, however, unlimited.

Suppose that in Scenario I the words spoken by the clerk had been, "Did you see the Pittsburgh-Dallas game?" or "My mother broke her hip yesterday." Neither of these locutions can logically be understood as specifying the Performance parameter of the speaker's action of requesting information about whether the addressee can reach the salt. They cannot be so understood because they do not indicate a distinction that makes a difference in the IA parameters of the clerk's action such that the action is the action of requesting information about the addressee's capacity to reach the salt.

There are, then, limits on the distinctions that can be marked by a locution if that locution is to specify the Performance parameter of a given action. These limits are given by the requirement of relevance to the IA parameters of the action in question, and by the fundamental constraint

that the parameter values be consistent with the coherent concept of that action.

The Locution in Relation to Non-Performance Parameters

Consider the various locutions that can specify the Performance parameter of the action of requesting information, as I have suggested above. None of them necessarily specifies the Performance of *that* action. It is logically possible that each of them might specify the Performance of some other action; i.e., the values of the non-Performance parameters of a speaker's action are not logically determined by the value of the Performance parameter.

This point is easy to see. For example, the words "Can you reach the salt?" can specify the Performance of either the action of seeking information or the action of asking for the salt (or other actions, such as the action of giving examples in linguistic discussions). Similarly, any of the other locutions which, as suggested just above, can be used to specify the Performance of the action of requesting information can also be used to specify the Performance of other actions. For example, the words, "That shelf is pretty high," might be the value for the Performance parameter of the action of asserting an obvious fact in the course of the social practice of establishing social contact with another person.

The hearer's knowledge that a given locution is the process element (Performance) of this action, and not that one, can be understood by reference to the IA parameters: If two behaviors involve the same locution, it is by reference to the non-Performance parameters (and to para-linguistic features partially specifying the Performance parameter) that the behaviors can intelligibly be understood as instances of the same or of different actions (cf. Table 1).

Thus this analysis shows that the locution does not determine the value of the other parameters of the speaker's action. There is therefore no problem in principle as to why the same locution—e.g., "Can you reach the salt?"—can specify the Performance parameter of different actions.

Summary

The locution identifies a conceptual distinction. The distinction so identified partially specifies the Know parameter of the action the speaker carries out in speaking. The possible specifications of the speaker's Know parameter of the deliberate action of speaking, and hence the distinctions that can be identified by the locution, include (a) the action itself that the speaker is carrying out, and (b) the circumstances that are relevant to the action.

The distinctions marked by the locution can concern any or all of the IA

parameters differentiating the action itself that the speaker is carrying out. The relevance of circumstances is by reference to the IA parameters: A relevant circumstance is one that makes a difference in parameter values such that the action is this action rather than some other.

There is no special problem with having the same locution specify the Performance parameter of different actions, since the locution does not uniquely determine the values of the other parameters. If the locution is the same for two behaviors, it is by reference to the values of non-Performance parameters and of such aspects of the Performance as para-linguistic features that the behaviors are understood as instances of the same or of different actions.

CIRCUMSTANCES OBSERVED BY THE HEARER

The hearer's understanding that a given locution is the process element of this particular action rather than that one, an understanding describable by reference to the IA parameters as indicated above, is by observation of the speaker as an acting individual, engaged in an ongoing stream of behavior in some circumstances.

The circumstances and background in which the speaker is observed to act do make a difference, of course, in the hearer's understanding. The circumstances that the hearer observes to be relevant are those that make a difference in the IA parameter values such that the action is *this* action rather than some other one. This is the same account offered above with respect to the circumstances that can possibly be identified by the locution of a particular action: For both the speaker and the hearer it is by reference to the IA parameters, within the constraints of the requirement for conceptual coherence, that the inclusion of some aspects of the total situation as relevant to the action, and the exclusion of others as irrelevant, can be understood.

This is not to say that the hearer first observes the total state of affairs and then, by a process of elimination sequentially executed, considers each aspect of this total state of affairs to see whether or not it makes any difference in the action. This would be manifestly impossible: The number of distinguishable aspects of the total state of affairs is indefinitely large, and it would be a limitless task to examine them one by one and make a decision as to inclusion in, or exclusion from, the circumstances that are relevant to the action.

Neither is it to say that the hearer knows of those elements to be included in the circumstances, and their relation to the action, by a process of inference, in which the hearer might, for example, begin with some partial description of the behavior and then make a judgment as to whether any particular element was relevant to the parameters. Rather,

the hearer's knowledge of the act in the circumstances is observational and direct (although as usual inferential explications have usefulness for certain purposes).

The example of the circumstances that are relevant to the action of requesting information, developed above as a part of the discussion of the concepts that can be identified by a locution, is applicable here, too. Other examples can be developed, as well.

Take the locution, "That shelf is pretty high, isn't it?" which I suggested above could, as a reference to circumstances bearing on the hearer's ability to reach what was on the shelf, specify the Performance parameter of the action of requesting information about whether the hearer could, as a matter of fact, reach what was on the shelf.

Now consider the locution as uttered in a different scenario. The situation is the same in some respects as in Scenario I: It is an icy winter day, and the utterance occurs in a hardware store. But this time the speaker is another boy, one slightly shorter than the addressee. The speaker has on a coat, and is walking down the aisle scanning the shelves as if looking for something. He sees the other boy looking up at the salt, and says, "That shelf is pretty high, isn't it?".

This new scenario clearly includes circumstances that make a difference in the action carried out by the speaker in uttering the locution. The speaker's Personal Characteristic of being short makes a difference in his potential ability to help the addressee reach the salt, and hence in the possible further end-in-view for the action. Furthermore, the speaker's age, apparel, and ongoing behavior make a difference in the Significance of his actions: He is not clerking in the store, but is engaged in shopping for himself, and the statement he makes is therefore not part of the social practice of clerking.

The circumstances have thus been selected for inclusion in the new scenario on the basis of their relevance to the IA parameters, because these circumstances make the difference in the action such that it can coherently be seen as one of stating an obvious fact as part of the social practice of making social contact with another person, as distinguished from the action of requesting information as part of the social practice of clerking in a store.

Once again, there are numerous aspects of the total situation that have not been included in the scenario because they are not relevant to the differentiation between actions. In this case factors such as the color of the coat the speaker is wearing, the fact that the speaker is looking for snow shovels rather than hammers, that the store is locally owned rather than part of a chain, that fact that it is afternoon instead of morning—all these are but a small sample of the indefinitely large number of factors that can be distinguished in the total situation but that are not included

among the relevant circumstances of the action because they do not make a difference between the action's being what it is and its being some other action.

Note that the inclusion or exclusion of the factors as relevant is not ad hoc or by rough-and-ready intuition. It is systematic, and exploits the resources of the IA parameters, which have furnished the framework for the identification of aspects of the total situation that are relevant. Note also that the explication above of the basis for including or excluding elements of the total situation from the scenario was stated in partially inferential form, thus illustrating one of the legitimate uses of inferential accounts without implying that the hearer's knowledge and understanding is inferential.

SCOPE AND IMPLICATIONS

The analysis presented here has at least one clear advantage over the accounts of the interpretation of utterances offered by such linguists and philosophers as Grice (1957, 1975, 1978), Gordon and Lakoff (1975), Katz (1977), Sadock (1974) and Searle (1969, 1975): it provides a systematic and explicit treatment of the factors usually collected under the term "context."

This term is generally used as a cover term to refer to all of the factors that are relevant to the interpretation of the action carried out by the speaker besides the words that the speaker utters. In this analysis I have shown that such factors may usefully be considered under two headings: (a) the values of the parameters of the speaker's own action besides the words the speaker utters; and (b) the relevant circumstances.

I have further pointed out that the inclusion or exclusion of elements of the total situation from the category of relevant circumstances is to be explained by reference to the IA parameters and the concept of the action in question: Those factors are part of the relevant circumstances that make a difference in the action's being what it is, by reference to the IA parameters within the constraints of the requirement of consistency with the concept of the action in question.

Thus the strategy suggested here is to account for what is usually termed context by the application of a general principle—what counts is what makes a difference in the action—within the general framework of the Descriptive-Psychology analysis regarding what makes a difference in actions: That which makes a difference in the values of the IA parameters makes a difference in the action.

This is an in-principle solution to the problem of context and circumstances: It does not state the relationship between any given concrete circumstance and any particular action. It does, however, provide an

entree to the handling of the problem of specific contexts and actions: Given the analysis presented here, the problem is a problem of data management, not a problem requiring any further theoretical or general conceptual elucidation.

This data management problem can be stated as follows: How can the manifold actions and circumstances, and their relationships to each other, be represented in a useful way that is technologically feasible? Previous work within the framework of Descriptive Psychology suggests a promising approach to this problem: For descriptions of actions and circumstances employ the appropriate schemata described by Ossorio (1972/1978c) for the representation of objects, processes, events, states of affairs and configurations; for descriptions of relations among actions and circumstances, employ the technology of multidimensional judgment spaces (Jeffrey, 1980; Ossorio, 1971/1978b).

The data to be thus represented are obtained in a straightforward fashion, by asking persons what the concepts and relationships are, in accord with a rule of thumb in Descriptive Psychology, "If you want to know something, ask someone who knows and who is willing to tell you."

If the problem of context and circumstances is one of data management, and this problem can be handled as just indicated, then one major stumbling block to the achievement of successful computer processing of natural language will have been overcome. Recent reports of work in this area (e.g., Walker, 1978; Woods, 1978) indicate that such systems continue to be severely limited as to context. Even the least limited of the computer systems for processing natural language, those developed by Schank and others working within the framework he originated, seem to have achieved their primary successes in the processing of straightforward narrative assertions and apparently have not demonstrated the capacity to deal effectively with interpretive problems of the sort discussed in this paper (see DeJong, 1979, p. 272 and Schank and Abelson, 1977, pp. 167–168).

This is not to say that the representation of contextual factors is the only obstacle to successful language processing by computer; there are other basic inadequacies in most current efforts. These inadequacies are also highlighted by the analysis presented here: For example, this analysis suggests that the fundamental conception of a computer program for processing natural language should be as a capability for differentiating and describing behavior rather than, as in most conventional conceptions, a capability for understanding the meaning of words. Previous work within the framework of Descriptive Psychology (e.g., Mitchell, 1969; Ossorio, 1971/1978b) suggests that the development of such a computer capability is feasible.

Thus, the analysis presented here can be seen to supply that which is conspicuously missing from other, conventional accounts, viz., a systematic treatment of all those elements falling under the usual designation of "context." Furthermore, this analysis holds out promise for applicability to the important problem of computerized processing of natural language.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NOTE

1. After submitting the completed manuscript for this chapter I became acquainted with the book by van Dijk, *Text and context* (London and New York: Longman, 1977). In the four full pages (191–195) of this book which he devotes to a direct consideration of context as such, van Dijk furnishes, in my estimation, a more sophisticated analysis of context than anyone else has previously. Nevertheless, I would take issue with some key aspects of his analysis, such as his consideration of context as a course of events (p. 192), i.e., as a process. Furthermore, I would argue that the analysis I present here furnishes a more powerful and parsimonious systematic foundation for dealing with context than does van Dijk's analysis.

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A NEW PARADIGM FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

H. Joel Jeffrey

ABSTRACT

A new paradigm for artificial intelligence is presented that involves treating the computer as a behaving person. Descriptive Psychology provides the formulation of Persons, Behavior, and the Real World in a systematic, interrelated way that makes possible such an approach to the field of artificial intelligence. In the reformulation of the general problem of artificial intelligence, the mechanistic model is replaced by one in which the computational process becomes an instance of the Performance parameter of Intentional Action. The central task of getting the computer to recognize instances of concepts that cannot be reduced to computations is accomplished by a judgment space technology invented by Ossorio. The technology is described, and its use in research on automated information retrieval and several other topics in artificial intelligence is illustrated.

T. S. Kuhn, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1970), applied the concepts of paradigm and paradigm shift to revolution in scientific fields. A field's paradigm is basically the world view that defines the field. It includes the set of standards accepted by members of the community about the world, what place their endeavor has in that world, what constitutes legitimate techniques and answers to questions, and perhaps most importantly, what constitutes a legitimate question. Sharing the paradign is the *sine qua non* for being a member of the scientific community whose paradigm it is.

The concept of phlogiston, for example, has literally no place in the practices of the modern chemistry community. Similarly, modern astronomers do not concern themselves with questions involving epicycles in the courses of the planets.

The paradigm for artificial intelligence (AI) has been that both a human and a computer are information processing devices: A person receives "sense impressions" from "the world"; these sense impressions are interpreted to produce what we "see," "think," etc., and sometimes further processing results in an output from "the system," which may or may not alter the environment. The information processing is of course extremely complex, but is basically describable in terms of powerful heuristics for handling such processes as tree-searching. The paradigm is well stated by Newell and Simon (1972), Minsky (1968), Uhr (1973), and (in rather a different context) Ossorio (1971/1978).

PARADIGM FAILURE

A paradigm can fail. Paradigm failure means that the members of the community involved are unable in some significant ways to treat the world as being what the paradigm says it is. When a field's paradigm has failed, the field is (by definition) in a state of crisis. The resolution of the crisis is the shift to a new paradigm. The rise of quantum mechanics early in this century is an excellent example. A new paradigm must be adopted, or the field ceases to be a scientific endeavor, for the existence of a paradigm is a key difference between science and other human activities.

In artificial intelligence (AI), the mechanism paradigm has been the only one that AI researchers have been able to see as providing any basis for scientific work. While non-mechanistic descriptions have at times been proposed, they have not been seen by the scientific community as scientific accounts of human behavior (Dreyfus, 1972). On a wider scale, the mechanism paradigm is the view held by almost all of the scientific community in the Western world (Dreyfus, 1972; Ossorio, 1971).

In recent years there has been considerable debate over the legitimacy

of AI as a field of scientific endeavor. The field has been attacked as having had no significant successes, and being based on a fundamentally deficient view of human nature (Dreyfus, 1972). Of course, practitioners in the field have responded vehemently to these attacks.

This paper presents the view that the debate over AI may appropriately and fruitfully be treated as a dispute over the viability of the mechanism paradigm as a basis for AI. From this perspective, the attacks on AI may be seen as claims that the paradigm for AI has failed. Since critics have offered no alternative paradigm that AI researchers have been able to see as a viable foundation for their work, it is not surprising that the attacks have failed: The AI community continues to do research, publish papers, hold conferences, attract Ph.D. students, obtain funding, etc., with no significant change in the way it conducts itself.

As Ossorio (1971/1978a, 1971/1978b) has discussed extensively, the mechanistic paradigm functions adequately in the "hard" sciences, but has some serious conceptual inadequacies as a basis for a science of human behavior. AI is directly concerned with the world of persons and human behavior. Thus, seen from this perspective, AI's paucity of significant results is not surprising, and, more importantly, does not appear to be simply a matter of practical difficulties that can be expected to be solved. The point of this paper is to present a new paradigm for AI, which makes possible a science of AI without having to try to treat humans as mechanisms.

THE BEHAVIORAL PARADIGM

Redescription, Not Reduction

It is possible to argue that the mechanistic paradigm is necessary to have a science of artificial intelligence at all. That argument, in very brief form, is roughly as follows: A computer is a mechanism. Therefore, if we have a computer which behaves as a human (though perhaps one with certain physical handicaps), then we would seem to have reduced human behavior to machine processes, for any behavior would have its equivalent machine process. The only alternative would seem to be some form of "ghost outside the machine." If one sees people as machines (as the mechanism paradigm holds) this argument seems compelling.

The key to resolving this apparent dilemma is not to start out attempting to treat persons as nothing but mechanisms. Let us take a common place (in the human world) event, and examine the logic of describing that event. Consider a person making the opening kickoff of a football game. A full description of that behavior includes a specification of all of the eight

parameters of Intentional Action. One of those parameters is the Performance parameter. An observer may redescribe the Performance in a number of ways. Some of those descriptions may include physiological processes, objects, events, and states of affairs. In particular, the observer could include processes, objects, events, and states of affairs in the person's brain (neurons firing, signals crossing synapses, serotonin levels, etc.) The observer could, in principle, give a description of what is happening, physiologically, when any part of the *behavioral* process of making the opening kickoff is taking place.

This certainly does not imply that an opening kickoff *reduces* to a set of physiological processes; it means only that when a person engages in this action certain other states of affairs are also the case. In particular, it does not mean that the physiology is what is "really" happening. (This is discussed extensively in Ossorio [1971/1978b].) In other words, this is an example of the (logical) fact that physiological processes that occur when a Person engages in some Intentional Action are exactly that: processes that take place when a Person behaves.

Now let us consider a different example: a program to do medical diagnosis, such as the thyroid-diagnosis program described in Johannes (1977). A list of a patient's characteristics are the input to the program, and a diagnosis is the output. The program's diagnoses have been judged, by a panel of qualified physicians, to be competent diagnoses. Thus, the program may appropriately be said to map sets of characteristics in relation to diagnoses. However, notice that the program may also be described as (a) a sequence of changes in the numerical values of variables in the program; or (b) a sequence of changes in the physical state of various of the components of the machine on which the program is running. None of these descriptions is incorrect. *Neither do any of these descriptions disagree with any of the others.*

Notice that there is no feature of the physical states of the machine which makes these states represent numbers and instructions, and there is no feature of the values of the variables which makes them represent characteristics and diagnoses. The descriptions given are different parameters of the Intentional Action which we can successfully treat the machine as engaging in. In other words, the programmer has designed a process such that we may successfully treat the results of the numerical process as a case of medical diagnosis. The same principle exemplified in the kickoff example may be seen here: There is no implication that diagnosis reduces to, or "is really" numerical calculation. Examples of this principle are common in everyday applications. Consider a program calculating checking account balances for bank customers. There is nothing about the calculations to imply that the program is "really" doing this. Rather, the programmer has written the program so that the numerical

process may successfully be treated as a case of computing the balance. That it *is* the balance (or is not) is a fact (state of affairs) in the human world, not a fact about numbers in the program.

Treating a Computer as a Person

Let's look now at a third example: Stipulate a computer that passes "Turing's Test"—i.e., a person who did not know in advance would not be able to distinguish between the program and a human being (Jackson, 1974). This means that we may successfully treat the computer as engaging in those Social Practices that we expect a paradigm case Person to engage in (language, problem solving, negotiation, etc.), although again perhaps with some physical handicaps.

While engaging in these Practices, a variety of physical, electronic, and numerical processes and states of affairs will occur. A number of those might take place within what we could appropriately call the "brain." Thus, while the machine talked, laughed, argued, passed the time with friends, wrote letters to the editor, etc., some number of "brain" processes would be taking place. And just as with medical diagnosis and checking account balancing, having these processes go on while the computer is engaging in these Practices does not mean that any of the social practices have been reduced to electronics, physics, or numerical calculations. When ordinary persons engage in various social practices, a variety of physiological things may happen (recall the kickoff); when this stipulated computer engages in various social practices, different "physiological" things happen. What counts for us about a Person is the Social Practices he engages in, not the concomitant physiology.

Ossorio has amply demonstrated that the fact that humans have brains which are physiological mechanisms in no way implies that humans are mechanisms, or that behavior is physiology (Ossorio, 1971/1978b). The point of this example is that the same relation holds for computers: Having a person with a computer for a brain does not imply that that person's behavior is physiology, or that that person is a mechanism. A human with a computer for a brain is exactly that: a human, with an unusual brain. Just as there is no *logical* problem in having humans with protoplasmic brains, there is none in having humans with electronic brains, and there is no "ghost outside the machine" in either case.

The apparent dilemma of AI has been resolved, by moving from the machine concept to the Person concept, and examining the Intentional Action formulation of the Behavior of a Person. What we have been doing here can be seen as a case of treating the computer as a behaving person. The concept is the new paradigm for AI: Treat the computer as person behaving in the world.

Research within this paradigm—i.e., acting on this concept—is endeavoring to create programs that we may successfully treat as Persons behaving in the world; the ultimate standard is the degree to which a given program may be so treated. There is no question of trying to reduce persons to mechanisms or behavior to computation; there are many questions involving how to build programs whose behavior we may appropriately describe as the behavior of a person. The issue of how to build such programs, and in particular the question of how to get the computer to do things that do not reduce to computations, is the subject of the next section.

A TECHNIQUE FOR JUDGMENTS

If treating the computer as a behaving person is to be successful as a paradigm for AI, we must answer the question posed at the end of the last section. If we cannot, then the whole enterprise is legitimately subject to the criticism that, while it may make sense to describe the machine as acting on concepts, if the only behaviors actually available to the machine are equivalent (to us) to computations, then there is little point in talking that way.

A concept will not, in general, reduce to some other concept. Instances of a concept may have nothing in common, other than being instances of the concept. How then will we program the computer (which after all can only calculate) to do things that we can appropriately describe as acting on concepts, and not just manipulating numbers?

Ossorio developed a technology that we can use to meet this need. In the original study (Ossorio, 1965) he dealt with the problem of having the computer make judgments of subject-matter relevance. The technique was called a Classification Space. In later work he presented Category Space for judging the category a thing fits into, Property Space for judging properties, Functor Space for judging significant dimensions of variation, and Means-End Space for judging how well a given means is suitable for achieving a given end (Ossorio, 1965, 1966, 1971a/1978).

The original publications (Ossorio, 1965, 1966) present the technique in detail. Rather than repeat that detail, my presentation is designed to provide a preliminary grasp of the procedure and to give those with relevant problems some reasons for trying to use the technology. Perhaps the most important reason for using the new procedures is that they are consistent with and were in fact derived from the behavioral paradigm of Descriptive Psychology. For didactic reasons, the first illustration will be based on judgments of subject matter relevance, but, as we shall see, such a starting place in no way limits the implications of the presentation for the general problem of AI.

In order to simulate human judgment, one must develop a Judgment Space. The first step in such a procedure is to notice that, while in general real-world knowledge is not deductively or mathematically related, human users are able to act on such knowledge. Further, this knowledge, whether factual and certain or fuzzy, vague, and tentative can be represented using numbers. We have a commonly used set of locutions to indicate clarity, degree of applicability of a concept, etc. We introduce an alternate set of locutions by using a numerical scale (e.g., 0–10), and use the highest rating to represent certainty, lowest to represent uncertainty, and intermediate values for intermediate uncertainty. For example, 1 out of 10 represents a case where some description is not totally false, but is extremely far-fetched.

Having represented enough knowledge in some area this way, it is in general possible to make new judgments by combining the values representing the original knowledge. Let us go through the derivation of a Judgment Space (or J-space) for making subject matter relevance judgments.

Step 1. Select the fields of interest. (If this were an attribute-judgment space, one would select the attributes of interest; if this were a concept-recognition space, one would select the concepts of interest.)

Step 2. Select a set of words or phrases from the subject matter fields of interest. (In the case of concepts, select examplars of each concept.)

Step 3. Putting the fields F[l], . . . F[n] across the top, and the vocabulary v[l], . . . , v[n] down the side, we have a (empty) matrix. This is the judgment matrix. Fill it, with judgments of the degree to which each v[i] is relevant to each F[j]. These judgments are obtained from human judges competent to make them. We ask the judges to express their judgments numerically (i.e., using the numerical locutions), as follows:

1. Irrelevant. This term really has nothing to do with this field. Rate 0.
2. Marginal. This term could be said to be relevant, but only in a tangential or farfetched way. Rate 1 or 2.
3. Peripheral. The term has some relevance to the field, but is basically peripheral to it. Rate 3 or 4.
4. Relevant. This term is definitely relevant to this activity. Rate 5 or 6.
5. Highly significant. This term is highly relevant to the field; it is a key concept in the field, or relates directly to several critical concepts. Rate 7 or 8.

Within each category, the rating is higher when the relevance is higher.

Step 4. We now have a filled-out judgment matrix. It is very difficult to use this matrix as it stands, because at this point the numerical locutions may not represent the human world well. Consider the following example. Suppose we had three subject matter fields, Computer Software, Computer Hardware, and Zen Buddhism, and three terms with ratings:

	CS	CH	Z
T[1]	8	0	0
T[2]	0	8	0
T[3]	0	0	8

Using only the numerical information here, T[1], T[2], and T[3] are equidistant. But in the real (human) world, software is certainly more closely related to hardware than either is to Zen. So, the numbers are not representative of the real-world situation.

In actual cases of judgment matrices, we have a large sample of terms from each field. Since some fields are more closely related, this means that some columns of the matrix will be more closely correlated. What we would like is to have another representation of the data, which represents the information in the matrix in terms of independent "types of fields" or "types of content." Since a high correlation between two columns represents high subject matter similarity (because of the sampling of the fields), this means that we would like to have a representation of the judgment matrix in terms of groups of columns, such that different groups are independent and the fields within a group are highly correlated. This is precisely the result produced by intercorrelating and factor analyzing the judgment matrix (Comrey, 1973).

Therefore, we get the desired orthogonal basis by intercorrelating and factor analyzing the judgment matrix. The common factors, made up of highly correlated F[i], and unique factors, which are those F[i] having no significant content in common with any other field, are an orthogonal basis for the Judgment Space. (The reader is referred to [Ossorio, 1966] for a detailed description of the methods of factor extraction and rotation used.)

Step 5. The factor analysis produces numbers, called *loadings,* which relate the F[i] to the factors; the loading is the cosine of the angle between the vector F[i] and the factor. The factor may be viewed as a combination of those F[i] with a loading of over 0.7 (approximately the cosine of a 45-degree angle).

This step is done as follows: Suppose we had factor loadings like

	FactorI	Factor II
F[1]	0.9	0.1
F[2]	0.8	0.6
F[3]	0.2	0.9
F[4]	0.1	0.9
F[5]	0.3	0.7

Supposing that term v[1] were rated 6 with respect to F[1] and 7 with respect to F[2], and 0 with respect to all other fields, the rating on Factor I would be 0.9*6 + 0.8*7 / (0.9 + 0.8) = 6.5. The rating on Factor II would be 0, since F[1] and F[2] are not used to measure the value for Factor II, since their loadings are less than 0.7 and thus they are in a direction more than 45 degrees away from Factor II. (Readers familiar with factor analysis will recognize this as computing the factor scores.)

Up to this point the mathematical procedures have been standard factor-analytic ones (or close variants). We have used factor analysis to produce a vector space with an orthogonal basis, each of whose basis vectors represents a distinct type of content, and populated the space with the vocabulary items. At this point we leave factor analysis and simply use the vector space.

Step 6. The result of the above step is that the set of vocabulary terms v[i] is located in the relevance space. (In the general case, the items, objects, or whatever would be located in the Judgment Space.) The hallmark of judgment, though, is to be able to judge novel cases. This is simulated by using known objects (the terms, in the relevance space case) to simulate judgment of new items: documents. When a document is to be located in the Judgment Space, which is a case of judging its relevance, it is scanned for terms recognized. Suppose we have K terms. The locations of the recognized terms are a set of points in the Space, p[1], . . ., p[K]. To judge the document's relevance we need to calculate its location in the Space. This is done by combining the K locations mathematically. In my work, a log average has been quite successful. For example, in order to calculate the value of the jth axis, one obtains the value, q[j], as given by:

$$q[j] = \log_b ((b^{p[1,j]} + \ldots + b^{p[K,j]}) / K) \tag{1}$$

(Recall that the axes are the common and unique factors of the judgment matrix.) In other words, the value of axis j is the log average of the values of each of the terms on that axis. This formula gives higher weight to more highly relevant terms, which appears to fit the facts of human judgment.

For example, a document in which ten terms were recognized but five were judged to be as highly relevant as possible, say eight on zero through eight rating scale, and the other five were judged to be entirely irrelevant, say zero on the scale, would receive a higher relevance scale than the simple average of the rating of these ten terms.

The function being componentwise (i.e., for the new value on axis j, we use only other values *on axis j*) illustrates the correspondence between the mathematics and the non-mathematical use of it: We have an orthogonal basis for the space. Mathematically, this means that the values on each axis are independent of values on the other axes. As noted above, each axis represents an independent type of content. One would not judge relevance to one type of content by examining relevance to entirely independent, unrelated content.

Step 7.   Documents (and terms) may now be compared for conceptual content similarity by calculating their distance in the Judgment Space. A variety of metrics is of course possible; I have had good results using the standard Euclidean metric (Jeffrey, 1975). By using a metric, the Space may be used to retrieve documents by treating a retrieval request as a document, locating it in the Space, and then retrieving those documents, in order of closest document first. Since the axes of the space represent types of content, and the value on each axis represents the degree to which a document has that type of content, a document is mathematically close to another (or to the request) precisely when it is close in conceptual content.

A cautionary reminder may be useful here. It is tempting, if one is still operating in the mechanism paradigm, to view Judgment Space technology as probabilistic reasoning, number-based inference, etc. To a certain extent it can be seen that way, but doing so misses the point: A program using a Judgment Space is doing something that we may successfully treat as a case of making judgments.

The question raised at the beginning of this section was how we could have the computer act on concepts that do not reduce to computational processes. By gathering numbers which are instances of acting on concepts (numerical locutions), and manipulating the numbers so that that relationship is maintained, we arrive at a mathematical object (the vector space together with the combining function) such that we may appropriately treat the results of calculating that function, in those cases, as acting on the concept. The computer (viewed as a machine) still only calculates; but when it calculates with these numbers, in this way, we can view it as acting on concepts.

RESEARCH IN THE BEHAVIORAL PARADIGM

This section discusses some examples of research in the field of AI as defined by the Behavioral Paradigm. Some of the work presented has been done, and some is proposed work. The examples cited are illustrations of what appear to be interesting and fruitful ways of acting on the concept of treating the computer as a behaving person.

Subject Matter Relevance

When a person retrieves information in response to a request, he makes a relevance judgment of the request—i.e., the relative importance, within various domains of human activity, of the information. This judgment is one criterion which can be, and is, used in practice.

Ossorio (1966) constructed a Judgment Space with the ability to make subject matter relvance judgments of documents and requests. He began with 24 fields from science and engineering and 288 technical terms from these fields. The factor analysis yielded 6 common factors. When the space was used to index and retrieve documents, the correlations of system ranking with human judge ranking ranges from .896 to .984 (Ossorio, 1966).

I implemented a complete document retrieval system based on this approach (Jeffrey, 1975). A relevance space covering 62 fields and specialties within computer science was constructed, using 800 technical terms. The system behaves just like a competent human librarian in a computer science library. When responding to a request which is within the range of content covered and that uses vocabulary for which judgments are present, the system achieves an average recall of 75–85% of the relevant documents *simultaneously with* an average precision of 80–90%. These results are a very significant improvement over results obtained by the usual techniques of word-matching, in which in almost every case the recall percentage plus the precision precentage total 100%—i.e., 30% recall—70% precision, 80% recall–20% precision, etc.

It is interesting to see that the retrieval system has the same limitations a human librarian does. If a user states his request in terms a librarian does not know, the librarian will not understand it; the same holds for this system. Subdivision of fields was not implemented. Thus, requests about game playing programs would result in retrieval of documents on natural language understanding, since both are topics within artificial intelligence. Again, this is exactly what a human librarian who had no knowledge of the subdivisions of AI would do—the only judgment available would be relevance to artificial intelligence.

Significant Feature Selection

It is an accepted fact, within the AI community today, that one ability that humans have and machines currently do not is the ability to judge what features of an object or situation should be examined. This is what Dreyfus (1972) terms "zeroing-in."

Lack of this ability leads to the necessity for searching a tree of possibilities. In some cases this has produced some reasonable results; the cases are those in which the possible states of affairs are simple enough, or have enough mathematical structure, that techniques such as tree pruning and alpha-beta searching are not too poor a substitute for judgment. (Jackson [1974] discusses tree searching techniques.) In checkers and, to a degree, chess, this has been so. In other cases, such as the game of Go, the results have been dismal.

It appears that we could obtain some very interesting results in the area of intelligent game-playing by using Judgment Spaces to provide a program with the ability to (a) judge what features are significant about a situation, and (b) judge the degree to which a situation has the features or properties of interest.

These abilities would be provided by a Functor Space and a Property Space, respectively. To construct a Property Space, the columns of the matrix represent properties of interest, and the rows represent objects. The judgments are the degree to which each object has each of the properties. A new object (for example, a new board position in a chess game) is located in the space by identifying subobjects, or related objects (for example, already-recognizable features or other board positions) and combining the positions in the space of those objects. A Functor Space is the result of starting with a list of significant features or dimensions of variation, which are represented by the columns. The judgment is the degree to which each dimension D is a significant dimension of variation of each object—i.e., the degree to which it is important to know D about object X. This directly attacks the zeroing-in problem.

Ossorio (1965) constructed both of these spaces, and reported that there were no difficulties in doing so. There has not, to my knowledge, been a game playing program constructed using this approach.

Medical Diagnosis

Johannes (1977) addressed the problem of thyroid disorder diagnosis by simulating the judgment of qualified physicians. The system takes in a set of patient characteristics. It uses a Diagnosis Space to make an initial diagnosis. It then uses a Test Space to make recommendations of tests to be done. The Diagnosis Space is then used to revise the initial diagnosis in

light of the known test results. As an attempt to simulate competent physicians, Johannes' program is highly successful: A panel of 7 physicians reviewed the system's diagnoses on 15 cases. The panel agreed with the system's initial diagnosis in 98.1% of the cases, the test recommendations in 91.4%, and the final diagnoses in 92.4% of the cases.

Chess

Chess has long been recognized as a paradigm case of human behavior. Playing good chess (Master level and above) requires the ability to recognize patterns, judge what is important in a position, whether a position should be examined further, pick appropriate goals, pick appropriate courses of action, and in general act on a great variety of chess concepts that do not reduce to any physically definable set of characteristics of boards and pieces. Currently, chess programs are limited in just that way—they can only deal with reducible attributes, not concepts. By giving the computer the ability to recognize instances of, and act on, chess concepts, we can construct a program that plays chess like a human does, i.e., by recognizing and acting on concepts. (How well it plays is a separate issue, just as it is for humans.)

Such a system would operate as follows:

1. When a position is presented, the Strategy Space returns the name of the strategy to use. (A strategy is a Process, and thus is described by a Process Description. The reader is referred to Ossorio [1971/ 1978a, 1971/1978b] for detailed discussions of Process Descriptions and how they may be used.)
2. The Attribute Space and Tactics Space are used to recognize instances of non-computable concepts and select the tactic(s) best suited to the strategy in this case.
3. Using common board position analysis techniques (Jackson, 1974), and probably a Move Space, a move is selected.

The strategy is what is being done—not an abstraction of reality as strategies have usually been viewed. Selecting a particular tactic is an instance of engaging in the strategy, for the strategy is a process that is made up of stages and options such that the selection of a move is the exercise of a particular tactic.

Problem Solving

The monkey-and-bananas problem (Jackson, 1974) is a standard toy problem for illustrating reasoning: A monkey is in a room where a bunch

of bananas is hanging from the ceiling, too high to reach. In the corner of the room is a box, which is not under the bananas. How can the monkey get the bananas?

This is a "toy" problem because of its size—the number of facts about the situation, objects, and available actions is very small. A predicate calculus formulation of the problem requires 11 axioms, and a proof that the monkey can get the bananas can be given in 13 lines, starting from the axioms (Jackson, 1974).

A human is in a room where a bunch of bananas is hanging from a 20-foot-high ceiling. The room is much like an ordinary living room; it has a couch, a straight wooden chair, a wooden table, a table lamp, a pole lamp, and a 4-foot-square rug on the floor. On the table are a box of 20 drinking straws, a pile of 100 rubber bands, 5 toy balloons, 3 pencils, and a roll of wire. On the rug are a toy truck, 6 paperback books, a cardboard box for toys, and a floor lamp. How can the human get the bananas?

This example is far out of the range of toy problems. The number of different objects (not counting the 100 identical rubber bands, etc.), the number of properties of each, and the number of actions that each is suitable for would result in an enormous number of axioms if the problem were formalized. Even more important, this problem has a whole range of problems not even present in the toy version: Which facts should be represented? For example, a table has a certain size, shape, and weight. It is suitable for a place to put objects, work at, etc. Less commonly, it could be climbed on, sat on, etc. Straightforward, so far. However, it is also a physical object, and so may be decomposed in various ways—legs, top, etc. Further, depending on its composition, it might be that the top could be broken into long sticks. The same situation holds for many of the objects in the room. Trying to represent the facts and the redescriptions leads to a hopeless combinatorial explosion.

But a human does not face these problems; he reasons with the facts he sees, and (depending on ability) acts on redescriptions if necessary. The following is one way a person might act in the given situation:

1. Decide to try climbing.
2. Stack chair on table, and climb on top.
3. Notice bananas are closer, but not yet in reach.
4. Decide to hit bananas from top of stack.
5. Take apart floor lamp, getting 6-foot-long center pole.
6. Notice this is not long enough to reach the bananas.
7. Wire the lamp pole to the table lamp.
8. Climb up, hit bananas with extended pole.

Let us examine this sequence, using a question and answer format to pinpoint the judgments being made:

1. Q. What known actions look good for getting the object out of reach?
   A. Climbing.
2. Q. Does climbing require any props?
   A. Yes—an object tall enough to help, and which can be climbed on.
3. Q. Any such objects present?
   A. No.
4. Q. Are there any known methods for creating tall climbable objects?
   A. Yes—stacking objects.
5. Q. Does stacking require any props?
   A. Yes—at least 2 objects that can be lifted, one of which must have a flat top.
6. Q. Are such objects available?
   A. Yes—table and chair.
7. Q. Can bananas now be reached?
   A. No.
8. Q. Does this approach look reasonable, or should you start over?
   A. Reasonable, keep stack for now.
9. Q. From the top of the stack, what known actions look suitable for getting the object out of reach?
   A. Hitting object.
10. Q. Does hitting require any props?
    A. Yes—a stick long, strong, and light enough to be lifted.
11. Q. Such a stick available?
    A. No.
12. Q. Any known methods for creating objects from other objects?
    A. Yes—putting objects together, and taking them apart.
13. Q. What objects have long, strong, light parts?
    A. Floor lamp has long center pole. Table has legs. Chair has legs.
14. Q. Center pole of lamp long enough?
    A. No.
15. Q. (Repeat 12.)
    A. Yes—putting objects together and taking them apart.
16. Q. Any objects suitable for putting together with lamp pole?
    A. Yes (marginally)—the table lamp.

17. Q. Any known methods for putting objects together?
    A. Yes—tieing, gluing, nailing, screwing, bolting.
18. Q. Does tieing require props?
    A. Yes—string.
19. Q. Any string present?
    A. No.
20. Q. Any objects with similar relevant properties?
    A. Yes—wire.
21. Q. Is new object (table-lamp-and-lamp-pole) long enough?
    A. Yes.

Now notice that *every one* of the above steps in this complicated piece of problem-solving behavior can be implemented by either simple lookup in Object or Process Descriptions, or via one or more Judgment Spaces. (Object Descriptions are also discussed in [Ossorio, 1971/1978a, 1971/1978b].) Further, subobjects and combinations of objects need not have any location in the Spaces in advance. Step 13, for example, involves Property and Functor Spaces; Step 19 uses Relevance and Property Spaces; Steps 1, 4, 9, and 12 use a Means-End Space. A Means-End Space is a Judgment Space in which the columns represent means, the rows represent goals, and the judgment is the degree to which each means is suitable as a means to each end. This is discussed in Ossorio (1965).

Finally, it is of interest to see how the problem of combinatorial explosion, which has long been recognized as *the* primary problem in AI, simply does not arise here. In Step 13, for example, the floor lamp was selected for dismantling by the (hypothetical) system. It was selected on the basis of being the most highly rated object in the Judgment Spaces, at each stage which required a judgment. Since a system operating with Judgment Space is reproducing human judgments, the system will make several attempts, or have several alternatives to consider in some stage, just when a human does: when the knowledge does not indicate a clear choice. In terms of the Judgment Space operation itself, this would be the case, for example, if several alternative methods were rated 4 (indicating "could be suitable, but you wouldn't normally think of it for this goal'   ').

Automatic Fact Analysis

The automatic fact analysis problem is the problem of producing an automatic system for analyzing the implications of facts. A paradigm case is the problem of analyzing military intelligence. It is in some sense the supreme AI problem. All of the difficulties of traditional AI must be faced in attacking it, the worst being the problem of how to handle real world

knowledge (Jackson, 1974). Certainly the best research with the Behavioral Paradigm is the State of Affairs Information System (SAIS) designed by Ossorio (1971/1978a). The SAIS forms a complete package for operating with Object and Process Descriptions, including Judgment Spaces for the places where human fact analyzers exercise judgment. What Ossorio did was to analyze, in terms of the Person Concept, what it is to do fact analysis, and then use that analysis to design a system to reproduce those achievements. This system has not yet been built. In my judgment, some of the most fascinating and significant research in the near future will be the implementation of a State of Affairs Information System.

CONCLUSION

A new paradigm for artificial intelligence has been presented: the Behavioral Paradigm. Whereas with the mechanistic paradigm one attempts to treat a human as an information processing mechanism, and tries to describe behavior by computational processes, with the Behavioral Paradigm one treats the computer as a behaving person, and constructs behavioral models for computational processes. In order for this approach to be viable as a scientific paradigm, one must have a precise, systematic formulation of the concepts of Persons, Behavior, and the Real World. Descriptive Psychology is that formulation. It is also necessary to have a technique by which the computer can deal with descriptions of parts of the real world, without having to replace them with others of a computable form. The technique for having the computer do noncomputable things is the Judgment Space. The Behavioral Paradigm is thus a new concept of the computer, which is scientifically useful. As such, it constitutes a new paradigm for the science of artificial intelligence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

The concept of community has long had an important place in Descriptive Psychology, but has not previously been formally articulated. A formulation, called the "Community paradigm," is suggested, having six parameters: Members, Statuses, Concepts, Locutions, Practices, World. These parameters are discussed and some interrelationships among them developed. Connections between the Community paradigm and the paradigms of Person, Behavior, and Reality are delineated, and the Community paradigm is used to give new perspective on the notions of consciousness, way of life, blue-ribbon panel, and classification space. Some questions for possible future exploration are listed.

The concept of community, in one form or another, has been used in Descriptive Psychology since its beginnings. One of the early observations about Social Practices was that, in some sense, they cluster or form coherent configurations; as Peter Ossorio once put it in conversation, "It's not like a cafeteria, where you go through the line and select the

ones you want." This configurational aspect of behavior was originally referred to in the notion of ways of life (Ossorio, 1966b). The methodology of blue-ribbon panels (Ossorio, 1966a) directly exemplifies a use of the concept of communities, as do such fundamental practices as negotiation and accreditation/degradation and such key Descriptive Psychological concepts as status and significance (the Significance parameter of Intentional Action).

But community has remained until now one of those background notions to Descriptive Psychology—used, relied upon, but never articulated and brought into the formal conceptual structure. This is especially surprising if one sees (as I do) Community as Descriptive Psychology's fourth major paradigm, conceptually and pragmatically on a par with Person, Behavior, and Reality, and arguably subsuming the Language paradigm. The purpose of this paper is to present an articulated paradigm of Communities; to demonstrate some of the more important conceptual relationships between Community and the paradigms of Person, Behavior, and Reality; to develop (in varying degrees of detail) some ways in which Community brings new coherence to some key concepts and practices of Descriptive Psychology; and to point to intriguing lines of further investigation using the paradigm. To make these tasks possible within the limited time and space available to the author, I have explicitly assumed a considerable familiarity with the concepts, practices and literature of Descriptive Psychology .

PARADIGM

A Community is, technically, a Configuration paradigmatically seen as an object having both object and process constituents (Ossorio, 1971/1978b, p. 55). The formulation of the Communities paradigm may be expressed as:

$$C = <M, S, Ct, L, P, W>, \text{ where}$$
$$M = \text{Members}$$
$$S = \text{Statuses}$$
$$Ct = \text{Concepts}$$
$$L = \text{Locutions}$$
$$P = \text{Practices}$$
$$W = \text{World}$$

That is, a Community is characterized by its Members, its Statuses, its Concepts, its Locutions, its Practices, and its World. Some elaboration of each of these parameters is in order; initially, it seems the prudent course to develop the more obvious before articulating the more subtle connections.

Members

The Members of a Community are Persons. Not all Persons are Members of a given Community, of course (with one important exception, discussed later). Indeed, in the paradigm case, there are constraints on who is eligible for Membership in a Community. To be a Member is to have Status within the Community, which means that one is eligible to participate in the Practices of the Community—particularly the Core Practices (see below). To be a Member is to have certain Powers (e.g., the ability to use at least some of the Community's Concepts and understand its Locutions) and Dispositions (e.g., to participate in its Practices with no further end in view). Paradigmatically a Member knows that he is a Member and is known by others to be a Member of this Community—both by other Members and by outsiders. And since distinctions are ordinarily not empty, there are ways of treating the Member as such—both within the Community and without.

Statuses

The notion of status was originally introduced into Descriptive Psychology in *Persons* (Ossorio, 1966b), where it was simply referred to as one of the "comparative" parameters of the Person paradigm (along with state, from which it was distinguished by the relative lack of "discontinuity or contrast which makes it informative in other cases to speak of 'states.' " [Ossorio, 1966b, p. 55]). Over the years, status has assumed increasing importance in Descriptive Psychology, and experience has shown that the above "state vs. status" distinction is a hard one to sustain. I propose a re-formulation: Status is a concept which has its primary place as part of the concept of Community. It also serves, as a linking concept, to codify the facts of an individual Person's Memberships—thus, it is a Personal Characteristic, as noted by Ossorio (1966b).

To have a Status is, fundamentally, to have a place in the Practices of a given Community. (Member is, of course, one such Status.) In the paradigm case, there are some Statuses for which Locutions exist (e.g., Black, White, Pawn; Quarterback, Coach, On-sides Kick, Touchdown), but there can certainly be others for which no particular Locution exists (e.g., the person who holds the "open" button in the self-service elevator while others exit). In all cases, however, to say that X has a certain Status is to say that X is eligible to enter into the Community's Practices in certain ways and not in others; that there are ways of treating X as having that Status, and that Members *do* treat X as having that Status.

This last statement perhaps needs elaboration. Viewed as an empirical generalization or a universal law, the statement "Members *do* treat X as having that status" is obviously nonsense and demonstrably false in many

instances. But it is intended as neither generalization nor law, but rather
as what Ossorio (1967/1981a) calls a "non-falsifiable rule." As such, it
requires unless clauses to make it complete. A fairly standard set of
unless clauses has evolved over the years (Ossorio's original 1967 for-
mulation of "non-falsifiable rules" is reprinted in this volume). They are:
If a person has reason to do X (in this case, treat another person as having
status X), he will do so, unless:

   (a) he has stronger reasons to do Y or not to do X,
   (b) he doesn't recognize the opportunity to do X,
   (c) he does not know how to do X in this situation,
   (d) he believes he *has* done X.

Note that in this formulation, it is not only Persons who have Statuses,
indeed, any object, process, event, state-of-affairs, concept, or rela-
tionship that has a place in the Practices of the Community can be
straightforwardly said to have Status within that Community (*which* Sta-
tus, of course, is a matter of *which* place(s) in which Practice(s)). "Pawn"
is as clearly a Status in the Chess Community as is "Black."

Concepts

It is a modern commonplace of philosophical and linguistic discourse to
observe that there is no such thing as a "private language" (e.g., Rhees,
1954); it is equally commonplace to observe that there is no such thing as
a private concept, and that concepts vary from community to community.
("The Eskimos have 27 different words for snow!") The Members of a
Community can ordinarily expect (indeed, require) each other to be
competent in using the Community's concepts, and would typically be
surprised to encounter a Member who lacked such competence. At the
least, one expects another Member to be able to use the Core Concepts of
the Community—those which are necessary to make distinctions required
for participation in the Core Practices. ("You call yourself a
psychoanalyst but you can't even recognize a simple transference neuro-
sis?") Not all Members are generally expected to have full mastery of all
Concepts of the Community, of course; indeed, such differential mastery
is often one basis for important Status distinctions within the Community
(e.g., apprentice-journeyman-master; neophyte-acolyte; child-adult).

Just as Deliberate Action, written DA = < I, PC, < IA >, < IA >, KH,
P, A, S > is the paradigm case for human behavior, the paradigm case of a
human community might be written C = < M, S, < C >, L, P, W >. That
is, among the Concepts of a paradigm-case community is the concept of
Community, the use of which enables one to distinguish this community
from others.

Locutions

One of the more readily observable facts about a given community is its use of characteristic locutions (or its characteristic, non-standard use of standard locutions). The difference in locutions between two communities can range from subtle (e.g., "U" vs. "non-U" speech in England) through moderate (as exemplified by technical articles in, say, *Philosophy of Mind* and *Heavy Equipment Maintenance*) to profound (e.g., Mandarin Chinese vs. English), but it is clear that, as much as by anything, a Community is characterized by its locutions.

At first glance it might seem odd to give such prominence to mere words; we are, after all, quite familiar with the strategy of dismissing an argument as semantics. But Locutions are not mere words; indeed, they are indispensible Performances in human social practices involving the use of language. Locutions, as Ossorio (1969a/1981b) points out, stand in a one-to-one relationship to concepts—and behavior; that relationship is codified in the Verbal Behavior paradigm, $VB = <C, L, B>$, that is, Verbal Behavior = Concept, Locution, Behavior. (Ossorio, 1969, p. 100). It should be recalled that a paradigm case of treating something as an X is to call it an "X." Thus, Locutions form a vital "link" between concepts and behavior, and codify the common notion that a different community speaks a different language. Again, it should be noted that, in the paradigm case, a Community's Locutions include those required to identify "one of us" (Members) and the Community itself.

Practices

Social Practices (for simplicity, "Practices") are, literally, the significant aspect of a community. After all, the point of being a Member is to be eligible to engage in the Community's Practices. It is not surprising, then, that this Practices parameter will be articulated in greater detail and to greater effect than any of the other five.

The key, classic distinction among Practices is intrinsic vs. non-intrinsic—and it is precisely for the purposes of articulating the concept of "intrinsic" that the Community paradigm is required. A Practice is intrinsic *only* for Members of a Community in which that Practice is intrinsic ("Only a chessplayer can play chess for the sake of playing chess.") To say that a practice is intrinsic within this community is to say: that the members engage in it with no further end in view; that, when a member engages in it, another member would typically *not* ask "What's he up to?"; that, given an opportunity to engage in it, a member will do so (the standard "unless" clauses apply here, of course). And as previously noted, among the most important criteria for Membership is the disposition to engage in the Practices with no further end in view—that is,

intrinsically. Indeed, in this context one can see intrinsic Practices as redundant—what makes X a Practice of *this* Community is precisely the fact that, within this Community, X is engaged in with no further end in view.

The conceptual connections with (and within) the concept of Practices are many and rich; several of the more important ones are discussed later. But one further articulation seems appropriate at this point.

Among the Practices of a Community a subset which I call "Core Practices" seem worth special designation. In general, not every Member participates in all Practices; indeed, often there are differential eligibilities involved, and some of these may be codified with Locutions. In that sense, then, many Practices, although intrinsic, can be seen as optional—e.g., a Member would not be puzzled to find that a fellow Member did not engage in this one.

But there are some Practices which are *not* optional; That is, it would be literally nonsensical to say, "He's one of us, but he doesn't participate in this Practice." Indeed, to a Member the whole point of being a Member is precisely to be able to participate in these Practices—and, of course, vice versa. To forego *these* would be straightforwardly to lose one's Membership—and again, of course, vice versa: The important aspect of losing one's Membership is that one is forced to forgo participating in these. These are the Core Practices.

An example may help: "You don't read chess books? Fine. You don't belong to a chess club? No problem—neither do I. You don't work chess problems in your spare time? That I can understand. But what I don't understand is: how can you call yourself a chess-player when you *don't play chess!*"

Core Practices have no place whatsoever for outsiders—another way in which they differ from other Practices. (We may welcome other religions at ecumenical breakfasts—but not in Holy Communion.) Indeed, the paradigm Rite of Passage (or any other Accreditation Ceremony) consists of (or culminates in) participation in a Core Practice: *By* such participation, you *become* one of us. (Baptism is a classic example here.)

Core Practices have another unique utility, in that they are obvious candidates to become a means whereby one affirms (or reaffirms) one's Membership—to oneself or to others. But since a Core Practice is intrinsic, there may be ambiguity regarding a Member's intent: Are they affirming their Membership, or just doing something they see the point of doing? Thus, typically, such affirmations become ritualized; that is, of all the possible versions of this Practice, a particular one, specified by Performance constraints, is designated as *the* version whereby one affirms Membership. ("There's a right way, a wrong way—and the *Army* way!" Religious rites of baptism, confirmation, and communion are famil-

iar instances here—a *real* Baptist is baptized by *total* immersion, not just water sprinkled on the head—and there are many others: standing for the National Anthem, dressing in a "business" suit for business, etc.) Quite literally, the ritualized Performances acquire added significance—which only a Member is in a position to appreciate.

World

In *'What Actually Happens''* (Ossorio, 1971/1978b), the real world is taken to consist of objects, processes, events, and states of affairs, and the point is made that different real worlds result from different choices of ultimate objects, processes, etc. The step to the Communities paradigm is a small one: Observe that, just as there are no private concepts there are no one-person real worlds (outside of psychosis; a psychotic may be a community of one). The fact of there being a given real world is fundamentally a fact about a Community, rather than about any particular individual; further, Communities differ in which objects, etc, are ultimate for them—in short, in their Worlds.

The term "ultimate object" (process, etc.) is used here in a very pragmatic, rather than truth-seeking, sense—a pragmatic usage which I take to be consistent with Ossorio's. To say that X is an ultimate object within this Community's World is to say nothing more nor less than that X has no object, etc., constituents which themselves have a place within the Practices of the Community. To say, for example, that a pawn is an ultimate object within the World of chess is *not* to pretend that this physical object we use as a pawn can't be analyzed into molecules, atoms, etc., but rather, straightforwardly, to observe that such constituent objects have no place in the practices of chess (Molecule to QB-4? Guard your quark?). This is equivalent to noting that a pawn is not meaningfully equivalent to a physical object . . . or "Chess is not physics."

The following are some basic connections of World to the other five parameters. When a Member is participating in the Practices of this Community, his real world at that time is, paradigmatically, the World of the Community. Those objects which are "ultimate" for this Community paradigmatically will be among the Concepts and identified by Locutions; further, there will be Practices consisting of treating such ultimate Xs *as* Xs (as having the Status of X); and there will be no Practices consisting of treating X as an instance of some more fundamental Y.

Roles, Relationships, and Norms

In presenting these six as the basic parameters of Communities, I have explicitly omitted the notions of roles, relationships, and norms, which many students of society have taken to be fundamental starting points in

their analyses. My position is that these concepts, while often important and useful, can be derived from further specifications of these six parameters. This is a very considerable claim, which I am reluctant to make without more thorough elaboration than time and space in this article permit; kindly let the following stand as promissory notes against such an elaboration.

I take it that the facts referred to by role and relationship are adequately subsumed by the concept of Status. To have a Status is to have a particular place within the Community; specifically, it is to be eligible (and expected) to engage in certain actions within the Community's Practices (and not eligible, of course, to engage in others). I submit that this is a reasonable statement of what is meant by role as it is used in the literature of the social sciences. Further, to have a place within a Community is to have a place vis-à-vis the other Members (and elements) of the Community; this "place vis-à-vis" aspect of Status is typically codified by talking of relationships, e.g., among Members. Thus, role and relationship are readily available via the concept of Status.

The notion of norm is a bit more problematic. It often appears to be used as positive specification of a negative condition. That is, we say "He violated a norm" when we observe that "His action was inappropriate": either he was not eligible to do it, or else "that's not the way *we* do things." In either case, we are running the risk of inventing positively-specified norms of behavior to account for the Members' *ability* to recognize cases of appropriate and inappropriate action. As outside observers, lacking such recognition ability ourselves, there may well be a point to talking about norms as a means of organizing our observations—but such talk might appropriately be taken as saying more about us than it does about the Community. In any event, I take it that a Member's ability to recognize appropriate behavior is a fundamental fact of any Community in a way that norms arguably are not.

COMMUNITIES AND PERSONS, BEHAVIOR, AND REALITY

Communities and Persons

The Members of a Community are paradigm-case Persons. Further : paradigm-case Persons are Members of Communities. I submit that the statement, "A Person is paradigmatically a Member of Communities" is as fundamental a specification of the Person paradigm as the familiar statement, A Person is paradigmatically an object whose history is a life-history of Deliberate Action (Ossorio, 1969/1978).

As previously noted, Status appears as a parameter of Communities, as

a comparative parameter of the Person concept, and as a value of the Personal Characteristics parameter of Intentional Action. From the Person viewpoint, Status is seen primarily as a means of codifying the facts of a Person's Memberships and eligibilities within those Communities (as well as the Person's relations to other elements—including communities—external to the Community in which he is a Member.)

Communities and Behavior

Among the parameters of Intentional Action is Significance, which specifies the social practice(s) of which this Intentional Action is a part. This parameter reflects the paradigm case of action, in that the stopping point for the question "But what's the point of doing *that*?" is to point to the intrinsic social practice of which this action is a part. Note, however, that "intrinsic" means that it is one of the Practices of a Community; thus, the Significance parameter directly links Intentional Action to the Community in which this Practice has its place. *All* action is straightforwardly a case of participating in the life of a Community. (This is not to pretend, of course, that one might never be mistaken in identifying *which* Community a given action takes place within; nor to deny that different significance descriptions of "this same action" might well apply—but then, these are familiar caveats in Descriptive Psychology). Further, the alienated person who merely goes through the motions of participating is the classic exception-that-proves-the rule; it is his lack of *recognition* of the significance of his actions that constitutes the pathology, *not* some actual lack of significance. Such lack of recognition can typically be seen as a problem of eligibility—and dealt with accordingly.

This suggests a new form of behavior description, called "Significant Action," in which only the content of the Significance parameter is specified (compare the form of "Achievement Description" (Ossorio, 1967/1981b) in which only the Achievement parameter is specified). Some uses that immediately come to mind for this form are: (a) when we want to answer some version of, "What's the point of doing *that*?"; (b) when we want to follow Ossorio's principle of "Drop the details and see what pattern remains" in formulating case descriptions—indeed, Significant Action descriptions would appear to be a major technical resource for explicating psychopathological cases; (c) any time that underlining the significance of behavior is useful, as in treatment of alienation, or in enculturation, or cross-cultural understanding. Indeed, it is reasonable to suggest that most *actual* behavior descriptions are Significant Action descriptions.

It also suggests another new form of behavior description: specify all parameters *except* Significance. Perhaps surprisingly, this form also has

an obvious, immediate name (and implied utility): Ritual Action. This form allows us to specify in great detail all other parameters of behavior while remaining noncommittal about the point of it all. This might be used by, say, an anthropologist or ethnologist studying a religion, a foreign protocol, or a mystery cult; its use might be straightforward acknowledgement of the notion that "Only an initiate could possibly grasp the significance of this ritual." (This, of course, is outsider's language; Members will view rituals quite differently, and indeed might appropriately use Significant Action descriptions among themselves to identify rituals—to one who is "partaking of the blood and body of Christ" no further description is necessary or relevant.)

There are other conceptual links between the paradigms of Community and Behavior: (a) As discussed above, the Personal Characteristic parameter includes the Person's Statuses, which reflect one's Memberships. (b) The Know parameter involves the use of concepts to make distinctions—and those concepts are the Concepts of some Community, paradigmatically a community of which the person engaging in the behavior is a member. (c) Part of the content of the Want parameter will reflect the intrinsic social practice in which one is engaging—that is, just as Achievement may be part of Want, so may Significance. (d) As mentioned in the previous paragraph, a particular Performance may be a ritual of affirmation or accreditation with a Community.

Communities and Reality

A Community, as previously noted, can be conceived of as a configuration paradigmatically seen as an object having both object and process constituents (although there are times, it seems, when the alternative configuration paradigm—a process with process and object constituents—may prove more useful). Among the object constituents are Members; among the process constituents are Practices; and Concepts are themselves listed as one of the basic Reality concepts (Ossorio, 1971/1978b, p. 17). These are some of the straightforward ways in which Communities fit within the State-of-Affairs system.

We have already noted some of the ways in which Reality concepts enter into Communities—notably via the World parameter. There are other, more subtle but equally substantial, connections which are of interest. One has to do with composition.

Treating a community in a strictly formal fashion as a Configuration immediately, via the State-of-Affairs system transition rules (Ossorio, 1971/1978b, p. 18), allows the possibility of "composition" of this community with others into a larger object which may itself be a community; and of "decomposition" into smaller objects that themselves may be

Communities as well. This gives us the methodological resources to do justice to the fact that larger communities (e.g., the community of scholars) are in some sense the same as a combination of a number of smaller ones (e.g., philosophers and historians), which in another sense remain distinct, even antagonistic, communities (e.g., psychotherapists composed of psychiatrists and psychologists and social workers). That sense in which they are the same is the State-of-Affairs system sense, in which they are viewed as Configurations; the sense in which they are *not* the same is the Communities sense, in which they are viewed *as* Communities. Note also that merely composing or decomposing with a community does not automatically result in new communities; in addition to being Configurations, they must also *be* Communities in order to qualify. (Or . . . "A Community is not *merely* a Configuration of Persons and Practices.")

As soon as one introduces composition and decomposition, of course, one introduces considerations of ultimates and limiting cases. There is one particularly interesting limiting case: the Community that includes all other Communities.

The Community that includes all other Communities might be referred to as the Community of all Persons (or the brotherhood of man, or the human race, depending on one's preference for ultimates and taste in locutions). It can be formulated as:

$$C_p = \; < P, FS, \; < P, B, R, C >, \theta, FP, IA >$$

C_p, the Community of Persons, has all Persons for Members. "FS" indicates Fundamental Statuses: those required for participation in the Fundamental Practices (see below). They include actor, observer, and critic. The Concepts of this Community are just those concepts referred to as the "Person concept" in Ossorio (1971/1978b, pp. xi–xii) which consists of Person, Behavior, Reality and a fourth paradigm—arguably, Language or Community. The theta in the Locutions parameter indicates that the parameter is deleted. This reflects the existence of two competing arguments. On the one hand, it seems reasonable to point to the community-specific nature of locutions and actively assert that there are no locutions which all Persons have in common. One might, however, just as readily use some symbol to indicate that *any* locution of *any* actual community is a Locution here—making the reasonable argument that any human linguistic utterance is characteristic of the human community. Lacking such a symbol, deleting the parameter seemed the conservative choice.

"FP" is an abbreviation for "Fundamental Practices," which term I use to denote those Practices which are necessary for the existence of any Community. (Perhaps unsurprisingly, a number of the technical methodo-

logical devices which have been created for the doing of Descriptive
Psychology, and which have existed up to now as rather ad hoc pieces,
clearly fundamental and necessary but not clearly articulated within the
major paradigms, turn out to be fundamental practices.) Among the
fundamental practices are; observation, description, criticism (formulated
in Descriptive Psychology in the Actor-Observer-Critic (AOC) diagram),
negotiation, accreditation, and degradation. In some form, each of those
practices must exist within a community for it to function *as* a Commun-
ity— and since the community of Descriptive Psychology is no exception,
it's not surprising to find them there.

FURTHER CONNECTIONS

Briefly, then, and in admittedly broad strokes, the above are some of
the major connections between the Community paradigm and the other
three major paradigms of Descriptive Psychology: Person, Behavior, and
Reality. I take it that the inextricable conceptual interdependence, as well
as that mutual interassimilability that characterizes so much of Descrip-
tive Psychology's conceptual apparatus have been adequately demon-
strated.

A major point of articulating a concept is to bring new coherence to
other concepts to which it is related. I take it that this, too, has been
demonstrated; as further demonstration (and, I presume, further substan-
tive contribution), let us take a fresh pass at some old Descriptive
Psychology notions, with an eye to polishing them using the Community
paradigm as a tool. Specifically, let us examine the concepts of conscious-
ness, way of life, and the methodologies of blue-ribbon panels and Clas-
sification Spaces.

Consciousness

It has been customary in Descriptive Psychology, whenever the term
"consciousness" is introduced, to inquire "conscious—of what?", as a
means of reminding us that we are typically interested in the *content* of
consciousness rather than in consciousness itself—whatever that may be.
To this "reminding question" I would add another, perhaps more fun-
damental, one: "Conscious—as what?", to call attention to the fact that
one is conscious *of* only those "things" (objects, processes, etc.) which
one is able to distinguish from other "things" by means of the concepts
one has—and that those concepts are the Concepts belonging to the
conceptual systems of a Community of which one is a Member. Further,
being eligible to engage in Practices involving this "thing" gives one
reason to be conscious of it. Thus, what a person *can* be conscious of, and
has reason to be conscious of, depends on what Statuses the person has,

and in which Communities. In a common manner of speaking, the Community provides the *context* of consciousness: conscious *as* a chess player, mother, elder of the church, psychoanalyst, etc.

One implication of the above is that we would not be surprised to find that a person's consciousness seems to change as he moves from community to community. And indeed this is the case; we are all familiar with numerous examples. ("It all seems so clear in the classroom, but as soon as I get back on the job it gets fuzzy again"; the brutal criminal who is a kind and loving father; the mental patient who does well in the hospital, but regresses during a home visit; etc.) Thus, in a very direct sense, the most "individual" of a person's characteristics—his consciousness—can be seen as inextricably rooted in his community.

Way of Life

The phrase "way of life" has an immediate commonsensical intelligibility, suggesting the sense in which an individual's life has a sort of form or coherence. But the concept has proved difficult to pin down. For instance what way of life should we attribute to, say, Albert Einstein? Scientist? Intellectual? German Jew? And which of these accounts for his passion for playing the violin—badly? It seems that any substantive attempt to specify a way of life amounts to little more than stereotyping—encompassing too little, implying too much, lacking sufficient detail to be either accurate or informative.

I suggest that the problem here lies in treating way of life as a substantive concept, when it is more appropriately seen as referring to a methodological principle. Specifically, way of life refers to a summary statement of an individual's community memberships, and the practices within which he has status. Just as "self-concept" is not a simple summation of *facts* about a person (Ossorio, 1971/1978b), neither is way of life appropriately seen as a summary of an individual's actual behaviors. Rather, it represents the life of the communities within which his behaviors acquire the significance and coherence they in fact have.

Methodologies

The blue-ribbon panel is a classic method in Descriptive Psychology for judging or assessing states of affairs. It can be seen straightforwardly as exemplifying the use of the Community paradigm: members are chosen on the basis of their status within the community within which the states of affairs to be assessed have their place. (We don't ask quarterbacks to judge the adequacy of a research design—unless they are also research scientists.) What makes the panel "blue ribbon" is precisely the fact that *other* members of the community will recognize the panel members as

really "one of us," i.e., as a genuine member, for whom our practices really *are* intrinsic. For exactly the same reason, of course, judgments by outsiders won't do the job.

The methodology of Classification Spaces (e.g., Ossorio, 1966a) even more clearly exemplifies the Community paradigm. In constructing a Classification Space, a key step is to ask experts in a given field (i.e., members of the technical community) to rate the extent to which a particular work is relevant to their field. This is simply a case of asking Community Members to identify their Locutions. Those Locutions rated most highly relevant to this field will certainly include those which are identified with the Core Concepts. Thus, factor analysis, a procedure which effectively highlights those highly rated Locutions while minimizing the contribution of the less highly rated, not surprisingly yields a representation of the technical community's concepts, which we can use to make judgments of, e.g., relevance of documents to the community. The main point here is that the procedure used to generate a classification space is neither arbitrary nor serendipitous, but rather follows from some logical interconnections among the Community parameters.

Further Questions

The Communities paradigm, in addition to shedding new light on established facts and concepts, also suggests some intriguing lines for future development. A slightly annotated listing of some of these would include:

1. Hypnosis and "Altered States of Consciousness": It seems promising to use the Community paradigm as a framework for viewing hypnosis as consisting of a two-person community, with some unusual constraints on eligibility within the fundamental practices, especially negotiation and accreditation/degradation. The obvious facts of hypnosis—the behavioral and consciousness changes—might be seen as the result of the subject's status within this community ("conscious *as*"). This formulation at first glance seems not inconsistent with Plotkin and Schwartz's perceptive formulations.

2. Consider a person whose consciousness does *not* change from community to community. Such might be the condition of a person classically referred to, in some communities, as "enlightened." Every action of the enlightened is participation in an intrinsic practice—but of what community? Could it be other than the community of persons referred to above? And could it be, that the enlightened consciousness is simply conscious *as* a member of *that* community? Is this what is referred to as "transcendence": in which *every* action is engaged in as a ritual of affirmation of this membership?

3. Are there other fundamental practices? What are they?

4. It seems that the Language paradigm which Ossorio (1971/1978b) proposed as the fourth paradigm can be appropriately subsumed in the Communities paradigm. Is this in fact the case? Demonstration, not assertion, would be required to bolster this assessment.

5. Are there identifiable "forms of Community description," comparable to "forms of behavior description" (Ossorio, 1967/1981b), which are obtained from the paradigm by means of specifying, deleting, or substituting operations? Some prime candidates might be Family, Tribe, Organization, Mob, Religious Community, Hierarchy, to name only a few. There seems to be ample room (and need) for invention here.

SUMMARY

The Communities paradigm has been presented; some of its important conceptual links within Descriptive Psychology have been displayed; it has been used to re-formulate a few concepts and practices; and some lines of future investigation have been indicated. It is now up to the members to determine the status of the concept of Community within the community of Descriptive Psychology.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CONSCIOUSNESS

William B. Plotkin

ABSTRACT

An articulation of "consciousness" is offered which identifies this concept's relation to the subject matter of psychology as formulated within Descriptive Psychology. The fundamental move is to view consciousness as a feature of a certain class of behavior: self-cognizant action. The relation of "consciousness" to other fundamental behavioral concepts is then explored, most notably: awareness, attention, intention, self and self-awareness, "levels" of consciousness, deautomatization, persons, and language. Next, Jaynes' hypothesis on the evolution of consciousness is considered, and several consciousness-related abilities are discussed. Finally, the concept of "the *un*conscious" is briefly considered.

The concept of "consciousness" has as yet received little formal attention by Descriptive Psychologists. This is a conspicuous omission given the wide-spread rumor, allegedly perpetuated by William James himself, that consciousness is *the* fundamental subject matter of psychology. In the interest of developing a more explicit understanding of its relevance

for behavioral science, I will offer a conceptualization of "consciousness" that locates this concept within the framework of the "Person Concept." What we will discover is that the early psychologists did well to identify consciousness as the fundamental subject matter of their discipline, given the unavailability of formal articulations of "person" or "behavior." However, in the absence of the latter concepts, the concept of "consciousness" has suffered from many ignominious articulations at the hands of both psychologists and philosophers. Although it may be of interest at a later time to review these previous approaches to "consciousness," I will limit my critical remarks here to a single sentence (which makes it all the more polemical): It is hopeless and categorically misguided to represent consciousness as an entity or substance, a force or energy, a brain process, an information-processing stage, a "mental element"—or as an object *of* consciousness.

I hope to show that consciousness, in its primary sense, is a *feature* of a certain logical class of actions, and that it is very closely related to the concept of "person." However, there is, unsurprisingly, more than one way in which the word "consciousness" is used, and I will accordingly discuss some of the other uses in the course of this article, and relate them to the one I see as primary.

Before beginning, it will be best to acknowledge that, given my limitations of space and understanding, I can offer here only the barest outline of what I take to be a workable approach to "consciousness"; many loose ends will be left dangling, others will not even be considered, and several of the analytic points I make will undoubtedly strike the reader as irksomely sketchy. At the least, I hope to have stimulated a systematic consideration of "consciousness" among Descriptive Psychologists.

CONSCIOUSNESS AS AWARENESS

The most general and straightforward sense of "consciousness" corresponds to the Know (cognitive) parameter of intentional action (Ossorio, 1973). As Natsoulas (1978) put it, "one's being conscious, whatever more it might mean, must include one's being aware of something" (p. 910). In this sense, any individual engaging in intentional action is conscious, and any state of affairs that he distinguishes is a content of consciousness. However, in order to keep the various senses of "consciousness" distinct, I will adopt the convention in this paper of speaking of "awareness" when I mean this general sense of "consciousness." ("Nonconscious awareness," then, rather than being a contradiction, will refer to Know values that are not conscious in the sense discussed in the next section.) The contents (objects) of awareness may be observed real-world objects, or images, thoughts, feelings, etc. In the present sense

of the word, awareness is not limited to persons: *Any* intentional actor (roughly, anything we would call an "animal") exhibits awareness.

This approach makes it clear that awareness is not a force or substance—it is not locatable—but that "awareness" refers to certain facts about a certain logical class of activities: "Awareness" is logically dependent upon the concept of "intentional action." The contents of awareness, at any given moment, are the states of affairs distinguished in the behavior which takes place. Any empirical study of awareness could hardly help being the study of the intentional action of individuals.

However, further thought about the above formulation suggests an exception: What about those instances of awareness that do not appear to take place during intentional action, such as dreams, or thoughts during meditation or mind-wanderings? Dreaming may be the clearest example: Surely we are aware of images during dreams, but dreaming is not normally considered to be an intentional action (there is no Want parameter). The solution, I think, is actually quite straightforward and rests upon the identification—not merely of a type of action—but of a type of *actor*. To see this, first consider an instance of a distinction connected to an activity that is *not* what we would call an instance of awareness (even in the present broad sense): a machine or computer responding to a certain input, or a rose closing its petals in response to nightfall. In the case of the computer, we might say that its "behavior" reflects Know, Know How, Performance, and Achievement parameters, but certainly not a Want parameter: That is, the computer as such is *never* (never qualifies as) an intentional actor, although it can make distinctions (Know), be programmed (Know How), run through procedures (Performance), and deliver outputs (Achievement). Correspondingly, we do not speak of the computer as literally *aware* of anything (ever). Hence, it appears that we have the following formal rule: The contents of awareness correspond to the Know values (whenever there *are* any) of the actions (intentional or not) of individuals whose history, paradigmatically, is a history of intentional action. This would include those individuals we know as human beings and other animals; it would exclude vegetables, minerals, and the inhabitants of the worlds of physics and chemistry, and the products of contemporary technology; and it would leave it as an empirical question whether or not it included certain borderline cases such as living sponges. In short, without intentionality, there is no awareness, even though there *can* be awareness without intention.

CONSCIOUSNESS

The concept of "consciousness" articulated in the present section appears to be the one that corresponds to that which is on the minds of

Figure 1 . Self-cognizant Action.
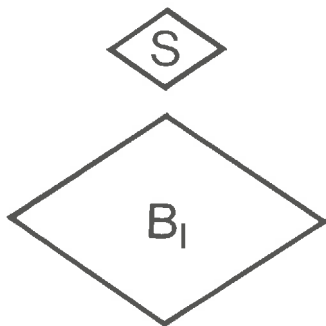
most psychologists when they speak of "consciousness." Just as the concept of "awareness" articulated above was seen to be a derivative of intentional action, the concept of "consciousness" is a derivative of a somewhat more complex class of actions—that which Ossorio (1973, 1969/1978) has termed "cognizant action." As a brief reminder, cognizant action is any case of intentional action in which the *concept* of intentional action is being acted upon (and thus one of the Know values is intentional action). However, to articulate "consciousness," I will focus on a special case of cognizant action, which I shall refer to as "*self*-cognizant action": an intentional action in which the person is distinguishing his *own ongoing* intentional action. (Note that to be distinguishing one's own ongoing behavior does not mean or imply that the person is necessarily or typically *conscious* of his ongoing behavior qua behavior, in the sense of "consciousness" articulated in this section.) Self-cognizant action will be represented as shown in Figure 1, where the "s" stands for "self", showing that this "s-diamond" in the Know parameter of the represented behavior (B₁) is the actor's understanding of his own ongoing behavior.

Paradigmatically, the behavior that persons understand themselves to be engaging in at any given time is the one that they have *chosen* to engage in, hence self-cognizant action is paradigmatically deliberate action (Ossorio, 1973), in which "intentional action" appears in both the Want and Know parameters. Figure 2 explicitly represents self-cognizant deliberate action.

Every behavior has, of course, an indefinite number of correct (equally applicable) descriptions. The individual's understanding (distinction) of his ongoing behavior corresponds to only one such description (for the moment, I am assuming his understanding is appraised as "correct" which is not necessarily the case; see below). One feature (parameter) of the behavior that a person understands himself or herself to be engaging in concerns the distinctions that are being acted upon—the Know parameter

Figure 2. Deliberate Action.
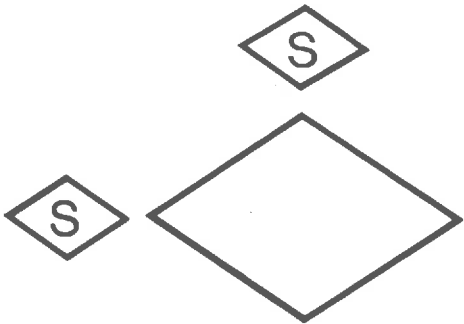
of the s-diamond itself. It is the latter "second-order" Know parameter that I will identify as consciousness. This identification is illustrated in Figure 3. The values of the second-order Know parameter of self-cognizant action are the contents of what I am here identifying as consciousness.

There are two points that need to be made immediately concerning the above articulation. First, the above is not meant to imply that a person *takes* his contents of consciousness to be a feature of his ongoing behavior rather than a feature of his world; the contents of consciousness are, of course, normally experienced as features of the world. "The values of the second-order Know parameter of a person's self-cognizant action" is an identification of the contents of consciousness, not an identification of the

Figure 3. Conscious Awareness as a Feature of Self-cognizant Action.
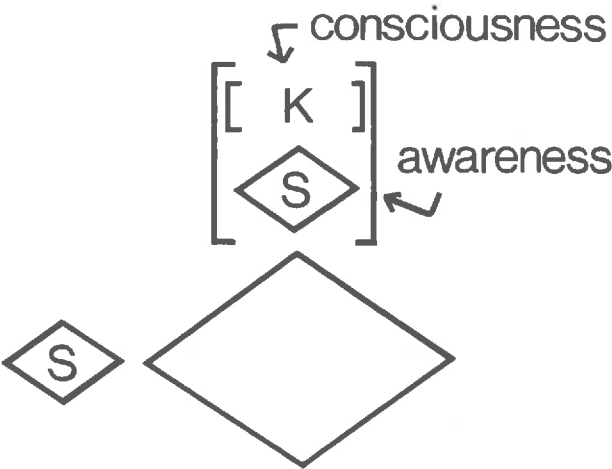
person's experience of the contents of his consciousness (which would involve a third-order Know parameter).

Second, note that the first-order Know values of self-cognizant actions are not limited to intentional action "descriptions." To the contrary, all higher-order Know values, whether or not they concern intentional actions, must also be first-order Know values, since all features of a behavior-description (including Know values) are also distinctions involved in the behavior of behavior-describing.

Third, I am well aware that the above articulation of the concept of "consciousness" corresponds to only one of several uses of the locution. Although it may very well be the case, I am not arguing that the presently articulated concept is primary or paradigmatic. What I am doing here is conceptual articulation, not conceptual analysis in the tradition of the ordinary language philosophers. Nevertheless, later in this article I will consider other concepts of "consciousness," especially those in which this term is used as a personal characteristic concept.

To return to my major point, I am identifying "consciousness" as a category term that encompasses those Know values of our self-cognizant actions which are features of that which we ourselves distinguish as our behavior. As such, the contents of consciousness are a subset of what I have earlier identified as the contents of awareness. Awareness encompasses all of the Know values of intentional action, while consciousness encompasses that sub-set that corresponds to the Know values of the behavior that we are *cognizant* of enacting. It is crucial to distinguish here and in the remainder of this article the concept of "cognizant of" from the concept of "conscious of." I am employing "cognizance" to refer to the first-order Know parameter (which necessarily includes all of the higher-order Know parameters), while "consciousness" refers only to the second-order Know parameter. Thus, when I say, as above, that the contents of consciousness correspond to those Know values which are features of the behavior we are *cognizant* of enacting, it should be understood that the cognizance of our ongoing behavior is generally taken to be nonconscious cognizance (i.e., non-second-order). That is, it is not paradigmatic that we are *conscious* of our ongoing behavior, but that we are cognizant of it—we nonconsciously distinguish or know it.

Another way to articulate the above ideas would be to say that the contents of consciousness consist of those distinctions which we distinguish ourselves to be distinguishing. (Again, this is not to imply that an individual who is conscious is necessarily *self*-conscious, since to be engaging in second-order distinguishing only requires that we are cognizant of our ongoing behavior, not that we are conscious of it; I will discuss below consciousness of one's self and/or of one's ongoing behavior). Notice that to be able to distinguish (be cognizant of) the fact of one's

making distinctions (which is an intentional action) logically requires that one has (a) a concept of intentional action (as distinct from mere performances and other nonbehavioral and nonintentional states of affairs), and (b) a concept of one's self as actor. These implications will be explored and expanded upon below.

To summarize so far, consciousness is here identified as the second-order Know parameter of self-cognizant actions. When engaging in a given intentional action, I am conscious only of those elements that are both (a) distinguished and (b) central to my behavior *as I* understand it at that moment. Included are those distinguished events whose occurrence are potential or actual disruptions of my ongoing behavior as I understand it (these will include surprises, mistakes, and other demands upon attention). Note that what counts as a disruption depends to some extent upon what I understand myself to be doing.

As an example of the distinction between conscious and nonconscious awareness, consider my behavior of writing the last sentence. At the time, I was most likely distinguishing (cognizant of; first-order Know values) my pencil, the pad of paper, the lines on the pad, the words and letters, the legibility of the words, the idea I wanted to communicate, the prospective audience, as well as the rustling of the leaves outside and the wind-chimes in the window, the pressure of my right leg resting on my left, and many other distinctions that were incidental or only functionally related to my behavior as I conceived of it at the time. However, the only distinction of which I was *conscious* was the idea I wanted to communicate and perhaps some global features of the prospective audience—since only these distinctions were of central relevance to my behavior as I understood it: viz., clarifying how attentional demands fit into the present formulation. Many of the other distinctions (e.g., of the pad and pencil) were necessary for the successful execution of that behavior, but these were not in consciousness, since I was not distinguishing my behavior at the time as, e.g., "writing on a pad with a pencil," although the latter would indeed be another applicable description of the same behavior (see below).

Heuristic Support for the Present Articulation

There are several heuristic bases for choosing the above articulation as an identification of the concept of "consciousness" (that is, when speaking of consciousness as a feature of behavior rather than as a personal characteristic concept, which will be considered below). Note that "heuristic bases" is not be be confused with "evidence" or "proof" that consciousness "really is" the second-order Know parameter of self-cognizant action. There is not a meaningful question as to what con-

sciousness "really is"; rather, the question is whether or not it makes sense to speak in the present fashion.

The first heuristic basis is the fact that, as illustrated in the above example, not all distinctions (first-order Know values) are conscious in the phenomenological sense. What we are phenomenologically aware of as the contents of consciousness must therefore be some subset of the first-order Know values. The present articulation provides an explicit and non-arbitrary means of identifying that subset.

Second, I have not been able to identify any contents of phenomenological consciousness that cannot be seen as second-order Know values of my behavior as I appear to have distinguished it at the time of the conscious contents in question. I have employed the following exercise. I think of an instance of a deliberate action in which I have recently engaged (for example, building a fire in the fireplace). Next, I ask myself (a) what I was conscious of at the time (e.g., the logs, their arrangement, wanting the fire to ignite effectively with one match) and (b) what I understood myself to be doing at the time (i.e., the description under which I had chosen that behavior). I then note whether or not the contents of category (a) can be seen as straightforward and sensible values of the Know parameter of the behavior described in category (b). Sometimes I may discover some contents of category (a) which at first do not have such a relationship to category (b). For example, I may note that I was consciously thinking about dinner while building the fire. But then I invariably recognize that my understanding of my behavior while building the fire, for example, was not just that I was building a fire, but also that I was planning a dinner at the same time (this was possible since building a fire is so routine; see below). Finally, I deduce what other distinctions I may have been making at the same time (e.g., the position of the grate, the dryness of the wood, the position of the damper, my own posture, the room temperature) and note whether these distinctions are as centrally relevant as the category (a) distinctions to my action under the description by which I chose it. They invariably are not. In general, such exercises have never turned up a content of consciousness that could not readily be seen as a second-order Know value.

A third heuristic basis for choosing the present articulation of "consciousness" is illustrated by the fact that in a single, relatively unchanging environment (e.g., a room of my house), the constant change of the contents of my consciousness appear to faithfully reflect the changes in the various behaviors which I choose (Want parameter) to enact at different times. (Recall that the behaviors that we choose generally correspond to the behaviors that we are cognizant of enacting.) When I choose different actions, I am conscious of different states of affairs (see below).

Fourth, consider the following case of non-self-cognizant action: sleep-

walking or dreaming. A person who is dreaming (assuming it is not "lucid dreaming," which is an entirely different story; see below) is not conscious—not conscious of *anything;* he also does not know what he is doing (literally), although he is making distinctions (he is aware), and he is typically distinguishing behaviors other than his own at the time. The fact of his not being conscious of anything follows from the fact that he does not know what he is doing—indeed, he does not know that he is doing *anything*. Interestingly enough, that one extraordinary type of dreaming during which we *are* conscious of the dream's content while it occurs (lucid dreaming), is, to my knowledge, unanimously identified by saying that it occurs when a dreamer becomes aware that he is dreaming (i.e., self-cognizant).

Fifth, it appears that the present articulation of "consciousness" is a more explicit version of many earlier formulations. For example, Natsoulas (1978), in his recent discussion of the fourth entry under "consciousness" in the Oxford English Dictionary, comments as follows:

One exemplifies consciousness$_4$ by being aware, or by being in a position to be aware of, one's own perception, thought, or other occurrent mental episode. (p. 911)

As with the present articulation, Natsoulas' involves a second-order awareness—awareness of one's distinctions. Many other thinkers on the topic have spoken in such terms as consciousness being "an awareness of awareness" (see the review and references in Natsoulas, 1978). There is one possible implication of these formulations, however, that I wish to avoid. This is the implication that we are not directly conscious of real-world states of affairs, but only of "mental episodes" or awareness. Of course, we can and often are conscious of our thoughts, intentions, feelings, etc., but we are also conscious of real world elements and not just our "perceptions" of these objects. For example, when I look at the pencil in my hand and become conscious of it, I am not conscious of a "mental episode" of a pencil, but of the pencil itself. The present formulation of "consciousness," as the second-order Know parameter of self-cognizant actions, does not remove us one step from the real world, but identifies which distinctions in awareness are consciously distinguished.

A seventh heuristic basis for choosing the present articulation of "consciousness" is the set of discussions found in the remainder of this article. However, in these discussions I will not primarily be arguing that the above articulation is heuristic. Rather, I will be simply *using* that articulation, so that whenever I use the word "consciousness" in the remainder of this article, I will mean this to be synonymous with "the second-order Know parameter of self-cognizant actions" (unless I say otherwise).

Thus, the remainder of this article is primarily concerned with the use and implications of the above articulation, not with its support. However, I believe these discussions will nevertheless be found to add up to a substantial body of indirect support for the proposition that it makes sense to speak of consciousness in this way   .

ATTENTION

Attention'' is the word that we use when we are referring to awareness or to consciousness as a domain within a larger domain. The objects of awareness are the objects of attention, and the objects of consciousness are the objects of *conscious* (''central'') attention. However, to speak of attention (or conscious attention) is different from speaking of awareness (or consciousness) since ''attention'' always implies a domain that includes the objects of attention as a subset. That is, to speak of P's attention is to indicate those features of a larger domain that P is discriminating, and thus ''attention'' is necessarily an observer's concept since it implies an observer, O, whose field of awareness (or consciousness) is (temporarily) greater than P's. However, relative to some other observer (or the same observer at a different time), O's field of awareness is simply *O's* attentional domain. Thus, when a given O wishes to contrast a possible set of distinctions from a subset of actual distinctions, he speaks of ''attention.''

Attention, Intention, and Behavior

Attention serves intention.

More prosaically, the contents of consciousness follow deductively from the behavior which we choose to enact. In particular, the contents of consciousness consist of elements (i.e., distinctions) which are central to the enactment of the (nonautomatized) behavior that is chosen (see the discussion, below, of ''automatization'' for instances of behavior in which the contents of consciousness do not include elements that are central to the enactment of those behaviors).

Thus, a change in intention (Want value) logically implies a coordinate change in attention (Know value), since only what is a value for the Know parameter can be a value for the Want parameter. Similarly, a novel value for Know provides the opportunity for a change in the value of Want. A change in the value of either or both, of course, constitutes a change in the action which the actor is described as carrying out, since the values of the Know and Want parameters are features of the behavior itself, not merely of states of affairs that precede and/or effect the behavior (Ossorio, 1973)

CONSCIOUSNESS OF INTENTION AND OF BEHAVIOR

Given the (analytic) fact that the contents of our consciousness follow from our distinction of our ongoing behavior which follows from our intention (our choice of behavior), it is of interest to note the empirical fact that we are very rarely conscious of *either* our ongoing behavior qua behavior or our present intentions to act. (We are typically *cognizant* of our ongoing behavior and intention, but not conscious of them). As an example, consider your own behavior of reading the previous sentence: It is highly unlikely that you were conscious of your behavior of reading (under any description) or of your intention to do so (although you were undoubtedly cognizant of both). Rather, you were probably conscious of what I was communicating, of the concepts to which I was referring, and/or of various points related to the one I was making. It is, of course, *possible* to be conscious of one's ongoing behavior and/or intentions, but it is neither necessary nor adaptive—and it is not particularly easy. Behaviors that require "full attention" (i.e., nonautomatized behaviors; see below) require conscious attention to the elements in relation to which we are acting and/or to the elements we wish to produce or acquire—not to the behavior itself or to the intention to behave. Indeed, a person who is overly attentive to his ongoing behavior per se is usually one who thereby trips himself up, and who we call "self-conscious"—he is observing himself as if from the outside. It is difficult to observe oneself act and to behave at the same time, with one exception: Interestingly enough, the class of behaviors which are easiest to perform self-consciously consists of those behaviors which can be performed entirely *non*-consciously— those "overlearned" behaviors which we can enact "automatically" without paying any conscious attention whatever to the elements in relation to which we are behaving. Examples are simple or routine movements like bouncing a ball, scratching an itch, walking, chewing, or even driving a car—anything that can be done "absent-mindedly" (i.e., without consciousness). However, it should not be surprising that this is so: it is a commonplace observation that there is a limit to the "capacity" of consciousness, and to be conscious of our own behavior qua behavior when that behavior is one which itself requires consciousness of its objects for its effective performance is often doing "more" than we are capable—hence, the often debilitating result of being self-conscious. (Parenthetically, there do exist "consciousness expanding" exercises, such as the Guirdjieffian "self-Remembering" Technique, in which the goal is precisely to be conscious of one's behavior as one is performing it. Without taking the space to go into the rationale of these exercises in detail, we may at least note that persons who regularly practice such a

technique and improve at it will not only be expanding the range of their attentional capacities, but also enhancing their present-centeredness with no loss of spontaneity as long as they are being observers of their action and not critics.)

In short, action which is paradigmatically human is the sort in which the actor is cognizant of his action but not conscious of it. However, we must be a little more careful before saying that we are typically not conscious of what we intend: If the contents of consciousness are the second-order Know values of self-cognizant action, as shown in Figure 3, wouldn't that Know parameter have to, logically, include the *Want* values (and hence the intentions) of that second-order behavior? Well, yes and no. First, it is always possible for one to be cognizant of one's ongoing behavior under a simple, undifferentiated intentional action description, which would leave out specific reference to the Want parameter. Second, we must distinguish the Want parameter of an intentional action from that of a deliberate action: If one is cognizant of one's behavior as intentional action, then one may be conscious of *what* one wants (i.e., the values of the Want parameter of the second-order behavior) but not necessarily be conscious *that* one wants it or what one is doing to get it (i.e., the behavior which is the Want value of the first-order behavior). (The reader is again reminded of the distinction between ''being conscious that'' and ''knowing that.'') In this simpler sense of ''intention,'' we *are* often conscious of our intentions. What we are rarely conscious of, however, is our *intention to behave*—to engage in a particular action. Indeed, it can be seen that to be conscious of that class of intention is logically equivalent to being conscious of one's behavior since the object of that intention *is* that behavior (see Figure 4). In other words, to be *cognizant* of one's action as *deliberate* action is to be *conscious* of one's *intentional* action.

"LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS"

As pointed out earlier, when we are cognizant of our ongoing action, we are cognizant of it under only one (or perhaps a few) of the indefinitely large number of applicable descriptions of it. We choose to be cognizant of it in the way in which we do just as other observers choose the description that *they* give of our behavior. However, it is not quite the same sort of choice, in that how I choose to distinguish my behavior is logically dependent upon the way I choose to enact it. That is, in the case of deliberate action, my cognizance (first-order Know) of my behavior follows from the description under which I choose (Want) it, whereas, for any other observers, the way they see my behavior may have little or no relation to the way I chose it (*or* see it).

One of the dimensions of behavior description along which an observ-

Figure 4. Being Conscious of One's Intention to Behave.
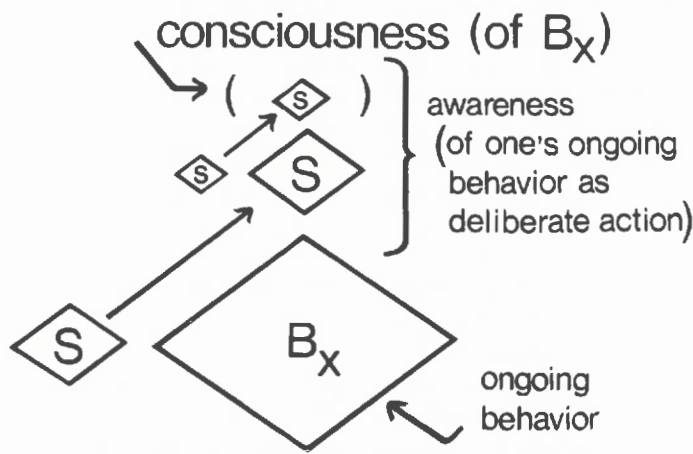
er's description of my behavior may vary is the Significance parameter. That is, a given description of my behavior may be relatively "higher" or "lower" on the significance dimension than another description of it. Figure 5 shows a description of a behavior that includes five dimensions of significance. Any particular observer's description of that behavior may only be concerned with one of these five "levels" of significance. However, if we assume that Figure 5 is a correct representation of that behavior, then any description of it at any of the illustrated significance levels would also be correct (applicable). The interesting point, of course, when discussing "consciousness," concerns the significance level at which the actor himself is cognizant of his ongoing action. It appears that persons are typically cognizant of their action at any given time only on

Figure 5. Symbolic Action Description: Levels of Significant and Levels of Consciousness.
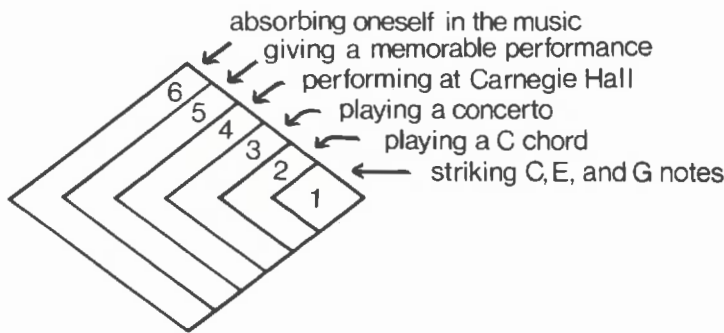
one significance level and very rarely more than three. At any rate, following the presentation above, we can see that the set of elements of which one is conscious follows logically from the significance level at which one is cognizant of one's ongoing actions. For example, referring to Figure 5, if one is cognizant of one's behavior at level 1, one would most likely be *conscious* of one's fingers and the piano keys; at level 3, one would be conscious of the melody and the music composition as a whole; and at level 5, one would be conscious of the audience, the feelings evoked by the music, and perhaps one's own virtuosity. Given that, for any typically human activity, there are several levels of significance on which a behavior can be described, and that the actor himself will typically "employ" only one of those levels, then at any given waking moment, there are several corresponding "levels" at which we can be conscious. Moreover, we should not be surprising to find that, for any given social practice (form of life; Wittgenstein, 1953), the relatively higher levels (up to a point) will tend to be associated with greater expertise, familiarity, sophistication, maturity, and complexity. In any case, the level at which one is cognizant of one's ongoing behavior will logically determine the sorts of elements of which one becomes conscious—the domain or level of consciousness.

The above should also make it clear how our intentions (our choices) "influence" our perceptions. Such mundane phenomena as persons being too preoccupied to hear or to understand what is being said, or persons misinterpreting instructions because of their expectations (both of which reflect choices of behavior which are incompatible with those of others) are instances of the "effect" of intention on consciousness. Moreover, any given real world element can be conceptualized and hence observed in numerous "correct" ways. The particular way in which we observe an element (i.e., the particular concepts we employ in its observation) will depend upon the way in which we are cognizant of our behavior, which depends upon the behavior we choose (which may depend, in turn, upon our cognized needs): "What a piece of bread looks like depends on whether you are hungry."

AUTOMATIZATION AND DEAUTOMATIZATION

Since the features of one's behavior that are only at significance levels below the level at which one is conscious are *non*conscious, one could say that these performance features of behavior take place "automatically." The concept of "automatization" is from Hartmann (1958):

> In well-established achievements they [motor apparatuses] function automatically:
> the integration of the somatic systems involved in the action is automatized, and so is
> the integration of the individual mental acts involved in it. With increasing exercise of

the action its intermediate steps disappear from consciousness. . . . not only motor behavior [Performance] but perception and thinking [Know], too, show automatization. (pp. 88–89)

Thus, for example, the virtuosos pianist, unlike the novice, is not conscious of the piano keys, his finger movements, or of the progression of chords per se. The development of expertise in any discipline would be expected to be accompanied by a change in the field of consciousness to a "higher" significance level. (I have placed the term "higher" in quotes since I do not want to imply a judgment of "better." The "higher" significance levels are *literally* higher when illustrated as in Figure 5, but this is because they are actually descriptions of the behavior in question from *more extensive contextual frameworks*.)

Essentially, the concept of "automatization" reminds us that many behaviors that, in earlier developmental phases, were enacted self-cognizantly, later become non-self-cognizant performance-features of more complex self-cognizant actions. The concept of "deautomatization" was developed by Gill and Brenman (1959):

Deautomatization is an undoing of the automatizations of apparatuses—both means and goal structures—directed toward the environment. Deautomatization is, as it were, a shake-up which can be followed by an advance or retreat in the level of organization. . . . Some manipulation of the attention directed toward the functioning of an apparatus is necessary if it is to be deautomatized. (p. 178)

Deikman (1969) comments as follows:

Thus, deautomatization may be conceptualized as the undoing of automatization, presumably by *reinvesting actions and percepts with attention*. (p. 31, original emphases)

Deautomatization, then, would be a case of a person performing a given behavior and becoming conscious on a lower than normal significance level of that behavior, with the result being the "appearance" in consciousness of elements that had routinely been distinguished but not *consciously* perceived. Interestingly enough, one of the ways to accomplish this is to become conscious of one's behavior *per se,* which, as we saw above, makes it difficult to engage in that behavior at the same significance level, forcing a shift of consciousness "downwards." Another technique would be to focus one's conscious attention on those elements which are central features of the behavior at the lower significance levels.

The goals of deautomatization, as discussed by Deikman, are (a) to counteract the tendency to perform given social practices in rigid routinized fashions, (b) to rediscover sensory qualities of observation, and (c)

to allow for a new sort of re-automatization—perhaps one that does not generate some of the difficulties of the previous automatization.

A LIMITATION OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Not only is it rare to be conscious of one's behavior qua behavior as it is enacted, it is also the case that it is *never* possible to be conscious of *all* of one's behavior in the following sense: Whatever consciousness one has of one's behavior, one cannot, logically, be conscious of that *fact* of consciousness. This can be more easily seen in Figure 6: One's behavior is represented by the contents of box B, and one's consciousness of one's behavior is represented by box C. Logically, there must always be more in B than in C, and thus one cannot be fully conscious of one's behavior while performing it. Moreover, since box A is less extensive than box B, one cannot even be fully *cognizant* of one's ongoing behavior.

Not Knowing What You Are Doing

There are at least two senses in which a person may be said to not know what he is doing. First is the case of non-self-cognizant intentional action, in which the person is not distinguishing his ongoing behavior under *any* description. Second is the case of self-cognizant action in which the actor distinguishes his behavior differently than does an observer—perhaps just on a different significance level; from the observer's perspective, the actor does not know what he is doing: They give significantly different, perhaps mutually exclusive, descriptions. This second category will in-

Figure 6. Limitations of Self-Consciousness.
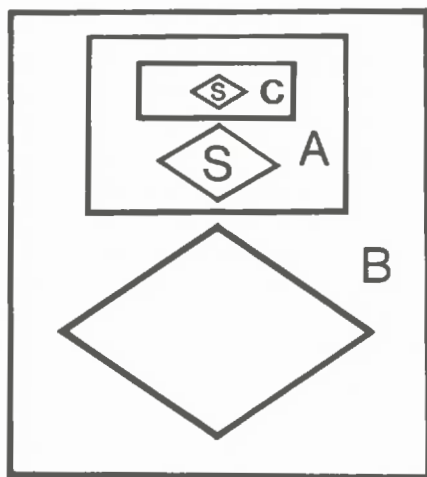
clude, but not be limited to, those cases in which the actor takes himself to be engaging in a behavior for which, unbeknownst to him, he does not have the requisite know-how. Another case is that of "unconscious motivation" when an observer sees the actor as having intentions that does not fit within the actor's self-concept.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND PERSONS

Ossorio (1966, 1969/1978) has articulated a concept of a person in terms of an individual who engages in a particular class of action. However, there is some variability in Ossorio's treatment of the precise sort of action which characterizes persons. In some places (e.g., Ossorio, 1969/1978, p. 42), he says that it is intentional action. In other places (e.g., Ossorio, 1969/1978, p. 75 and p. 79), he indicates that it is deliberate action. An examination of the concept of consciousness suggests that the latter formulation is to be preferred since it allows for a coordination of the concepts of "person" and "consciousness."

When defined as an individual whose life history is, paradigmatically, a history of deliberate action, a person is ipso facto a conscious being (again, paradigmatically). This follows from the fact that deliberate action entails a cognizance of one's ongoing behavior, and, hence, consciousness. Conversely, an individual who exhibits consciousness is necessarily a self-cognizant actor, and, for all practical purposes, a deliberate actor. (It is hard to imagine an individual who would be self-cognizant but not make choices in terms of behaviors).

A related point is that to be a person or to be conscious, an individual must have a concept of intentional action, since otherwise he could not be cognizant of his own behavior. One implication is that the appearance of consciousness in the child should coincide with the child's acquisition of the concept of intentional action. Furthermore, the concept of "person" should be found to be acquired along with the concept of action and with the appearance of consciousness. Lastly, the developmental history of the concept of "self" should coincide with that of the above concepts since consciousness requires a cognizance of "*my*" behavior. Indeed, as Natsoulas (1978) points out, one of the earliest uses of "consciousness" referred to

> . . . standing in a certain cognitive relation to *oneself*, namely, being a witness to one's own deeds, just as another person might be. (p. 910)

In short, without cognizant/deliberate action, there is no consciousness, no self-awareness, and no persons. One would, in fact, be justified in saying, then, that consciousness is the fundamental subject matter of

psychology, but it would be equally, and perhaps more, correct to say that it is persons or behavior (deliberate action). Most of the earlier approaches to consciousness can be seen as hopeless attempts to identify what is unique about human beings without the help of the concepts of "person" or "behavior"; not surprisingly, most "behavioral" scientists peered ever more closely at human *biology* in search of an answer. However, with a formal articulation of the concept of a person (Ossorio, 1966, 1969/1978, 1973), it can be seen that what is fundamentally definitive about human beings is not something to do with the fact of their being *homo sapiens,* but rather with the fact of their being persons. Many previous approaches to consciousness can be seen as categorically misguided attempts to identify consciousness as some sort of "emergent property" of human biology. Consciousness has been thought of as a "something" which when "added" to a human body produces a human being—hence, the hypostatizations of consciousness.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND LANGUAGE

Given Ossorio's (1969/1978) conceptualization of verbal behavior as $V = <C, L, B>$, there appears to be no reason why consciousness, as defined here, would be required for the occurrence of language. Awareness (Know), of course, would be necessary, but not consciousness since the uttering of a locution (L) which is the performance of a verbal behavior (V), which in turn is an instance of a class of behavior (B) that consist of acting on concept C, does not require that the individual have a *concept* of behavior—only that the observer who characterizes the verbal behavior does. On the other hand, *human* language does presuppose consciousness, simply because the concept of intentional action is thoroughly embedded in the use of such a language. Thus, an individual who can intentionally employ human language must be one who has mastered the concept of intentional action, and, hence, as seen above, be paradigmatically conscious. The language of a nonconscious individual would contain no locutions whose meanings involved or presupposed intentional action, and thus would be an extremely primitive language compared to what we know. (Perhaps the language of bees is such a case; von Frisch, 1962.)

This does not imply, however, that all instances of human language-use require that the individual be conscious at the time. To the contrary, as long as the person is not cognizant of his own behavior *during* a verbalization, he need not be conscious even when employing language that includes intentional action concepts—that is, "action language." (For example, consider sleep-talking.) However, an individual who was never conscious would not have acquired action language in the first place since he would not have a concept of action.

A possible objection to this is found in the question: "But why could there not be individuals who have acquired a concept of intentional action but who do not apply it to themselves and hence who are not conscious?" A brief consideration of this possibility will show that it is incoherent. Such an individual could not conceive of himself as an actor. He would have no self-concept and would not know how to correctly employ first-person pronouns. Thus, if he spoke of action at all, it would have to be restricted to other individuals' actions. (If he did not speak of action at all, he wouldn't be a user of action language.) But how could it be possible for an individual to understand "he is doing X" without being able to say and understand "I am doing X" (or at least "I cannot do X")? (Students of philosophy will recognize this as a peculiar variation of the "problem of *other* minds.") It is not logically possible: If an individual can say "you are doing X" to another, he must be able to understand "you are doing X" when others say it to him. Furthermore, there *must* be others who say that of him if there are others who recognize him as an actor. If there are not any others who recognize him as an actor then he would never have acquired the competence to act in the first place, since he would never have been a participant in social practices (Maxim 7), and, hence, he could not have become a language-user.

In sum, consciousness is necessary for the sort of action language that characterizes human societies. Indeed, one of the major uses of language is for the expression of self-knowledge, which clearly requires consciousness as defined here. It is interesting in this regard to note Natsoulas' (1978) discussion of two of the earliest concepts of "consciousness":

> the word *consciousness* did not always refer to the quintessentially private state or occurrence many now take consciousness to be. The word was used to characterize a kind of relationship between people, in which they were as confidants. (p. 909)

> The next concept of consciousness from everyday thought is an adaptation to the individual of the [above] joint, or social, use. . . . consciousness can refer to standing in a certain cognitive relation *to oneself*, namely, being a witness to one's own deeds, just as another person might be. (p. 910)

JAYNES' HYPOTHESIS ON THE ORIGIN OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Readers who are familiar with Jaynes' (1976) recent treatise on the origin of consciousness will recognize that the above discussion implies that Jaynes must be wrong—indeed, that his argument is incoherent. I believe that that is precisely what we must conclude. This is not to deny that he has written a fascinating book and integrated much extraordinary—if not controversial—data, or that he has made several discerning points about consciousness in his early chapters. Nevertheless, Jaynes' central hy-

pothesis, that language (as we know it) appeared and was fully developed before the appearance of human consciousness, is logically untenable.

First, let us be clear that Jaynes' concept of consciousness corresponds—at least roughly—to that which is articulated in the present article. He begins by reminding us what consciousness is *not:* it is not a substance or entity such as the reticular activating system; it is not mere "reactivity":

> In writing, I am reacting to a pencil in my hand since I hold on to it, and am reacting to my writing pad since I hold it on my knees, and to its lines since I write upon them, but I am only conscious of what I am trying to say and whether or not I am being clear to you. (p. 22)

It is not experience; it is not what I have here identified as "awareness" since Jaynes points out that it is not necessary for concepts (distinctions), for learning, for thinking, or for reasoning (in the sense of choosing, decision-making, induction, deduction, recognition, and some other forms of problem-solving).

Later, he speaks of consciousness in a way that roughly corresponds to that which I will discuss below as the concept of consciousness as "real world":

> Consciousness is an operation rather than a thing, a repository, or a function. It operates by way of analogy, by way of constructing an analog space with an analog 'I' that can observe that space, and move metaphorically in it. It operates on any reactivity, excerpts relevant aspects, narratizes and conciliates them together in a metaphorical space where such meanings can be manipulated like things in space. Conscious mind is a spatial analog of the world and mental acts are analogs of bodily acts. (p. 65–66)

Although I would say there is some misleading language in this passage, it nevertheless shows that Jaynes sees an important relationship between consciousness and intentional action. Later, the fact that his concept of consciousness corresponds to the one employed here is seen when he speaks of his *pre*-conscious individuals as "noble automatons who knew not what they did" (p. 75)—non-self-cognizant actors—and even more to the point:

> Man and his early civilizations had a profoundly different mentality from our own . . . men and women were not conscious as are we, were not responsible for their actions, and therefore cannot be given the credit or blame for anything that was done. (p. 201)

Thus, Jaynes' "bicameral men" were non-deliberate actors, but, never-

theless, were users of action language. As I believe I have demonstrated earlier, this is not a logically coherent possibility.

As a specific example from Jaynes' text:

> The characters of the Iliad do not sit down and think out what to do. They have no conscious minds such as we say we have, and certainly no introspections. . . . The beginnings of action are not in conscious plans, reasons, and motives; they are in the actions and speeches of gods. To another man, a man seems to be the cause of his own behavior. But not to the man himself. When, toward the end of war, Achilles reminds Agamemnon of how he robbed him of his mistress, the king of men declares, "Not I was the cause of this act, but Zeus . . . so what could I do? Gods always have their way." (p. 72–73)

I suggest that we cannot take either Jaynes or Agamemnon seriously here. Agamemnon's response was a way of denying responsibility for his act (as well as an apparently acceptable manner of doing so—for Achilles and Homeric Greece) but the significant point to see here is that only an individual who could see himself as *eligible* to accept responsibility could be in a position to deny responsibility (otherwise there would be no need nor way to deny it). Hence, Jaynes' own quotation from the Iliad refutes the very point he is attempting to make. Moreover, Jaynes' assertion above, that individuals saw others as agents, but not themselves, is precisely the notion that we saw earlier to be incoherent.

In summary, there cannot be individuals who use action language unless there are individuals who are conscious, as defined here. Moreover, both require cognizant/deliberate action.

There is one further point to be made about consciousness and language: Given that all *intentional* actors are "language" users in the sense that all intentional actions are symbolic (i.e., all intentional actions are the significance of their respective performances), then it is not language *per se* that is unique to persons, but rather the concept of action, its use, and its implications for consciousness, self-knowledge, and *action* language. In other words, it is not merely language that becomes extraordinarily more complex with the evolution of cognizant/deliberate action, but *all* aspects of life. Thus, although it is not wrong to say that language (meaning action language) is what "separates man from beast," it is perhaps more to the point to say that it is cognizant/deliberate action or consciousness that does so.

Another popular misunderstanding about language is that it is what we use to create our reality, or the related notion that language shapes thought. However, without much elaboration, I believe that the above articulation makes it clear how (action) language, reality, thought, consciousness, and action all *reflect* one another; how they are all so many perspectives on a single domain of possible facts; how they all must evolve, develop, and change together—each one "pulling" the other if

not varying simultaneously. It is our action that creates the contexts (the social practices) within which there are places for the particular sorts of elements that together make up the real world that is codified and reflected by our language of action which, in turn, reflects the domain of possibilities that we can distinguish, ponder, and be conscious of. All cognizant/deliberate actors are ipso facto action-language-users (even if they are not speakers) and vice versa. The ability to use some form of action language is no different from the ability to *know* that one is doing X *by* engaging in performance Y: self-cognizant symbolic action. In this sense, verbal linguistic grammar codifies only one portion of symbolic competence. Furthermore, just as it is not possible to have (action) language without consciousness, it is not possible to have consciousness without (action) language. Here it is important not to confuse speech with language. What I am saying is (a) that to have consciousness an individual must ipso facto be able to represent to himself what he is doing, (b) that if he can represent this to himself there must be someone else to whom he can represent it, and (c) whatever means of representation he employs would count as an instance of action-language.

CONSCIOUSNESS–RELATED ABILITIES

In this section, I shall adopt the stance that American consumer-psychologists have taken vis-à-vis consciousness, and ask: What good is it, anyway? Who needs it? What does it buy me? (Mandler, 1975; Norman, 1976; Posner & Klein, 1973; Shallice, 1972). (Note Mandler's title.) In line with earlier sections, we can recognize that that which we could not do without ever being conscious will be the same as that which we could not do without cognizant/deliberate action. (A second related question I will explore below is: What sorts of behaviors can persons—who are, paradigmatically, self-cognizant actors—not do at all or as well non-self-cognizantly?)

The consciousness-related ability that seems to occur most often to psychologists is that of planning—in particular, planning courses of action. Naturally, one must have a concept of action in order to distinguish and choose among alternative courses of action. Without cognizant action, we could not make plans. Norman (1976) comments:

> Some believe that conscious processes play a central role in guiding us through our activities. Conscious processes act at the highest level of decision making, initiating high-level operations and choosing between courses of action whenever there are conflicts (Shallice, 1972). . . . George Mandler (1975) argued that consciousness plays an important adaptive role for the human organism. He views it as a planning process, a mental "scratchpad" on which one can plan the possible results of future actions, allowing for more intelligent, reasoned choice then would be possible otherwise. (pp. 217–218)

The capacity to plan courses of actions corresponds to the features of consciousness that Jaynes (1976) has referred to as "the analog 'I' ", . . .

> which can "move about" vicarially in our "imagination", "doing" things that we are not actually doing. . . . we imagine "ourselves" "doing" this or that, and thus "make" decisions on the basis of imagined "outcomes" that would be impossible if we did not have an imagined "self" behaving in an imagined "world." (pp. 62–63)

Even more fundamental than the ability to plan, however, is the ability to know what we are doing. Non-self-cognizant actors may know the results of their actions, or may be aware of their movements and posture, but they cannot distinguish their actions as intentional actions—they cannot conceive of themselves or others as agents or doers. Accordingly, non-self-cognizant actors can have no concepts of self-as-actor, of personal responsibility, of morality, of justice, of duty, of freedom, of intention, or of reason. These and related action concepts (and their associated forms of life) can only appear with cognizant/deliberate action—with consciousness.

Self-cognizant action is also required for "internal dialogue," for self-awareness, and for the role of critic:

> Consciousness is closely coupled with the inner voice with which we "speak" to ourselves and which appears to analyze our experiences and our actions. . . . [Another] important aspect of consciousness is the state of self-awareness. By being aware of the courses of action that one is contemplating, there can be self-criticism and evaluation of the actions prior to their use. Similarly, while some activity is underway, or after it has been completed, this awareness allows for intelligent evaluation of the results and for suggested modifications for future actions. (Norman, 1976, pp. 217–218)

Jaynes (1976) speaks of an additional consciousness-related ability that he calls "narratization," and that appears to correspond to our concept of the "self-concept":

> In consciousness, we are always seeing our vicarial selves as the main figures in the stories of our lives. . . . New situations are selectively perceived as part of this ongoing story, perceptions that do not fit into it being unnoticed or at least unremembered. More important, situations are chosen which are congruent to this ongoing story, until the picture I have of myself in my life story determines how I am to act and choose in novel situations as they arise. (pp. 63–64)

Another capacity related to consciousness is the experience of time. It does not appear too farfetched to suppose that the concept of "time" presupposes the concept of "action," of "doing," since the concept of tense—of past, present, future—is intimately bound up with action verbs. (Our action language is verbal in both senses of "verbal.") It follows that a non-self-cognizant actor would be able to distinguish only here-now

elements. Perhaps this is the key to understanding (action) language as symbolic—in the sense of being able to *represent* states of affairs that are not here-now-present—in contrast to preverbal "signs" which can only *indicate* here-now elements and those "immediately forthcoming" (Langer, 1951).

The second question concerning the "usefulness" of consciousness involves the issue of what sorts of behaviors *persons* can enact non-self-cognizantly. The answer has been at least partially given in earlier sections: "over-learned" or habitual actions, and performance-level behaviors of symbolic actions. Behaviors that are not "automatized"require self-cognizance for their effective execution. There are one or two possible exceptions that come to mind but whose consideration would take us too far afield of the present discussion: namely, behaviors performed during at least some of the so-called "dissociated states" (Hilgard, 1977), and behaviors associated with self-deception (Fingarette, 1969).

CONSCIOUSNESS AS STATUS

A different, but related, sense of "consciousness" is often used to refer to the *domain* of which one is conscious in the above sense. This domain is generally referred to as the "real world." The real world corresponds to the totality of elements that a given individual *could* be conscious of. This totality can also be referred to as "consciousness" in the sense of the domain of consciousness. This "personalization" of the real world follows from the analytic fact that an element is a part of an individual's real world only by virtue of the empirical fact that it corresponds to a distinction that that person can make and act upon (see Plotkin & Schwartz, 1976). In this sense, "consciousness" corresponds to Ossorio's (1969) concept of Knowledge: the totality of concepts and facts that a person can make and act upon. The relation between "consciousness" in this sense to "consciousness" as second-order Know values is analogous to that between knowledge and Know. To know another's consciousness, in this broad sense, is to know his real world, or, better in this context, his relation *to* the real world—his place or status *in* the real world.

Consciousness can also be seen as a reflection of abilities: The set of elements of which we are conscious is limited by those actions that we are able to perform, those social practices in which we know how to participate—the contents of consciousness follow from the actions we choose to enact. A person's consciousness, in both senses, is an achievement of his actions, just as is his real world. It is in this sense that one speaks of "expanding consciousness"—expanding the range of elements that can be distinguished, expanding knowledge, expanding abilities, or, most generally, expanding behavior potential.

This broad sense of consciousness is the one that Natsoulas (1978) refers to as "personal unity";

> According to the fifth OED entry, consciousness is "the totality of the impressions, thoughts, and feelings, which make up a person's conscious being." (p. 912)

This sense of consciousness can also be seen to be related to Jaynes' (1976) concept of narratization, discussed above: narratization may be thought of as real world maintenance or as status-monitoring.

When we speak of "states of consciousness," we are employing the term "consciousness" in the above sense of status or real world. Thus, a particular state of consciousness corresponds to a particular relation to the world (Plotkin & Schwartz, 1976). This is why it is not paradoxical to say that one of the states of consciousness is unconsciousness: This is to say that, at the time, the person is not acting upon *any* relation to the world—he is not self-cognizantly acting. In general, then, an *altered* state of consciousness is an alteration in the person's perceived relation to the real world—a significant and temporary change in perceived status.

One last point about the domain of consciousness: It is, for the most part, equivalent to the domain of awareness. That is, those elements which can be distinguished are for the most part coextensive with those elements of which one can be conscious. There appear to be two sorts of exceptions, however. One set concerns the fact that it is possible to act on distinctions of which one is never conscious (e.g., some of the distinctions that infants act upon, which, by the time they become cognizant actors, are Know values only of behaviors that are at significance levels below the conscious level). The second set concerns the "repressed," discussed below.

CONSCIOUSNESS AS STATE

A third use of the term "consciousness" involves a psychological-state concept in which "to be conscious" corresponds to being engaged in self-cognizant action. A person who "loses consciousness" is one who is temporarily ceasing to self-cognizantly act, and typically ceasing to act in *any* fashion since the behavior of persons is, paradigmatically, self-cognizant.

THE UNCONSCIOUS

There are several senses in which the term "unconscious" has been and can be employed. I will only suggest four of them, and only with the briefest articulations.

The first consists of those present contents of awareness (first-order Know) that are not also in consciousness (second-order Know).

The second refers to those contents of knowledge not presently acted upon.

The third sense of the unconscious, closely related to the second, is a peculiar way of speaking of an individual's personal characteristics. This is the "dynamic unconscious": the "place" that many psychologists suppose all sorts of fanciful thoughts, attitudes, energy exchanges, cathexes, and counter-cathexes are going on, "behind the scenes" as it were. The most peculiar feature of this "place" and these "goings-ons" is, of course, that there *is* no such place or such goings-ons, which is not to deny, for example, that persons have motivations that they are not presently acting upon. Rather, my point is that in every instance I have encountered that psychologists have spoken of the dynamic unconscious, it is easy to see that what they are talking about is simply *the person* and his personal characteristics: his dispositions, powers, status, and states. The temptation to speak of these features of the person as if they were hidden happenings appears to stem from two related states of affairs: (a) Since the concepts of "person" and of "intentional action" are largely foreign to contemporary psychology, psychologists find themselves with the need to account for human "behavior" solely on the basis of efficient (mechanistic) cause and effect. Furthermore, since efficient causes must be events (i.e., happenings), then the causes of human "behavior" must be sought in either visible or invisible ("internal") happenings. Final causes (intentions) and reasons are ruled out of place. (b) Since the notion of a *formal* cause is largely absent from contemporary "behavioral science," formal causes such as personal characteristics (e.g., attitudes, values) are thought of on the model of efficient causes. Thus, for example, if a person is expressing an attitude by his behavior, this must be due to something going on behind the scenes, unconsciously. The alternative, of course, is to see that behavior is the expression of the person whose behavior it is, not the causal effect of processes going on in his body or "mind."

(A related topic that I will have to save for a future paper concerns the issue of precisely what it is that a person is conscious of when he is attending to dreams, feelings, and/or "random" thoughts while, e.g., meditating or falling asleep. My answer will be that he is attending to *himself,* not to anything happening anywhere. Clearly, this will require further articulation.)

The final notion of the unconscious that I will mention is that of the "repressed." Once again, the metaphor of energy blockage may be avoided by simply referring to a portion of the domain of self-knowledge that not only lies outside the domain of the self-concept, but which is incompatible with that self-concept, and which, on that account, cannot become conscious.

NOTE

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PART III

APPLICATIONS OF

DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY

WITHIN CLINICAL

PSYCHOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Keith E. Davis

These five papers, by three authors, reflect the rapid development of the clinical implications of Descriptive Psychology in the period from 1972 to 1976, culminating in the publication of Ossorio's seminar, *Clinical Topics* (1976). Several aspects of the conceptualization underwent a major development during this period, and these become major resources that are reflected in all of the papers in the section. The most important developments were (a) the formulation of status dynamics, (b) the elaboration of the emotion formulas, (c) the development of images and scenarios as conceptual devices, and (d) the formulation of general policies for doing psychotherapy.

The notion of status dynamics accomplishes some of the same logical work that "Being-in-the-world" does for the Existentialists and that "Life Space" does for the Lewin's Field Theory. A person's status in his place in the real world and as such the various statuses that he has codify or summarize his behavior potential. Status constraints are not, however, causal limitations but rather limitations in how whatever a person does will count. Because the status that one has marks what one is eligible to

do and hence how specific behaviors will count—both to one-self and to others—a change in status assignment has powerful implications for a person's behavior. As both Bergner in "The Overseer Regime" and Driscoll in "Self-Criticisms" show, one aspect of the treatment of excessive self-criticisms is to get the client to see that he is not merely the victim, but the active perpetrator of those attacks on himself, which leave him feeling depressed and worthless. As such a client becomes aware that he is indeed acting from a position of power, it often becomes possible for him to relax the unjustified or extreme self-criticism. Bergner suggests some useful images in accomplishing such a reorientation (e.g., "A good friend who will tell you;" "The good boss.") and both Bergner and Driscoll emphasize the use of humor to help the client see what he is doing.

And, one of the fundamental themes of Farber's "Don Juan" paper is the ingenuity that Don Juan shows in refusing to let Carlos depict himself as a victim. He affirms the strengths that Carlos has and works to get him to see fear as a sign of power not as a weakness.

The major implications of status dynamics for therapy are codified in Driscoll's "Policies for a Pragmatic Psychotherapy," but these policies are also exemplified in the specific recommendations that Bergner and Driscoll make in their papers and are made explicit in Farber's analysis Don Juan's method of dealing with Carlos.

Two policies stand out as cornerstones of the approach: (1) affirm the client and (2) provide reality contact. The former gets elaborated as: Treat the client as someone who already makes sense, has strengths and abilities, and is of good character. For treating the client in these ways is to assign him the corresponding statuses, and that is an important step in his viewing himself that way and acting accordingly.

Two other policies that may often have been involved in the practice of successful therapists, but which are not codified explicitly are the recommendations to choose anger interpretations over fear interpretations and the policy of challenging the view of oneself as a victim. Because anger involves self-affirmations it is more status affirming than fear interpretations. Explicit formulation makes these behaviors available to therapists as a deliberate action—as a move to be made when the circumstances call for it.

The second major policy of pragmatic therapy is that the therapist actively provides reality contact because he shares responsibility with the client for improvement. He does this by conveying information, by clarifying concepts, and by stressing the reality basis of emotions. A major resource in the therapists efforts are images, scenarios, and some of the other technical devices of Descriptive Psychology described earlier. These are elaborated considerably in Ossorio's (1976) *Clinical Topics*.

Images and scenarios are pattern or theme concept-types. "Images" are reserved for fairly limited behavioral or relationship patterns, such as the "Stern Overseer" or the "Hanging Judge"; whereas a "Scenario" is a pattern of interaction that exemplifies an entire life.

Having vividly realized behavioral patterns identified is to have devices that may be used to do any of a number of things. They may be used diagnostically (e.g., "What you are describing seems to fit this pattern?") and used to warn about consequences, to illustrate the implications of a pattern and to pick out a place for changing the pattern.

Bergner's "Stern Overseer" illustrates a particularly effective use of a larger image or scenario; for with it he is able to tie together the cluster of behaviors that typify obsessive-compulsive disorders. The whole pattern of living under the constant pressure to do the proper thing when the standards applied are those of superhuman perfection—all knowing and all powerful—and in which the circumstances do not count is captured by the elaboration of the stern overseer's coercive and harsh indictments of the self. Part of the power of the image lies in the leverage it gives the therapist when he shows the client that he is doing this to himself—that he is acting from a position of power but treating himself as the suffering victim.

Farber in his paper, "Castaneda's Don Juan as Psychotherapist," likewise shows the power of certain images—of Carlos as a crow, as a hunter, as a warrior and as a man of knowledge. Here the images are used to transform Carlos' view of himself as helpless and powerless.

Driscoll in his paper, "Self-Criticism: Analysis and Treatment," elaborates the image of A criticizing B by asking what A could be doing by doing that. The same question applies to B, and when it is answered for each, one has derived the varieties of self-criticism that Driscoll has identified. Where Bergner examines the implications of excessive self-criticism becoming the dominant theme of a person's life, Driscoll shows the variety of forms that self-criticism takes or the variety of ends that it may serve.

In Bergner's "Marital Conflict Resolution" images—many derived from Bach and Wyden (1968)—are used primarily to illustrate the pitfalls that couples encounter in dealing with issues between themselves. The notion of approaching the task as a case of exercising a mutual judgment about the issues is, however, a novel image for some clients, and it when combined with Bergner's didatic material serves to get them started in a new social practice.

The uses of images, scenarios, directive exercises, homework are ways of implementing one of the central policies—namely, that of the therapist as an active provider of information, concepts, and thus as a link with reality.

These five papers are so interesting and enjoyable that, as an editor, I am tempted to summarize and elaborate these points, but that would deprive you of the enjoyment of discovery. Two of the papers, which I happened to have in prepublication drafts, have already become underground classics around the University of South Carolina. In my judgment, this entire collection would provide stimulating material for a clinical seminar. We look forward to a regular section on clinical applications in future volumes of *Advances in Descriptive Psychology*.

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THE OVERSEER REGIME:
A DESCRIPTIVE AND PRACTICAL STUDY OF THE OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE PERSONALITY STYLE

Raymond M. Bergner

ABSTRACT

The individual with an obsessive-compulsive personality style is one who has instituted a characteristic type of harsh dictatorship over himself. This report explores the precise nature of this dictatorship and the reasons, both intrapersonal and interpersonal, for its perpetuation in the face of tremendous human costs. Finally, and most importantly, the bulk of this report is devoted to the delineation of a comprehensive therapeutic strategy which the author has found of considerable efficacy in helping obsessive persons to relax this self-imposed tyranny.

Shapiro (1965) makes the observation that the obsessive-compulsive individual functions as "his own overseer." That is to say, he has instituted an "ironclad dictatorship" (Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman, 1951) over himself in which he harshly and relentlessly issues "commands, directives, reminders, warnings, and admonitions (to himself) concerning not only what is to be done and what is not to be done but also what is to be wanted, felt and even thought" (Shapiro, 1965, p. 34). The purposes of the present study are (a) to provide a detailed description of the overseer regime which expands upon Shapiro's original delineation; (b) to specify its tremendous human costs for the individual; (c) to clarify some of the primary reasons for the maintenance of this regime despite such costs; and (d) to present a set of treatment recommendations for the psychotherapist seeking to help the obsessive individual to alter this self-imposed regime.

PROPAEDEUTIC CONSIDERATIONS

"Overseer" as a Behavioral Summary Term

The term "overseer" as employed in this paper is best thought of as an image which serves to capture and to organize certain of the ways in which individuals behave. It might also be thought of as a role in which the individual functions in his relationship with himself. Perhaps even more important than capturing the precise positive sense of this term, however, is a caution against a particular sense in which it should not be taken. The term "overseer" does not refer to any ego-alien "part" or "agent" (cf. the sense in which the terms "conscience" and "superego" are often used). Rather, it refers to *this responsible individual* behaving in this role. An individual does not *have* an overseer; he *is* an overseer.

Paradigm Case Methodology and Individual Differences

For purposes of this narrative the overseer will be described as if it were an either-or phenomenon; i.e., as if an individual simply either does or does not engage in the mode of controlling and appraising himself delineated below. Despite this mode of description, it is important to bear in mind that what is being described here is in reality an individual difference specification. Individuals vary along a continuum in the extent to which they engage in this sort of relationship with self, and what is described here may be best thought of as a paradigm case, i.e., a pure type which includes all of the relevant features.

Sample Size and Characteristics

The clinical descriptions and therapeutic recommendations proffered in this report derive from work with 27 individuals seen for around 700 clinical hours over a five-year period. Twenty-five of these individuals

were seen at a community mental health center serving a highly diverse population; the remaining three, at a university student counseling center. The 21 males in this sample comprise 37% of the total number of males treated by the author during this period while the six females comprise but 8% of the total number of treated females. Individuals in the obsessive-compulsive personality sample tended overwhelmingly to be white (100%), middle-class (96%), and well-educated (89% had completed or were about to complete college; 33% had earned a masters degree or higher). In 93% of cases, these individuals were either university students or were currently engaged in professional or other white collar work (e.g., teaching, computer work, low and middle management). Fifteen persons (56%) were married at the time of first clinical contact, including three (11%) who had been divorced and remarried; six other individuals (22%) were divorced and six (22%) were single. In this sample, then, the individual with an obsessive personality style emerges prototypically as a white, middle class, well-educated person who, whether male or female, is oriented towards a professional or other white collar career.

It has previously then been noted (Cawley, 1974) that individuals with obsessive-compulsive personality styles fall into two general categories. The first of these is the category of individuals whose public demeanor is that of a relatively obliging, compliant, "nice guy"; the second category comprises individuals who exhibit a much more arrogant, hostile, and interpersonally controlling face to the world. It is perhaps more accurate, as is so often the case, to think of this dichotomy as in reality a continuum. In any event, the individuals comprising the present sample tend strongly to fall near the outwardly obliging, compliant end of this continuum. The descriptions and recommendations rendered below are thus proffered as most applicable to this population.

THE OVERSEER: DESCRIPTION OF A ROLE

The distinction may be drawn between a person insofar as he is the *perpetrator* of directives and criticisms and that person insofar as he himself is the *object* of these. The term "overseer" refers to the individual in the former, perpetrator, role when the directives issued and criticisms rendered are of certain characteristic sorts. The purpose of this section is to delineate the various ingredients which, taken together, comprise the overseer role.

The Mode of Self-appraisal

Superhuman Standards

The individual *qua* overseer is a critic who adopts a certain characteristic stance. This stance is that of upholding personal standards which are

so elevated, refined, or forthrightly impossible in nature that it is impossible to live up to them. Personal conduct, motives, achievements, and relationships all continually and inevitably fall short of these superhuman standards. And, while the primary focus of this discussion is on relations with oneself, it may be noted that the set of standards imposed is almost invariably a two-edged sword which is wielded by the individual against both self and others.

As important characteristic instances of such superhuman standards, the overseer demands omniscience and omnipotence of himself. This is not ordinarily noticeable in any overt statement of personal standards, but is rather implicit or presupposed in the nature of certain indictments levelled against the self. Thus, such individuals would rarely assert that they are always responsible for the actions of others or that they should know everything; most would readily ascribe to be everyday bromide that "nobody's perfect." Yet closer inspection reveals that such individuals commonly make indictments of self which are intelligible as indictments only if the standards upheld are omniscience and omnipotence. For example, an individual might criticize himself for making an error in a situation where, given the information available to him, such a mistake was unavoidable (implict standard: omniscience). Another individual might attack himself as somehow responsible for offensive behavior on the part of his spouse or his child where such behavior is clearly beyond the province of his personal autonomy (implicit standard: omnipotence).

Negative Focus

In his role as critic of self, what draws the overseer's attention are deviations from superhuman performance. From the plethora of possible bases of self-appraisal, which include for the ordinary person both positive and negative aspects of the self based on reasonable personal standards, the individual *qua* overseer consistently chooses to focus on the infinitely varied ways in which he falls short of perfection.

Harshness and Injustice

In response to perceived failings in himself, the overseer tends to bring indictments against self which are very harsh and unjust in character. For him, the punishment characteristically does not fit the crime. Rather, the indictments tend to be of an overly severe and vindictive character. For even the mildest and most ordinary of offenses, he will frequently engage in "private self-degradation ceremonies" (Ossorio, 1976) as he passes the sentence: "I find you unworthy and ineligible to participate in life with truly worthwhile people; I find you not a coequal member of the human community."

Acontextualism

Whereas in a court of law, such considerations as extenuating circumstances, the physical and mental state of the individual, and other situational factors are taken into account as relevant to both verdict and sentence, the overseer commonly ignores context in the judgments he passes on himself. Superhuman standards again come into play as he (implicitly) reasons thus: "No matter how tired or sick I may have been, no matter how provocative my mate, and no matter the many other pressures upon me, I should not have lost my temper. In *my* case, circumstances shouldn't matter."

Bases for Action Choice

Compared with the ordinary person, the individual in his role of overseer to self has restricted the range of possible types of reasons for engaging in action. In common with others, he regards three kinds of reasons as legitimate and important. First, he regards ethical reasons in these manners. Considerations of right, of wrong, and of moral duty and obligation constitute for him legitimate grounds for action. Compared with the ordinary person, however, he was extended the range of applicability of moral considerations, and is well known for his proclivity to perceive moral "shoulds" as relevant in the most amazing array of circumstances (Shapiro, 1965). Second, prudential or instrumental reasons are of paramount importance to the individual qua overseer. The criterion of action choice here is the consideration of whether or not present activities will bring some greater extrinsic good in the future. Actions which seem to promise such benefit are selected, those which do not are rejected. Third and finally, reasons of social custom and propriety assume legitimacy and importance for the obsessive individual. Great attention is paid to conforming to societal and subgroup norms for what constitutes acceptable and appropriate behavior, and to engaging in those actions and postures appropriate to his various social roles (e.g., "father," "husband," or "boss") (Shapiro, 1965). Thus, in summary, the individual in his role of overseer to self places the requirement on all of his behavior that it must be moral, it must be in line with societal and subgroup norms and expectations of him, and it must at all costs be "productive," "constructive," or "useful" in the achievement of some extrinsic end.

What is most pertinent with regard to action choice, however, is not these positive reasons for action, despite the fact that they are so frequently carried to extremes. What is most salient here is what is missing. The overseer consistently does not entertain hedonic reasons in his choice of actions. He does not do something because it is "fun" or "enjoyable" or "pleasurable." Indeed, it has often been noted (Shapiro,

1965; Rado, 1959; Salzman, 1968; MacKinnon and Michels, 1971) that he suffers from a substantial inability to experience such emotions. Not only does the obsessive individual *not* act for such reasons; to a considerable extent he *cannot* enjoy to begin with. To employ a phrase often reserved for discussions of schizophrenia, he is substantially "anhedonic." Further, the individual *qua* overseer does not select actions because they possess any *intrinsic* significance or meaningfulness for him. He does not choose a vocation, for example, because it possesses intrinsic interest for him, but because it is the "logical thing to do given his talents," or because it will bring him some further good which he deems desirable. Again, as with enjoyment, it is accurate to say that this individual is substantially *unable* to find intrinsic significance in what he does.

Under the regime of the overseer, then life becomes for the individual substantially a matter of "going through the motions." The individual continually does what he ethically "should" do, does all the "correct" things from the standpoints of societal roles and mores, and is ever engaged in "constructive" instrumental action which he believes will improve his lot in the future (and I do not wish to join previous authors who seem to regard such reasons as totally without legitimacy). However, many of his actions are to a considerable degree meaningless and empty to him. They possess little intrinsic significance and they bring him little pleasure or joy. As one patient aptly described her dilemma, "I do all the right things, but there's nothing there for me. I keep thinking that somewhere along the line I'll get a 'big cookie' for all my hard work, but it never seems to come."

Mode of Self-control: Coercion

The healthy person must at time drive or force himself to do things. However, much of his activity is not so impelled, but consists in a natural, undriven participation in that which has intrinsic appeal or meaning for him, or in that which brings him enjoyment. To ask such an individual how he "makes himself" engage in such activity would be akin to asking an individual who has just completed a thriller which he "just couldn't put down" the question, "How did you make yourself finish the book?"

The individual who has adopted the role of overseer, however, resorts routinely and characteristically to *coercion* in order to impel himself to action. Far more than the ordinary individual, if he is to do anything, he must *make* himself do it. This is the overwhelmingly predominant mode of self-control and of action which he knows. He pursues this relentlessly for fear that he will become indolent, nonproductive, or even problematically impulsive should he fail to do so. Given the aforementioned lack of intrinsic meaning or of enjoyment which this individual finds in action, it

is indeed unsurprising that the overseer resorts so extensively to coercive measures. There is in fact little in which he would participate spontaneously if he did not coerce himself.

An important result for the individual of this coercive overseer regime is a continuous sense of pressure to work, to do something "constructive" or "productive," and never to let down. Attempts to relax or to engage in recreational or other activities with no utilitarian or ethical value prove futile, due to his relentless sense of pressure. The individual either returns to more constructive pursuits or has his idleness poisoned by a gnawing self-recrimination. As a rule the individual is very far from being aware that he himself is the source of this pressure and experiences the pressure as outside the realm of his personal autonomy (Shapiro, 1965).

SUMMARY

Overall then, the individual who appraises and controls himself in the manner which I have designated the "overseer" subjects himself to a most painful regime. His superhuman personal standards and continual negative focus doom him to a constant sense of personal failure. The harshness and injustice of the indictments of self which he metes out result in continual feelings of depression and a conviction of inferior, unworthy personal status in the human community. His emphasis on moral obligation, custom, and continuous instrumental activity in the absence either of intrinsic meaningfulness or of joy doom him to a depressing, alienated existence best characterized as "going though the motions." And finally, his relentless driving and coercion of self to work and to do something productive and useful at all times doom him to a very painful and constant sense of pressure and an inability to relax and engage in any manner of recreational or other non-utilitarian activity with any degree of personal comfort.

FURTHER CONSEQUENCES OF THE OVERSEER REGIME

Rebellion

Tyranny breeds rebellion. It is hardly a secret, in human relationships, that if an individual consistently coerces others, systematically disregards their wants and interests, and enforces this coercive regime in an unjust, punitive fashion, the others are likely to rebel. They may, if they are able, utterly refuse to comply. Or they may, if they are unable or unwilling to do this, engage in delay tactics, sabotage, inadequate imple-

mentation, or (at a minimum) an actively rejecting attitude towards the harshly dictated assignments.

Quite apart from his well-known sensitivity to influence from others, the obsessive-compulsive individual frequently resists even his own self-imposed overseer regime. He rebels. At times, the rebellion may be complete, in which case what is observable is complete paralysis with regard to some self-dictated action. At other times, the rebellion may be partial, resulting in endless procrastination, poor performance, or a refusal to care for the self-imposed activity. It is as if the individual *qua* object or victim of his own tyranny is forever saying to the overseer either "you can't make me do it at all," or, at a minimum, "you can make me do it, but you can't make me do it well, do it on your time schedule, or like it."

The foregoing analysis accounts in good part for certain (amply justified) phenomenological facts about obsessive individuals. Characteristically, they do report a sense of paralysis, a sense that, at times, even though they clearly believe they should do something, that they just "can't act" or can't "make themselves do it." A more literate patient related in this connection an identification with the lines in a T. S. Eliot poem, "Between the idea and the reality, between the motion and the act, falls the shadow" (in Drew, 1963, p. 242). Further, obsessive individuals often report a sense of tremendous inefficiency. They feel (and justifiably) that they expend a great deal of energy and time to accomplish what others do with far greater ease and efficiency. Finally, many individuals report that, despite such enormous expenditures of energy, the ultimate quality of their performance is far from satisfactory (even by ordinary human standards). For example, one such individual reported numerous occasions on which he had studied diligently for a tremendous number of hours, ultimately only to receive a grade of "D" or "F" on a university examination. This same individual, once he had succeeded in therapy in diminishing his relentlessly self-coercive ways, was able to achieve grades of "B" and of "C" in the identical courses with far less effort than he had previously expended to get the lower grades.

Maintenance of Inadequate Levels of Personal Differentiation

The obsessive individual is at heart a very undifferentiated person. For the most part, the use of this term in the present report is consistent with its use by Bowen (1966, 1971, 1976), and the reader is referred to that author's work for a more exhaustive treatment of the concept.

To be well differentiated is to have clearly defined certain very important types of facts about oneself, and to be able to take authentic personal action stands consistent with such definitions. (a) It is to have clearly defined, in the conative sphere, the nature of one's fundamental wants, likes, interests, and life goals. Whom does one like, whom love? What

forms of life participation, vocational or avocational, does one find intrinsically meaningful, fulfilling, and enjoyable? (b) To be well differentiated is to be clear about the nature of one's personal values, principles, and obligations. What does one believe to be morally right or wrong? What obligations and responsibilities does one have toward one's parents, children, spouse, and community? What are the limits of these responsibilities: where does one's own responsibilities end and those of others begin? (c) Finally, to be well differentiated is to be clear on matters of personal disagreement and on one's personal limits of tolerance. Is one clear on when one genuinely disagrees with others or objects to their actions? Is one clear on the boundaries of what one is willing to tolerate and not tolerate from others in one's relationships with them?

The concept of differentiation might be termed an "interface" concept. That is to say, it is a concept predicable both of an individual and of his social system. Thus, to say that a person is well differentiated is both to say something about him as an individual and about the clarity of the personal boundaries existing between him and other members of his social system. It is to say that there is clarity with respect to what exactly are *his* wants, interests, values, responsibilities, limits, and life goals, and what are those of *others* in his social network.

When it comes to differentiation, to use an old saying, "Actions speak louder than words." The criterion par excellence for determining levels of personal differentiation is not what the individual might merely *say* about his principles, limits, and life goals, but his ability to take authentic personal action consistent with his self-definitions. Is the individual able, with reasonable comfort and conviction, to specify his preferences and to actively pursue his coequal right to have these preferences honored in situations where there exists the possibility of a conflict of interest with significant others? Can he communicate and enforce personal limits regarding what he is willing to do and not do, tolerate and not tolerate, in such relationships? Can he act comfortably and with conviction on his values or is he easily corrupted in these by pressure to change from others?

To return to our primary concern in this report, the obsessive individual is one who is markedly undifferentiated. Emerging typically from a relatively undifferentiated family system, he has never genuinely defined himself on the sorts of life issues delineated above. He does not possess the freely adopted, integrated set of self-definitions which constitute what Bowen (1966) terms "solid self," and which brings with it what Erikson (1963) refers to as a "strong sense of identity." Beneath a facade of tenacious certitude, he does not know where he stands. If he were to abandon the societal conventions, moral codes, and social role definitions which he coercively imposes upon himself as guides to action, he would

be (and on some level knows he would be) a "leaf in the wind," blown about and easily moved by every social force impinging upon him. Lacking the sense of solid core self which comes with adequate differentiation, he must cling in a desperate fashion (often described as "rigid") to such guides.

The historical reasons for the substantial absence of freely adopted, integrated interests, values and limits on the part of the obsessive individual have often been described, and will only be touched upon here. Psychoanalytic authors (Cameron, 1963; Freud, 1972; Salzman, 1968) have attested that early in development, and particularly during that stage variously referred to as "anal" (Freud, 1927) or as the stage of "autonomy versus shame and doubt" (Erikson, 1963), obsessive individuals have had their attempts at self-assertive and autonomous action substantially stifled. These authors have stressed the presence in the family milieu of a harsh, overly-controlling, tyrannical parental regime which sometimes approximates in intensity that of the later overseer, and sometimes not. The mode of later self control which I have described under the rubric "overseer," and which they would describe as overly severe superego functioning, would then be seen fundamentally as an internalization of the previously external parental mode of control. A further determinant of the harshness of this regime would be the strength of the aggressive component of the Oedipal wishes. [This psychoanalytic picture of *the* obsessive-compulsive background should not blind the reader to other possible historical factors. "A person has a given personal characteristic if he acquired it in *one* of the ways in which it can be acquired" (Ossorio, 1969/1981, p. 33).] The crucial element in this account is that the child is substantially denied the fundamental developmental opportunities to define self freely on matters of interest, value, personal limit, and life goal, and to act on such definitions.

The foregoing paragraph is concerned with the *past* subjugation of self-definition by other individuals during the formative years. The adoption by an individual of that mode of self-appraisal and control which is the overseer regime substantially guarantees a *continued* failure to adequately differentiate a self. For all of the elements of this tyrannical regime are essentially inimical to the establishment of freely adopted, integrated wants, interests, values, limits, and life goals. The elements of coercion, harsh and unjust enforcement, imposed superhuman standards, and imposed action choices based on inadequately integrated ethical values, social roles, and societal conventions all conspire against increased levels of differentiation. In this regime, everything is imposed, little chosen; self is rarely consulted regarding intrinsically meaningful or enjoyable interests and wants; self is in rebellion. The individual *qua* overseer, essentially a bully ever dictating and coercively forcing self into

activity to which the individual has no established intrinsic connection, thus maintains the low level of differentiation which he has brought from his family or origin, and with it the underlying sense of personal weakness and insubstantiality.

REASONS FOR PERPETUATION OF THE OVERSEER REGIME

When a life style entails as much meaninglessness, joylessness, personal pain, and degradation as that which the individual *qua* overseer imposes upon himself, why does he perpetuate it? The answers to this particular version of the "neurotic paradox" (Mowrer, 1948) are obviously of the utmost practical importance for the psychotherapist aiming to help such individuals to attain more rewarding forms of participation in life.

Lack of More Viable Alternatives

To make the simplest and most obvious (yet often overlooked) point first, the individual who has adopted those modes of appraising and managing self which comprise the overseer role continues to do so because these are the best means at his disposal. These are the ways he has learned to appraise and to control himself; he is usually at a genuine loss with regard to knowing and being able to implement more effective and less costly ways of achieving these ends.

Satisfactions of the Overseer's Supercritical Stance

To criticize by finding fault is to raise oneself above. To act in the role of "that critic whose standards are so refined and elevated that all is found wanting" is to lay claim to a rather exalted status. The art critic, for example, who when all of his fellow critics are hailing some work, states that "Well personally, I found it rather flawed," in doing so raises himself both above his fellow critics and above the artist himself. The satisfactions attendant upon doing so are for most of us considerable, and are not least among those enjoyed by the individual *qua* overseer. Giving up the overseer role is, among other things, giving up these claims to superior status and these attendant satisfactions.

Reasons Grounded in Lack of Differentiation

In the preceding section it was noted that the obsessive individual is one who is very significantly undifferentiated. It was further noted that his relative lack of freely adopted, integrated, authentic interests, principles, and personal limits, and his lack of confidence in his ability to act effectively on these if he had them, result in strong underlying feelings of personal insubstantiality and weakness. For him, the idea of dropping his

facade of tenacious certitude is unthinkable, for it would surely expose him to the danger of being overrun by others. This state of affairs provides a multiplicity of reasons why the obsessive individual perpetuates his (otherwise painful) overseer regime.

Fundamentally, given this sense of underlying insubstantiality, other people become inherently dangerous. If the obsessive-compulsive individual could crystallize his life motto into a few sentences, he might say, "They will overwhelm me if I let them. They are inherently coercive and bent on my subjugation, and I am at heart weak, insubstantial, and ill-equipped to fight. Therefore I must constantly be on my guard, resist anything which smacks of coercion, and continually restrain myself from the temptation to let them know that I care or that I want anything from them." In this motto, one finds intelligibility for the interpersonal distancing, the vigilant mistrust, the sensitivity and resistance to interpersonal influence, and the absence of emotional expressiveness (to express oneself emotionally is ipso facto to communicate that one cares) that have often been attributed to obsessive individuals.

However, the continued maintenance of this stance vis-à-vis others requires a great deal of personal constraint. Tendencies in oneself to seek closeness, to drop one's guard and trust another, to cooperate with or to give in to others, to express caring or involvement, to let another know that one wants something from them—all of these must be restrained and suppressed lest the individual expose himself to the perceived danger of subjugation. For these purposes, the maintenance of that internal police state which is the overseer regime appears to the obsessive individual a vital necessity.

Further, the maintenance of this stance vis-à-vis others engenders strong feelings of anger and inclinations to act on this. The perception of others as out to subjugate him, the feeling that because of his weakness his back is to the wall and he must fight very strongly, the continual frustration of his needs for affection and intimacy: all of these engender considerable anger against others. However, the obsessive individual has powerful reasons not to act overtly on this anger. In his view, only negative consequences can ensue from such expression. Primarily, his fears are, on the one hand, that he will prevail but will go too far and be too destructive and, on the other hand, that he will not prevail but will be subjected to a humiliating and intolerable defeat at the hands of another. Again, powerful controls and restraints, the overseer regime, are needed to insure that self will not act rashly on the very considerable anger felt towards others.

Several further reasons which are related to the individual's lack of differentiation have already been mentioned in other contexts, and will only briefly be reiterated in this connection. First, if one does not possess integrated values, interests, and limits which serve as natural guides to

action, it makes good sense to *impose* a substitute set of these. It has to be one of the more intolerable of human experiences to have nowhere to stand and to be buffeted about by every interpersonal force that impinges upon one. Enter the overseer. Second, lacking intrinsically meaningful and enjoyable loves and interests, the individual is not naturally drawn toward any forms of life participation. Left to his own inclinations, the individual fears, he would do nothing, and this lack of "productivity" would be utterly abhorrent to him. Enter again the overseer, needed here to drive and coerce the individual to such ego-alien but "productive" activity.

THERAPEUTIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A comprehensive psychotherapy for the overseer regime is simultaneously a comprehensive psychotherapy for the obsessive-compulsive personality. In my experience, such a therapy can most profitably be pursued by placing a primary emphasis on two basic approaches. The first of these is very direct, and consists in straightforward attempts to help the individual to relax the harsh, tyrannical regime which he has imposed upon himself. The second approach is less direct but no less fundamental, focussing on helping the individual to increase his level of personal differentiation; the aim here is to ameliorate many of the basic conditions which have necessitated the individual's maintenance of the overseer regime. In general, improvements in either of these two spheres will have positive ramifications for the other. This interactive state of affairs notwithstanding, each of these general emphases will be discussed separately in the pages to follow.

Goal #1: Relaxation of the Overseer Regime

The author has found it beneficial to work with obsessive-compulsive individuals in a very direct way on the goal of relaxing the tyrannical overseer regime which they have imposed upon themselves. The therapeutic aim here is that the individual come to be less harsh, less unjust, less unrealistic in his demands on self, and less relentlessly coercive in his approach to himself. In this section, some of the therapeutic means which the author has found most useful for achieving this goal will be presented.

Helping the Individual to "Own" the Overseer Role

The great majority of obsessive individuals are not aware that they engage in those behaviors which comprise the role of the overseer. Rather, they experience the *effects* of their own tyranny, the deep personal sense of worthlessness, the depression, the relentless pressure to work,

etc., as *visited upon them*. In their eyes, they feel wholly *victims,* persons upon whom these feelings are visited by some ego-alien force which they are genuinely unable to control or to understand. Such a view is further reinforced by the fact that, as a rule, despite their best efforts, these individuals have been unable to find any ways to alter this very painful state of affairs.

Thus, an integral part of the therapeutic strategy is to help the individual to realize that he *is* an overseer. He must see, in the clearest fashion that he is *perpetrating* a certain kind of tyrannical regime, comprised of certain repetitive self-directed actions and appraisals, on himself. To use the classical Gestalt expression, the individual must "own" the overseer role rather than experience its consequences as the result of some ego-alien forces impinging upon him.

The essential practical point here is that so long as the overseer role is experienced in an ego-alien, "monkey-on-my-back" fashion, i.e., so long as this role is not owned, the individual is not in a position to act differently in this regard. The individual *qua* overseer, *qua* perpetrator, is where most of the power is; the individual *qua* object of this, *qua* victim, has far less. And, as in any relationship involving individuals of unequal power and status, attempts at change are best initiated and implemented by the ascendant party.

Obviously, there is no single way to accomplish this end. There are, rather, a host of ways. The following suggestions are proffered as a few among the many possibilities which the author has found especially useful.

1. Once it has been established in a given case that an individual has imposed the overseer regime upon himself, the therapist may introduce and define this concept itself and clearly articulate its particular applicability to and its consequences for this person. For the author, the overseer image will then be maintained as one central theme in the therapy and will as a rule be utilized again and again in different contexts until significant improvement is noted. The image of the overseer provides for the individual a relatively sharp definition for one of his core problems, points by its very nature some clear directions for change (e.g., "superhuman" implies "human"), and provides a central image to which a multiplicity of problems in living (e.g., inferiority, depression, sense of pressure, etc.) may then be traced.

2. In order to facilitate the sense that he *is* an actively perpetrating overseer, the psychotherapist may employ the strategy of suggesting to the individual that he engage in overseer role behaviors consciously and deliberately. He may suggest for example, either as a homework assignment or as an active exercise during the therapy hour, that the individual select some personal action or trait and that

he deliberately attack himsf for this in a harsh and unjust manner, ignore any possible mitigating circumstances, and lay down a super-human requirement that he must adhere to without exception in the future. (The exact nature of this suggestion of course, would be tailored to the individual.) In addition to the advantages of enhanced awareness and ownership inherent in compliance, the use of such directives presents further possibilities to the psychotherapist. For example, in employing them, he might incorporate a constructive use of humor and exaggeration to the point of ridiculousness (e.g., he might respectfully but good-naturedly chide the client: "C'mon, really make a federal case out of it!") or he might employ paradoxical instructions (e.g., the instruction to "Ignore mitigating circumstances," is somewhat akin to the old trick of instructing someone, "Whatever you do, don't think about a pink elephant.").

3. The individual may, with regard to the overseer, be systematically approached as one who is in power, not as one who is helplessly victimized. Thus, where the individual gives problem descriptions in which he is cast as a powerless victim, the therapist may shift the portrayal to one in which the individual is cast as an active perpetrator. For example, should the individual present the problem that he has been quite depressed on a given day, the therapist might remark that it sounds as if the individual is attacking himself with particular vigor on this occasion and wonder if they might explore this. Similarly, should the individual report an "unshakable sense of pressure," painful feelings of inferiority and ineligibility for relationships, or an inability to get over a paralysis with regard in some needed action, the therapist may revert to the corresponding overseer function which the individual is actively perpetrating, and approach the problem in question from this position of greater power.

Constructive Alternatives to Overseer Role Behaviors

If the individual is to move away from controlling and appraising himself in the overseer mode, it is helpful to him to perceive alternative modes of behavior. If he is to move away from coercion, but fears that he will become indolent if he does so, what alternative is available to him which avoids this particular danger? If he is to abandon superhuman standards, but understandably does not want to abandon every "should" in his life and thus become amoral, what can he do? If he wishes to soften his harsh, unjust, attacks on himself, is there some positive specification possible for alternative approaches? The following concepts are proffered as such constructive alternatives.

1. *"The Friend Who Will Tell You."*   Often, the obsessive individual who wishes to soften his overly harsh, unjst attacks on self for perceived

failures and transgressions is confronted with a dilemma. Like most persons who have gone to extremes, the only perceived alternative is the opposite extreme (Kelly, 1955). Here in particular, the perceived alternative is a total abandonment of personal standards and critical appraisal of his own behavior, and he finds this unthinkable. Unfortunately, many therapists, with their abhorrence of all "shoulds," are not of much help to this individual.

A viable alternative for such persons, and one which does not entail an abandonment of personal standards or responsible self-criticism, is given in the notion of "the Friend Who Will Tell You." Like the overseer stance, "the Friend Who Will Tell You" delineates a possible mode of appraisal of and reaction to one's own actions. An individual who utilizes this mode with himself is akin in two-person systems to a very honest friend, one who will call a spade a spade, for better or for worse, but would continue to remain a friend. He is like a friend who might say, "Yeah, that was a rotten thing to do; you really ought to quit doing that; but of course we're still friends." His reactions are characterized by justice, honesty, realistic standard setting, and a lack of hatred.

Most obsessive individuals, though not all, are capable of this mode of judgment, and in fact employ it routinely in appraising the actions or characteristics of other persons whom they like. Thus, an entrée to making such appraisals reflexive is to start by posing the question, "What if your friend did this (or had this characteristic)? What would your judgement of him be?". The "this" in question is, of course, some action or characteristic of the individual himself which is here attributed to his friend. Once this perspective is conveyed, the individual would be encouraged to actively practice this mode of appraisal both inside and outside of the hour. He would not be urged to necessarily *believe* his appraisals, but simply to *make* them, and then to "try them on for size" in the case of self. Once he has mastered a self-reflexive employment of this perspective, he has by definition more of a choice, and his choice can be emphatically pointed out to him. (Note: A frequent initial response to this approach is for the client to come back with statements to the effect that "What's all right for him is not all right for me." The author's typical tack at this point is to make the arrogance of this position clear and to portray the client's existential dilemma as one of choosing whether or not to "come down off it.")

2. *The "Good Boss."*   In stark contrast to the overseer is what might be termed the "Good Boss." The overseer is in fact a poor boss. He is precisely analogous to a boss who is insensitive to and unheeding of his employees' feelings and interests, relentlessly coercive and stifling of their autonomy, and harsh and vindictive in his interactions with them.

While he is effective to some extent, he also engenders enormous resistance and rebellion, immense ill will, and abysmal morale. In contrast, the "Good Boss" who is sensitive to and heeding of employees' wants and feelings, who does not impose superhuman expectations on them, who is not relentlessly on the backs of his employees, and who acknowledges successful performance, is typically a great deal more effective in enlisting the cooperative efforts of those under his authority.

Again, as in the case of the "Friend Who Will Tell You," the author has found it most profitable both to convey the concept to the individual, taking care to emphasize its compatibility with his existing values (here, productivity and self-control), and then, if the individual demonstrates an interest in this approach, to provide active opportunities in the forms of role playing and homework assignments. Mere presentation of concepts to obsessive individuals without encouragement to *action* can easily result in little or no change; they will *think* a great deal about the concept and *do* very little with it.

3. Charity.   This concept overlaps to some extent with that of the "Friend Who Will Tell You." However, since contempt is such an important issue here and since some obsessive individuals seem genuinely at a loss with respect to the concept or perspective of "friendship," there is often a utility for this second concept. Charity is defined by Webster (1961) as "lenience in judging men and their actions." A more pragmatic definition, at least for the purposes of the psychotherapist, is the definition of charity as "an exploitation of the non-invidious yet realistic conceptual possibilities" where judgment of one's self and fellow man are concerned (Ossorio, Note 1). To illustrate this concept, let us suppose that the wife of an individual is given to spending quite a lot of time on her personal appearance. The individual might, with equal realism, construe this behavior in a variety of quite disparate ways. He might see his wife as "vain" or "neurotic" or "overly concerned with external appearances," and thus a "rightful object of his scorn." Or he might take it that she is "feminine," that this is "just her way," and/or that her behavior arises out of a very human and understandable insecurity but is in no sense contemptible. These characterizations of her actions do not differ in realism; they do differ in charity as defined above. The obsessive individual in his role of overseer is invariably given to an exploitation of the more invidious conceptual possibilities in his relations with self (and usually, with others). Again, the imparting of this concept and an encouragement of the client to actively practice adopting a more charitable approach in his judgements enable the individual qua overseer to have greater choice in the matter of how he will appraise, and thus treat, both himself and others.

Discouraging the Use of Overseer Tactics on the Overseer

When the obsessive individual becomes aware of his harsh, tyrannical ways, it is only to be expected that he will react to these newly perceived faults in himself as he has historically to other faults: i.e., he will approach them as an overseer. Thus, he will adopt a hypercritical, self-hating and coercive approach towards his own hypercriticism, self-hatred and coercion. Such a harshly negative reaction is not entirely a bad beginning here. Certainly it is perferable to another reaction found in some more severe obsessives, total abjectness. However, like anger at one's parents, which at first serves the constructive function of enabling the individual to begin to differentiate from them, in the long run it is not constructive. Ultimately, the individual's stance in relation to his own overseer role must be a more understanding, charitable (but not condoning) one, or the individual finds himself in the kind of paradoxical dilemma described by Watts (1940) where he remarks that ". . . the hate of hatred is only adding one hate to another, and its results are as contrary as those of the war that was fought to end all wars" (p. 59). The overseer *is* oneself; vindictive rejection of the overseer is vindictive rejection of oneself. On its face, it amounts to a perpetuation of the precise problem.

How may the therapist help the individual avoid this dilemma? First, the therapist may, quite simply, clearly delineate this possibility to the individual. This is a therapeutic maneuver which incorporates both self-awareness (insight) elements and, to a certain degree, the element of "spitting in the client's beer." The obsessive can continue to do as he has been doing, but his new awareness may make it more difficult to do so with unfettered impunity; he has become too aware to continue doing so. Secondly, a further therapeutic activity which often proves helpful in this regard is to acquaint the individual with the very human benefits, satisfactions, and even past necessities that attach to his being an overseer. Where the individual's reaction may be one of contemptuous, enraged rejection of this aspect of self, the therapist's conveyed attitude is more the following honest but light-hearted one: "Now don't be so hard on your poor old overseer. You once needed him and he's brought you through some rough times. And he still does a lot for you, including giving you some of the few pleasures you're now getting out of life. You might want to change and stop being an overseer 'cause it hurts like hell, but, boy, show a little appreciation—he's done the best he's known how and hasn't done a half bad job getting you this far".

Summary: Goal #1

The first goal with the obsessive-compulsive individual, then, is that of helping him to become intimately aware of, and ultimately to relax, the tyrannical overseer regime which he has imposed upon himself. Recom-

mended approaches to the accomplishment of this goal have included (a) helping the individual to clearly perceive himself as a perpetrating overseer and to "own" this behavior (vs. experiencing it as ego-alien), (b) acquainting the individual with alternative modes of appraising and controlling himself, and encouraging active experimentation with these modes, and (c) discouraging the ultimately non-productive use of overseer tactics on the overseer. Consistent, systematic emphases are employed throughout both on realistically portraying the individual to himself as one who is an active perpetrator, and on utilizing change strategies which call upon the individual to operate from this position of far greater leverage and power. In an ideal therapeutic course, the individual will progress from an initial position of experiencing himself as a victim of forces beyond his control to a clear realization that he is the active perpetrator of these "forces" to an ultimate ability, operating from the overseer position, to relax his self-imposed tyranny.

Goal #2a: Differentiation: Action in the Interpersonal World

As related in the introduction to this section, the second general goal of psychotherapy for the obsessive-compulsive individual is that of helping him to increase his basic level of differentiation. Under this rubric is included both the degree to which he has defined a set of genuine, integrated wants, principles, personal limits, and life goals, and his ability to take effective action with other persons consistent with these self-definitions. What is logically predictable from the intimate connection between such differentiation and employment of overseer tactics is also what actually happens: i.e., any progress which the individual is able to make and maintain with regard to differentiation reduces his need to perpetuate the overseer regime. For reasons which will become clearer in the final part of this section, that component of differentiation which is concerned with action in the interpersonal world will be discussed first.

The obsessive individual would dearly love to solve all his problems in living in the privacy of his own mind. He would prefer that he not have to take any action which might leave him vulnerable or bring him into potential conflict with others—e.g., openly defining and actively pursuing personal wants and interests, delineating and taking action stands with respect to his limits of tolerance, strongly and clearly objecting to the actions of others. Exclusively rational therapies, where the entire approach consists in reconstruing self and world, or exclusively insight-oriented approaches, focusing entirely on self-understanding, have a special appeal for the obsessive in that they hold out the hope that by private, cognitive means alone his problems may be resolved. It is extremely doubtful that such hopes can be fulfilled.

The issue of personal power in the interpersonal world is of the utmost

centrality for the obsessive individual. At heart, his sense of self is somewhat akin to that of an anemic individual who is weighing his chances of success in professional football. He does not fundamentally believe that he has what it takes. For this reason, the goal of new and more powerful, self-assertive forms of personal participation with others assumes paramount importance in treatment. It is sustained, effective, rewarding participation with others, both confrontative and affectional in nature, which more than anything else convince this individual that genuine increases in personal power have been achieved. It is the author's experience that an explicit focus on and encouragement of new interpersonal behavior is essential to successful treatment.

Paving the Way to Increased Personal Power: Realistic Portrayal of the Individual as Already Powerful

It is certainly far easier to move from one perceived success, or from a history of same, to further success, than it is to progress from failure to success. The obsessive individual, who perceives himself both past and present as weak and ineffectual, and as having to go a long way to achieve personal power, is in the latter dilemma. Too often, to add to the difficulty, the psychotherapist joins him in this view. At best, this does nothing to mitigate the problem; at worst, it compounds it.

It is a serious mistake, both tactically and from the point of view of providing an accurate portrayal of reality, to view the obsessive individual as factually weak and powerless. (It would be an equal mistake to view the more arrogant obsessive as not entertaining severe underlying doubts about this.) For, where this individual might focus on a perceived lack of direct self-assertion and a feeling that he is pushed around by others as the bases for his conclusions, frequently he is both distorting these factors to some extent and eliminating from his consideration many further pieces of evidence relating to the accurate assessment of his personal power.

The obsessive individual typically has numerous factual weapons at his command for dealing with others. (a) Frequently, he has long since demonstrated that he can say "no," that he can refuse. And, while he might see himself as continually "knuckling under" to others because he initially *says* "yes," closer inspection frequently reveals that in the sphere of action he has in no sense knuckled under. He has, on many occasions, procrastinated, factually not complied, or in some way sabotaged the fulfillment of the request or demand of the other person. Thus, while he may have been dishonest, he has not in fact "knuckled under." (b) Further, where he perceives himself as generally "taking it lying down" with respect to perceived provocations from others, closer inspection again reveals that this is often not the case. What the obsessive is

looking at typically in drawing his conclusion is his immediate overt response to the perceived provocation, not at the fact that he has later in some way avenged the wrong done to him, perhaps in a rather severe way. One individual, for example, when his fiancee was half an hour late for a social engagement, did not take this matter up directly with her, but avenged himself by being moody, irritable, and preoccupied the whole evening, thus ruining the occasion for her. Where he perceived himself as "taking it lying down," the therapist viewed it more as a case of "revenge by overkill." (c) Many obsessives make heavy use of the very effective weapons of withdrawal, both physical and emotional, and rejection. In their hands, these become powerful weapons, especially effective in dealing with those who care for them. Typically, they are not aware of the power which they are factually exercising here. (d) Finally, many obsessive individuals possess considerable expertise in the intellectual sphere and are quite adept at making others feel stupid and ridiculous. In response to perceived provocations in other more personal spheres, which they are reluctant to confront directly, the more intellectually gifted individual will often wreak his revenge by making other individuals feel like idiots for having the particular political views, philosophies, or personal tastes which they do.

It is of the utmost importance that the therapist not join his client in denying or mitigating the power inherent in these tactics. However he might view the morality or the "appropriateness" of these, his client has truly underestimated his personal power and would do well to revise this estimate and to have a realistic picture of his considerable weapons and skill at their use. I am not talking here about condoning these actions or about mitigating their problematic aspects—only about addressing the client's perceived weakness and defenselessness by being realistic regarding these matters.

With each newly emerging situation touching upon the issue of personal power, the therapist has choices in how he elects to portray the individual to himself. Depending on these portrayals, the individual is given reason to see himself as more or less powerful and autonomous, more or less in control. And since it is generally easier to act from a position of greater power and control, realistic portrayals which so describe the individual convey (if believed) an enhanced ability to act (Ossorio, 1976). For example, let us suppose that an obsessive individual is reporting that his wife is engaging in a great deal of extreme, provocative behavior (e.g., overspending to the point of severe financial strain on the family) and that this individual has not directly communicated his strong opposition to this or the limits of his personal tolerance. The therapist in such a circumstance might portray this in different ways. He might, for example, take up the matter of the individual's "fear of asserting himself," "inability to set

limits,'' or ''difficulty with getting in touch with and expressing his anger.'' Or he might portray the individual to himself as ''writing his wife a lot of blank checks,'' ''emotionally rejecting her by refusing to communicate his genuine position and feelings on the matter,'' or as ''punishing her by giving her the silent treatment.'' The former set of portrayals characterize the individual in a weaker position (fearful, unable, not assertive); the latter characterize him as more powerful and more a perpetrator than a victim (writing blank checks, rejecting, punishing). Relative to the former portrayals, the acceptance of the latter characterizations conveys an enhanced perception of personal power and a comparatively improved position from which to act (e.g., it is easier to ''stop rejecting'' than to ''overcome one's fears''). Providing characterizations in which the individual is initially portrayed as more powerful, and consistently following through by working on the difficulty in question from this angle of greater leverage, considerably enhances the ability of the individual to change. Finally, to those who would be concerned about the apparently greater pejorative quality of some of these characterizations, what is true for the ordinary person is not necessarily true for the obsessive. More often than not, he would much prefer to be seen as ''punishing'' or ''rejecting'' than as ''fearful'' or ''unassertive.'' Assuming a basic therapeutic relationship in which the client is assured that the therapist is fundamentally on his side and not attacking him, the status-enhancing aspects of being described as powerful and in control will usually more than compensate for the more negative elements in such descriptions.

Encouraging Increased Self-assertive Communication and Action

What the obsessive individual typically engages in far too rarely is honest, direct, self-assertive communication to others and the taking of actions consistent with this communication. He seldom communicates clearly and firmly regarding his personal wants and interests where these might conflict with those of the other person, nor does he act in ways consistent with such communicated wants. He tends as a rule not to voice direct, strong objections to behavior on the part of others which is unjust, inconsiderate, or otherwise provocative to him. He frequently does not clearly and outwardly communicate the limits of his personal tolerance to others; i.e., he does not overtly take the position that ''this is where I draw the line and there will be consequences if you don't respect my limits,'' and then act consistently with this stand.

It is the comparative absence of this sort of communicative behavior and this sort of active stand-taking that importantly accounts for much of the obsessive individual's experience. It is an important determinant of why he perceives himself as so weak, ineffectual, and lacking in power. It is an important determinant of why he lives his life beset with so much

inner rage: failing to address wrongs and to get what he wants overtly and directly, he accumulates grievances; feeling so powerless, his rage assumes proportions which the confidently assertive individual rarely experiences in ordinary day-to-day living. Finally, it is an important determinant of his lack of self-definition (see next section), his sometimes vigilant suspiciousness (an endangered, powerless person must keep a sharper watch for potential dangers), and his need to maintain emotional distance from others (lest he be overrun).

For these reasons, a vitally important goal with the obsessive individual is that of helping him to engage in direct, honest, communication regarding his genuine wants, feelings, objections, and personal limits of tolerance, and to take action consistent with this communication. The author attempts to facilitate the attainment of this goal through: (a) a clear, direct communication of this problem and its importance to the individual; (b) an encouragement throughout therapy to think clearly about what current actions he most importantly wants and needs to take; (c) various behavioral techniques (e.g., role-playing with feedback, cognitive behavior rehearsal) which facilitate the ease and skill with which action can be taken; and (d) explicit acknowledgement and reinforcement of assertive communication and action when the individual engages in these. Inasmuch as an abundant literature already exists documenting techniques for the achievement of such ends (e.g., Alberti and Emmons, 1974; Bowen, 1966; Salter, 1949; Satir, 1967), further details regarding these will not be reported here.

Summary: Goal #2a

The psychotherapist, then, can help the individual to new and more powerful forms of participation in the interpersonal world by pursuing a two-fold strategy. First, rather than "buying" the individual's portrayal of self as weak, defenseless, and in danger of being overrun, the psychotherapist portrays him (and more importantly, *treats* him) as already powerful. The therapist emphasizes the power inherent in the individual's already existing interpersonal strategies and describes new situations in such a fashion that the individual's power is enhanced. Secondly, the psychotherapist works in a very explicit fashion with the individual on increasing the extent to which he engages in direct, assertive communication of his wants, feelings, objections, and limits, and on the extent to which he actively takes stands consistent with such communication.

Goal #2b: Differentiation: Increased Self-definition

With regard to the general goal of increased personal differentiation, the element of action has been taken up prior to the element of self-

definition for a particular reason. This reason is that the individual's historical failure to define his wants, interests, limits, etc., is partially but importantly intelligible as a "sour grapes" phenomenon. Like the fox in the ancient fable who disclaimed a liking for grapes on the basis of his inability to get them, the obsessive individual has elected not to define his wants and limits importantly on the basis that he has despaired of his ability to engage in effective action to achieve them. When his perception of his power to achieve these increases, there will be a predictable increase in his willingness to define his wants and limits.

There is of course a distinctly circular element here. On the one hand, continued successful action leads to an accrued confidence that one can act effectively and thus that there is point to defining self. On the other hand, defining where one stands on life issues and defining what it is that one does care for lends a clear directionality to the behavior of the obsessive individual, who is so prone to become mired in ambivalence and indecision. The ordering of these topics here reflects the belief that the issue of perceived power is in some sense more fundamental here.

Thus the third and final goal to be focussed upon in this presentation is that of self-definition. The obsessive individual badly needs to increase the degree to which he is clear on what he *does* in fact like and dislike, what he *is* in fact interested in, what *are* his responsibilities, what *are* his limits of tolerance, etc., rather than relying so extensively on the poorly integrated pseudo-definitions which he has legislated into existence. As has been the case throughout this account, there are many therapeutic operations for accomplishing this goal. And again, as before, the author will be relating those which have proven empirically to be most beneficial.

It has frequently proven helpful with obsessive individuals to relate ideas or concepts which both elucidate the nature of their self-definitional dilemmas and point a direction for change. Examples of such ideas and concepts include the notion of intrinsically motivated activity, the distinction between "being interested" and "legislating interest," and the futility of a life entailing all means and no ends. It should be clear from what has been said thus far that to present and to discuss such concepts is only a beginning—it draws a needed distinction, points a direction. Typically, much more in the way of self-consultation and of *action* is needed if the individual is actually to experience a way of life which entails, for example, considerable intrinsic meaning.

A second general tactic, and one commonly employed in a great deal of therapy, is that of pulling out from the warp and woof of the obsessive's presentations important elements of self-definition. The therapist reflects, questions, calls for clarification, and in other ways amplifies these elements, enabling the client to become more sharply and clearly focussed on them. For example, the therapist might pick up on a note of irritation

and disagreement in a client who is always proclaiming to his spouse that "anything is fine with me." Or he might reflect and thus highlight an interest mentioned in passing by a very alienated obsessive, and call for elaboration and clarification of the expressed interest. To cite a final example, the therapist might pick up on a client's veiled threat to leave his spouse, and attempt to draw the client out on whether or not he believes that some personal limit has been violated; if so, he might further urge the client to delineate the exact nature of this limit. Depending on the general level of differentiation of the individual in question, such statements of genuine interest, disaffection, or personal limit may be more or less difficult to come by.

A final general tactic which often proves beneficial is that of aiding self-definition by focusing on areas of personal conflict and decision. Like the proverbial rat in the maze who is "buried in thought at the choice point" (Guthrie, 1952), the obsessive individual in conflict has a tendency to become distressingly mired in thought about conflicting possibilities at the expense of decision and action. The therapist may be of considerable benefit if he can highlight such areas of conflict, and engage the client in active attempts to achieve a personal resolution. While there are many ways to accomplish this, a particularly effective technique for those obsessives who can and will try it is the Gestalt split-chair exercise. In this exercise, the therapist takes two chairs and positions them so that they are directly facing each other. He then directs the individual to actively debate the conflict with himself. In each chair he is to take one side (and *only* one side) of the conflict and to express clearly and congruently that part of himself which is on that side of the issue. He then shifts back and forth in what ideally becomes a very active, involved confrontation with self about this issue. Through this process, the therapist adopts a neutral stance in the conflict in which, in the role of "alter-ego" to each of the two "opponents," he reflects feelings, asks pertinent questions, calls for clear statements of position and, perhaps above all, continually inquires regarding matters of intrinsic interest and personal enjoyment in each pole of the conflict. This process of unambivalently "trying on for size" each side of the conflict and of engaging in such involved dialectic can result in some of the more rapid and well-integrated self-definitions possible in psychotherapy.

Summary: Goal #2b

In this section, the vital importance to the obsessive individual of achieving a clear, integrated, convicted sense of his personal wants, interests, principles, limits, responsibilities, and life goals has been reaffirmed. Three general tactics which have proven beneficial for the author in

pursuing this goal have been described. (a) In an educational vein, general concepts or ideas which elucidate aspects of his self-definitional dilemma and which point a direction for change may be imparted and discussed. (b) The therapist may, in whatever fashion, extract from the client's statements important elements of self-definition, and focus on these in ways which enhance their clarity and importance to the individual. (c) The therapist may help the individual to achieve clarity on important areas of life conflict and decision, carefully delineate the poles of such conflict, and engage in useful efforts to achieve an integrated personal resolution.

In practice, there is in the author's therapy with obsessive individuals a constant weaving back and forth between the two aspects of personal differentiation, self-definition and action. Each successful sequence, i.e., each occasion on which the individual is able, with conviction, to define self on some life matter and to take effective, sustained action consistent with this definition, is a step forward. If the individual is clear about his own success (and the therapist may at times have to help the individual in this regard), each such step provides grounds for increased confidence that he can act to some effect in the world and take charge of his own life. With each such success comes an increased sense of personal substantiality and power, a corresponding decline in the sense that one's integrity is endangered by others, and, finally, a dininished need to maintain that harsh, tyrannical, self-imposed police state which is the overseer regime.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NOTE

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POLICIES FOR PRAGMATIC PSYCHOTHERAPY

Richard Driscoll

ABSTRACT

Policies are presented as procedural guidelines for therapy from a common language orientation, termed pragmatic therapy. The policies cover therapist stance, affirmation of a client's already existing characteristics, assessment, and means to increase a client's ability to see and act. They have been synthesized from Descriptive Psychology.

Policies regarding a social practice are guidelines for action based on general considerations of the nature of the social practice, the desired objectives, and the means by which the desired objectives are best achieved. Since a policy is intended to apply across cases, it is ordinarily to be implemented without the need for further rationale specific to individual circumstances. Circumstances, however, do sometimes provide reasons against following the policy. Thus, one implements a policy unless specific circumstances provide better reasons for doing otherwise.

The adoption of policies, where they are adequate and reasonable, generally gives one a good chance of attaining a desired outcome from any specific intervention.

I have synthesized the following psychotherapy policies from Descriptive Psychology (see especially Ossorio, 1976). These are important, but do not constitute a final or exhaustive list of psychotherapy policies.

1. *Be on the client's side*. Therapy is done for the benefit of the client, not the therapist, society, etc.
2. *Be the client's ally*. Don't be an adversary. Maintain your own status through non-competitive ways of being. Avoid one-upmanship and status contests. Active involvement is needed—neutrality and passivity are insufficient.
3. *Affirm the client's strengths*. Clients often underestimate and misunderstand their positive characteristics. As much as possible, treat the client as someone who already makes sense, has strengths and abilities, and is of good character. Being authentically treated in these ways gives the client that status, and is an important step in his seeing himself that way and acting accordingly.
   a. *Legitimize*. Show the client the sense that he does make. Actions based on misunderstandings make sense in the light of such misunderstandings; unusual personal experiences or conceptual limitations may account for reaching misunderstandings; circumstances may account for otherwise confusing intentions and actions. Legitimizing contrasts with making excuses, causal interpretations, or merely telling the client he makes sense.
   b. *Decriminalize*. Interpret client actions and characteristics in ways which may be accepted by the client. A client's view of himself as simply immoral or despicable should be challenged. Where good intentions are present despite failures, emphasize the intentions. Where a client allows others to undermine or degrade him, outline and challenge such influences.
   c. *Choose in-charge interpretations*. See the client as someone already in control of his actions, who is successful in some important ways.
   d. *Choose anger interpretations*. Anger involves strength, self-affirmation, and satisfactions, and is more amenable to conscious control. Fear involves weakness and victimization, especially where the danger is not substantial and realistic. Therefore, choose anger over fear interpretations in ambiguous situations where you have a choice.

e. *Challenge the victim ideology.* A client may present himself as a victim to avoid responsibility or gain sympathy as an underdog. Deal instead with the client's reasons for the act.

f. *Treat the client as a person.* Use person concepts familiar in ordinary language terms, such as intentions, reasons, wants, understanding, know-how, satisfaction, and so on. Avoid using theoretical terminologies, and treating the client merely as a neurophysiological entity or a theoretical construct.

4. *Assess what matters.* Focus on what may be put to practical use, including personal limitations, troublesome personal characteristics and relationships, as well as areas of strength.

5. *Begin with simple interpretations.* Move to elaborations and further complexities as additional leverage is needed.

6. *Begin by affirming the client.* Avoid pejorative or unfavorable character assessments as primary accounts of personal difficulties. Present unfavorable interpretations of personal characteristics later, as possibilities or as completions of the whole picture.

7. *Don't make things up.* Assessments should concern what actually is the case. Emphasize the particulars of the individual, rather than speculations and theory.

8. *Don't expect the client to be somebody else.* Realize that the client's restrictions are often stubborn and may survive your initial or most obvious solutions. Use failure to progress as a means to further understand the problem. Elaborate or alter conceptualization and treatment strategies as necessary. Avoid or correct unproductive feelings of frustration or inadequacy as a therapist. Avoid angry, accusatory, and pejorative stances with your client. Avoid abdicating responsibility for client progress.

9. *Provide.* The therapist actively shares responsibility for client improvement. Provide help for the client to overcome limitations due to particular inabilities to act, involving errors or deficits in the client's knowledge, concepts, values, and skills. Address such deficits, as outlined below.

a. *Convey information.* Correct errors and encourage fuller understanding of the real world. Emphasize practical knowledge, such as actual and potential circumstances, relationships, status, and ways of being. Illustrate, support, restate, and deal with objections, so that the client may understand the information fully, rather than merely hear it.

b. *Clarify concepts.* It is important the client has the ability to see an issue directly, rather than merely taking your own or others' word for it. Introduce and apply distinctions which the client

can see and use himself. Use common language; illustrate; refer to the familiar. Legitimize misperceptions, so the client sees where he is going wrong. Distinguish what is and is not relevant. Resolve paradox and confusion.

c. *Use what is important to the client.* Assess the client's major motivations and values, and present what he needs to see or do in ways that make use of, rather than contradict, what counts. Generally, values change slowly; motivational changes in particular circumstances are made by appealing to what already matters to a person.

10. *Deal with the reality basis of emotions.* Fear and anxiety are related to perceived real-world threat or danger; anger, to provocation; guilt, to wrongdoing. The client needs to deal constructively with the circumstances generating the emotion. It is important for the therapist to understand that this does not require that the client express or necessarily even be able to acknowledge the feeling.

11. *Avoid coercion.* Coercion elicits resistance; a client's resistance means that he sees the therapist as coercive. Client resistance undermines the therapeutic alliance and interferes with common (non-paradoxical) means of attaining progress. When resistance does appear, assess what you are saying or doing which could be seen as coercive. Redescribe interpretations in non-coercive ways, bypass defenses, or leave the issue until later. When intentions are unacceptable to the client, use activity descriptions (which specifically omit intentions). Negotiate differences of opinion with the client, *unless* you choose to use resistance as a paradoxical strategy to impel the client to constructive action.

12. *If it works, don't fix it.* Do not introduce uncertainties into areas which are already appropriate and functional.

The above policies frequently overlap. They cover: affirming the client as he already is, assessing problems, and increasing abilities to see and act. Together, they suggest a general way of being with clients, which is fundamental to pragmatic therapy. Some of these policies may feel natural and obvious; others may require attention and supervised experience. In my judgment, therapy proceeds faster and with better results when such policies become naturally a part of one's approach to therapy.

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CASTANEDA'S DON JUAN AS PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Allan Farber

ABSTRACT

This paper examines Carlos Castaneda's early reports of his apprenticeship to the Yaqui Indian sorcerer, don Juan, as an analogue to psychotherapy. A review of the content and method of don Juan's teachings highlights a series of theoretical and technical considerations relevant to psychotherapy. In this context, this paper outlines the rudiments of a non-pejorative understanding of so-called neurotic behavior; also, it articulates and provides the rationale for several general therapeutic policies which might form the basis for a coherent approach to the practice of psychotherapy.

"When you were born into this world, a new possibility was born with you."

Nikos Kazantzakis

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is not intended to demonstrate that don Juan's teachings can be reduced to traditional psychotherapy concepts. They cannot. Nor does it undertake to do comprehensive justice to don Juan's art. Space, and understanding, do not allow for this. Rather, as don Juan ushers Carlos Castaneda to a new conception of himself, and of the world, he touches upon the psychotherapist's ground. Tracking don Juan through this territory, and following him beyond it, opens a new horizon for psychotherapy.

Prevailing models of psychological functioning riddle us with inevitable conflict and irrationality. Or just as bad, they portray us as puppets to external controlling variables—and then console us that at least we can learn to pull our own strings. We have come to very unfortunate ways of thinking about our clients and, inevitably, ourselves. This paper articulates the rudiments of a reasonable and non-pejorative description of so-called neurotic behavior (Ossorio, 1976).

In the shadow of these prevailing models, it is no wonder we quake—hoping only for "adequate functioning." Our clients are rarely encouraged to conceive the full prospect of their own greatness; it is not surprising that so few achieve it. It is a commentary on the present state of the behavioral sciences, and a sad one, that one has to look outside of the field entirely to find the kind of affirmation of man's possibilities which don Juan both articulates and embodies. It is a sad commentary that we relegate greatness to the realms of magic and metaphor.

> For me the ideas of being a warrior and a man of knowledge, with the eventual hope of being able to stop the world and see, have been most applicable. They have given me peace and confidence in my ability to control my life. At the time I met don Juan I had very little personal power. My life had been very erratic. I had come a long way from my birthplace in Brazil. Outwardly I was aggressive and cocky, but within I was indecisive and unsure of myself. I was always making excuses for myself. Don Juan once accused me of being a professional child because I was so full of self-pity. I felt like a leaf in the wind. Like most intellectuals, my back was against the wall. I had no place to go. I couldn't see any way of life that really excited me. I thought all I could do was make a mature adjustment to a life of boredom or find ever more complex forms of entertainment such as the use of psychedelics and pot and sexual adventures. All of this was exaggerated by my habit of introspection. I was always looking within and talking to myself. The inner dialogue seldom stopped. Don Juan turned my eyes outward and taught me how to see the magnificence of the world and how to accumulate personal power. (Keen, 1972, p. 98)

I.

All these questions take as real the very illusion which constitutes the actual problem, but what is the *guru* or therapist to do? . . . Almost the only thing the *guru* or therapist can do is to persuade the individual to act upon his false premise in certain

consistent directions until he sees his mistake. . . . For this, as we have seen, was the essential technique of liberation: to encourage the student to explore his false premises consistently—to the end. (Watts, 1969, pp. 107, 147–148)

It was the promise of personal power, above all, which intrigued Carlos Castaneda. Blundering and uncertain at every turn of his life, the experience of his own power always seemed to elude him. His long apprenticeship to the Yaqui Indian sorcerer, don Juan, was raised upon this very question: "How does a man acquire personal power?" To answer this question directly, there is only one possible reply: "One acquires personal power by no longer raising the question—no longer calling one's power into question in the first place." However, once such a question has taken hold, straightforward answers do not suffice. The only sufficient answer is actually to *transform the questioner* such that his experience of power is no longer in question. When asked by a psychiatrist how he cured neurotic people, a Zen master is reported to have replied: "I trap them! . . . I get them to where they can't ask any more questions!" (Watts, 1969, p. 40).

In his opening therapeutic move, don Juan masterfully mirrors Carlos' question by posing a riddle of his own. In doing this, he initiates a counter-game which has the form of a therapeutic double-bind. As he and Carlos sit on the small porch of don Juan's house, he instructs Carlos to 'find his own spot":

I waited for him to explain what he meant by a "spot," but he made no overt attempt to elucidate the point. I thought that perhaps he meant that I should change positions, so I got up and sat closer to him. He protested my movement and clearly emphasized that a spot meant a place where a man could feel naturally happy and strong. He patted the place where he sat and said it was his own spot, adding that he had posed a riddle I had to solve by myself without any further deliberation. (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 14)

This riddle, akin to a Zen koan, is a restatement—indeed, a caricature—of Carlos' original question. Don Juan is instructing Carlos to find happiness and strength, but such an instruction is a paradox. The behavior which don Juan is demanding from Carlos can, by its very nature, only be spontaneous. Even Carlos could sense the impossibility of his situation:

What he had posed as a problem to be solved was certainly a riddle. I had no idea how to begin or even what he had in mind. Several times I asked for a clue, or at least a hint, as to how to proceed in locating a point where I felt happy and strong. I insisted and argued that I had no idea what he really meant because I couldn't conceive the problem. (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 14)

Had Carlos only been willing to accept his own conclusion—that such a riddle posed a false and insoluble problem—the apprenticeship could

have come to completion on that Arizona bordertown porch with its first lesson. Instead, Carlos continued searching for his spot, finally becoming exhausted and falling asleep.

While the questions which Carlos asks may be contradictory, the fact that he is asking them is not. Carlos comes to don Juan, just as psychiatric clients typically present themselves to the psychotherapist, bearing a long history of personal failure. Important areas of Carlos' life are going awry, and his best efforts to change things for the better have been of little avail. Carlos, then, has good reason to question his adequacy, and even to regard himself as a powerless victim of the world. With the additional grounds of his father's life failures, he may even have reason to wonder if having personal power is consistent with the human condition. It is in this vein that Carlos initially presented himself to don Juan:

> "I am only a man, don Juan," I said peevishly. I made that statement in the same vein my father used to make it. Whenever he said he was only a man he implicitly meant he was weak and helpless and his statement, like mine, was filled with an ultimate sense of despair. (Castaneda, 1972a, pp. 4–5)

In view of his learning history and his outlook, certain life plans would seem to be obviously ill-suited for Carlos. Just as a person who considered himself to be physically inept would be unlikely to plan for a career as a professional athlete, Carlos is hardly in a position to embark eagerly upon the path of becoming a warrior. If he were directly exhorted to do so, one could hardly be surprised by the reply: "Who? . . . me?" To a person who considers himself inadequate, however, other life approaches seem well-founded. He might rely upon withdrawal, for example, to avoid the threats and demands which he seems so ill-equipped to handle; he might play upon his helplessness to avoid responsibility for the continued failures which seem inevitable; he might stick to accustomed ways of doing things—at least he knows he can survive that way; he might dissemble and cultivate pretense to mask his felt inadequacy from others; he might adopt an aggressive posture, never to be caught with his guard down; he might ally himself with someone of greater power; or, he might go in search of his missing parts. Indeed, these would seem to summarize the basic so-called "neurotic" life styles; and Carlos employs some combination of them.

The next moves in don Juan's counter-game must address these realities. More gradually than at first, don Juan now sets to work in removing, shovelful by shovelful, the ground on which Carlos' dilemma stands. The first step, it would seem, must be to convince Carlos that the possibility of realizing personal power does exist. The certainty and natural grace of his own bearing present this most compellingly. Don Juan puts his own self-presentation in words as follows:

"I am only a man too, but I don't mean that the way you do. . . . I've vanquished my problems. Too bad my life is so short that I can't grab onto all the things I would like to. But that is not an issue; it is only a pity." (Castaneda, 1972, p. 5)

Don Juan also invokes his riddle to affirm the existence of a natural condition in which a man feels happy and strong. After exhausting himself in searching for his spot, Carlos is awakened by the sound of don Juan laughing and talking above his head, " 'You have found the spot', he said" (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 18). Carlos, however, is not entirely convinced:

It was not clear to me whether or not I had solved the problem, and in fact I was not even convinced that there had been a problem . . . I was certain that don Juan had watched me all night and then proceeded to humor me by saying that wherever I had fallen asleep *was* the place I was looking for. (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 18)

(Indeed, where else can a man seeking the discovery of his own power find what he's looking for except in *whatever place he happens to be!*) There can hardly be a more persuasive demonstration that a place exists than to convince a person that he has *already* been there. Don Juan elaborates on the importance of his riddle as follows:

He asked me to remember the time I had tried to find my spot, and how I wanted to find it without doing any work because I had expected him to hand out all the information. If he had done so, he said, I would never have learned. But, knowing how difficult it was to find my spot, and, above all, knowing that it existed, would give me a unique sense of confidence. (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 34)

However, even once the prospect of personal power is firmly established, the issue of Carlos' eligibility to achieve it remains in question. Don Juan has also begun to skillfully address this question since he promises that Carlos has *earned* confidence and assurance by virtue of having found his spot. Confidence and assurance are critical ingredients of personal power. Don Juan goes yet a step further:

Don Juan, on the other hand, was very sure I had succeeded, and, acting in accordance with my success, let me know he was going to teach me about peyote. "You asked me to teach you about Mescalito," he said. "I wanted to find out if you had enough backbone to meet him face to face. . . . Now I know I can take your desire alone as a good reason to learn". (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 19)

Don Juan, then, *treats* Carlos' behavior as successful. This provides Carlos with the grounds for a more favorable assessment of his own behavior, and of himself. Now, with incredible leverage, every new lesson about Mescalito will serve as an unspoken reminder of Carlos' eligibility for personal power. For don Juan is quite clear: the teachings

are offered only to those who have earned their right to them, to those who have already demonstrated their eligibility for mastery.

It is important to note that treating Carlos as successful carries considerably more weight than even the most convincing mere verbal portrayal. It is not only that the latter can be more easily dissembled, but more essentially that the way we treat things *is* the counterpart of our true perception of them. To see an object as a chair, for example, is to treat it as a chair—simply, with or without formal verbal acknowledgement. Repeatedly telling someone that he is successful can belie itself. For that is not the way one typically treats those whom he truly considers to be successful—i.e., patronizing them. In this light, one can readily recognize that the therapist—however well-meaning—who consistently makes apologies for his client's failures may only make matters worse. Treating someone as a success, then, must exceed mere kind support, and verbal flattery. Indeed, under many circumstances a well-placed constructive criticism will forcefully carry the implied message: "I am holding you responsible precisely because I do consider you to be someone who can succeed."

II

If one examines all methods of psychotherapy at the most general level, a similar pattern can be seen. The patient is first persuaded that a positive change in himself might occur. The patient then participates in bringing the change about. This participation may include following a directive therapist's instructions, taking a journey to Lourdes, free associating daily in an analyst's office, and so on. Finally, the patient begins to look for and notice changes when they do occur. (Haley, 1963, p. 51)

In traditional approaches to psychotherapy, the transaction between therapist and client goes something like this: the client reports his failures; the therapist, in turn, advises that things can go better in the future. The therapist's message to his client seems to be on the order of: "Yes you've failed in the past; however, you can succeed in the future." The therapist affirms, then, that in spite of the evidence he has seen and heard—evidence which may seem overwhelmingly discouraging to his client—he sees reason for encouragement. And, after all, he is the expert. In this way, the therapist lays the foundation for a particular form of remedy deriving from the individual requirements of his client, and from his own preferred therapeutic approach. The relative success of treatment usually depends on the therapist's ability to direct, or otherwise encourage, his client to behave differently in the future—that is, to behave in such a way that he will encounter success rather than failure. Success experiences are essential. They provide the ground from which positive expectations can grow, and upon which further success can be established. The kind of

encouragement which therapists provide, then, can be of critical importance. It can provide clients with reasonable grounds for departing from their accustomed—and at least marginally successful—ways of doing things in order that they may discover ways of achieving true satisfaction.

In this traditional model, then, the therapist is acting on a set of "moves" which are calculated to elicit a desired response from his client at some point in the future. Indeed, this would seem to be the most familiar paradigm for persuasive techniques; it is straightforward and linear. This approach often leads to the desired results, just as a chess player who opens a game with P-K4 can usually expect his opponent to do likewise. This "Move 1 to Move 2" strategem, however, can be particularly vulnerable to the recalcitrant or unorthodox player since he is likely to go off and do something else entirely. Ironically, the psychotherapy client can, almost by definition, be expected to be an "unorthodox player."

Moreover, there is a predictable drawback to this approach. A person who has a history of failure has *reasonable grounds* for disparaging his future prospects, and he may resist making any new attempts at all. Or worse, new attempts, once made, might fail. This approach, then, can be characterized by a predictable risk: therapy may be left at a standstill, without even a single success to build upon. The inertia of all those past failures might prevail.

In failing to challenge clients' pejorative assessments of their own behavior in the first place, traditional therapists often comply with the acid of past failures, only to subsequently labor in the hopes of repairing damages. Don Juan takes no such risks. He immediately challenges Carlos' view of his own behavior, dealing failures the deathblow, even reshaping them into successes. Don Juan redescribes Carlos' behavior as successful, treats Carlos accordingly, and—at least in the context of the apprenticeship—*forces* Carlos to be successful. In doing so, he does not merely encourage future moves, he transforms those which have *already* occurred. Don Juan does not merely encourage success; he ensures it! A particularly clear illustration of this occurs in dialogue as Carlos laments his over-all failure in the apprenticeship itself:

> "I feel that I'm betraying you, don Juan." . . .
>
> "You're not betraying me."
>
> "I have failed you. I have run away. I feel I am defeated."
>
> "You do what you can. Besides, you haven't been defeated yet. What I have to teach you is very hard. I, for instance, found it perhaps even harder than you." . . .
>
> "But you're different; you've conquered your fear." . . .
>
> "I've told you already, only a crackpot would undertake the task of becoming a man of knowledge of his own accord. A sober-headed man has to be tricked into doing it."

"I'm sure there must be scores of people who would gladly undertake the task." I said.

"Yes, but those don't count. They are usually cracked. They are like gourds that look fine from the outside and yet they would leak the minute you put pressure on them, the minute you filled them with water." (Castaneda, 1972a, pp. 27–28)

Thus, don Juan redescribes Carlos' behavior as evidence of strength, rather than of weakness as Carlos had originally taken it, and treats it accordingly. Nor does don Juan rely upon Carlos' agreement. Rather one is reminded of quicksand; the more Carlos resists and struggles, the deeper he sinks. Every new protest or resistance is only further proof of his sober-headedness, his basic soundness. Once again, don Juan has set up a therapeutic double-bind in which Carlos *can only succeed*. If Carlos continues to disparage his efforts in the apprenticeship he is only providing more evidence of his integrity; if he stops such self-disparagement, he is cured!

In principle, at least, no behavior is immune from being treated as successful. Indeed, an entire personal history could be transformed from bleak to promising in this way. If a therapist were to follow this tack consistently, the underlying message of the therapeutic approach would no longer be the problematical: "You've failed in the past; however, you can succeed in the future," but rather: "You've been succeeding all along; why expect anything different now!"

This may seem paradoxical, since it would appear that in some instances clients obviously *have* failed. While it may be true that some behaviors can be portrayed as only modest successes, consider the following clinical dialogue:

Client: I've accomplished nothing in my entire life. I've done nothing! Why, I don't even hold a job. My folks get down on me, put pressure on me, but still I do nothing. I guess I'm just sort of a zero.

Therapist: Ya know, it strikes me that *doing nothing* when someone else is trying to get you to *do something* is different from merely "doing nothing". It seems more like refusing, holding your own. It appears that you've really been "holding your own" with your folks, and doing it quite well!

The basic form of the therapist's reply, then, consists in showing his client what it is that he *is* succeeding at. A "success-portrayal" of this kind reveals a client to himself as both active and effectual. The responsibility for his behavior—for what he *is* doing, and for the effects it is having—is placed squarely on his own shoulders. This stands in sharp contrast to a client's usual description of his own behavior as a failure to have achieved something—essentially, then, as something he has *not* done (except perhaps, accidentally) and is therefore *not* responsible for. Most importantly, such a description places a person in the position of having a short

step to take from succeeding at one thing to succeeding at another, rather than the leap required to bridge a history of failure to a future of success. To be therapeutically appropriate and effective, portrayals of this sort must reflect a therapist's accurate understanding of what it is that his client has reason to do, and *is actually achieving* by doing what he is doing—regardless of whether or not his client has acknowledged or even recognized the achievement.

Such therapeutic redescriptions, then, require an appreciation of the basic intelligibility of a given client's mode of operating in the world—or, more colloquially, how that person's behavior makes sense. *Showing a person how he makes sense,* then, becomes the foundation for *showing him what he is succeeding at.* To the extent that a therapist is able to accomplish this, he provides his client with the basis for a more favorable concept of self, while he undermines the pejorative conclusions which clients often draw about themselves—i.e., that they are fundamentally inadequate, self-defeating, "masochistic" or "crazy."

In reference to the above clinical example, showing a person how he makes sense could be represented by such therapist replies as: (a) "If you don't really think that you can succeed, then I can certainly see why you're not all that eager to try"; or (b) "If it appears that you've always failed in the past, it is no wonder that you really don't think that you can succeed now." It is important to note that these descriptions, while essentially "legitimizing," do not necessarily justify, or condone, the client's behavior. Rather they simply acknowledge the way in which a particular choice of behavior "makes sense." Neither do they affirm the client's point of view beyond acknowledging that it is the point of view on which his choice is based. On the contrary, both of the above descriptions are non-committal in this regard and therefore can constitute a flexible groundwork for a wide range of therapeutic follow-throughs. The "success-portrayal" presented in dialogue above, for example, illustrates one such follow-through; here, it consists in giving the client reason to reconsider his interpretation of his own past behavior. Subsequent therapeutic plans may include whatever additional augmentation of learning or skills individual clients may require—after all, failures can sometimes be traced to a lack of competence or incomplete learning as in the case of the poorly-trained mathematician who mistakenly believes that $2 + 2 = 3\ 1/2$. Or, more broadly, a therapist may, as don Juan does, lead his client to reconsider and even to reexperience the entire context—world-view, or system of identification—in which these reasons, this "sense," occur.

A wide range of portrayals can serve to show a person how he makes sense. The two examples which appear above were chosen because they are paradigmatic in that: (a) one's choice of behavior is directly a function of one's perception of reality—i.e., to see a situation in any given way *is*

to have reason to treat it accordingly (equally, to consider oneself as having certain characteristics or limitations is to have reason to behave accordingly); and (b) the original context of one's ordinary perception of reality is one's past learning history. All social—i.e., culturally shared—constructions of reality must, presumably, be learned.

Two therapeutic principles, or therapy policies, can be derived, then, as a basis for transforming present and past "failure" into success:

(1) show the client what it is that he is, and has been, succeeding at; and

(2) show him how he makes sense.

And, of course, treat him accordingly. Not only does don Juan treat Carlos in this way, but he also invokes the assistance of a small community of supernatural Allies to do likewise: "yerba del diablo" (devil's weed); "humito" (the little smoke); and the protector and teacher, "Mescalito."

Finally, don Juan once again endorses Carlos' eligibility for acquiring personal power in a striking demonstration of therapeutic agility. Following his first encounter with peyote, Carlos makes the by now familiar appraisal that he has failed miserably. The dialogue which follows has the quality of a board game—one in which don Juan must insure that Carlos wins, by countering Carlos' well-practiced losing moves. In this, unlike most board games, either both players win, or both lose—don Juan as a therapist, Carlos as a client. Carlos makes the opening move, advancing his position of discouragement and self-defeat; don Juan counters; and the game proceeds in this way:

> I told don Juan how I felt about my experience. From the point of view of my intended work it had been a disastrous event. . . . Don Juan laughed and said, "You are beginning to learn."
>
> "This type of learning is not for me. I am not made for it, don Juan. . . . All I know is that it makes me afraid."
>
> "There is nothing wrong with being afraid. When you fear, you see things in a different way."
>
> "But I don't care about seeing things in a different way, don Juan. I think I am going to leave the learning about Mescalito alone. I can't handle it, don Juan. This is really a bad situation for me." (Castaneda, 1972b, pp. 29–30)

Carlos is immoveable. Frightened by his first experience with peyote, he clings tenaciously to his failure, his best hope for escape. So far don Juan has been able to shadow Carlos, at least preventing him from gaining the kind of (dis-) advantage which could snowball out-of-control. But now, the more directly don Juan challenges Carlos's appraisal of his behavior, the more resistance Carlos mobilizes. The game is at a standstill; Carlos is

one move ahead. Suddenly, like a judo expert, don Juan rolls back, and Carlos, already in motion, can but follow him:

> "Of course it is bad—even for me. You are not the only one who is baffled."
>
> "Why should you be baffled, don Juan?"
>
> "I have been thinking about what I saw the other night. Mescalito actually played with you. That baffled me, because it was an indication (omen)."
>
> "What kind of an indication, don Juan?"
>
> "Mescalito was pointing you out to me."
>
> "What for?"
>
> "It wasn't clear to me then, but now it is. He meant you were the 'chosen man' (*escogido*). Mescalito pointed you out to me and by doing that he told me you were the chosen man. . . . I've made up my mind and I am going to teach you the secrets that make up the lot of a man of knowledge." . . .
>
> The way in which the situation had evolved was quite strange. I had made up my mind to tell him I was going to give up the idea of learning about peyote, and then before I could really make my point, he offered to teach me his "knowledge". . . . I argued I had no qualifications for such a task, as it required a rare kind of courage which I did not have. I told him that my bent of character was to talk about acts others performed. . . .
>
> He listened without interrupting me. I talked for a long time. Then he said:
>
> "All this is very easy to understand. Fear is the first natural enemy a man must overcome on his path to knowledge. Besides, you are curious. That evens up the score. And you will learn in spite of yourself; that's the rule."
>
> I protested for a while longer, trying to dissuade him. But he seemed to be convinced there was nothing else I could do but learn. . . .
>
> "You are the only person I have ever seen playing with him. . . . Think about the wonder of Mescalito playing with you. Think about nothing else: The rest will come to you of itself." (Castaneda, 1972b, pp. 30–32)

Don Juan's agility is indeed extraordinary. He has not only managed to counter Carlos' determined effort to "throw in the towel," but has somehow transformed the entire episode (which Carlos had interpreted as a total failure) into the strongest affirmation yet of Carlos' eligibility for achieving personal power. At the same time, don Juan has revitalized each future moment of the apprenticeship, each new chapter of his teachings, as an implicit reminder of that eligibility

III

> "A person's status and eligibilities summarize his relationships with other individuals or groups, and so they set limits to the possible facts concerning him, hence they define a kind of world, i.e., *his* world. . . . We noted that for a given observer the real world is the one which includes him *as* an observer." (Ossorio, 1971/1978, p. 14)

A person's appraisal of himself, and of his own behavior, is embedded in a larger context—i.e., his appraisal of the world. It is in this world that a

person lives, and with it that he must come to terms. This world, or his construction of it, provides the context for all of his choices. It is, then, in relation to this world that all self-appraisals are made. This connection is not only actual but also logical in that all appraisals are contextual in this way: the meaning or significance of any behavior depends on the circumstances (context) in which it occurs. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of any behavior which might not be considered either appropriate or inappropriate, given a sufficiently well-tailored set of circumstances to support it. One's view of the world—that is, of the circumstances at hand—provides a context, then, which is essential not only for choosing behavior, but also for making sense of it. To effect relevant changes in a person's world-view can be expected to have a far-reaching effect on his choices, and also on his view of himself. Just as the moves of a board-game player will depend on what he takes to be the rules of the game, a person's behavior depends on his construction of the physical and social world. This construction of external reality not only provides the context for evaluating the adequacy of moves chosen, or not chosen, but also contributes to define the range of *possible* moves. Moreover, while the player in a board-game can usually switch to another board and a new set of rules, one's view of the world constitutes "the only game in town." It governs all purposeful behavior.

These interconnected appraisals—of oneself and of external reality—are inseparable. Together, they define each person's unique *relationship to the world*. Each person's behavior is not only always expressive of this relationship, but also serves to support and maintain it. Specifically, a person's appraisals of himself and of the world provide him with reasons for behaving certain ways; others then react to his behavior; and finally these reactions, or his interpretations of them, provide "fresh" information concerning what he and the world are "really" like. Consider the by now classic example of the person who has learned that the world is a hostile place, and that other people can't be trusted. Unable to turn his back on that kind of threat to his survival, he defends himself—perhaps by launching a self-protective offense, or merely by treating others with distrust and suspicion. To the extent that such behavior is typically provoking, others can be expected to react with hostility; thus, the world obligingly proves itself to be a hostile place. It is in this way, among others, that each individual's and culture's view of reality is self-confirming—however invalid it may be.

Correspondingly, Carlos considers himself to be inadequate, and, consistent with this view, he blunders and is often irresponsible in his behavior. In doing this, he *forcefully* invites external disparagement. When such disparagement follows, it is taken as "independent" proof that he *is* inadequate—and that others are simply recognizing it. Indeed, Carlos

takes no chances; if external disparagement is not forthcoming, he provides it himself. As a therapist, then, don Juan must be prepared to resist the trap, that is, the "demand characteristic" of Carlos' style. In this, don Juan must transcend the mechanical patterns of reaction which characterize conventional social interchange. Even more constructively, he must reverse the self-confirming machinery of Carlos' life pattern of failure and defeat. Challenging Carlos' self-presentation at the outset—i.e., as an inadequate victim of the world—he directly addresses this.

Conceiving of the therapeutic task more broadly now, as effecting a significant change in a person's relationship to the world, it is no longer surprising that a wide variety of therapeutic approaches—so-called "cognitive," "emotive" and "behavioral"—can all accomplish essentially similar goals. A person's relationship to the world will be reflected in his ideas, emotions and behavior; any of these can provide a point of entry for therapeutic intervention. Up to now, don Juan's therapeutic approach has mainly centered on reconstructing Carlos' view of himself and of his behavior. Broadening his attack, don Juan now begins to undermine Carlos' basic conception of reality (or, more poetically, to "stop Carlos's world"), and to teach Carlos to *act* in accord with a new and more powerful relationship to the world.

Don Juan's therapeutic technique is diverse and often extends beyond prescribing specific behaviors even to guiding him through a series of new participations in, and with, the world. In doing so, don Juan can insure that Carlos acquires relevant new concepts and skills, as well as practice in a wide range of life situations. Here, far outside the traditional therapist's office, don Juan can see to it that Carlos behaves in ways which prove to be successful—thereby providing Carlos with grounds for encouragement, and with a compelling basis for thinking more highly of himself. Successful experience of this kind can trigger a self-perpetuating *positive* cycle in a person's life. This constitutes, perhaps, one of the most valuable insights of the "behavior modification" school.

Introducing and structuring these new activities as he does—dangerous, intensely personal, and sometimes heroic in their scope—don Juan also enables Carlos to experience the pride and accomplishment of an initiate. Don Juan ushers Carlos to a new self-identity. With his characteristic flair for the dramatic, don Juan welcomes Carlos to the world of power through an extraordinary series of learning experiences including becoming a bird and flying like a man; a life-or-death battle with a crafty and protean sorceress, La Catalina; risking death by divining with lizards; and a daring encounter with a 100-foot gnat, the fearsome guardian of the other world. By insuring that Carlos is successful in confronting each of these situations, don Juan not only maneuvers Carlos into behaving differently, but also leaves him to reconcile the apparent contradiction

that he—a man who has considered himself as powerless—has done all of this.

Unlike many behavior therapists, however, don Juan does not settle for piece meal behavior change alone. As he leads Carlos to behave differently, don Juan also introduces new conceptions of the world which provide the supports for this new behavior. He portrays the world, and man's position in it, in such a way that this new way of behaving is reasonable. Indeed, it becomes the logical choice. It is the very force of these world-descriptions which renders don Juan's behavioral prescriptions so compelling to Carlos, and to the reader. The entire cosmology which don Juan unfolds is brilliantly tailored for Carlos' presenting problem and personal style. The generality of its appeal probably rests, at least in part, in the fact that Carlos' difficulties in life are widely representative of the times. Don Juan organizes his teachings in this way, around a series of articulated roles or more distinct relationships to the world. Each is coherent, and from each a particular world-view and mode of behavior logically follows: a crow; a hunter; a warrior; and, finally, a man of knowledge. Carlos learns to see the world from each of these new perspectives, and, importantly, to treat it accordingly. Employing these roles as vehicles, don Juan sets out to *re-socialize* Carlos thoroughly to a new conception of reality; and perhaps ultimately to demonstrate the relativity of all ''fixed,'' or conditioned, systems for construing reality.

IV

But from this point of view the troubles and symptoms from which the patient seeks relief, and the unconscious factors behind them, cease to be merely psychological. They lie in the whole pattern of his relationships with other people and, more particularly, in the social institutions by which these relationships are governed: the rules of communication employed by the culture or group. These include the conventions of language and law, of ethics and aesthetics, of status, role, and identity, and of cosmology, philosophy, and religion. For this whole social complex is what provides the individual's conception of himself, his state of consciousness, his very feeling of existence. . . . For when a man no longer confuses himself with the definition of himself that others have given him, he is at once universal and unique. (Watts, 1969, pp. 20–21)

The first step to re-socialization is *de*-socialization—that is, ''stopping the world'' as Carlos knows it. Don Juan begins to loosen the privotal supports of Carlos' construction of reality, beginning with the cornerstone—his personal history. All of Carlos' conceptions of himself and of the world are rooted in his past learning, his personal history. This history is perhaps the single greatest barrier to the achievement of don Juan's therapeutic goals. If this single domino could only be made to fall, it

would set off a chain-reaction which would leave no part of Carlos' world unchanged. Don Juan attempts to loosen the hold of Carlos' personal history in a variety of ways. Most directly, he simply instructs Carlos to drop it. As Carlos probes don Juan for his genealogy and family history, the following dialogue ensues:

"What did you call your father?" I asked.

"I called him Dad," he said with a very serious face.

I felt a little bit annoyed, but I proceeded on the assumption that he had not understood. . . .

"What did you call your mother?" I asked.

"I called her Mom," he replied in a naive tone.

"I mean what other words did you use to call your father and mother? How did you call them?" I said, trying to be patient and polite.

He scratched his head and looked at me with a stupid expression. . . .

"Well," he said . . . "how else did I call them? I called them Hey, hey, Dad! Hey, hey, Mom!" . . .

Using all the patience I had, I explained to him that these were very serious questions and that it was very important for my work to fill out the forms. I tried to make him understand the idea of a genealogy and personal history.

"What were the names of your father and mother?" I asked.

He looked at me with clear kind eyes.

"Don't waste your time with that crap," he said softly but with unsuspected force. . . .

"I don't have any personal history," he said after a long pause. "One day I found out that personal history was no longer necessary for me and, like drinking, I dropped it." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 10–11)

In the light of Carlos' culturally-based assumptions regarding the structure of reality, don Juan is asserting an impossibility. In the context of the deeply imbedded intellectual and scientific traditions of historical determinism, the very possibility of "dropping one's history"—that is, no longer being defined or determined by it—is nearly inconceivable. Neither don Juan, nor the world-conception which he is unfolding, however, is subject to the limitations of this tradition.

Don Juan proceeds to loosen two additional keystones of the construction of reality in which Carlos has become trapped. The first of these is the broad issue of "fear" itself; the second, the particular threat of possible failure and defeat. The issue of fear is of critical importance. Fear is the enforcer of one's socially—or culturally—learned conception of reality. To depart too radically from this agreed-upon reality is to risk forfeiting the social agreement that one is rational, sane, and thereby eligible to the rights of membership in the group. Losing one's "membership" in this context is the rough equivalent of losing one's place in the world. It is not difficult to appreciate, then, that the fear of jeopardizing basic social agreement concerning "what is real" can be one of the deepest and most

powerfully motivating experience known to man. To the extent that one's "true identity" is inconsistent with the definition assigned, and generally agreed upon, by the cultural group, this fear can become the arch-adversary to the realization of one's own integrity and, consequently, personal power.

Don Juan clearly identifies this adversary so that Carlos can begin to keep watch for it, track its movements within himself, and in this way be enabled to stand against it. At the same time, don Juan deals this fear a blow of his own by beginning to neutralize the threat of possible failure or defeat in the apprenticeship, and in life itself. In describing the difficulties which a man must be prepared to encounter on the path to knowledge, don Juan explains:

> "He slowly begins to learn—bit by bit at first, then in big chunks. And his thoughts soon clash. What he learns is never what he pictured, or imagined, and so he begins to be afraid. Learning is never what one expects. Every step of learning is a new task, and the fear the man is experiencing begins to mount mercilessly, unyielding. His purpose becomes a battlefield.
>
> And thus he has stumbled upon the first of his natural enemies: Fear! A terrible enemy—treacherous, and difficult to overcome. It remains concealed at every turn of the way, prowling, waiting. And if the man, terrified in its presence, runs away, his enemy will have put an end to his quest." . . .
>
> And what can he do to overcome fear?
>
> The answer is very simple. He must not run away. He must defy his fear, and in spite of it he must take the next step in learning, and the next, and the next. He must be fully afraid, and yet he must not stop. That is the rule! And a moment will come when his first enemy retreats." . . .
>
> Anyone can try to become a man of knowledge; very few men actually succeed, but that is only natural. The enemies a man encounters on the path of learning to become a man of knowledge are truly formidable; most men succumb to them." (Castaneda, 1972b, pp. 56–58)

Don Juan has not only effectively identified fear as the enemy of self-knowledge, but he has also *transformed* the threat of failure. In an incredible therapeutic sleight-of-hand, the very possibility of an ordinary failure or defeat has vanished. From this point on, "failures" in the apprenticeship—and in Carlos' life over-all—are no longer ordinary fail-ures, rather they have become the inevitable setbacks encountered by any man who heroically pursues the path of knowledge. Even the fear which Carlos had persistently complained of at every step of the appren-ticeship has been transformed. No longer an expression and proof of his basic inadequacy, his fear has now become the natural and formidable enemy of a formidable man who is embarked in an extraordinary pursuit. Each person's conception of reality is constructed on a foundation of viewpoint and interpretation. Carlos, as client, typically *chooses* pejora-

tive descriptive, and interpretive, contexts in which to judge and evaluate his own behavior. Don Juan, as therapist, counters by *choosing* salutary and enlivening ones.

This reversal of the threat of possible defeat or failure is a pivotal therapeutic move. For as long as Carlos lives in the shadow of such a threat, he has reason to defend himself against it either by not playing at all, or by losing or winning predictably, compulsively. Even consistent success or winning, when it is driven by fear and compulsion, fails to support a realization of one's own personal power, of one's intrinsic sufficiency beyond any compulsive need for success or achievement. Don Juan explains by his portrayal of the man who is overcome by fear:

> "He will never become a man of knowledge. He will perhaps be a bully, or a harmless, scared man; at any rate, he will be a defeated man." (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 58)

As with the bully and coward, the compulsive winner and compulsive loser are merely playing the two ends of a game in which everybody loses—i.e., fails to acquire power.

This can serve as a caveat to therapeutic approaches which train clients in the "techniques" of winning, succeeding, or becoming expert in assertive encounter. A particular form of the limitation inherent in mere "behavior" modification can be illustrated by the following example. Consider the case of a client who perceives nearly all relationships in the terms of "persecutor-victim" in a "dog-eat-dog" world. Conceiving of himself as a victim, he adopts a general policy of appeasement in his interpersonal relationships in the hopes of avoiding persecution. Consequently, he characteristically fails to assert himself even when the situation clearly calls for it. A therapeutic approach—assertiveness training, for example—which merely encourages more assertive behavior without addressing the underlying world-view may simply end by trading problems. For in the context of this world view, a person can conceive only one alternative role—i.e., that of the persecutor. While he may become quite skillfully assertive, his behavior may also be quite oppressive to others, and a new and equally intractable problem arises. Don Juan, by contrast, goes directly to the source of this issue:

> "You haven't been defeated yet," he said.
>
> He repeated the statement four or five times so I felt obliged to ask him what he meant by that. He explained that to be defeated was a condition of life which was unavoidable. Men were either victorious or defeated and, depending on that, they became persecutors or victims. These two conditions were prevalent as long as one did not "see"; "seeing" dispelled the illusion of victory, or defeat. (Castaneda, 1972a, p. 138)

Seemingly never at a loss for a therapeutic sense of humor, even in the most "serious" moments, don Juan continues:

> He added that I should learn to "see" while I was victorious to avoid ever having the memory of being humiliated.
> I protested that I was not and had never been victorious at anything; and that my life was, if anything, a defeat.
> He laughed and threw his hat on the floor.
> "If your life is such a defeat, step on my hat." (Castaneda, 1972a, p. 138)

Thus, don Juan has structured a light-hearted therapeutic double-bind. Now Carlos, in order to maintain his self-presentation as helpless, power-less and defeated, must act assertively.

Still, however, for Carlos the man this dichotomy between winning or losing, victory or defeat, seems inescapable. Finally, in order to effect a radical departure from this view, don Juan teaches Carlos to become a crow—and thereby to consider a novel and salutary perspective on the world. The crow's relationship to the world is entirely non-competitive. Rather than seeking victory, or even avoiding failure, the crow, simply, seeks that which is pleasing. A crow, then, is neither strong nor great, but it is inconspicuous, and in that there can be great freedom. It is in this way that don Juan teaches Carlos to become a bird, and fly like a man:

> There was one last thing I had to change, he said, before I could fly. It was the most difficult change, and to accomplish it I had to be docile and do exactly as he told me. I had to learn to see like a crow. (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 122)

Don Juan explains his reasons for choosing the crow:

> "I learned to become a crow because these birds are the most effective of all. No other birds bother them . . . Men don't bother crows either . . . who cares about a crow? A crow is safe. It is ideal in size and nature. It can go safely into any place without attracting attention. On the other hand, it is possible to become a lion or a bear, but that is rather dangerous. Such a creature is too large; it takes too much energy to become one. One can also become a cricket, or a lizard, or even an ant, but that is even more dangerous, because large animals prey on small creatures. . . . A crow can also tell when something is moving too fast, and by the same token a crow can tell when something is moving just right. . . . It means a crow can actually tell what to avoid and what to seek. . . . When it moves inside just right, it is a pleasing sight and a crow will seek it."
> Don Juan said: "It does not take much to become a crow. You did it and now you will always be one." (Castaneda, 1972b, pp. 125, 128–129)

V

> "When a man decides to do something he must go all the way," he said, "but he must take responsibility for what he does. No matter what he does, he must know

first why he is doing it, and then he must proceed with his actions without having doubts or remorse about them." . . .

"That's an impossibility!" I said. . . .

"Look at me," he said. "I have no doubts or remorse. Everything I do is my decision and my responsibility." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 39–40)

With many of the barriers at least partially removed, don Juan is now in a position to articulate directly a way of life which embodies power—a way of living which excludes Carlos' chronic dissatisfaction and self-uncertainty. Carlos, who has had good reason to expect failure in the past, has typically attempted to avoid taking responsibility for his behavior. Don Juan advises Carlos to begin to assume responsibility for his behavior and for his life. Carlos, however, continues to resist. The threat of possible failure continues its hold. The risk of choosing badly, of erring, renders precise and totally committed action untenable for Carlos. He defends his position as follows:

To illustrate my point I told don Juan the story of an old man of my culture, a very wealthy, conservative lawyer who lived his life convinced that he upheld the truth. In the early thirties . . . he was categorically sure that change was deleterious to the country, and out of devotion to his way of life and the conviction that he was right, he vowed to fight what he thought to be a political evil. But the tide of the time was too strong, it overpowered him. . . .

The last time I saw him he had concluded our conversation with the following: "I have had time to turn around and examine my life. The issues of my time are today only a story; not even an interesting one. Perhaps I threw away years of my life chasing something that never existed. I've had the feeling lately that I believed in something farcical. It wasn't worth my while. I think I know that. However, I can't retrieve the forty years I've lost." (Castaneda, 1972a, pp. 87–88)

Indeed, then, how is one to risk everything on choices which may in retrospect prove unsound? Don Juan answers with a story of his own:

He said that once upon a time there was a young man, a destitute Indian who lived among the white men in a city. He had no home, no relatives, no friends. He had come into the city to find his fortune and had found only misery and pain. From time to time he made a few cents working like a mule, barely enough for a morsel; otherwise he had to beg or steal food.

Don Juan said that one day the young man went to the market place. He walked up and down the street in a haze, his eyes wild upon seeing all the good things that were gathered there. He was so frantic that he did not see where he was walking, and ended up tripping over some baskets and falling on top of an old man.

The old man was carrying four enormous gourds and had just sat down to rest and eat. . . . When the young man saw the gourds he thought he had found his food for the day.

He helped the old man up and insisted on helping him carry the heavy gourds. The old man told him that he was on his way to his home in the mountains and the young man insisted on going with him, at least part of the way.

The old man took the road to the mountains and as they walked he gave the young man part of the food he had bought at the market. The young man ate to his heart's content and when he was quite satisfied he began to notice how heavy the gourds were and clutched them tightly.

Don Juan opened his eyes and smiled with a devilish grin and said that the young man asked, "What do you carry in these gourds?" The old man did not answer but told him that he was going to show him a companion or friend who could alleviate his sorrows and give him advice and wisdom about the ways of the world.

Don Juan made a majestic gesture with both hands and said that the old man summoned the most beautiful deer that the young man had ever seen. The deer was so tame that it came to him and walked around him. It glittered and shone. The young man was spellbound and knew right away that it was a "spirit deer." The old man told him then that if he wished to have that friend and its wisdom all he had to do was to let go of the gourds.

Don Juan's grin portrayed ambition; he said that the young man's petty desires were pricked upon hearing such a request. Don Juan's eyes became small and devilish as he voiced the young man's question: "What do you have in these four enormous gourds?"

Don Juan said that the old man very serenely replied that he was carrying food: "pinole" and water. . . . Don Juan said that, of course, the young man had not believed a word. He calculated that if the old man, who was obviously a wizard, was willing to give a "spirit deer" for his gourds, then the gourds must have been filled with power beyond belief.

Don Juan contorted his face again into a devilish grin and said that the young man declared that he wanted to have the gourds. . . . The young man took his gourds and ran away to an isolated place and opened them. . . .

"Well," I urged him. "Were the gourds empty?"

"There was only food and water inside the gourds," he said. And the young man, in a fit of anger, smashed them against the rocks."

I said that his reaction was only natural—anyone in his position would have done the same.

Don Juan's reply was that the young man was a fool who did not know what he was looking for. He did not know what "power" was, so he could not tell whether or not he had found it. He had not taken responsibility for his decision, therefore he was angered by his blunder. . . . "Had he been aware of his decision and assumed responsibility for it," don Juan said, "he would have taken the food and would've been more than satisfied with it. And perhaps he might even have realized that that food was power too." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 44–47)

Impeccable choice *is* possible, don Juan reaffirms, and only a man himself can reduce his own choices to failure. In this, don Juan prepares Carlos for the eventual realization that power—far from being the external and mysterious force which Carlos seeks—is a natural consequence of choosing to assume full responsibility for oneself, and for one's actions. However, once again the game is at a stalemate; don Juan has rendered taking responsibility for one's choices as possible, but to Carlos it still seems risky. Finally, don Juan invokes the inevitability of Carlos' death to tip the scales.

VI

"A hunter. . assesses every act; and since he has an intimate knowledge of his death, he proceeds judiciously, as if every act were his last battle. Only a fool would fail to notice the advantage a hunter has over his fellow men. A hunter gives his last battle its due respect. It's only natural that his last act on earth should be the best of himself. . . .

Use it. Focus your attention on the link between you and your death, without remorse or sadness or worrying. . . . Let each of your acts be your last battle on earth. Only under those conditions will your acts have their rightful power." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 84–85)

Don Juan introduces Carlos to the world of the hunter: a world in which the reality of death is ever-present—a world in which the necessity for precise and calculated action becomes crystal clear. Don Juan dramatically reminds Carlos that life is brief; and that death is sudden and often unexpected. In the shadow of death, the threat of minor failures is minute compared to the *failure to live* life to its fullest. Don Juan's reminders of death have the impact of telling Carlos that he had a terminal illness, and only each day left to live. His awareness of life, of each living moment, is thereby heightened and transformed.

Don Juan introduces death as an observational reality for Carlos. Carlos learns, as his body becomes properly attuned, that by turning his eyes to the left, he can actually perceive the shadow-like presence of death. In teaching Carlos to become a hunter, don Juan confronts him with death even more graphically:

He told me in a dry tone of command to stalk a rabbit, catch it, kill it, skin it, and roast the meat before the twilight . . .

I automatically started off, proceeding the way I had done scores of times. Don Juan walked beside me and followed my movements with a scrutinizing look. I was very calm and moved carefully and I had no trouble at all in catching a male rabbit.

"Now kill it," don Juan said dryly.

I reached into the trap to grab hold of the rabbit. I had it by the ears and was pulling it out when a sudden sensation of terror invaded me. For the first time since don Juan had begun to teach me to hunt it occurred to me that he had never taught me how to kill game. . . .

I dropped the rabbit and looked at don Juan.

"I can't kill it," I said. . . .

"What difference does it make? This rabbit's time is up. . . Kill it!" he commanded with a ferocious look in his eyes.

"I can't."

He yelled at me that the rabbit had to die. He said that its roaming in that beautiful desert had come to an end. I had no business stalling, because the power of the spirit that guides rabbits had led that particular one into my trap, right at the edge of the twilight.

> A series of confusing thoughts and feelings overtook me, as if the feelings had been out there waiting for me. I felt with agonizing clarity the rabbit's tragedy, to have fallen into my trap. In a matter of seconds my mind swept across the most crucial moments of my own life, the many times I had been the rabbit myself. . . .
>
> "The hell with it," I said loudly. "I won't kill anything. The rabbit goes free."

But as Carlos attempts to set it free, the rabbit is killed accidentally:

> I was dizzy. The simple events of that day had crushed me. I tried to think that it was only a rabbit; I could not, however, shake off the uncanny identification I had had with it. . . .
>
> Don Juan leaned over and whispered in my ear, "Your trap was his last battle on earth. I told you, he had no more time to roam in this marvelous desert." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 86–88)

The impact of this lesson will not soon be forgotten. As the hunter, Carlos achieves the realization that he too is being stalked by death. Ever-conscious of this, he is able to use death as an adviser. Death advises him that each of his acts on earth may be his last, and to each he should give the very best of himself.

VII

> "Does this path have heart? All paths are the same: they lead nowhere. . . . Does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good; if it doesn't, it is of no use. Both paths lead nowhere; but one has a heart, the other doesn't. One makes for a joyful journey; as long as you follow it, you are one with it. The other will make you curse your life. One makes you strong; the other weakens you." (Castaneda, 1972b, p. 76)

In a world where death is the hunter, one has little choice but to assume responsibility for one's life—to make every act count. Once reconciled to the inevitability of death, however, this responsibility ceases to be an onus. Rather the acceptance of one's death becomes a liberating force which enables indifference and abandon. For living is at the same time dying, and to resist death is to deny the full experience of life.

Carlos, like most people, rejects life. Neither he, nor life itself, somehow measures up to his concepts of the way it "ought" to be. Rather than fully accept and experience life, he dedicates his energies to trying to change or improve it. Compulsively, he seeks one solution after another. In the process of seeking satisfaction and fulfillment from a source outside himself, he can be expected to pursue the appearances of success upon which others have agreed—advanced education, material acquisition, even spiritual attainment. Every new attempted solution simply reinforces the illusion that something is missing in the first place. Finally, perhaps, Carlos is ready to acknowledge the liberating realization that *life*

simply is as it is; and that *he is* as he is, complete, and precisely the way he was intended to be. Nothing whatsoever is hidden. Power consists, simply, is recognizing this—in appreciating the wonder of life for the sake of itself; and in giving up the countless paths without heart which are based on a denial of life and of oneself. To follow such paths is to squander one's natural power. To lose touch with the experience of life, simply as it is, is to lose sight of the only true source of understanding, satisfaction, joy and power.

Don Juan reminds Carlos, and us, that all paths lead to death. In the face of this reminder, the logic of the path of heart, the path which is *intrinsically* rewarding, is indisputable. Only this path, he explains, holds power.

No longer constricted by the fear of failure, nor compelled in illusory pursuit, nor even limited by the norms and standards of his culture, a man is finally liberated. Once he has broken free even of the concepts, labels, and systems of explanation which his particular culture calls "reality," then he and his behavior become fluid and unpredictable. He now fully realizes that anything is possible. He simply responds to an ever-changing world. Just like don Juan, such a man has no routines. He relies upon the spontaneous creativity of life itself. Don Juan illustrates with a story·

"You like hunting; perhaps someday, in some place in the world, your path may cross the path of a magical being and you might go after it.

A magical being is a sight to behold. I was fortunate enough to cross paths with one. Our encounter took place after I had learned and practiced a great deal of hunting. Once I was in a forest of thick trees in the mountains of central Mexico when suddenly I heard a sweet whistle. It was unknown to me; never in all my years of roaming in the wilderness had I heard such a sound. I could not place it in the terrain; it seemed to come from different places. I thought that perhaps I was surrounded by a herd or a pack of some unknown animals.

I heard the tantalizing whistle once more; it seemed to come from everywhere. I realized then my good fortune. I knew it was a magical being, a deer. I also knew that a magical deer is aware of the routines of ordinary men and the routines of hunters.

It is very easy to figure out what an average man would do in a situation like that. First of all his fear would immediately turn him into a prey. Once he becomes a prey he has two courses of action left. He either flees or he makes his stand. If he is not armed he would ordinarily flee into the open field to run for his life. If he is armed he would get his weapon ready and would then make his stand either by freezing on the spot or by dropping to the ground.

A hunter, on the other hand, when he stalks in the wilderness would never walk into any place without figuring out his points of protection, therefore he would immediately take cover. He might drop his poncho on the ground or he might hang it from a branch as a decoy and then he would hide and wait until the game makes its next move.

So, in the presence of the magical deer I didn't behave like either. I quickly stood on my head and began to wail softly; I actually wept tears and sobbed for such a long time that was about to faint. Suddenly I felt a soft breeze; something was sniffing my

hair behind my right ear. I tried to turn my head to see what it was, and I tumbled down and sat up in time to see a radiant creature staring at me. The deer looked at me and I told him I would not harm him. And the deer talked to me." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 76–77)

Indeed, if a man could stand on his head and wail under those circumstances, he could do almost anything! Power, don Juan reveals, rests in liberating oneself from conditioned patterns of reaction and thoughtless routines. Power rests in rediscovering one's *self as source* of all choice and of all action.

VIII

"A warrior is an immaculate hunter who hunts power; he's not drunk, or crazed, and he has neither the time nor the disposition to bluff, or to lie to himself, or to make a wrong move. The stakes are too high for that. The stakes are his trimmed orderly life which he has taken so long to tighten and perfect. . . . A hunter of power entraps it and then stores it away as his personal finding. Thus, personal power grows, and you may have the case of a warrior who has so much personal power that he becomes a man of knowledge." (Castaneda, 1974, pp. 91–92, 122)

Thus, don Juan has ushered Carlos into the world of personal power. Power is not, however, derived by following a set of specified rules for "well-adjusted" behavior. Rather it consists in personal choice and action, and in assuming full responsibility for both. Power inheres in realizing that every act may be one's last, and in always giving one's best.

The goal of the warrior stands in sharp contrast to the therapeutic concept of "adequate functioning." It is dedicating oneself to a task truly worthy of one's personhood: seeking the perfection of the warrior's spirit. Entirely different from a psychologically-sophisticated distrust of action, and of one's deeper motives, it is a balanced combination of deliberate control and exquisite abandon. A warrior is protected not by distrust of his passions, but rather by his unbending purpose.

Traditional therapies, themselves embedded in and blinded by cultural conceptions of reality, often only serve to lend support to the existence of illusory problems in the first place. "Therapy" can lend credibility to problems created, not by life itself, but by the concepts, labels and systems of explanations which can be confused for life itself. Don Juan teaches Carlos to perceive beyond the entire system of identification in which the false problems occur.

The power to which don Juan leads cannot be achieved by reducing life to a series of "psychological insights." Don Juan does not trade one set of predictabilities for another. Power, rather, is deeply rooted in the full recognition that the world is both unpredictable and awesome. And the

art of being a warrior, don Juan explains, is "to balance the terror of being a man with the wonder of being a man." (Castaneda, 1974, p. 267)

Beyond even our most cherished concepts and beliefs, *life simply is*. Each moment is new and has never been lived before. No one can tell even what we are capable of. Don Juan leaves Carlos, and us, with this: one's own integrity is all that one has in a world that is both wonderful and awesome; realizing one's own integrity leads to power; life is a battle for power; and a man's life is his only art.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

NOTES

It remains a matter of dispute whether Castaneda's tales are to be taken as factual accounts, as he presents them, or rather as exceptional undertakings of fiction. For the purposes of the present paper it is sufficient that the world of don Juan is both substantive and internally consistent. It is a possible world, whether or not it proves to be an *actual* one.

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MARITAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND ITS EMPIRICAL EVALUATION

Raymond M. Bergner

ABSTRACT

In this article, a conceptual framework relevant to the resolution of marital and other interpersonal conflict is introduced and several of its practical applications are discussed. The framework developed here will be divided into three primary sections. First, a task analysis for disagreement, a specification of the particular tasks at which it is ordinarily necessary to succeed if two people are to resolve an issue confronting them, is introduced. Second, a list of pitfalls, i.e., of actions or omissions on the part of participants which have a high probability of leading to failure to resolve

differences, is generated from the foregoing task analysis. Third, some remarks concerning the place of anger in the present account of conflict resolution are presented. This article concludes with a discussion of two practical applications of this conceptual framework. The first of these is a videotaped program embodying the ideas contained in the conceptual framework. This program and some empirical research done to establish its effectiveness are described. The second application is that to clinical practice: here some ideas for the utilization of this conceptual framework in psychotherapy are presented.

The primary purpose of this article is to present an organized framework of ideas relevant to the resolution of marital and other interpersonal conflict. The aims in doing this are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, the aim here is one of providing a coherent conceptual framework from which future thought and research in this area may be generated. Practically, the present formulation is proffered as an organized set of ideas, for use by clinicians and others, relevant to the question of how issues arising in relationships may constructively and amicably be resolved.

Subsequent to the presentation of this conceptual framework, two of its applications will be related. The first of these is a piece of empirical research in which the ideas comprising the framework were embodied in a videotaped program designed to help couples to better resolve their differences. This program was shown to couples, and its effects on their conflict behavior and wider relationship were assessed. The second application is that to clinical work. Here, a general sketch of the uses to which this conceptual framework may be put in clinical practice will be presented.

SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Range of Convenience

The account presented here was developed primarily for the resolution of conflict between marital partners. However, its range of convenience also extends to disagreements between other intimate partners, close friends, roommates, business associates, and others. In general, as will become clear from the subsequent explication of this framework, its nature is such that it should prove relevant to any contending parties confronted with a situation in which it is important to them to resolve their differences. Although in the discussion to follow examples will be drawn largely from the domain of marriage and other intimate relationships, this wider applicability should not be forgotten.

Requisite Motivation: The Primary Desire to Resolve Differences

Confronted with an issue between himself and another, an individual might be motivated to achieve a variety of ends. He might want to gain revenge, to get his way, to resolve the issue, or to perpetuate a state of conflict, to name but a few possibilities. Indeed, the usual state of affairs in this situation is one in which the individual is simultaneously disposed to several ends, and some of these ends are incompatible with others (e.g., an individual may wish both to punish and to get his way, but may also wish to ultimately restore harmony between himself and the other). The present formulation applies in those situations in which the individuals involved are *more disposed* to achieve a resolution of their differences than they are disposed to other, incompatible goals. Given such a primary goal, the ideas presented below are intended as means for its achievement. Given other and incompatible primary goals (e.g., revenge, perpetuation of a state of conflict), a situation obtains in which by definition what the individuals are seeking is not primarily resolution, but something else. To the extent that this is the case, the present conceptual framework becomes irrelevant. (Note: Confronted with a couple in the latter situation, clinicians would thus have to address and deal with these competing motives if they wished to employ the ideas contained in this framework. See the "Clinical Applications" section for more about this matter).

A Note on Context

A consistent difficulty with previous formulations on interpersonal conflict has been the (probably unwitting) tendency of authors to address issues of context or of situation with absolute formulas. For example, Rubin (1969) may be characterized as advocating the policy: "Whenever you are angry, express this anger." In effect, such absolute formulas amount to a directive to ignore context. Obviously, certain problems and dangers attend upon such a strategy. In Rubin's case, for example, action consistent with his policy would be appropriate and constructive on some occasions, but on others would be inappropriate, unethical, self-destructive, or in other ways ill-advised.

The present formulation emphasizes the importance of a more flexible, situationally-oriented policy with regard to the conduct of disagreements. When an issue arises between two persons in an intimate relationship, it is ordinarily the case that a disagreement (a term which will be defined precisely in the following section) is called for. Depending on the particular circumstances, the consequences of maintaining a status quo which is an unresolved issue are most often negative for a couple. For example, a situation might arise in which a wife goes to work against the wishes of

her husband. The maintenance of this state of affairs (i.e., she working, he being opposed to this) as a live, unresolved issue would often entail such consequences as prolonged mutual anger and resentment, disruption in other spheres of their relationship (e.g., sexuality), and distress to one or more of the children in the family. Consequences would, of course, vary in importance, kind, and duration depending on the particular circumstances and individuals involved. Thus, confronted with an issue, it is generally desirable that a couple address and ultimately resolve this issue for the benefit of their relationship.

In particular circumstances, however, there are at times good reasons for *not* conducting a disagreement. At times, for example, the issues may not be of sufficient importance to an individual to warrant a disagreement. At other times, an individual might perceive that the reasons why some "provocation" has angered him have much more to do with his own hypersensitivities or exaggerated claims on others than they have to do with truly objectionable behavior on the part of another. And so forth. I recognize that reasons such as these often serve as rationalizations for individuals who do not wish, on other grounds, to disagree openly with another. This is a separate problem. Suffice it to say in this regard, however, that this possibility does not constitute grounds for dispensing with the caution here not to ignore context.

THE TASK ANALYSIS FOR DISAGREEMENT

The term "disagreement" as employed in this article encompasses the entire range of interpersonal conflicts of clashes which we ordinarily designate by recourse to such terms as "argument," "quarrel," "fight," "dispute," "squabble," "spat," and so forth. It is intended to cover conflicts characterized by much or by little emotional display, as well as those of major or of minor significance within the context of a particular relationship. In sum, the concept of *disagreement* is here employed as a generic term which encompasses the whole spectrum of such interpersonal clashes.

The format for the conduct of a disagreement, as well as the precise meaning of this term as employed throughout the present article, is given in the "Task Analysis for Disagreement" diagram (Ossorio, Note 1) shown in Table 1. This task analysis constitutes a delineation of the

Table 1.   Task Analysis for Disagreement.

BASIC CONDITION:	TASK #1:	TASK #2:	TASK #3:
An issue arises	Statement	Negotiation	Resolution
	of	of	of
	positions	differences	differences

requisite achievements in the paradigm case of disagreement. That is, it provides a *specification of those tasks at which it is ordinarily necessary to succeed* if *two people are to resolve an issue confronting them.* (Note: if our analysis is correct, then, it becomes not only "descriptive" but *necessarily* prescriptive). The paradigm case is the complete or full-fledged case, i.e., that case which conforms to the logical requirement that it contain all of the essential features which an instance of a given concept could have. Non-paradigm cases are cases deficient with respect to certain of these features which, despite this, still qualify as disagreements. Each of the achievements in the task analysis for disagreement will be discussed briefly.

Basic Condition: An Issue Arises

This refers to the basic situation in which the conduct of a disagreement is ordinarily indicated. The term "issue" as employed here is intended in its everyday sense. It refers, quite simply to *any matter with respect to which two people are at odds or at variance.* Of particular importance here are those issues which for a given couple are such that failure to resolve them would be damaging to their relationship (e.g., for many couples, polarization on such issues as whether or not to have children, how often to have sexual intercourse, or what means are permissible to influence each other, would entail such consequences). Of less importance are those issues with respect to which continued polarization creates either minor problems or no problems at all (e.g., for many couples, the espousal of divergent political beliefs is an issue which entails few or no untoward consequences).

Task #1: Statement of Positions

Given the existence of an issue, the first task in conducting a disagreement is that of both parties' stating openly where they stand with respect to this issue. They must let each other know, in whatever way, "This is what I want here," "This is my reaction to what you've done," "This is where I stand on this issue"—whatever makes sense in the particular situation.

Task #2: Negotiation of Differences

Here the task of the parties involved is twofold. Their first task is to bring up considerations which have a bearing one way or the other on the issue at hand. Such considerations usually take the form of reasons in defense of one's own position and critical of the other's position.

Their second task concerns the adjustment of positions in light of considerations presented. This task entails giving *genuine consideration*

to the points introduced by the other party and, on the basis of their soundness, fairness, and legitimacy, adjusting one's original position in the light of these.

Negotiation as a social practice is a process of *mutual judgment*. It is a process in which two people take into account all of the considerations presented, regardless of source, and, on the basis of their perceived soundness, relevance, and fairness, make a *mutual judgment* regarding what is to be done. It is analogous in some respects to the social practice of ''philosophical inquiry'' as discussed by Socrates in Philebus: ''. . . for surely we are not now contending in order that my view or yours may prevail, but I presume that we ought both of us to be fighting for the truth'' (Jowett, 1871). The social practice of philosophical inquiry implies an adherence to the goal of establishing the truth. In the process of discussing a philosophical issue, it is ''presumed'' that one will state only what one believes to be true and that, in response to considerations presented by others, one will accept or reject these based on their apparent truth. Where this is not the case (e.g., where ''prevailing,'' not truth, becomes the primary goal), we have a *different social practice,* rhetorical contest. In the same way, the social practice of negotiation implies a commitment to introducing only those considerations which are considered true or just, to genuinely considering the legitimacy of the partner's statements, and to making a sound, fair mutual judgment on these bases.

Task #3: Resolution of the Issue

The final requisite achievement in the task analysis for disagreement is that of resolving the issue. The task here is that of the involved parties' coming together on some mutually agreed-upon resolution of their differences. The minimum requirement here is merely that each assent to some resolution. Their satisfaction with this resolution is a separate matter. This may range from (optimally) a good deal of satisfaction to (minimally) sufficient tolerance of the resolution that the individuals involved can honestly assent to it.

As a rule though not exclusively, resolutions take one of three forms. (a) Compromise: here the resolution is one in which the parties involved each concede to some extent with respect to their original position, and settle on some intermediate position. For example, X might wish to visit in-laws and stay for a week, while Y might wish not to visit them at all, and the two resolve their differences by agreeing to go, but to stay only a few days. (b) A bargain or exchange: in this form of resolution partners exchange concessions. For example, X might agree to fulfill certain household responsibilities if Y agrees in return to fulfill certain others. (c) Capitulation: in this form of resolution, one partner accedes to the other partner's demands. For example, X might recognize that Y has a right to

be irritated about some behavior of his, concede this, and apologize. In the present formulation, unlike a number of previous ones, there is no commitment to any particular form of conflict resolution as *the* preferred mode. Emphasis is placed, not on the particular form a settlement takes, but on the desirability of *some* settlement in whatever form being achieved. An issue is still a *live* issue until this has been accomplished. (This is not to say that every settlement arrived at provides a guarantee that the issue is no longer a live one. Inevitably some resolutions will not prove satisfactory and arrival at some other settlement will be indicated.)

Conclusion

The task analysis for disagreement is a delineation of those tasks at which it is ordinarily necessary to succeed if two conflicting parties are to resolve their differences. Herein lies both its descriptive and its *practical* value. The three tasks which comprise the Task Analysis of Disagreement are *logically* distinguished inasmuch as many actions on the part of participants qualify simultaneously as relevant to the achievement of more than one task (e.g., to say "I like science fiction movies" may both state my position and present a reason why my position should be adopted). The relation between the different tasks is this: the achievement of all "later" (i.e. higher in number) tasks ordinarily requires as a precondition the achievement of all "earlier" tasks. Specifically, negotiation of differences (task #2) presupposes that these differences have been addressed (task #1). And, most importantly, *resolution* of differences (task #3) presupposes both that differences have been addressed and that relevant considerations have been introduced and entertained.

PITFALLS IN THE RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES

The concept of a "pitfall" is important in this conceptualization. The term, as employed here, assumes no idiosyncratic technical meaning. Rather, it is used in its everyday sense as "any concealed danger or trap for an unsuspecting person" (Webster's 1962). A pitfall, in this conceptualization, is *any action or omission which, in a disgreement, is likely to lead to failure to resolve the issue.*

The logical relations between the three tasks comprising the task analysis for disagreement were delineated above. Briefly, it was asserted that the achievement of a later task in this diagram ordinarily requires as a precondition the achievement of all earlier tasks. It follows from this that failure to achieve any particular task in the diagram ordinarily precludes success at any later task in the diagram, and, ultimately, success at resolving the issue. Thus, *any* way in which an individual fails at any of these tasks qualifies as a pitfall in the process of the successful resolution

of differences. It is this general point that is the most important one. However, certain specific sorts of failures seem empirically most common and thus worthy of note.

Pitfalls Related to Task #1: Statement of Positions

1. *Not addressing the issue*

The failure here is a simply one of omission with respect to the task. An issue arises for a couple but, for whatever reason, they fail to address their differences. Each fails to let the other know where he or she stands with respect to this issue. Rather, the two may pretend no issue has arisen, one of the two may collude with the other, etc.

One common reason why partners encounter this pitfall bears noting. Partners often expect each other to be "mindreaders" (Bach and Wyden, 1968). When an issue arises, one or both of them assumes that the other knows what he wants or how he feels about that issue and that, consequently, he needn't overtly address the issue.

2. *Not addressing the issue with sufficient clarity*

At times, partners do attempt to address their differences but one or both fails to do so with sufficient clarity so that the other partner adequately understands his position.

3. *Addressing unresolvable issues*

This pitfall is related to task #1 in a different way. It occurs when an individual addresses an issue with his partner, but states his position in such a way that no resolution is possible. For example, one partner might address the issue by objecting to his partner's "dependency". In effect, he demands that his partner stop being "dependent." Posed in this form, the individual is asking his mate to do the virtually impossible; one does not simply stop being dependent. Posed in a different form, e.g., in the form of specific requests or demands for specified times when one is to have privacy, the issue becomes amenable to resolution. The individual is now requesting something which is possible. The general point in this regard is that to pose an issue in such a way that it is unresolvable, whatever form this might take, is a pitfall in the resolution of this issue.

Pitfalls Related to Task #2: Negotiation of Differences

1. *Not sticking to the issue*

The individual encountering this pitfall is one who introduces considerations into a disagreement which have no significant bearing on the issue at hand. Certain common and especially pernicious forms which this may take are described by Bach and Wyden (1968). One of these they

term "digging up relics from the psychiatric museum." This refers to the practice of introducing old grievances into a current disagreement to which they have no relevance. A second form described by these authors is termed "kitchen sinking" and refers to an attack on the partner which focuses upon current but irrelevant matters (e.g., in a disagreement about money, attacking the partner's sexual adequacy).

2. Escalation of the arena of conflict

In this pitfall, the original issue is expanded or dilated to an unnecessarily broad arena. For example, such an escalation might occur where the action, omission, conflicting interest, etc., with which issue is originally taken is posed as an expression of the character of the offending individual (e.g., a wife, angry at her husband for his refusal to make a large purchase, attacks him as "greedy," "selfish," and a "miser"). Escalations may take many forms. As a class, they result in the evolution of new and often far more unresolvable issues, and frequently, as in the example cited, provoke an added degree of anger and antagonism which renders conflict resolution far more difficult.

3. Failure to listen to and to consider the partner's points

The individual encountering this pitfall is one who, when considerations are introduced by the partner, either fails to listen to these or, if he does listen, fails to consider or to entertain them. He fails, as it were, to ask himself: "Is this a legitimate gripe?", "Is that a valid point?", "Is this something I should take into account?", etc., and, if indicated, to make the appropriate adjustments in his position. The pitfall here lies, not in the conclusions which might be drawn (e.g., "that's *not* a legitimate gripe"), but in the failure seriously to consider and to entertain the considerations in the first place.

When the process of negotiation is viewed as a mutual judgment, the status of these failures as pitfalls in conflict resolution becomes even clearer. First, in the cases of "not sticking to the issue" and of "escalation of the issue," these may be seen as failures, when making a judgment, to confine attention to considerations relevant to the judgment. In the case of failure to entertain or consider the partner's points, this may be seen as an arbitrary rejection of considerations potentially relevant to the judgment and a consequent failure to adjust one's position (if indicated) in the light of these considerations.

Pitfalls Related to Task #3: Resolution of the Issue

Playing for a win

The individual encountering this pitfall pursues the goal of winning regardless of the legitimacy of his own or his partner's position. Goals of

coming out on top, being "right" about some matter, having one's way, etc., are pursued for their own sake and take priority over all else in a disagreement. (Bach and Wyden, 1968)

It is important to distinguish between *playing* for a win and *achieving* a win. The pitfall lies, not in the achievement of a win when this is the natural outcome of a disagreement between two people who don't *have* to win, but in playing for a win, i.e., going into a disagreement in the first place and conducting the disagreement throughout with the attitude that one must win no matter what. The failure to recognize this seems responsible for the tendency of previous authors (e.g., Bach and Wyden) needlessly to proscribe this form of conflict resolution (i.e., capitulation) in their formulations.

The perspective of viewing a disagreement as a mutual judgment once again helps to clarify the status of playing for a win as a pitfall. The person encountering this pitfall may be characterized in this respect as "violating the practice." That is, he is no longer even attempting to make a sound, just, mutually agreeable judgment. The term "judgment" no longer applies to his activities. Rather, descriptions such as "engaging in a power struggle" or "attempting to impose an arbitrary 'rightness'" seem most apt.

Conclusion

The task analysis for disagreement thus serves as a useful organizational and explanatory device for a large number of pitfalls. Other pitfalls, however, are not directly related to this diagram. For an extensive list of these, the reader is referred to Bach and Wyden's excellent work, *The Intimate Enemy* (1968). For purposes of the present article, no further pitfalls will be mentioned.

Two Qualifications

In concluding this section on pitfalls in the resolution of differences, it is important to mention two qualifications. With respect to any of the prohibitions listed above, it is *usually* the case that acting contrary to it is a destructive practice and is likely to result in failure to achieve an amicable resolution of differences. However, to encounter a pitfall does not always or inevitably guarantee failure to resolve such differences. For example, couples who are aware of these pitfalls may quickly recognize where they have encountered one, cease to do what they are doing, and return to more constructive modes of conflict resolution. In addition, analysis of particular situations will sometimes suggest that to do some of these otherwise proscribed things may be desirable or even necessary. For example, although not sticking to the original issue is generally a poor idea, situations may arise in which a couple becomes aware that the

original issue is not the important issue, and thus that a shift to the more important issue is indicated.

SOME REMARKS ABOUT ANGER AND ITS PLACE IN THE PRESENT CONCEPTUALIZATION

For those with a special interest in problems of anger and aggression, the present conceptualization may be seen as a statement about some ways in which aggression may be constructively managed in a relationship. As conceived and presented above, the conceptualization is broader than this. Broadly conceived, it is a statement about how a couple confronted with an issue, whose aim is to resolve this issue, might go about accomplishing this end. Moving from the general to the specific, among the sorts of relevant issues here are those in which the investment of the conflicting parties in their respective positions is such that opposition provokes strong anger and other emotionality. Among the sorts of considerations which are commonly brought to bear in a disagreement are considerations which prove provocative to the opposing party.

Certain things, however, are noteworthy about the case of disagreements characterized by anger. Early in the discussion above, the observation was made that, when issues arise, the individuals involved may be disposed to different ends (to amicably resolve differences, to punish the other, etc.). And the direction of this discussion has been, loosely, "If you want an amicable settlement, observe these prescriptions and prohibitions." By its very nature, anger is not an emotion which disposes people to this goal of an amicable resolution. An individual who is angry at another is often, by the very fact of this anger, disposed to goals incompatible with an amicable settlement, e.g., revenge, punishment, or rejection of the other. For such an individual, the constructive resolution of differences will call for the making of certain allowances for his anger. The avoidance of specific pitfalls (e.g., kitchen sinking, character assassination) will often require restraint on the part of an angry individual. At such times, the conduct of a disagreement as described in the foregoing pages, a fundamentally cooperative activity calling for listening, fair consideration of the other's position, a willingness to concede at times, etc., will often be rendered very difficult.

A realistic account, then, must acknowledge the difficulties that an angry person is likely to have operating within the constraints of the present framework. On the other hand, however, the *possibility* of doing so should be emphasized. Finally, lest there be any confusion on this score, what is being urged here is *not* that individuals suppress their anger, but rather that they make allowances for it. Here restraint takes the form of confining the expression of this anger to constructive modes.

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

If the ideas which comprise this conceptual framework are sound and constructive, then learning and employing them ought to help couples to resolve their conflicts better. Research was done to see if this was indeed the case. A brief description of this research will be presented here. For a complete account, see Bergner (1973).

The Marital Conflict Videotape (MCV)

The vehicle chosen for presentation of the conceptual framework was a videotaped program. This program, entitled the "Marital Conflict Videotape" (MCV), employs four repetitions of the following format. First, a short play is presented in which a couple is seen having a disagreement. In this play, they encounter one or more pitfalls, all related to the same task in the Task Analysis for Disagreement, and they consequently fail to resolve their differences. For example, in one sequence the couple fails to stick to the original issue; instead they generate multiple issues and, as a result, ultimately fail to resolve the initial issue. Following this play, a commentator appears and presents a very brief lecture in which he defines the relevant task and discusses the pitfalls related to it. Finally, the play is shown a second time; this time action is stopped at key points and the commentator poses multiple-choice questions to the audience. These questions require the viewer to apply the materials of the lecture to the events of the play. In the first three play-lecture-play sequences, pitfalls relevant to tasks #1, 2, and 3, respectively, are encountered by the couple. In the fourth sequence, no pitfalls are encountered. Here, constructive modes of resolving conflict are modelled for viewers.

Experimental Procedures

A total of 20 couples participated in this research. Initially, a tape-recorded sample of their actual conflict behavior and some questionnaire data were obtained from each of these couples. The latter data concerned such matters as the couple's typical behavior when issues arise, the frequency and severity of their disagreements, and the nature and satisfactoriness of the typical outcomes of these.

The experimenter rated each of the 20 tape-recorded conflicts for the degree to which the participants encountered the pitfalls mentioned above in the conceptual framework. Couples were then assigned to two matched groups on the basis of these ratings. Those couples who were assigned to the experimental condition then viewed the MCV. Those couples assigned to the control condition received no treatment.

One week later, a second tape-recorded sample of conflict behavior was

obtained from all couples in the study. One month following this, the questionnaire data were again obtained. This delay was due to the longitudinal nature of many items on this questionnaire (e.g., "During the past month, how many times . . .").

Finally, three months later, a third tape-recorded sample of conflict behavior and a third questionnaire were obtained from a total of 6 couples (3 from each experimental condition).

Behavior ratings

Two trained raters listened to each taped marital conflict, and made judgments regarding the degree to which each pitfall mentioned in the MCV was encountered. Any disagreements about particular ratings were resolved by negotiation. The raters did not know either the experimental condition to which any couple belonged or the pre-test vs. post-test vs. follow-up status of any disagreement.

Results

Post-treatment results

At post-treatment, exposure to the MCV was associated with significant positive changes on the following variables: (1) the extent to which Ss exhibited the pitfalls delineated in the MCV in their taped conflicts ($t = 2.86$, $p < .01$, $df = 19$); (2) the reported frequency with which Ss directly addressed issues ($t = 2.61$; $p < .01$, $df = 19$); (3) the reported frequency with which couples achieved mutually satisfactory outcomes to their disagreement ($t = 2.07$, $p < .05$, $df = 9$); (4) general feelings of "affection" for their partners ($t = 2.31$, $p < .025$, $df = 19$); and (5) reports of "overall satisfaction" with their partners ($t = 3.27, p < .005$, $df = 19$). Control Ss exhibited no significant positive changes on any of these variables (t's $= -.12, .42, -.54, -3.25, -2.25$, respectively).

Follow-up Results

Three months later, exposure to the MCV was associated with the maintenance of significant positive change on the following variables: (a) the extent to which Ss exhibited the pitfalls delineated in the MCV ($t = 4.08$, $p < .01$, $df = 5$); (b) the reported frequency with which Ss directly addressed issues ($t = 2.34$, $p < .05$, $df = 5$); and (c) the reported frequency with which Ss achieved mutually satisfactory outcomes to their disagreement ($t = 3.00, p < .05$, $df = 2$). The significant changes at post-treatment for "affection" and "overall satisfaction" were not maintained (t's $= .00, 1.72$, resp.). Control Ss again exhibited no significant positive changes or any of these variables (t's $= .39, .47, .22, .45$, and -2.18, resp.).

In retrospect, it is my judgment that the failure to obtain follow-up data from all Ss represents a serious drawback in this study. I say this for two reasons. First, statistical procedures (see Bergner, 1973 for details) indicate that the particular subgroups sampled at follow-up may not have been representative of the larger samples. Second, the resultant number of observations is far too small to make generalizations with any degree of confidence. For these reasons, the follow-up results obtained in this research should be regarded as tentative.

Discussion

Overall, the results obtained in this research support the contentions: (a) That the ideas comprising the conceptual framework for marital conflict resolution are sound and constructive; and (b) that the MCV is an effective vehicle for the presentation of these ideas. With respect to both contentions, stronger support is provided by post-treatment data. Follow-up data, as noted above, must be regarded as far more tentative.

CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

In those cases where conflict behavior is to be a focus in psychotherapy, we may distinguish two broad groups of clients. The first is composed of individuals who are ready, and at times even eager, to hear and to put into practice the ideas contained in the conceptual framework for marital conflict resolution. This group, in my experience, constitutes the minority of individuals seen in therapy. They tend to be very distressed by the discord existing between themselves and their partners, highly motivated to resolve their differences and, most importantly, not highly invested in some goal or some mode of conduct which would be incompatible with conflict resolution.

With this group, utilizing the ideas contained in the conceptual framework is a straightforward matter. Typically, what I will do if a couple is composed of two such individuals is simply observe the pitfalls which they encounter as they discuss their problems and then present these observations and the associated rationale to the couple. A typical observation might be the following: "I just noticed something which might be very important. The two of you started off a little while ago arguing about how you wanted to divide up household responsibilities, but as you've been talking, you've gotten into a whole lot of other issues—whether or not Mary needs a new car, whether John wastes too much time, and several others. I wonder if this is one of the reasons you have so much trouble resolving issues; namely, you don't stick to them,

ind you introduce so many other issues that the first one gets lost." In order to enhance both awareness of and avoidance of this pitfall, I might then suggest to the couple that they pay attention to this pitfall in the ensuing week, try to avoid it in their disagreements, and discuss their efforts to do so in the next session.

At times, clients seem in need of a more comprehensive, less piecemeal, exposure to the ideas contained in the conceptual framework. For example, for some couples the whole notion of "constructive disagreement" is alien; to these couples, disagreement and conflict represent *ipso facto* relationship failure, not a potentially constructive process which can improve a relationship. On such occasions, I have exposed couples to the entire conceptual framework, either by providing a lecture or, more often, by requesting that they take home and read a written version of this framework. At these times, if I had a more technically adequate version of the MCV, I would use this.

The second broad group of clients is composed of individuals who, although they encounter severe difficulties in the conduct of their disagreements, seem substantially unwilling or unable to put the ideas from the conceptual framework into practice. This group is composed of individuals who have a significant investment in goals or modes of conduct which are incompatible with conflict resolution. For example, such persons might be so furious at their partners that revenge takes precedence, so "allergic" to acceding to influence attempts from them that they cannot yield the slightest ground, or so bent on being "right" that they cannot acknowledge the legitimate aspects of their partners' positions.

With individuals such as this, obviously, the sort of straightforward feedback discussed above becomes insufficient by itself. In addition to such feedback, the individuals' competing goals and modes of conduct must be assessed and dealt with if they are to employ and benefit from the ideas contained in the conceptual framework. The question of how such competing agendas might be dealt with therapeutically is a question as broad as how to do psychotherapy itself and is thus beyond the scope of the present account. Suffice it to say in this regard that, for the majority of couples I have treated, considerable effort has been devoted to the discovery and alteration of these very important barriers to conflict resolution.

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SELF-CRITICISM:
ANALYSIS AND TREATMENT

Richard Driscoll

ABSTRACT

The phenomena of self-criticism are analyzed within Descriptive Psychology. The self-critical individual is seen to be acting on identifiable, understandable reasons, and thus to be already in charge of his self-critical acts. The major reasons and intentions involved in self-criticism are outlined and illustrated. A dozen categories of reasons are found, and parallels to already existing theoretical interpretations are mentioned. For each category of reasons, possible psychotherapy strategies are suggested. It is argued that for maximum therapeutic effectiveness, the therapy strategies must address the client's reasons for his excessive self-criticism. The major aim of the analysis is to assist a practitioner in distinguishing between reasons, and in gearing therapy strategies to such reasons. The interventions follow Ossorio's policies for pragmatic psychotherapy, and the analysis and treatment of self-criticism is presented as an illustration of the pragmatic orientation to therapy.

"We have met the enemy, and he is us."

Walt Kelly

It is known as self-depreciation, self-condemnation, self-contempt; as being too tough on oneself, giving oneself a hard time, putting oneself down; as excessive self-criticism. By whatever terms, the phenomena are familiar to all, and are generally recognized as one of the common elements in personal distress and unhappiness.

In analyzing the phenomena of self-criticism, it is imperative to look at what the person is actually doing: what he intends, what he achieves, and what satisfactions he may gain. The following survey identifies and illustrates twelve major reasons a person might understandably have for being self-critical. As an assemblage of possible reasons, it gives a broad overview of the phenomena, and may thus enable one to see better what is going on in any instance of self-criticism.

Identifying and distinguishing between reasons for self-criticism is extremely important. For maximum therapeutic effectiveness, treatment strategies need to be closely aligned with the client's significant issues and reasons. Also presented here are therapy strategies, which deal with and give proper weight to the reasons for self-criticism. This analysis is constructed entirely from a Descriptive Psychology orientation, on the grounds that straightforward description in ordinary language is sufficient to capture the phenomena, and that theoretical terminologies are therefore unnecessary.

In its general usage, self-criticism refers to unfavorable appraisals of oneself, and includes statements of varying severity—some negative but appropriately and correctly so, and some overly or unfairly harsh. While occasional self-criticism is normal, the self-critical person is one who is disposed to criticize himself too frequently and with unusual and inappropriate harshness. Excessive self-criticism involves exaggerated and inappropriate forms of many of the same aims found in ordinary garden-variety self-criticism.

Self-criticism refers both to actual statements and to those unspoken self-appraisals which are commonly termed thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and opinions about oneself, ordinarily expressed as "thinks badly of himself," "has a poor opinion of himself," or "has a poor self-concept." We expect some continuity, though it is the actual statements which, as observable intentional actions, provide our best insights into the phenomenon.

In one person's criticizing another, two positions are recognized: The actor, or person doing the criticism; and the recipient, or person receiving the criticism. Implicit in the concept of self-criticism are formally the same two distinct positions: The person as actor is making the criticism, and the same person as recipient is receiving the criticism. The distinction is also contained in the grammar: self-criticism may be restated as "he" (subject) criticizes "himself" (object), again showing the same two posi-

tions. Where self-criticism is unduly severe, these are perpetrator-victim positions: the person as perpetrator is inflicting unjustified criticism on himself, the victim. This separation of the two positions is crucial for an understanding of self-criticism. Clearly, in understanding something being done, one must view the one doing it, not merely the one to whom it is being done, and expect to find answers there. The reminder, then, is: "Keep your eye on the actor."

Often persons are altogether unaware of these separate positions. Self-critical persons often see themselves only as victims of the harsh treatment, and have little awareness of being also the perpetrators. They experience the condemnation, the degradation, the humiliation, and the pain as if the process originated from someone or somewhere else. Given the personal distress generated by extreme self-criticism, it is not surprising that persons are often unwilling or unable to attribute it to their own choices and actions. Certainly, one assumes, the infliction of such suffering is merely irrational or merely a conditioned pattern, and not an understandable attempt to deal with one's world. But by failing to understand the legitimacy and sensibleness of his self-criticism, a person thereby leaves himself in a poor position to do much about it. He is in no position to redirect what he claims he is not in charge of in the first place.

The concept of behavior as Intentional Action is fundamental to the present analysis. An intentional act is one done for some reasons, and not merely by accident or mistake. Following Ossorio's (1973) explication, the usage here of the terms "intention" and "reason" does not also convey that the person is necessarily aware of his intentions and reasons. One may act to accomplish something without being aware of what he is intending to do. And one may have reasons without understanding or being able to state what those reasons are. Indeed, one frequently important task in therapy is aiding the client to see and understand what he is doing or trying to do.

Following are a dozen common issues, intentions, and reasons which may be involved in self-criticism, each followed by a brief outline of therapy issues and strategies. The therapy examples follow the policies and principles of pragmatic therapy (Driscoll, 1980; Ossorio, 1976), and serve to illustrate the approach.

VARIETIES OF SELF-CRITICISM

Self-understanding

Self-criticism may be a good-faith *appraisal of one's action or of oneself*. In such cases, the person is concerned with understanding himself, and is using unfavorable self-appraisals toward this purpose. The

appraisal may be made of one's actions or of one's self; each has a slightly different rationale.

In the first case, the person observes his action and appraises it as appropriate or inappropriate by the relevant standards. He asks, "Was it ethical, safe, or effective in getting what I wanted?" Such considerations are to be made in choosing one's actions, but cannot always be assessed in any complete or adequate sense on the spur of the moment. Thus, it is important to make such appraisals in the light of the completed action. The final appraisal gives the action a place, or status, in the person's understanding of his possibilities. An action appraised as poor, bad, wrong, etc., need not be considered again in making future choices—it has already been considered and found lacking. Conversely, a favorable appraisal means there is reason to do it again, should the opportunity arise.

Given reasonable standards, one's appraisals should include a balanced combination of both positive and negative opinions. A preponderance of negative appraisals indicates standards which are high in comparison to what one usually could be expected to achieve. High standards themselves may be maintained in order to encourage oneself to improve, to meet the standards and not settle for less. The person takes it that such high standards help one to improve and does not notice that such standards may also generate resistance or discouragement. Criticism of most or all of one's actions comes across as criticism of oneself in general.

One also has reason to appraise himself, his capabilities, and his status. A person who recognizes that he is poor at algebra might avoid such a course, or plan to study more in order to compensate. Often, self-appraisals are made with the aid of others. In saying he did it badly, the person may be asking for confirmation of his judgment, or for a counter-opinion. The same may hold with the high schooler who says she is not popular enough to date the captain of the football team: is she right?

In psychotherapy, mistaken appraisals of oneself are probably the simplest form of self-criticism to deal with. The person is merely mistaken about himself or his behavior, and the therapist's task is to correct the mistake. Most often, this is done by providing additional information, or asking the client to consider relevant factors. A mother, for example, whose child falls and hurts himself might genuinely see herself at fault for not watching him closely enough. She might be reassured to hear that falling is natural for children, that most parents expect a certain number of falls, and that falls are not as harmful as she is expecting them to be. She might be asked to consider what life would be like if she expected herself to prevent all hurts: could anyone tolerate that sort of anxiety?

Where the client is in general too unfavorable in his self-appraisals, the therapist may point to this and suggest giving the benefit of the doubt: "In

general, you are too hard on yourself, you are overly critical. When there is a possible mistake or failing, you expect you have done the worst and rush to judgment. You can sometimes make headway with this by giving yourself the benefit of the doubt. When there's a possibility of a mistake or failing, take it that you have done reasonably well unless there is glaring evidence to the contrary."

Where the client's self-appraisal is negative but appropriately or accurately so, the therapist of course avoids challenging it. Reassurance here would be false and unhelpful. The therapist might comment on the client's willingness to face difficult things about himself, mentioning the personal honesty that is required to do that. It is only frequent and overly severe self-criticism which is problematic, and which needs be addressed in therapy.

Self-improvement

Self-criticism may be pressure intended to force oneself to improve. Here it is one's self-esteem, self-image, ego, or general worth which is being challenged. The criticism is an uncomfortable or painful reminder of one's inadequacies: the aim is to mobilize discomfort into pressure toward better choices, and toward renewed and more energetic efforts to achieve success. Here again, the person takes it that self-criticism should lead to improvement, and with some basis, as illustrated in the "Putting the Screws to Yourself" image: when required to do something in which he has little interest, one can generally buckle down, get tough with himself, and get the job done. Being really tough on oneself does increase motivation, at least temporarily, and often long enough to finish the job. While being tough on oneself for a short time may produce some temporary improvements, being extremely harsh on a continual basis is most likely to result in discouragement, exhaustion, and resistance. Thus, the connection between self-criticism and improvement is incomplete: improvement may or may not occur, depending on circumstances and personal dispositions. Often, the person's understanding or assumption is implicit: he is not aware he is making it and has not consciously evaluated it as correct or incorrect. Because it is an unrecognized assumption, it is particularly immune to disconfirmation by observations. The person may see his failures in the light of self-criticism, and conclude only that he has not been critical enough. Signs of resistance and discouragement may provoke him to apply even more pressure, in an attempt to overcome the lethargy.

Similarly, a person's criticism of another is often intended to better the other. A parent may criticize his child in order to have the child see his mistakes and improve his conduct. In its more severe forms, criticism is a punishment: a tongue-lashing may be every bit as painful as a physical

punishment or restriction. Such criticism, sparingly used, may produce compliance and improvement. Harsh or continual criticism is more likely to result in discouragement, loss of confidence, exhaustion, defiance, and failure. Again, unfortunately, the child's failure to improve does not necessarily lead the parent to try other methods. The parent's understanding is implicit, and is not necessarily challenged by failure. When the child fails to improve, the parent may easily assume he has been too lenient, and therefore increase the criticism. The method may even get unjustified confirmation. Children will often straighten up and comply immediately following criticism, keeping quiet for a moment, and doing what they are supposed to do. But a few minutes later they return to their previous behavior, often even noisier and less compliant for having received what they see as unjust and undeserved criticism.

The therapist's intervention here often begins with a statement of the client's implicit understanding or assumption. Where self-criticism is for self-improvement, the client often will agree freely that being tough on himself does, or will, or should make him improve. If needed, the therapist may legitimize the client's understanding, by using the "Putting the Screws to Yourself" image to show that the assumption is sometimes correct. Often in such cases, the client has grown up with a parent who criticized him in order to make him improve. The parent's understanding—that criticism should lead to improvement—can be used directly to account for the client's assumption: he simply assimilated that way of seeing and doing things. Legitimizing affirms the client's rationality, and at the same time allows him to accept more easily that he may be mistaken.

The therapist's aim is that the client become convinced that harsh self-criticism is not a very good means of self-improvement. The task is to undermine the client's assumption, without generating resistance by a direct challenge. Sometimes the client sees the mistake as soon as his assumption is mentioned. When he doesn't, one good first step is to ask, "Is it working?". The client comes to his own conclusion—that no, it doesn't work for him. For emphasis, the therapist might add playfully: "If it does make you improve, you ought to be just about perfect by now, because you sure do enough of it."

The client who is really committed to the assumption may sense at this point that he is in trouble with it, but move toward resistance rather than change. Here the therapist might suggest that it is up to the client to figure it out, and he must not take anyone else's word for it. The therapist might even add, again playfully: "Perhaps being tough on yourself *is* the golden road to improvement, and you just haven't given it a fair chance. You might want to try it for a few more days, or a few more weeks or months. Or perhaps you need to be tougher, and you might give that a try."

Following such a suggestion, the client's remaining resistance must be expressed through controlling his self-criticism. Arguing for or continuing the self-criticism, because it follows the suggestion, now counts as compliance rather than as resistance.

Most often, the client sees the mistake and lessens the tendency, but the self-criticism nonetheless appears again a short bit later. Therapist reminders are necessary, until the client becomes able to catch himself. "Ah, there you go with your self-improvement program again," may become an in-joke between therapist and client.

The client may involve himself more by actively stating his assumption. The therapist may ask him to say aloud, "If I punish myself enough, I won't make so many mistakes.". The client may also be instructed to repeat it to himself when he finds himself being too self-critical.

Continual pressure is seen not necessarily as the preferred means of self-improvement, but more often as the only means. The client here usually sees himself as incompetent or lazy, so that it is only by constant pressure that he accomplishes anything, or could ever possibly hope to accomplish anything. "If I were not putting the screws to myself," he asks, "then what would make me ever do anything?". It is a good question. Such a client may have been pressuring himself for so long that he has failed to develop any interests, any intrinsic involvements, any sense of what he genuinely wants to do as opposed to what he merely should do or has to do. Since intrinsic interests arise in the absence of overwhelming pressures, it is often only through the lessening of the pressures that such interests may be understood. Thus, the rationale here is that it cannot be done otherwise, and the prescription is to lessen the pressure long enough to see what one is and is not genuinely interested in accomplishing.

High Opinion of Oneself

Self-criticism may be used to maintain a high opinion of oneself. The person takes it that he is somebody special; somebody with excellent abilities and high standards of conduct and performance; somebody in a position to make a difference. And from the vantage point of such high self-appraisals, he sees that his actions fall short and place him in an embarrassing position. The person's course is to criticize the action, as a means of renouncing it and seeing it as something other than a reflection of himself. Thus, the claim is that the action is beneath him, and that he is still who he is despite the appearance to the contrary. Although it may appear paradoxical, the person actually affirms himself by so renouncing his behavior.

Such a move makes sense in two ways. To the person who sees himself as so special, it is consistent and follows naturally that he give an unfavor

able appraisal to a less than superior action. Such an action is beneath somebody of such high characteristics, and the person is merely commenting on the obvious. In this sense, the unfavorable appraisal is an expression of a vision which is restricted and directed downward by an unreasonably high self-appraisal.

In the other sense, renouncing the action serves to protect the self-appraisal, and to maintain and enhance one's sense of superiority. The self-criticism is the person's statement to himself that he really is better than shown, and implicitly confers upon himself an especially high status. In this latter sense, the satisfaction is from the implicit claims to superiority and status, which is the point of the following three images from Ossorio (1976).

The "Kissinger Joke" conveys the grandiosity involved in holding oneself accountable for that which was in reality outside of one's control: "A man drops into a bar after work and has a couple of drinks. It is announced on the television that Henry Kissinger is going to Peking—top secret negotiations and such, possible opening of diplomatic relations. 'How could I have been such a fool,' he moans. 'It's a mistake; I shouldn't have let him go. Now I've ruined everything.' And while he is ostensibly bemoaning his stupidity, one gets the sense that there is something funny going on." At this point, the therapist asks the client what it is that is fishy. Usually the client has the idea, and if not, the therapist fills it in. "In criticizing himself for allowing Kissinger to go to Peking, the man is making an implicit claim that he was in a position to do something about it. In this case, he was claiming to be the President, and that's high status indeed."

As with other images, treatment involves the presentation of the image to the client, followed by the therapist's making the connections between the image and the client's circumstances. With the individual client, discussion involves what he was claiming to be in a position to have accomplished; how realistic the claim may be; and the grandiosity of such a claim. Implicit in grandiosity is an inability or unwillingness to see oneself in a more modest light, and it may be worthwhile to discuss what restricts the client from accepting a more modest self-appraisal.

The "Kissinger Joke" is what Ossorio (1976) terms a "Poisoning the Well" move. The client until then was able to find in damning himself the satisfaction of maintaining a high self-image. Through the image, he sees that such self-blame does not enhance his status, but only maintains his pretense of status. Thus, while he can continue the self-blame, he no longer finds it satisfying in the same way. Hence the expression, "Poisoning the Well," for it takes only a small dose to ruin the flavor of what was previously a reservoir of satisfaction.

One always runs the risk of offending a client by calling him grandiose. The "Kissinger Joke" takes the initial focus off the client, and presents the

grandiosity issue in a humorous way. Clients are more willing to accept such a presentation of an otherwise distasteful interpretation, and often do so without major resistance. They don't necessarily like it, but have already seen and enjoyed the rationale.

The "Art Critic" image conveys the status involved in excessively high standards. Among art critics, we often see a preponderance of adversely critical appraisals. More movies, plays, books, etc., are given unfavorable reviews than warmly favorable ones. And that is no accident. The art critic makes his living via his criticism, and his status as a critic depends on his reviews. The critic who says that a movie looks just fine to him is leaving himself wide open to be one-upped. Another critic may give an unfavorable review, saying in effect that it may be good enough for the competition, but it certainly doesn't meet his (higher) standards. So to stay one-up in that practice, the critic needs to have high standards, and to look down a bit. The art critic does just that, and the image fits the client who does it for the same reasons.

In the "Super-Critic" image, it is not merely high status but ultimate superiority and perfection which is the issue. The person is saying in effect that nothing is good enough for him—that his standards are just that high. The ordinary things that are good enough for ordinary run-of-the-mill people just are not satisfactory for the super-critic. His criticism of everything is an implicit claim to ultimately superior status, to being in a position so far above everyone that he can judge it all and find it lacking. The "Art Critic" and "Super-Critic" images illustrate the satisfactions involved in criticizing others' works. The same high standards and satisfactions are involved in criticizing one's own actions and outcome.

The "Super-Critic" may be found in any setting, and one that is widely familiar is academia. Consider the dissertation student who cannot get underway with his thesis: Each topic seems too limited, each approach seems inadequate. If the student expects that his is going to be an important contribution, he may be rejecting available possibilities in order to maintain this sense of importance. Any thesis he actually writes may fall short. By rejecting each of his initial involvements, he maintains his great expectations, his sense of himself as someone with something of importance to contribute.

In therapy, an image serves to illustrate the issue in a familiar and non-threatening way. It is then applied to the client's situation, in a manner appropriate to the therapy relationship. Should the client be suspicious or overly sensitive, the therapist might suggest rather than force the analogy: "That sort of issue might apply to what you're doing here. Can you see any connection?" As with other images, the term is a handle on the entire image or issue, and the therapist thus has the easy reminder: "Ah, remember the Super-Critic."

In treatment, the above images are used to challenge victim moves. The self-critical client often feels bullied, pushed around, and sees himself as a victim of unfair treatment. The images outline the satisfactions involved in doing the criticizing and affirms the client as the perpetrator rather than merely the victim of the injustice. He is already in control, and the issue then becomes one of exercising the control in a more beneficial manner.

The client may still ask helplessly how he is to stop the self-criticism, thus countering the therapist's affirmation and maintaining himself as the helpless victim. The therapist again refers to the satisfaction involved: "Given such satisfactions, the issue is not whether you are able, but whether you are willing to give up the satisfactions." Where the client is unwilling, the therapist responds that it is understandable, that the client probably doesn't see anything to replace the satisfactions, or that it is difficult to give up something so central. The client is reaffirmed as in charge of his self-criticism, and his status is maintained.

Therapist-client interactions here have elements of a contest, as do many "Poisoning the Well" strategies. The client is not supposed to like the interpretation, but merely see the point in it, the significance. And where the therapist is genuinely supportive and on the client's side, such interpretations can be accepted by clients without undue bad feelings.

Penance

Self-criticism may be used to make amends for wrongdoing. A person who has done wrong has reason to make amends via acknowledgment of fault, penance, and restitution. All are ways of showing good faith—of saying that the transgressed standards do count, and that the wrongdoing is not an indication of one's true character.

In everyday conflicts between persons, it is not always clear who is in the wrong and who is being wronged. Commonly, this issue is negotiated by argument, ploys and counterploys, and the marshalling of evidence and allies. When one sees that he has done wrong and acknowledges it, he thereby stops the negotiation. In so doing, he accepts whatever loss of status (penance) is his as a wrongdoer, and he makes amends (restitution) by clearing the other of fault.

Often, an additional benefit is accomplished. By acknowledging his own wrongdoing, the person sets a precedent which invites others to acknowledge their own parts in the conflict. Fairness may require that an apology from one person be followed by apologies from the others. Thus, acknowledging wrongdoing may resolve the issue without the person's ending up at that much of a disadvantage.

Self-criticism thus may acknowledge wrongdoing, and accomplish

penance and restitution. It takes forms such as, "It's my fault," "I was mistaken," "I was being mean and selfish," and "I feel awful about how much trouble I have caused you." Such self-criticism is intended to show good faith despite implications that the person did wrong. By so doing, the person lessens the prospect of further accusations by others. He has confessed, and that may be sufficient. In addition, if others accept the confession and see it as a commitment to do better, the person regains standing as a morally sound person.

Paralleling the influence on others, the person may use self-criticism to see himself as a morally sound person. He may acknowledge fault to himself, and may accomplish penance through the suffering generated. The theology of penance holds that the willing self-infliction of suffering cleanses one's sins, and restores moral soundness. The practice of penance is not limited, however, to those with formal religious training. It may be an element of any culture, or perhaps of human nature. Certainly persons without formal religious training do practice penance.

Any appraisal of wrongdoing necessarily involves standards of conduct. What are appropriate standards of morality, and in what ways does the behavior fall short? Are the standards the person's own, or are they the standards of others which he unthinkingly accepts? Further, does he make the appraisal that he did wrong, or merely accept others' possibly self-interested statements?

Treatment should begin with a fair evaluation of the standards. Where standards are too strict, inconsistent, or otherwise inappropriate, client acceptance of better standards will correct the guilt problem. Where the client is setting the standards himself, direct discussion of moral and ethical issues is usually helpful. Where the client is submitting to unreasonable dictates of family or friends, such influences need to be examined and challenged. The course of therapy often involves examining and rearranging relationships with the family, friends, or others significant to the person.

Where the client has actually violated appropriate and just standards, the guilt is real and should be dealt with as real. Criticizing and demeaning oneself is a harsh way to go about it, but how else does one regain moral standing? Consider the distinction between penance and restitution—both are seen as ways of reaffirming one's morality in the face of wrongdoing. It is only penance, however, which emphasizes self-condemnation and suffering. Restitution may involve some difficulty, but emphasizes the correction of the wrongs rather than loss to the wrongdoers. The therapist's task then may be to encourage the client to use restitution rather than penance. In accomplishing this, one may need to outline the limitations and failings of penance: 'You're condemning yourself, doing penance if

you will, as a reaffirmation of your good moral character. But can you really accomplish it that way? Can you really be more moral merely by making yourself suffer? Maybe not."

The overriding theme of current ethics and morality is the affirmation of others and the avoidance of harming others (and oneself). Penance can be challenged in that it does nothing to help or better others, and may even be annoying or disturbing to others. Thus, while it may make the client *feel* more moral, the therapist argues that it cannot make him *be* more moral. In its own way it is even selfish. It allows the client to get without giving, to feel moral without doing anything for anyone else.

It is interesting that formal religion may be itself turning from penance to restitution. In confession the Catholic is often encouraged to do something good for the individual or community he has sinned against. Penance itself may be a leftover from medieval times, when there was little hope of bettering existence on earth, the Church was supporting the status quo, and morality was insulated from issues of everyday social relationships.

Often the person feels guilty but does not fully accept that he *is* guilty, and in such cases restitution suggestions go nowhere. The person feels guilty, yes, but feels also that it is others who are to blame for implicating him, for accusing him, for manipulating him, for making him feel guilty. Angers, resentments, and resistance accompany the feelings of guilt. The person thus may be willing to suffer for his wrongs, but he is unwilling to make amends to those he feels are also at fault. Restitution, because of its unselfishness, does not appeal to everybody.

The therapist might use a paradoxical affirmation, encouraging penance: "Your self-criticism is a form of penance, which is strong statement that those standards and values really do count for you. You are willing to punish yourself for your wrongdoings, and that in itself demonstrates good moral character. In that sense it is an honorable thing you are doing, and you may wish to continue punishing yourself, or perhaps to punish yourself more harshly. That's one way of showing that you're really sorry for what you did." The strategy accomplishes two objectives. It affirms the client's good moral character, thus lessening the pressure. Where the aim of the penance is already accomplished, why continue it? If he does continue, however, he is under the therapist's description continuing to be moral, which generates the therapeutic double bind: if he continues the self-criticism he is affirming his good character; if he stops it he is cured.

Secondly, the above strategy may evoke resistance in the client. He is being encouraged to continue or even increase something which is itself tiring and unpleasant. While he was willing to do it of his own chioce, he may be unwilling to continue it on somebody else's recommendation.

The therapist may even "volunteer" the client to assess how much more self-criticism is needed to complete the penance, thus pushing the client's assumptions to their necessary conclusions, and generating further resistance: "Your understanding is that punishing yourself is the right thing to do to make up for your wrongs. But you've been punishing yourself for quite a while now, and you still feel awful. Are you sure it's going to work?" The therapist allows some reflection, and then continues: "It hasn't worked so far, but perhaps you just haven't been tough enough. You might try doubling your self-punishment, and see if that works. I don't know that it will work, but you may have to try it to see for yourself." The client, who is engaging anyway in a futile endeavor, is thus being encouraged further in the same futile endeavor. The acknowledged futility here generates further resistance, as well as an understanding in the client that he has good reason not to continue that course of action.

Many of the same ends can be accomplished by similar strategy. The therapist suggests that the client may need to do penance, but there is no real reason to string it out over the whole day. A single concentrated self-condemnation session would accomplish the penance, perhaps 20 minutes before bedtime, leaving the client free of the guilt for much of the day but assured that self-punishment will be accomplished later. A slight to moderate hypnotic trance may be used to aid the suggestion, so that the therapist may have the client imagine actually freeing himself of the "guilties," conveying them to a concentrated time period, and being assured they will be dealt with then. The feasibility of forcing oneself to feel concentrated guilt is bypassed. Most often, the client resists concentrated feelings of guilt, sometimes forgetting the period of penance altogether. He should be encouraged, however, to actually stick to the penance period. Where the penance period is omitted, the client loses the reassurance that penance will actually be accomplished at all.

At times, it is not merely good faith or moral soundness which the person wishes to convey, but rather moral superiority and ethical infallibility. Such issues are presented in Ossorio's (1976) "Hanging Judge" image, which also involves self-righteousness and vindictiveness toward the wrongdoer. It illustrates an intention and attitude which by analogy applies to the person's action toward himself. The "Hanging Judge" metes out maximum penalties. What he is seeking is not merely justice, but the angry and vindictive destruction of the criminal. He attains a reputation for toughness which carries with it more than merely the lack of mercy. Such a self-presentation carries the claim that he is ultra-moral, that upholding the law matters deeply to him. It implies he is so tough that he is almost without sin, and certainly that he is beyond suspicion of criminal acts himself. At the same time, one might wonder why the "Hanging Judge" is so invested in being ultra-moral. A common account

is that he himself has either done or been sorely tempted by sinful acts. Being ultra-moral is a way of renouncing such activities, and functions to regain moral status and to maintain necessary self-control over evil urges.

As illustrated by the "Hanging Judge," vengeance and destructiveness toward oneself may convey ultra-morality. The client should be questioned as to exactly why he needs to appear so ultra-moral. What has gone on that could possibly require such stern reaffirmation of moral standing?

Self-restraint

Self-criticism may be a means of *self-restraint* in the face of tempting opportunities. A person who sees an opportunity to get something he wants thereby has a reason to try for it. At the same time, if what is desired is unsafe or unethical, he also has reason not to do it, and therein lies a conflict. Where safety or ethics are compelling reasons against an action, good judgment requires that it not be done. The person who is tempted to do it anyway obviously needs a means of restraining himself.

The most straightforward means of self-control is to convince oneself of the reasons against the action, maintain awareness of them, and act accordingly. Such an approach is not always possible, most particularly when a person is unable or unwilling to see, accept as legitimate, or act upon the restraining reason. In such instances the person needs alternate means of self-restraint. One way of avoiding a tempting action is to be in no position to do it, or to be convinced of being in no position to do it.

Self-appraisals convey one's position, status, and place in the world. Self-critical statements are unfavorable appraisals of one's own position or status, and may serve to remind or convince oneself of being in no position to undertake desired but unsafe activity. Saying it brings it home, and thus serves as self-restraint.

An unattractive person convinces himself that he is in no position to pursue a love affair with someone who is attractive; an incapable person is in no position to attempt difficult activities; an unworthy person should not expect the support of others. Or more generally, a nobody is in no position to act as a somebody with any real chance of success. The doors of opportunity are shut.

An example of unfavorable self-appraisals used for self-restraint is seen in the common and almost obsessive concern among teenagers over flaws in appearance. The social expectation among teenagers is not only that they meet and go out with the opposite sex, but that they enjoy and be good at such relationships. Opposite-sex relationships are obviously desirable, but teenagers usually lack adequate means of assessing standing with potential partners, or of navigating anything close to a safe course of conduct. Fears of being publicly seen as inappropriate, inadequate, out of

place, left behind, or rejected are worsened by a lack of sharing and support. And in addition, they have concerns about the ethics of sexual intimacies. Being unattractive is but one way the person would not fit in, but it is an obvious and tangible one and often serves as a focus for the more complex and unfamiliar issues of social standing. It is sometimes better to remind oneself of one's place, however modest, than to overstep it and be publicly embarrassed.

One client, an attractive married woman, held an inner sense that having an affair would be immoral as well as unsafe. Such reasons were not sufficient restraints, however. She felt her husband did not meet her needs, that he treated her badly, that he deserved infidelity, and that she was going to deliver. What to do? She became preoccupied with what she considered unattractive or flawed features, and that obsession restrained her from an affair. She demeaned herself until she ensured that she lacked the necessary confidence, so no action was possible.

As mentioned earlier, one person criticizing another is often similar to a person criticizing himself. Consider the Grier and Cobbs (1968) analysis of Negro families before the black equality movement. Mothers who were usually loving and nurturant were nonetheless at times harshly critical and demeaning toward their children—especially the boys—in effect undermining their confidence and thwarting their masculinity. While such messages appear hostile, the authors see that the real aim was to teach the boys their place in order to promote their safety. A Negro man who did not know his place might become enraged and challenge white authority, and perhaps end up being lynched. The mother's criticism was based on a good sense of culture and status, and the intention was to protect the boys against their own masculine self-assertive impulses.

In therapy, the task is to find better solutions to the safety or morality issues involved. Most often, this is best accomplished by moving directly to the issues themselves, as the client must understand his need for safety before being able to evaluate his means of attaining it.

With a teenager who is self-critical about her appearance, the therapist might comment on the difficulties of teenage dating, the naturalness of anxieties, and the need to have somebody to talk to. Acceptance and rejection by partners should be brought up, and the client questioned on how one could know if a guy or gal is really interested. With the issues spelled out, the client may accept an interpretation of the self-criticism such as, "I think that your standing with fellows is what you're really concerned about. Being so upset about your looks is one way of asking, 'Will I fit in; will they like me?' And looks are certainly one thing that matters a lot to fellows, though not the only thing. Perhaps we would do better thinking about how you do fit in. At least, that is something you may be able to do something about."

With the married client mentioned above, the safety and morality of having an affair were discussed. The therapist made an activity interpretation of the self-criticism, suggesting but not forcing the issue of intentionality. "Your obsession with your flawed features destroys your confidence, and you end up staying home anyway. I wonder if you're trying to tell yourself something like 'Watch out, I'm not ready for that affair'."

Where self-restraint seems overly conservative, the client is encouraged to trust a bit more, to take some chances. Where restraint is good judgment, one should not expect the self-criticism to lessen until the client has alternate ways of managing impulses. Initially, some self-management strategy may be necessary. The client might be persuaded to delay the desired experience until he is better able to handle the situation, with the expectation that he can have it then, and will enjoy it more. The ideal is not merely to restrain desires, however, but to somehow reconcile what one wants with what is practical and safe, and therapy works toward this overall goal.

Avoidance of Disappointment

Self-criticism may be used to *reduce potential disappointments*. Everyone has expectations and opinions of himself, of who he is, and what he can reasonably expect to accomplish. Such self-understanding is generally covered by the terms "self-image," "self-concept," "self-esteem," "opinion of oneself," or just "self." The issue is often personally sensitive, and one may have considerable investment in the nature and stability of who he sees himself to be.

Ideally, one's opinion of oneself corresponds with who one is in daily life. And yet the correspondence cannot be perfect—there may be unexpected achievements and unexpected failings. Within the framework of different situations, one may see himself as sometimes more, sometimes less, and sometimes merely different than his expectations.

A low or modest opinion of oneself may have the advantage of safety. A person with modest expectations may be surprised by good news but he will not be surprised by failure—that he expects. A person with a high expectation may be shocked, disappointed, or hurt by adverse circumstances, and may have his sense of himself challenged and undermined by others. The person with the low opinion of himself takes no such chances—he plays it safe. Issues of control are often important here. The person generates his own low self-image and self-esteem, and does not allow circumstances or others to do it for him. It may not feel good, but at least that way he is in charge of who he is.

A common example of self-criticism to avoid disappointment is found in the student who generally does well in his courses, but who nonetheless is obsessively concerned about failing any given exam. As he sees it, he is

too stupid, too unprepared, or the test is too difficult for him. Considerable anxiety and wasted actions are involved with such low self-expectations, but there is the advantage that he is prepared for the worst, and cannot be too upset by any outcome. Even the worst could not be that bad in comparison with his expectations, or in comparison with the suffering he has already accustomed himself to. And he himself maintains control of his own emotional state, and does not allow the whims of fate to have the final say.

In therapy, the first step is to discuss the protective function served by his low self-assessments. Often, the person already has a sense that this self-criticism is somehow safer, and he finds the interpretation acceptable or even intriguing. Some progress may be made through outlining the reasons, following with the obvious issue of "Is it worth it?" For more impact, the therapist might challenge the client on his overcontrol. "You're attempting to be in charge of anything bad that might happen to you; you're not allowing the world to have a say in anything. That's quite a control trip you're on, isn't it?"

Sometimes emphasizing the conservative safety has impact: "You're choosing to play it safe and avoid getting hurt, no matter what the price." Where the person has a stoic pride in his willingness to endure suffering, the statement challenges where it counts: the message is that a real willingness to endure requires the person to live more optimistically and accept the disappointments involved.

Should the client feel that this strategy is worth the price, the therapist accepts the choice, but nonetheless there is some gain. The client is now someone who is in charge of the self-criticalness and is behaving for understandable reasons. If it appears initially worth the price, perhaps the therapist could tip the balance the other way: "How much shock and pain need accompany life's disappointments?" The therapist might help the client deal with the disappointments in a healthier manner, as: "Even when you lose, you might still be somebody who thinks well of himself, who tries, and that's something more than just a loser."

Or the person feels he should not have to endure disappointments. Often, disappointment for this person means more than lack of success. It connotes overstepping appropriate bounds, and the person feels foolish, embarrassed, sinful, and alone. He assumes his more optimistic acquaintances are not faced with such hardships. The therapist should convey that disappointments are part of the human condition, and challenge the client on his claimed privilege: "You feel you're somebody who shouldn't have to endure disappointments. Everybody else has to, but you're above all that, you're special." Usually, the client sees his pessimism as a break-even strategy, and the therapist's statement here conveys that it is much more: the client is trying to get above and ahead of everybody else. There

is some comfort in realizing that disappointments are a part of our shared humanity.

As in the other sections, the above is an outline of treatment issues. In practice, issues are presented with greater elaboration a·,d complexity, and tailored to the individual client. Commonly, the issue arises and is dealt with several times in a similar but abbreviated manner.

Safe Status

Self-criticism may constitute a *safe self-presentation*. A person's statements about himself are presentations to others of who he believes he is, and of how he is asking to be seen. In this sense, they are implicit claims to status or standing, and others then accept or fail to accept the claimed status. Others accept the claimed status by treating the person as who he says he is, or fail to accept it by overt challenge, undermining, or simply not going along with it. Status claims may be subject to considerable challenge, reaffirmation, and negotiation.

Self-critical statements are claims to lower or less desirable status, and therein lies the safety. While any self-presentation is subject to acceptance by others, claims to low status are particularly invulnerable to challenge and undermining. A person claiming to be a nobody, to be incapable and unworthy, is extremely difficult to undermine—he is already too low. Others may not agree with him and may argue with him that he really is more than he says he is. Usually, in so doing, they merely frustrate themselves.

A high status claim, on the other hand, makes one considerably more vulnerable. A person presenting himself as somebody worthy and capable may have his self-presentation rejected, and find himself seen and treated as somebody less than he claimed to be.

Everyone has a certain amount of self-esteem connected with his self-presentations. Seeing one's self-presentation undermined by others may be a blow to one's esteem—an insult, a slap in the face, a rejection, a failing, an embarrassment. The person who is unprepared to deal with status challenges and rejections would find the needed safety in sticking with low-status self-presentations.

The situation is more dangerous when challenge and undermining are expected from significant others. Not surprisingly, self-critical persons are usually closely involved with family or friends who are critical and undermining.

Often there are norms or conventions against making positive self-presentations. The person who says he is somebody and has done well violates the norm, and may evoke envy and jealousy, challenge and

negation from others. Where convention holds that modesty is a virtue, the self-critical individual adheres to that convention.

A mother, for example, who says she does well as a parent may generate an unfavorable comparison between herself and others who are having difficulties. And the other parents, rather than seeking to learn from her, may attempt to undermine her self-presentation: "Ah, just wait till the kid gets to be a teenager—then you'll be in for a big shock," or "That's what I thought, too, before I learned better." As a consequence, parents may talk to each other about the difficulties they are having, but seldom do they say much about the exceptional parenting they have accomplished.

The person riding high may be shot down out of the saddle, while the man who is already on the ground takes no such chances. There is a certain safety in being down low, especially if one is in hostile territory and is not a particularly good rider.

In treatment here, an initial move is to outline for the client the above self-presentation issues. A person often assumes that any attacks on his self-presentation are somehow deserved. Understanding that others' attacks may be motivated by competitiveness and jealousy helps the client put the issue into perspective. Such undermining is still unpleasant, but no longer means necessarily that the client has been immoral, incorrect, or wrong.

Those people who generally undermine should be distinguished from those who do not. The client may need to watch himself carefully with some people, but may be pretty much himself with others.

Being challenged on a self-presentation does not mean that the game is lost. It is a contest, and the initial self-presentation may be maintained by an appropriate comeback. Often the client is unable to fend off the challenge, or more commonly, does not even consider doing so. The therapist attempts to remedy this restriction. One good beginning is to sketch possible counter-strategies. The client thus sees that there are workable comebacks to challenges, and that it is something he himself might be able to do. Through the sketch he is already credited with a win, at least a vicarious one, and the therapist affirms the legitimacy of the client's position.

One form of comeback is to comment on the challenge or undermining: "You don't think I should have so much confidence?" or "You feel I think too highly of myself?" Such comments hold the adversary responsible for his challenge, and put the client on an equal footing.

The therapist may ask the client to make a positive self-statement, and then show his approval. The client sees that someone can accept and affirm a positive self-presentation. In sessions with the spouse or other

significant person present, actually trying out positive self-presentations may have considerable benefit. The reservations and difficulties become apparent and can be dealt with there in the session. Where the spouse supports the client's optimism, a new pattern may be established. Where the spouse fails to approve, there is further grist for the mill.

Sympathy

Self-criticism may be used to enlist *sympathetic involvement*. Being overly tough on oneself invites others to be sympathetic and to try to correct the situation, often via reassuring and affirming the person's worth and abilities. Others become involved and concerned about one's welfare and general well-being.

A person who is isolated, lonely, and unloved has reason to desire such sympathetic involvement, and can easily see self-criticism as a way of attaining his main satisfaction. The reassurance, one observes, is often merely countered by more "I'm no good" statements. In this strategy, there may be some importance in not allowing the others to succeed in their reassurance. He sees that if others do succeed in reassuring him, the job would be done, and the others would feel free to go on to other things. To him that means abandonment and renewed isolation. The involvement reminds him that he is not alone in the miseries, that another is joining with him in taking them on.

Often, the reassuring friend shares in the misery, saddened by what he hears and frustrated by his inability to do anything about it. If misery loves company, as it is said, the person's self-criticism earns good company indeed. To the extent that sympathetic friends join in the sorrow, there is an added advantage—an unfavorable comparison is avoided between the person's own unhappiness and what might have otherwise been happier and better-off friends.

On the other hand, a constant pattern of self-criticism is hard on one's associates. They weary of giving so much reassurance and seeing no improvement, and eventually, they may try to avoid someone who is excessively self-critical. This avoidance, in turn, provokes fears of abandonment, anger at being left alone, and feelings of worthlessness. The person's implicit understanding is that being tough on himself should bring sympathetic involvement, and such an assumption would not necessarily be challenged by occasional failure. Indeed, withdrawal by others may lead to a further self-criticism, in an attempt to re-involve others and as a reaction to the anger and despair of the abandonment.

In treatment, the therapist asks how others react to the client's self-criticism. Are others straightforwardly sympathetic and supportive, or do they get annoyed and weary? Often the client already feels that others

don't really mean it, that they feel they have to reassure him but wouldn't wish to on their own. He may feel others are letting him down. The therapist's course here gives others the benefit of the doubt, and places the responsibility on the client's way of going about things. Obligating others does indeed elicit obligatory support, but what else could one expect? Furthermore, there is no way of knowing if the support is ever genuine. The client forced the support, so how could he see it or believe it even if it were genuine? The conclusion here is that to be able to see others as genuine, one has to give them the freedom to be genuine. Is the client willing to take such a chance on another's good faith?

Other than dwelling on their problems, such clients often lack any good idea of how to talk about themselves. The therapist would thus account for negative self-presentations by suggesting that the client is simply unable to talk about himself in any other way. Such clients need to explore alternatives, to talk about attitudes, interests, ambitions, achievements, feelings, and opinions, or almost anything. Quite astonishingly to some clients, others may be interested even in that. Not uncommonly, the restrictions here are embedded. The therapist may have to suggest particular statements as illustrations, and then have the client actually practice them. If a family member or friend is in the session, the client can try out being optimistic and see if the other responds with encouragement and support. This type of interchange has quite an impact when it works, and the therapist troubleshoots any difficulties which occur.

Avoidance of Responsibility

Self-criticism may be used to *avoid responsibility*. One is responsible only for what he is in a position to influence, for what he is in some way able to do something about. A fair or just sense of accountability follows similar lines: one should be accountable only for what he is in a position to influence. There are actually two parts here, holding oneself accountable and being held accountable by others, and the same argument applies to both. One should hold himself accountable, and be held accountable, only where he is in a position to do something about it.

Self-criticism may be a statement, an appraisal that one is less than he otherwise appears. Statements such as "I'm no good at anything," "I always mess everything up," or "I can't control my nerves," are statements that one is incapable. And one who really is incapable is in no position to influence the matter, and therefore should not be held responsible: "Don't expect too much from me because, you see, I've got this 'wooden leg'." Self-criticism is thus a claim to the status "incapable," which carries with it the advantage of not being accountable.

It is not unusual to see friends or family members actually competing

for standing as the most miserable of the group. The "winner" of the contest is out from under the burdens and has a claim to being taken care of. The loser is saddled with the obligation to take care of the needy ones, and is accountable for whatever goes wrong.

Where self-criticism leads to reassurance, responsibility is being transferred. It is the reassuring others who are taking implicit responsibility for making the person feel better. They are the ones concerned about his feelings, not the person himself, and they either raise his self-esteem or fail at it. A person with general miseries surely finds relief, perhaps even some satisfaction, when someone else takes responsibility for his state, and takes the pressure off him.

Seeing oneself and presenting oneself as incapable carries with it the obvious price: one acts accordingly, and misses the satisfactions and joys available to competent people. Such a choice becomes intelligible when one considers that responsibility can be a weighty burden indeed. Often, these persons feel absolutely overburdened and overwhelmed. Responsibility is not necessarily an easy thing for even the most thoughtful and capable. For someone with confused or chaotic relationships, it may be indeed unmanageable.

Commonly, such persons misunderstand just what they are and are not responsible for. Where the person feels he is accountable for everything, he finds it severely taxing. If the choices are between being always to blame, and being a nobody who cannot be blamed, it is understandable that people choose the latter. Frequently, such persons have had inadequate or incorrect training in setting reasonable standards for personal accountability. Often, there is presently someone holding the person accountable for far more than anyone should be expected to deal with.

The main therapeutic task is to enable the client to see responsibility as a fair, understandable and manageable issue. One might begin by presenting and legitimizing the client's self-presentation. "You're saying here that you're somebody who is not capable of meeting those sorts of responsibilities, that you're not to blame. And the way you talk about those responsibilities, they do indeed sound overwhelming. It's not surprising at all that you want to get out of them, and you're doing just that. But let's look further, and see if responsibility needs to be so terrible."

Where the client holds himself overly accountable, the therapist introduces and advocates reasonable standards. Perhaps the client evaluates himself only by his results, and disregards his intentions and efforts in the matter. "Even when you've done your best, you still condemn yourself if everything doesn't turn out well. You're missing the intentions in what you're doing, you're missing the part that you contribute. Seems like you're blind to the better part of who you are and what you're about."

Frequently in these cases, significant others are holding the person

overly accountable, perhaps by illegitimate or manipulative means. The therapist challenges such influences, conveying their unfairness or dishonesty. The client is encouraged to challenge the others' demands, mentally and in the actual relationships.

Avoidance of responsibility tends to run in families. The client may have assimilated the "wooden leg" strategy from a parent who used it to control and obligate him. He is only trying to break even, to out-manipulate using the same tools. Challenging the parent's manipulativeness first allows the therapist to be on the client's side, to be supportive. It is then easier to interpret that the client himself had adopted the strategy—it may have been the only way he had of breaking even.

Hostility

Self-criticism may express *hostility*. Seeing a person being overly self-critical is often distressing to family and friends who care. A person who sees himself as wronged has reason to get back, and self-criticism may be an unobvious means of doing just that. The necessary conditions are that one wants or has reasons to get back at others, and that he takes it that self-criticism distresses them.

A person using self-criticism to express hostility is angry, and often appears angry. Further, the angry "I'm such an awful person" or "I'm no good at anything" statements appear to be anger directed at oneself. It is this appearance or disguise which makes the hostility difficult to see or to challenge, and thus it becomes particularly tormenting. Such ruggedness of camouflage makes the self-criticism a particularly safe form of hostility. Failing to see its significance, others do not hold the person accountable for the hostility. And should they suspect, the person already appears so miserable that challenge and accusation would be difficult.

Often, the immediate circumstances seem to indicate another as the cause of or at fault for the person's self-criticism. Consider an incident in which the wife has spent several hours making a gourmet meal. The husband comes home late, eats mostly in silence, but comments that the duck is dry, perhaps overcooked. The wife states angrily that she is an awful cook and nothing she does is ever right. She dumps the dry duck in the garbage, platter and all, and runs from the table. The effect is to convey not only her distress but also that it was the husband who caused it and was at fault. The husband's comment was the provocation, and she let him have it.

The therapist's initial move is to convey the issue in a manner acceptable to the client. Ordinarily, the therapist avoids straightforward interpretations which would make the client feel accused, exposed, and vulnerable. These persons go to considerable expense to disguise the

anger in self-criticism, and usually need the cover. Unless there is an exceptionally trusting relationship, interpreting the hostility would be seen as coercive, and would elicit client resistance.

Through legitimizing the anger, the therapist may gain entry. The provocation, mistreatment, and injustice of the situation serve to make sense of and to justify the anger. Thus, without being forced to admit that he himself was angry, the client can accept that one might have been legitimately angry in that situation.

Take the example above of the duck's hapless journey to the garbage. The therapist legitimizes: "That must have been annoying, to invest so much in cooking a really special meal, and to get nothing back except the silent treatment. Sounds like his comment about your cooking was the last straw. That's enough to make anybody angry."

Sometimes legitimizing allows the client to accept his anger. In other instances, the client may still maintain his cover: "I wasn't angry; I was hurt/upset." The therapist might sidestep the resistance here, and continue legitimizing. "I'm not necessarily saying that you were angry. I'm just saying that it was extremely thoughtless of your husband, and was the sort of thing that would make most people angry." Ordinarily, the client will not argue with this one: she agrees that she was mistreated, and does not feel accused or made vulnerable by the therapist's statement.

The client's anger is being channelled into self-derogatory rather than self-affirming actions. The therapist's task is to enable the client to actively affirm himself and to improve his situation, lessening the provocations which evoke anger. Often, however, such clients have definite reservations about self-affirmation. They feel it is selfish and wrong to look out for themselves, to put their own interests ahead of others. The expression of hostility through self-criticism is thus a next best solution, because it has the appearance of being unselfish.

When the client is able to accept and see his hostility, this may be used as a rationale for self-affirmation. The actual choice is no longer between selfishness and purity, it is between self-affirmation, and continued hostility and hurt to oneself and others. Injustices are difficult to ignore, and there is no innocence. Self-affirmation must surely be seen as the lesser of the evils.

Standard methods, including illustration of assertive moves and client practice in role-play situations, may be used to teach self-assertiveness. Self-criticism diminishes as the client becomes able to deal with provocations more constructively.

Loyalty and Belonging

In certain circumstances, self-criticism may express *loyalty and belonging*. A child growing up with criticism has been exposed to a convention, a

way of life. Being a member in good standing in that family often means accepting parental authority, the criticism. Opposing or ignoring his parents, in contrast, may be disloyal and disrespectful, and leave the child isolated and on his own. Through such socialization, the child comes to see acceptance of the criticism as necessary for being a member of the family. Later, loyalty and belonging may still be important, and the person may turn the criticism on himself as an affirmation of his place in the family. He carries on the family's tradition.

Such a person would have strong feelings about the parents, and about being a member of the parental family. While he might feel wronged by the harsh treatment he has received, he would be unable to effectively oppose the authority and set an independent direction. Even as an adult, he sees opposing a parent's statements as disloyal and disrespectful. Belonging to that family is important, and may be all he really has to hold on to. Most often, he has not really established himself in a current family. While self-condemnation may not feel good, at least he feels he has a place somewhere, that he belongs.

Treatment here often begins by outlining to the client such loyalty and membership issues. The task then is to counter the critical messages his parent has given, without generating client resistances or challenging the client's loyalty and respect toward his parent.

One often effective way of doing this is to agree initially that offspring should love and respect their parents. Furthermore, the client is credited already with such feelings, as shown by his observed commitments toward his parents' ideas. At this point, the therapist mentions that real people are fallible and do indeed make mistakes. The question then is raised of whether the client loves an ideal of his parent, or whether he is able to love the parent as he really is, including his failings and mistakes. Is not more compassion and real loyalty required to see another's mistakes and still love him, than merely to love him in the ideal? Thus, following the policy to use what counts to the client, the therapist makes client acceptance of parental fallibility count as real love, and opens the door to overturning the parent's harsh appraisals. Indeed, seeing the parent as overly harsh, mistaken, and even sometimes mean, itself becomes real loyalty: It means seeing and loving the parent as he actually is. The client's loyalty is used to move him toward independence.

The client may be encouraged to improve his present relationships with his parents. As an adult, he is now in a position himself to influence his parents so that they criticize him less. The therapist aids in constructing strategies to change the client's status with his parents, to fit him into the family as an equal rather than as a misbehaving child. In some cases the parents change easily; in other cases, unfortunately, they never will change.

The client may be overvaluing his relationship with the parents, and in many cases this is due to inadequate belonging and commitment in present relationships. The parents are overvalued because they are the only family he has. There are no easy tips for this one. Improvement of present relationships should be a main task of any treatment, and is done in any or all of the ways it can be done.

Argument

Finally, self-criticism may be maintained out of *argumentativeness*. Often the overly self-critical person finds his remarks being challenged by friends and family, or even casual acquaintances. His "I'm no good" statements are met with "Yes, you are, too," and his "I'm afraid I'll fail" statements with "Don't worry, it'll turn out O.K." Such counterstatements, while meant to be reassuring, are in effect directly contradictory, conveying the message that the person's own statement is merely mistaken and of no real consequence.

Recall, again, the two positions: the person as actor making the criticism, and the person as recipient being criticized. The friend's reassurance is an attempt to support the person as recipient of criticism, and his intention is generally to be supportive. Just as surely, the reassurance is also an opposition to the person as actor making the criticism. The friend's reassurance is a challenge, a contradiction, an undermining, a discounting of the actor and of his position. It is an attempt to diminish or eliminate the perpetrator of the criticism, so that the friend's own more positive messages will carry the day. The above two-position heuristic carries with it the reminder, "Keep your eye on the actor." In most cases the actor-critic does not simply disappear upon being so challenged. In contrast, the challenge gives the actor reason to respond via reaffirming his position, via repeating his self-critical statement, arguing it stronger and louder, and via marshalling more evidence to support his contention that he is no good.

Such argument is in one important sense actually reaffirming himself and his status. The person who sees himself as worthless and incapable might take it he is someone at least capable of making that appraisal, of seeing his miserable position and stating it accurately. The contradiction of his statement is a challenge to his last vestige of esteem and status, and he fights tenaciously. He will maintain his right to make his own self-appraisals.

The person may see the issues his self-critical statements as personally sensitive and important. In such cases, a contradictory response leaves him feeling badly ignored and misunderstood, or even betrayed by the

friend's failure to take his important message seriously. Such feelings may lead to further esteem problems or further urgency in expressing the messages, and thus to further self-criticism.

In medicine, the term "iatrogenic effects" covers those side effects and additional sickness caused by the physician's attempts to cure the patient. Perhaps the concept applies equally well here, as it is the other's good-faith attempts to reassure and thus alleviate the self-criticism which provides the person with additional reasons for more strongly advocating his self-critical statements.

The therapist should be sensitive to self-criticism out of argumentativeness, and should avoid trying to force an argumentative client into a more optimistic outlook. One obvious first step in alleviating iatrogenic self-criticism is to avoid causing it.

Nonetheless, the therapist may need to convey that the client is misstating things, and that he is not really as badly off as he is presenting himself to be. The therapist's task then is to convey the information without opposing or contradicting the client's negative self-statements, and thus without provoking him to argument. One approach is to focus on what the client is doing, without stating directly that he is wrong. "You're really tough on yourself," or "You seem to be ready to stomp yourself for any failing." The client may agree, or he may disagree. But the issue is whether he is too tough on himself, and he cannot argue against the therapist by simply continuing the self-criticism. Should he attempt that, e.g., "But I really am that awful," the therapist counters with "See what I mean?" The client's only real counter would be to argue that he really isn't too tough on himself. For that, the best supporting evidence would be to show less self-criticism.

In situations where the therapist is called on to comment on the client's self-criticism, he may find himself in something of a bind. Were he to disagree, he would evoke further argument, whereas were he to agree he might be offensive and untherapeutic, as well as untruthful. It is often best for the therapist to express his opinion but to minimize its importance, and to continue dealing with the way the client sees it. Suppose a moderately attractive woman states emphatically that she is ugly. The therapist might respond, "I'm not sure I see it that way, but if you were ugly, that would be a difficult thing to have to deal with. Is there a place in this world for people who are not so attractive?"

The above comment avoids argument, and provides an additional benefit as well. In claiming to be ugly, the client is saying something about herself which ordinarily would hurt, and should hurt. Where others contradict her, they in effect protect her from the pain that statement should carry with it. When allowed to actually experience it, the pain itself

provides a reason to avoid such self-criticisms: hearing such awful things about oneself simply hurts too much, and that is its own reason not to say them.

Summary

I have thus outlined twelve categories of issues, intentions and reasons that may be involved in any particular instance of self-criticism. In summary, self-criticism may be:

1. A self-appraisal, to better understand one's limitations and one's place.
2. Pressure, to force oneself to improve.
3. A renunciation of one's failings, to maintain a high opinion of oneself.
4. Acknowledgement and amends for wrongdoing, to affirm moral standing.
5. A reminder of limitations, to restrain oneself against desired but unsafe or unethical actions.
6. A low self-expectation, to avoid disappointment.
7. A downtrodden self-presentation, to make oneself safe from undermining by others.
8. A pitiful self-presentation, to evoke sympathetic involvement from others.
9. An appearance of being incapable, to avoid responsibility.
10. Disguised hostility, to harm others, to get back.
11. An acceptance of limited status, to affirm one's loyalty and belonging.
12. An argument, to reaffirm one's opinion against challenge.

INTEGRATIVE TREATMENT

In any instance of self-criticism, the person may have one of these reasons, or several in combination. Where he has but one major reason, treatment is more straightforward. Where he has several reasons in combination, each of the major reasons must be addressed, and treatment involves complex sequences and combinations of appraisals and treatment strategies. Unfortunately, many of the harsher and more stubborn cases of self-criticism do involve multiple reasons. Ossorio (1969/1980) has stated a maxim to the effect that, where a person has a second reason to do something, he has a stronger reason to do it than if he had just one of the reasons. Often it is those second, third, and fourth reasons which account for the harshness of the self-criticism, and for its stubborness and resistance to treatment.

Several of these reasons commonly occur in combination with others. One may criticize himself with no other reason than to appraise himself and his behavior. In contrast, where one criticizes himself in argument, he generally has another reason as well, since he has criticized himself initially for that other reason, and has been contradicted. Similarly, where one criticizes himself to express hostility, he always has a second reason: to disguise the hostility and prevent retaliation. It is the two reasons in combination which account for self-criticism, rather than some other more straightforward means for expressing hostility. Further, where the person feels hostility is not merely unsafe but also wrong, his self-criticism may be penance as well. Thus, he criticizes himself to harm another, to remain safe from retaliation, and to do penance for the harm he is doing. Another combination of reasons may occur where one has done poorly: He may criticize himself as a punishment to make himself improve, to do penance for the failing, and to restrain himself from making further mistakes. Or again, where one is concerned about his position, he may criticize himself to make himself safe from challenge by others, and to promote a low self-expectation in order to avoid disappointment.

Reasons for criticizing oneself may occur in combinations peculiar to a given individual. Where a client is extremely self-critical, perhaps half a dozen reasons may be identified and dealt with in the course of therapy. To illustrate, consider a schoolteacher, married, with several good friends and a competitive and over-involved mother. The woman claims that she is dull and stupid, and a poor mother to her children. When she presents herself so unfavorably, she is reassured by husband or friends, but to no avail. She seeks therapy for help with an unhappy marriage and recurrent depression.

The husband is present in many of the therapy sessions. As the woman criticizes herself, the husband responds with frustration and reassurance, thus showing the therapist the pattern. The woman, it appears, is criticizing herself as a way to argue with the husband, to frustrate and annoy him, and to make him take responsibility for her unhappiness. The therapist intervenes: "You, Bob, spend considerable energies trying to reassure your wife, and you, Bonnie, are trying without much success to talk about something that is sensitive and important to you. The pattern is entrapping both of you, and, with your permission, I'd like to try something different." They agree an alternative is needed, and the therapist invites the woman to discuss her inadequacies with him, and asks the husband to just listen.

As the woman discusses feelings of being stupid and inadequate, the therapist understands and legitimizes: "You're concerned that these social gaffs are more than little mistakes, that they mean you are out of

place, that you don't belong," or "You are afraid that no matter how much you do as a parent, you will never be able to do enough, and that someone may find fault." The woman finds it easier to talk about herself, and criticizes herself less. The therapist invites both persons to see what has just occurred. "When you reassure her, Bob, you see that the self-criticism merely continues. What I did was to try to understand the feeling and to convey that I understood. And as I did that, you, Bonnie, became more relaxed, and less self-critical. Perhaps you felt understood and supported, and most surely you did not feel contradicted and challenged."

The therapist now focuses on the couple's actual interaction. "You have seen that responding in a new way does make a difference. Would you, Bob, be willing to try reflecting the sentiment, rather than reassuring?" The husband feels he should reassure, and the therapist deals with his reservations. For any assurance of success, one should conduct practice sessions. The wife criticizes herself, and the husband is taught to respond by understanding the sentiment, and by reflecting it back. Where the pattern has been persistent, it may be difficult for the husband to not reassure, and the therapist gives support and encouragement to him.

Such an initial intervention addresses several of the wife's reasons for self-criticism. Since she is not being contradicted, she loses that reason to argue. When the husband no longer becomes frustrated and upset by the criticism, she loses the opportunity to upset him through criticizing herself. And when the husband no longer reassures her, she loses the opportunity to make him take responsibility for her emotions by criticizing herself.

Additional major reasons for the self-criticism are seen in later sessions. The woman is continually criticized and undermined by her mother for the way she raises her children. She presents her inadequacies as a means of allaying her mother's criticism, of accepting the criticism to avoid being shocked and upset by it, and of maintaining her relationship with her mother. The therapist encourages the woman to establish another viable status with her mother. She is encouraged both to see herself as someone who should be respected and not undermined by her mother, and to make the actual stands necessary to change the relationship. The client is, however, wary of overtly challenging her mother, and the therapist suggests the low profile of a paradoxical challenge: "Ah, Mother, I do realize I am still fallible, but perhaps with your continuing criticism, I may yet learn to be as good with my children as you wish me to be." The mother may dislike the comeback, but it exposes a slice of truth, and because of its subtlety and unconventionality it is difficult to challenge. Several acceptable client responses are explored. As the client practices each new response to the criticism, she implicitly tries on the

new status it conveys: she is encouraged to see herself as someone who has the right to challenge her mother's criticism, and the right to make her own parenting decisions. There is some benefit in realizing that the mother's criticism may be challenged, and more benefit of course when the criticisms are effectively challenged and a new status is secured.

As the client's reasons for criticizing herself become less significant, the criticism diminishes, and she is free to accept a better and more stable way of seeing herself. Although presented in abbreviated form here, it is common for such issues to require ongoing attention and varied interventions over a course of therapy.

Where self-criticism is overly harsh, too frequent, and inappropriate, it is restrictive to the individual and should be diminished. While severe self-criticism is troublesome, in its gentler forms it is not always or entirely bad. In the midst of the otherwise unfavorable publicity self-criticism receives, some acknowledgement of its constructive elements should be made.

One person feels that he should never make a mistake, that because he is conscientious and competent he should always do well. Another feels that nothing he does should be seen as a mistake, that as long as he is spontaneous and expresses his real feelings, he is doing as he should. Although such orientations or philosophies appear polar opposites, both are commonly seen, and both indicate the same failing. In both extremes, the person fails to acknowledge the necessity of self-regulation.

Proper functioning, in a complex and flexible way of life, requires that one act as best he can, and in addition, that he observe his actions and that he appraise their adequacy and appropriateness. Where the action is good, one can appreciate and affirm himself. Where it is poor, one should note the inadequacy and, where it is seriously wrong, attempt to understand and correct the personal tendencies which led to the mistake.

Where the client fails to see the need for such self-regulation, an analogy of a self-regulatory mechanism may be useful. Consider a heating mechanism—a furnace coupled with a thermostat. The furnace provides the output, it "acts" to heat the dwelling. The thermometer "observes" and "describes" the resulting temperature. An executor device "appraises" by a set standard the output as too much or too little, and signals the furnace accordingly. Imagine for a moment a furnace acting without observation and appraisal of its output, and consider the potential for such a non-self-regulating mechanism going amiss. With the client who expects himself to act without mistake, the analogy may provide some understanding of the impossibility of his standards: were one to attempt to set a furnace to function properly without self-regulation, he would be continually dissatisfied with the results, or might fail to complete the setting altogether. On the other hand, with the client who allows

himself any action he feels is genuine, it may again provide understanding: were one to allow the furnace to do anything it does spontaneously, its function most certainly would evoke continual discomfort and dismay.

A proper function of self-criticism is self-regulation, and in that capacity it is healthy. In other functions it has uneven consequences or is wholly detrimental. It is at times helpful to a client to see his own uses of self-criticism in comparison to proper and appropriate uses, and an analogy to a self-regulating mechanism does this. Many a self-critical client feels that the self-criticisn is somehow essential, and it is therefore more realistic to steer him toward appropriate uses than to push him to give up self-criticism.

In actual practice, assessment and intervention strategies are often closely interwoven. As the therapist focuses on and interprets the excessive self-criticism, the client often provides additional information by saying more about his concerns and about his experience of the world. Perhaps he states the grounds he uses for seeing himself as such a failure. Where faulty assumptions are involved, the therapist may challenge those, and if the client is receptive some progress is made. Where the client adamantly rejects the information, that indicates argument, and the therapist avoids further reassurance. Perhaps the client states that he feels he should do better, that whenever he lets his guard down he messes up, or that he should not make any mistakes at all. Each contains information, and the therapist follows the lead.

Where the client does not, on his own, indicate the important issues, the therapist may present some reasons why people commonly act in ways similar to his and see how the client reacts to each of them. The therapist thus presents parts of the overview to the client, and invites the client to sort through it and see what looks plausible: "I'm not sure what is going on with this, but let me suggest some common reasons why people are overly tough on themselves. See which of them look familiar and might apply to you." It is a no-risk move, and more often than not a connection is made: the therapist is merely stating the possibilities, and not necessarily committing himself to them; the client is being invited to look and appraise for himself, and does not feel that he is being pushed into anything he does not wish to accept.

RELATIONS TO THEORETICAL ANALYSES

The present analysis is intended to cover the range of common reasons for self-criticism. No guarantee can be made, of course, that all major reasons are included, that none has been overlooked and inadvertently omitted. The categories themselves are not discrete, but overlap and blend with each other at the edges. Thus, this sort of categorization

necessarily involves individual judgment, and each attempt at categorization may distinguish reasons somewhat differently. The present explication is, to the best of my knowledge, the first survey of major reasons for criticizing oneself. It has drawn on an understanding of intentional action, a review of actual cases, an analysis of logical possibilities, and the assistance of other clinicians. Thus, despite the cautions, it may be taken as a fairly thorough survey of the major reasons for criticizing oneself.

The survey should be distinguished from a theory of self-criticism, on several grounds. Whereas a theory often purports to formulate the fundamental process that generates the phenomena, the survey attempts to encourage better observation and description of the phenomena. Whereas a theory often uses special terminology, the survey attempts to stay within ordinary language. Whereas a theory may provide a ready-made explanation of the phenomena, the survey portrays a range of possibilities: the aim here is to facilitate therapist's ability to make and act on the appropriate distinctions. And finally, whereas theories compete with each other, or claim to, the dozen accounts given here complement rather than compete: written within the same framework, each serves as one aspect of the whole picture.

A descriptive survey of the phenomena, once available, provides an interesting perspective for viewing the already existing accounts of the phenomena. Each of the various theoretical orientations may have one or more accounts of self-criticism, and for each such account, a correspondence may be constructed with one or more of the dozen categories presented here.

Where the person criticizes himself to better understand and appraise himself, and is mistaken, the rational-emotive approach sees him as irrational and attempts to correct the mistaken assumptions. Where one criticizes himself to pressure himself to improve, the Gestalt approach involves "Top Dog–Under Dog" controversy, with Top Dog attempting to force and correct, and Under Dog resisting. Where one criticizes himself to affirm his status, Top Dog and Under Dog are again appropriate, with Top Dog enjoying the status of being superior. Where one criticizes himself as penance for wrongdoing, the analytic approach considers it the action of a strict superego. And where one criticizes himself as a means of self-restraint, analytic terminology considers it a super-ego reaction against breakthrough id impulses. Where one criticizes himself to maintain low expectations to avoid disappointment, Kelly's personal construct theory holds that one does so to ensure predictability. Where one criticizes himself to maintain sympathetic involvement, a behavioral orientation holds that the attention of others reinforces and thus maintains the self-criticism. Where one criticizes himself to avoid responsibility, the existentialists are quite at home, offering much the same explanation.

Where one criticizes himself as a disguised expression of hostility, here as elsewhere, transactional analysis would note the switch between the appearance and the resulting satisfaction, and call it playing a game. Where one criticizes himself as an affirmation of loyalty and belonging, a family systems approach holds that the symptom takes on the family pain, and thus maintains family stability. And where one criticizes himself to argue, a communication orientation implies resistance and suggests paradoxical solutions, and reality therapy minimizes therapist intrusiveness so the client can see and profit from the consequences of his own actions.

Accounts from each of the theoretical orientations correspond to one or more of the common language possibilities, but not so the converse: no theory individually deals adequately with *all* the possibilities contained in the present descriptive survey. An eclectic may attempt to construct a survey from selected aspects of various theories, but the lack of consistency between theoretical terminologies would make the task a frustrating one. Because of the diffuse terminologies, it is difficult to tell when theoretical accounts are competing with each other, or when they are complementing each other. Thus, while the information or insights in the present survey are often similar to particular existing orientations, the common language used here encourages an integration which would be difficult to attain by merely incorporating and splicing together aspects of various theoretical orientations.

Summary

This paper presents the central phenomena of self-criticism in their entirety. By stressing the variety of reasons for self-criticism, the survey should enhance the therapist's behavior potential. By being aware of what the client could be doing by doing the self-critical moves, the therapist can reformulate initially incorrect appraisals. The survey is also organized to draw attention to therapeutic moves available for each type of self-criticism.

The approach to psychotherapy presented here is termed pragmatic therapy. Fundamentals of the approach are: that assessments and interventions are in the ordinary language and make use of the distinctions formalized within Descriptive Psychology; that assessments are made which actually matter in treatment; that interventions are made to achieve understandable aims; and that treatment follows the general policies and formats for pragmatic therapy. A sample of the approach is presented here in the analysis and treatment of self-criticism.

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