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Arthur F. Bentley's Early Writings: His relevance to Behavior Analysis, Contemporary Psychology and the Social Sciences

Os Primeiros Escritos de Arthur F. Bentley: sua Relevância para a Análise do Comportamento, a Psicologia Contemporânea e as Ciências Sociais

Los Primeros Trabajos de Arthur F. Bentley: su Relevancia para el Análisis de la Conducta, la Psicología Contemporá y las Ciencias Sociales

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Abstract: While a few later works of Arthur F. Bentley are known, his earlier work has rarely been discussed despite containing much of relevance to contemporary behavior analysis, social analysis, and psychological thinking, and despite showing his later work in a new light. This paper outlines all his major early writings except those that are well-known, leaving much in his own words. He proposed critical and contextual analyses of many themes, and many innovative directions to follow, including: relations between individuals and the social; method and ideas for a fully contextual analysis of human behavior; a very early discursive analysis of how eleven major psychological theories of his time dealt with the issues of thinking about behavior; critiques of the major forms of talking in psychology; details of methodologies for making contextual observations rather than cross-sectional or causal observations; and his early versions of critically examining the skin as a false distinction between an inner and outer. His detailed and extensive early research shows that he was not an arm-chair philosopher as many readers of his later works assume, but was even engaged in what now would be "action research". The paper helps put his later writings into a more accurate perspective. It is argued, though, that despite extensive discussion about the nature of language as active social interaction, he did not ever present a final or satisfactory (by his own criteria) version of this. What is of importance is that his early works show how his *transdermal* conception and critique of the inner/outer distinction stemmed from his social science research projects which described the way human behavior is shaped by external social and economic events.

Keywords: Behavior Analysis, Social Sciences, Psychology, Early Behaviorism, Methodology, Contextual Research

Resumo: Enquanto alguns dos últimos trabalhos de Athur F. Bentley são conhecidos, seus primeiros trabalhos são pouco discutidos, mesmo sendo de muita relevância para a Análise do Comportamento contemporânea, para a análise do comportamento Social e do pensamento psicológico e apesar de estes colocarem seus últimos trabalhos em uma nova perspectiva. Este artigo abarca todos os seus primeiros escritos, exceto por aqueles que já são bem conhecidos, apresentando boa parte destes em suas próprias palavras. Bentlaey propôs uma análise critica e contextual de vários temas e muitas direções inovadoras para serem seguidas, como: a análise das relações entre os indivíduos e o social; métodos e ideias para uma completa analise contextual do comportamento humano; uma versão preliminar de análise do discurso de como onze das maiores teorias psicológicas do seu tempo lidavam com questões e de como pensavam o comportamento; criticas das principais formas de falar em psicologia; detalhes das metodologias para serem realizadas observações contextuais no lugar de análises transversais ou observações causais; e suas primeiras versões do exame crítico da falsa distinção entre o que acontece dentro e fora do corpo. Suas detalhadas e extensas primeiras pesquisas mostram que ele não era um filósofo de poltrona, como assumem muitos leitores de seus últimos trabalhos, e sim que era engajado na agora chamada pesquisa-ação. Estes primeiros trabalhos ajudam a colocar os seus últimos trabalhos em uma perspectiva mais acurada. Argumenta-se, porém, que apesar da extensa discussão sobre a natureza da linguagem como um ato da interação social, ele nunca apresentou uma versão final ou satisfatória (pelos seus próprios critérios) disso. Contudo, o mais importante aqui é que seus primeiros trabalhos revelam que a sua concepção transdérmica e suas criticas da distinção entre interno/externo provém de seus projetos de pesquisa em ciências sociais que descrevem o caminho pelo qual o comportamento humano é modelado pelos eventos sociais externos e econômicos.

Paravras-chave: Análise do Comportamento, Ciências Sociais, Psicologia, Behaviorismo, Metodologia, Pesquisa Contextual.

Resumen: Aunque algunos de los últimos trabajos de Arthur F. Bentley son conocidos, sus primeros escritos rara vez se han discutido pese a la relevancia de su contenido para el análisis de la conducta, el análisis social, y el pensamiento psicológico, y a pesar de mostrar su trabajo posterior bajo una nueva luz. Este artículo describe todos sus principales primeros escritos, salvo los que son muy bien conocidos, dejando una gran parte en sus propias palabras. Él propuso un análisis contextual y crítico, y muchas directrices innovadoras para seguir; entre ellas: las relaciones entre los individuos y lo social, métodos e ideas para un análisis contextual completo de la conducta humana, un análisis discursivo pionero acerca de cómo las once principales teorías psicológicas de su tiempo trataron cuestiones del pensamiento y la conducta, críticas de las principales formas de hablar en psicología, detalles de las metodologías para la realización de observaciones contextuales en lugar de observaciones de corte transversal o causales, y sus primeras versiones de un examen crítico de la piel como una falsa distinción entre lo interno y lo externo. Sus primeras investigaciones, detalladas y extensas, muestran que él no era un "filósofo de sillón" como muchos lectores de sus obras posteriores suponen; incluso, estuvo comprometido con lo que hoy se llamaría investigación-acción. El artículo es de ayuda para poner sus últimos escritos en una perspectiva más precisa. Se argumenta, sin embargo, que a pesar de una extensa discusión sobre la naturaleza del lenguaje como interacción social activa, él nunca ofreció una versión final o satisfactoria (por sus propios criterios) de esto. Lo importante es que sus primeras obras muestran cómo su concepción transdérmica y crítica de la distinción interno/externo se derivaron de sus proyectos de investigación en ciencias sociales, los cuales describen la forma en que el comportamiento humano es determinado por los acontecimientos sociales y económicos externos.

Palabras-clave: Análisis del Comporamiento, Ciencias Sociales, Psicología, Conductismo Temprano, Metodología, Investigación Contextual

Arthur F. Bentley (1870–1957) was a scholar who wrote steadily and powerfully about the problems of the social sciences and psychology from the early 1890s until his death in 1957, but, with a few exceptions, most of his large output has been ignored or missed in psychology and the social sciences. Bentley did not have a whole school of thought or a single comprehensive view of the world. Such would have been inimical to him—there was no notion of persuading people to become Bentlarians or Bentleyarites. A few good books and papers have been written about his thought, but they focus on his better known two or three books (e.g., Hale, 1960; Handy, 1973; Jordan, 1999; Kress, 1970; Pronko & Herman, 1982; Ratner, 1957; Taylor, 1957a, 1957b; Ward, 1981, 1984; Weinstein, 1962).

These books and papers all contain short biographies of Bentley, so I will not repeat his life story here. However, there are a few biographical points which are relevant to the goals of the paper. Most writers paint a picture of a failed academic who did armchair philosophy or psychology, but that will be disputed here. He studied in the USA and in Europe in his early life, but did not concentrate on psychology or philosophy. Instead, it is important that he worked with some key sociologists in Europe, Georg Simmel for example. Back in the USA he worked in various occupations, including time as a journalist, and then briefly held a teaching post at the University of Chicago. His teaching, however, seems to have left students and staff puzzled and he did not stay long. He then spent most of his life managing an orchard in Indiana while extensively writing.

A few of Bentley's main works are reasonably well-known to a small handful of academics, particularly some in political science, behavior analysis, systems theory, and interbehavioral psychology, and a few who come to him through reading John Dewey. His three most popular works are really the only ones known (Bentley, 1908, 1975/1954; Dewey & Bentley, 1949) and little of the rest is cited apart from a few key papers (Bentley, 1941a, 1941b, 1950) which are reprinted in two of the books just listed. He is mainly known therefore, first, as someone who developed an approach in political science to treating groups as forces of power, and, second, as someone who explored the distinction between inner/ outer in psychology, and had complex views about the various behaviorisms.

In this paper I wish to dispute many of these views just given of Bentley and show that his early work informs his later work and that those who do not read his early work will get a false idea of why he was trying to break down the inner/outer distinction in psychology and refer instead to *transdermal* interactions between people and their worlds. I also wish to show that he was far from being an armchair philosophical scholar, and spent the majority of his life very engaged in the world, and utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods in pursuing his early work.

Although I do not agree with everything he wrote, I believe that much it addresses problems still faced by psychology and the social sciences today, and which continue to be debated today. And, some of the impasses we face in how to think about our subject matter he dealt with in very creative ways, *even anticipating the application of discursive analysis to psychological writing*. Much is also of direct relevance to behavior analysis, interbehavioral psychology, and contextual approaches to human behavior, but he had many novel points worth considering.

The aim of this paper, therefore, is not to show who he was, or to go through the later books and papers as others have already done, but to read through his early, less-known writings, to show the real foundations for his better-known later works. I will quote wherever possible in his own words, so that I do not speak for him. Many of the summaries of Bentley' ideas put new words into his written words, or try to mold him into a particular school of psychology, but I will try and present as he wrote it himself to avoid this.

In conclusion, I will summarize what we can fruitfully learn from this rich thinker. In particular, as we move away from current psychology to more contextual versions such as discourse analysis, interbehavioral psychology and behavior analysis, Bentley is important as an earlier thinker who attempted this, and this is why he sits alongside Kantor, Dewey, Skinner, and others who had similar goals (Guerin, 2016a, b). Further, in emphasizing that what we currently call 'psychological' depends upon, is built upon, or even *is*, the social

world, he was saying something important that even those listed thinkers have not emphasized or described in practice.

Background to Bentley's Writings and Style

Bentley excelled at two main activities. One, little known to most, was that he was a very thorough researcher who tried to study all aspects of the subject matter he was considering. This led him to ignore discipline divisions within the social sciences and to ignore methods which focused only on cross-sections in time and space. What Bentley was also particularly good at was criticizing (deconstructing, we will see) the thoughts or writing of others by tracing their own ideas down to the very smallest detail, and showing the contradictions and absurdities that were already implicit in their own systems. With the exception of Kantor's interbehavioral psychology, and Skinner's radical behaviorism partly (see Bentley, 1951-1952), he showed that most psychological systems of his time were inconsistent by their own criteria. A few times, he tried to build something more comprehensive in the way of his own system of thought, but ultimately, even he saw that he was making the same mistakes for which he criticized others.

In many ways, reading Bentley closely resembles reading the early Derrida (1978/67): the clear presentations of other people's views, followed by drawing those views out even further by attending to all the small details that those authors themselves did not consider, and then showing how the system contradicts itself once the minutae are examined. In fact, "Bentley adds as his own observation; it is almost the rule in the *Geisteswissenschaften* that the point which is most important is to be found in a footnote" (Ratner, 1957, p. 43). This is close to what Derrida has done since.

"The Units of Investigation in the Social Sciences" (1895)

This publication was an essay submitted for Bentley's doctorate. The problem he tackled was that of the contemporary theories of 'social organisms,' for example, the notions of a 'social will' or a 'social soul.' For Bentley (1895), "Now without having reference to the concrete content of any of these theories, we cannot avoid the feeling that as far as they are expressed directly in terms of the social organism, *they are rather to be looked upon as statements of the problems to be solved than as themselves solutions*. When we are told that 'society does so and so,' we are given rather a description than an explanation of the phenomena" (p. 915, my italics).

This contains some points that Bentley defended throughout his writings. First, descriptions should be separate from explanations. What counts as a description does not count as an explanation by itself, and nothing extra is added by dressing up descriptions to look like explanations. Bentley, like others around the same time, found examples of this confusion between description and explanation throughout the social sciences. In psychology, events were 'explained' as the intentions of a mind, but these loose words are not solutions or explanations. They are problems needing further investigation.

A second point raised in the quote above is that words do not provide foundations, they provoke further investigation. As he put it later: "A theory that does not seek to establish the where, when, and what of its subjectmatter (sic) does not interest me. The only way to determine such facts is by experimentation" (1941a/1975, p. 226). Another point Bentley (1985) is at pains to make is that we must begin somewhere: "It is necessary to point out that very few sciences are able to take as their units of investigation, elements which they are satisfied to regard as themselves irreducible" (p. 88).

Bentley (1895) gives an example of psychology and society, which is notable because the view expressed here is very different from his later writings:

> "For we must remember that the material that is empirically given us in society to investigate is first of all, simply motion; regular and irregular, temporary and permanent changes of situation in both men and things. Motives, desires, feelings, ideals, and all the other elements that go to make up a conscious personality are not direct

> objects of investigation for the student of society. Directly they concern only the psychologist. Society itself is rather a nexus of actions; and it is a nexus so complex that were the investigator himself of other nature than human, its interpretation would be utterly impossible... because what one man observes in other men is of necessity only the physical, the outer series; it is in himself alone that he can attend both to inner and outer series." (pp. 89-90)

Later in life, Bentley (1941b/1975) would find it objectionable to talk about 'inner and outer,' as though the skin divided up two realms (here called 'series'). He then went on to develop ideas of consciousness and subjectivity with which we will not deal with here because Bentley changed his views quickly on these. His basic point, though, was that sociological explanations need only worry about the 'psychological' in so far as people 'want' things: "For the sociologist the fundamental fact of the psychic life of man is that he is a creature with wants" (p. 97). He uses others' work primarily to develop a categorization of three bases for reasoning about social phenomena: impulses, habits of custom, and conscious reflection on habits.

What is Bentley trying to do with this somewhat confused discussion? He is trying to bring together the following ideas, but is aware of the contradictions and pitfalls inherent in them when put together:

> (a) most 'explanations' are only descriptions; we must start with something though, however uncertain;
> (b) we cannot make a complex explanation in terms of adding 'simpler' units (*contra* Descartes);
> (c) we cannot explain social phenomena as the sum of individual actions; and yet
> (d) individuals still make up the society.

Listing these points together is the most important thing here, rather than his own answers or solutions at this stage. His answer is a mixture of theories that were current at the time. Social institutions are consciously changed by people and then become followed without reflection. Larger states begin when people form together for impulses such as food and sexual activity, which then through a few who are consciously leading begin to constitute customs and institutions which are further changed by conscious decisions. Although Bentley later changed these views, of note is how the main interest of his 1908 book, *The Process of Government*, derives from the key points above: that book is likewise concerned with how small pressure groups within societies can change the majority views through lobbying and social influence. Taken in the present context, Bentley is not saying that all politics and social behavior occur through conscious lobbying and social pressure. That is only one form of influence. This earlier work shows that he had a broader idea for the 1908 book than some later reviewers have given him credence.

These points bring Bentley to raise a question that will follow him for several more years: What does it mean to have 'social facts'? "We must be careful not to confuse objectivity with materiality. Everything material is objective, but the objective is not exhausted in the material" (pp. 104-105). This problem is usually referred back to Durkheim (1982/1895), who first tried to state the 'reality' of social facts. This development will continue through to his later writings that observation and description should not be cross-sectional, but longitudinal.

At this time of his thinking, then, Bentley (1895) saw social explanation as the result of people's customary habits and their conscious deliberations for 'wants.' People are determined by the customs that are in their situation, but can change them through deliberate actions.

> "We see then that in all departments of social life the main elements to be considered are the actions of men in accordance with customs and those which depend on deliberate calculations. The latter must have, to a great extent, conscious reference to the objectified customs and institutions of the society in which the individual is placed, in short, to social formations. These formations are on the one side social products to be explained; on the other as part of the content of knowledge of the individual, they are themselves elements of further progress." (p. 113)

What Bentley envisaged was a social science which would cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries. Accounts would have to be made of customs and how they got there, individuals and their development within customary institutions, and the changes in institutions brought about by deliberate calculation by people who reflected on customary ways. He was therefore already envisioning a *systemic* or *contextual* approach, not unlike Kantor's interbehavioral psychology in some ways. He continues:

> "Undoubtedly the most important static theories are those of modern industrial activities. They have concern with the relationships of men, acting partially under the influence of custom, partially by means of careful calculations of increments of pleasure and pain; these actions taking place under definite geographical and climatic conditions, and with reference to definite industrial formations. Some of these formations have been already enumerated. They include organized markets, credit, currency and banking systems, exchange and the transportation system, and business law. In addition to these and many other strictly industrial formations, the wide extent and complexity of our economic activities require us to take into account nearly all of the more important social formations. It is sufficiently evident how much a man's industrial life is affected by the existence of the state, even where it does not primarily conserve economic ends; or by his desire to found a family or to conform to some class spirit or to some demand of fashion or of his 'set' in society, simply for social reasons and where the practice itself has no attraction for him.
>
> It is evident that theories built up from these elements will have validity only in the specific societies or countries in which the particular premises used are found. They will make no pretense of 'perpetualism' or 'cosmopolitanism.' ...The 'absolutism' can consist only in choosing as premises such formations as are common to as many societies as possible; and in so doing the theory evidently moves far away from the actual conditions of any one society."

Here Bentley is saying that we must look at a wide variety of contexts to understand people acting and people acting as a group or society. *We cannot assume a separate 'psychology' which is somehow independent of the economic, social and other contexts*. What we will see in his next publications are three of Bentley's detailed research analyses of specific social situations done in just this way. He was not trying to derive a high 'level' explanation from so-called fundamental principles or 'facts,' but trying to place all aspects from all social sciences into a joint account that floats along on their conjunction and sinks otherwise.

In summary, although there are problems with Bentley's account in this publication, especially naming the psychological basis as merely being the 'wants', the overall effort was quite an achievement for a 25-year old. He raised most of the big issues of the social sciences and suggests an approach. He relied too much on the assumptions of previous writers, particularly with regards to the psychology and the inner/outer and consciousness ideas (dealt with below), but he was making progress with other issues. As we will see, his contact with John Dewey and others, and his gradually more sophisticated readings in these areas, eventually brought him to a different and original position that built on what was written here (Bentley, 1935, 1941d; Dewey & Bentley, 1949).

The Early Social/Political Contextual Analyses

Those who only read Bentley's later works might be forgiven for thinking that he was an armchair philosopher sitting peacefully in his Indiana orchards. For that reason, I wish to emphasize in the following sections Bentley's early social and economic research, very down-to-earth, detailed, and meticulous. The first was published before his 1895 essay, but relates more closely to the contextual analysis approach. He did not just write essays but carried out interviews, analyzed statistics of all kinds, and even helped organize groups in North Dakota and Illinois in what would now be called "action research". His analyses are exemplary of the kind of social science promulgated in his theoretical writ-

ings, looking at real problems from many angles and over time, while avoiding narrow studies done cross-sectionally within one discipline. My bigger point is that his later more philosophical works are grounded by what he was doing here.

"The Condition of the Western Farmer" (1893)

This monograph was Bentley's first publication, submitted as an undergraduate thesis. It is a full economic and sociological investigation into the economic problems of farmers in the American West. It is closely related in two ways to his *Units of Investigation* paper (see above) that came out two years later, although they seem miles apart. First, Bentley uses the methods he later advocated at the end of the 1895 paper, of combining all the social sciences to investigate fully a problem and not to divide up disciplinary areas. He also argued that this is easier or clearer if done on a small scale but intensively:

> "Two ways lie open to one desiring to find an answer to such a question as that set before us. Either many and varied statistics for the whole region under consideration may be collected and examined, or a study in miniature may be made of some little district which can fairly lay claim to being typical of the whole region." (p. 7)

Second, the impetus for the investigation of the farmers' condition came from thinking about militant farmer's groups that had arisen to lobby the government for help in their economic distress. Such political/social influence was to be more focused in his (1908) publication on the processes of government.

> "The farmers' movement, culminating in its attempt to change the policy of the government in many important particulars, had for its raison d'être the depressed financial condition of the agricultural classes. Against this position, the other political parties urged that the financial depression affected all classes alike, and that in no way did farmers have greater difficulty in attaining prosperity than persons in other lines of activity. Realizing the worthlessness of the isolated examples cited as proof, as well by one side as by the other, the author undertook the present investigation." (p. 7)

This monograph, then, is about what led to the farmers' movement becoming active, beyond the surface 'cause' of just citing economic depression (which is an example of description dressed up as explanation). As we saw above for Bentley's *Units* paper (1895), 'economic depression' is one of those concepts that are more "statements of the problems to be solved than as themselves solutions" (p. 915).

Bentley begins by tracing the social and economic history of the town chosen (Harrison, Nebraska), following their progressive waves of settlement. He outlines the geographical features and agricultural potential of the land, as well as outposts for purchasing the settlers' supplies and the profiteering of land selling. Although not unique, it does show an integrated social science approach to the question at hand. The immigration and emigration of the area are shown to fluctuate, and this is shown to relate to external crop conditions, particularly grasshopper plagues:

> "We are able to trace a very close connection between the number of resident owners in the various years and the climatic and crop conditions. The number of such owners increased on the wave of immigration until 1875, but a complete cessation of settlement caused in that year by the grasshopper pest of the preceding seasons, and, in fact, the same cause was at the basis of the continued decrease in the number of resident owners, which lasted through '77." (p. 35)

Bentley conducted interviews throughout the region, especially with the older residents who had lived through these times. From archives, he recorded the reasons for selling or surrendering lands which had been recorded on government documents, and he related those to social and economic conditions.

Bentley worked through in practical research what in his *Units* paper he was to call the 'pleasures and pains' or the 'wants' of people. He traced the resources needed and the geographical and social methods of gaining them. Credit for purchases of capital

was essential, and Bentley starts showing how credit was a limiting resource. Settlers were helped by:

- Having served in the Civil War army they got a pension that helped see them through
- Having served in the Civil War army they needed less time to become a homestead
- They were located near the government's land office
- Nearby lands were already cultivated so they could buy grain until their own crops grew
- This meant reduced transportation costs for essentials
- There were neighbors who could help out in mutual services

There were also hardships:

- Prairie fires
- Many interviewees told Bentley that the lack of a nearby physician was a handicap, they could not get easy attention and the cost was great
- Grasshopper plagues

Bentley also worked his way through the economic factors limiting the farmers—land values, renting farms, credit, taxation, and markets and freight costs, giving longitudinal statistics on each of these. He then proceeded to do the same analyses for the contemporary situation in the Harrison township, going through the minute details of taxation, credit and different types of mortgages. In particular, he discovered differences between those who had purchased land from the government and those who had purchased land from the railroad company. The former had a much smaller mortgage and debt than did the latter. Given only railroad land was available for purchase:

> "One is tempted to draw the moral that the would-be purchaser, at least the one whose means are not sufficient to pay entirely for his farm and then tide him over all subsequent periods of hard times, had almost better throw his money away than invest it in farming operations in Nebraska, at the current prices of land and under the present agricultural conditions; unless, indeed, he be possessed of unusual energy and ability." (pp. 69-70)

This is then related to the quality of the land, and Bentley again advises that the poor farmlands, in terms of fertility, are hardly worth farming in the current conditions. The rise and fall in land value clearly set limits to every other variable considered, for example, credit is determined by land value primarily. Even in poor years, Bentley claimed, successful farmers became conservative about risks that involve new crediting. But he also drew out the idea that debts are socially strategic and not fixed in their effects:

> "Perhaps the effect of his debt on a heavily mortgaged man may be summed up by saying that in order to use the money profitably, the borrower must be a man of above normal ability; if his qualities are exceptionally good he may profit greatly by his loan; but if they are under the average, or if fortune should go against him, his debt will almost surely operate to increase his troubles...
> In short, if the farmer of to-day expects to achieve the same success as the pioneer achieved, he must, except where good fortune and the possession of unusual personal qualities are combined, have capital in sufficient amount to offset the free land and the low cost of living of the pioneer period." (p. 85)

Bentley does not draw this back to the discussion of the farmers' movement to petition the government. His conclusions argue that the economic conditions of the Nebraska farmers have grown more difficult, and that *this is not attributable to their personal qualities*. The social and economic conditions had changed markedly from those of the settlers and more is now required to get the same out of the occupation.

What we can draw out of this is the integrated way that social and economic factors are researched and put together, the way personal factors are seen as limiting conditions but not major determinants, and the way that the entire situation is pulled apart in a detailed way to get at the answers. He sometimes writes as a social geographer, sometimes sociologist, sometimes political scientist or economist, and sometimes a psychologist. His point from the *Units* paper (1895) was that these should all be used

in every problem area and not kept as separate (and competitive) disciplines as they are still today.

"Municipal Ownership Interest Groups in Chicago" (1904-1907)

Bentley carried out three small studies between 1904 and 1907. They again highlight that he was not an armchair philosopher, and they highlight that he dealt with the contextual details of what he was saying about political and industrial organization. The full manuscripts lie unpublished in the Bentley Manuscript Collections, but he gave short summaries in *The Process of Government* (1908), which will be followed here.

(1) The first of the three studies was a quantitative analysis of referendum votes for the issue of Chicago taking over municipal control of street railways. In the style of a full social science analysis, he analyzed the votes into geographical regions, such as those furthest from the city center, stratification into different wealth areas, the places with the worst car lines (more in need of railways therefore), and some smaller details such as an inconsistent vote in Polish regions. He also analyzed the data into social dimensions, such as the effects of mayoralty elections and the Socialist vote.

Once again, this was detailed and illuminating social science, looking at a real problem from many angles. Here is an example of Bentley's summary:

> "*Outlying territory.*–A general tendency to the progressive extension of strong municipal-ownership interest toward the farther outlying parts of the city was noticed, which reached its culmination in 1905; though in 1907 the elsewhere receding wave carried farther in spots and hit one or two very small extreme outlying districts. A tabulation of the votes in a broad band of outlying territory extending entirely around the city (33,200 votes cast in 1905, 38,900 in 1907) showed, with very slight change in the proportion of partisan mayoralty votes, a municipal ownership decrease from 52 to 39 per cent. Of all votes cast (city averages decrease 46 to 40), and an antimunicipal-ownership increase from 16 to 53 per cent (city averages increase 18 to 49). With an increase of 5,700 voters, municipal ownership lost absolutely almost 2,000 votes. Nothing but the car-service needs of the population in both years can explain the high vote of the first of these two years or the low vote on the second." (1908, pp. 488-489)

(2) The first of his two other smaller studies (1904-1907) was done in 1905/1906 looking at 165 bills in Illinois State that passed and became law. Bentley again categorized these into the groups and strategic play of interests that got them into the legislature and carried them through. There were three main subdivisions: brought in by initiative, brought in by opposition to another bill, and other aspects. His main conclusion was that cooperative groups were the main driving force. He is an example of this work:

> *"Initiative.* – Of the 165 entries, 83 were assigned to administrative initiative, 34 to special interests, 20 to organized public opinion in some one or other of its definite forms, and 2 to political machines acting for their own direct interest, leaving only 26 to be assigned to members of the legislature acting in their theoretical legislative capacity." (1908, p. 493)

(3) The second of the two smaller studies was similar to the previous one, but looked at 1,108 ordinances, orders, or resolutions passed in the city council of Chicago rather than the state legislature. Similar procedures were used. He again emphasized the pressure of interest groups, the theme of his (1908) book:

> "Under the pressure of interests the council gave by ordinance 46 franchise grants which it had no legal right or power to give. By order it gave 55 distinctly illegitimate grants. Many of its other acts were gross abuses or marks of favoritism. Such were 88 special privileges, including gifts of city property or services and permits to violate ordinances... The council's own praiseworthy, but feeble, attempts to regulate these pressures serve but to emphasize the present license." (1908, p. 494)

Makers, Users, and Masters (1920/1969)

This book was finished in 1919-1920, but was rejected by several publishers. Bentley had apparently abandoned it until he gave a copy in 1949 to his friend Sidney Ratner, Professor of History at Rutgers and later editor of the Dewey/Bentley correspondence (Ratner, Altman & Wheeler, 1964). Ratner was impressed and got permission to edit and publish the volume, although this was held up until 1969, twelve years after Bentley died.

This book was a description, in the sense given earlier, of how power in America had become concentrated into the hands of a few and, in particular, into the hands of industry magnates, finance professionals, and trade elites. This had occurred through World War 1, after priorities were given to oil and steel production. As in the other two early social science studies and his conceptual work, Bentley was meticulous with detail, reading everything clearly and thoroughly for possible misunderstandings, and drawing conclusions hesitantly.

If we stand back, the bigger theme of this book is probably more about the change occurring between a focus on production and a focus on consumption (Corrigan, 1997). Social sciences, since Marx, had thought mostly about *production*, and indeed, Bentley's research on the farmer in Nebraska was an example of this: how the little farmer could survive while producing grain and other crops. But the whole focus of society was changing markedly between the wars to focus on *consumption* (Veblen, 1975/1899) rather than production issues. Technological advances in crop production meant that subsistence farming was on the way out and large-scale, mass-produced cropping using fewer people was coming in (Barraclough, 1991). It was not that people did not consume before, nor that there was no production afterwards, just that the focus changed because producing became less problematic than consumption. The focus had become one of how to get people to consume more goods and products, not how to produce more food, at least in the rich western countries.

The themes coming out of this change are the themes coming through Bentley's book: mass workers coming under the control of big business, increases in sophistication and frequency of advertising, weakening of union power, new classes of the rich, re-thinking of welfare systems, and a worldwide dependence upon money, credit and stock markets. His title, then, reflects this nicely: *Makers, Users, and Masters.*

> "This volume is to concern itself with the facts of wealth and power in the United States in this second decade of the twentieth century. It does not purport to have value beyond that restriction of time and place. Its main reliance is upon facts that can be quantitatively stated... So far as is possible, they will be stated objectively, not with reference to current theories, not with blind reliance on the symbols which must be used in stating them, but instead in terms of groups, of their interests as related to one another, of their viewpoints as developed out of those interests or as latent in them, and of the probabilities of their political or extra-political action in accordance with those interests." (p. 2-3)

In the first chapter, Bentley anticipates modern methods of economics and sketches a balance sheet for the entire country. He identifies all the assets and the liabilities of the United States, and outlines the occupations, levels of employment, and concentration of power. His main conclusion is summarized at the start of the next chapter:

> "The preceding chapter has shown, as exactly as statistical and other available facts will permit, to what an extent our wealth is concentrated in a few hands and to how much greater an extent the control over our industry has become centralized. The huge fortunes of a few [e. g., Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller] are spectacular, but the dictatorial power of... the few is more spectacular. The fortunes have grown great, but the power has grown greater and more rapidly. Not the ownership of wealth, but the control of tremendous economic power is what makes this generation of capitalists most radically different from the last. Today, indeed, wealth is not really the basis of power; rather it is its plaything. Today, wealth is not so much substantial property to use and enjoy, as it is the powerful assertion of claims by

> an elite upon the future income of the people. Today, 'good will,' which is a commercial euphemism for economic might, is more the basis of capitalizations than is material wealth. Within such statements lie a nest of puzzles, and in the solving of these puzzles lies the fate of the nation." (p. 31)

Drawing on his 1908 book, he views both political government and industry as forms of government; that is, he stands back and sees that they are really about organizing small or large groups of people, nothing more than this. While textbooks might look to governments as 'true' governing bodies, because of mandates and monarchies, such authority is itself only part of the organizing process. It is one rhetoric in a series of strategies. It is not something special in the same way that religions can be viewed as ways of organizing people, for both better and worse, and the special properties of religions that most political governments do not indulge in are properties of organizing people (Guerin, 1998). In fact, Bentley's use of 'governing' in these few pages is similar in many ways to the broad use by Foucault (1979) and his analyses of power.

The main chapters of the book are about system failures and abuses of the industrial government and the political government. A lot of it antedates but predicts the 1960s sociological talk of the industrial/military complex and its profiteering and monetary abuses. Bentley goes into details of many specific cases to give examples, but most of them are historical and no longer relevant. His main point, however, remains today. If one stands back, both the political and the industrial governments (organizing) are built out of the people of the country, but the whole system of capitalism allows for abuse and this need to be kept in check. He also deals with the welfare problems that are even more with us today in large cities than ever before:

> "Are we, as a people, getting our money's worth out of our industry as we have it organized today? If we are not, we may be expected to hunt for the leak, if there is one, and stop it. Beyond question some of our businessmen are getting their money's worth and more. Equally beyond question, by the test of high prices, large parts of our people feel that they are not getting their money's worth." (p. 72)

Bentley also devotes a chapter to waste arising from industry. The details and amounts of money are dated; and we are probably more familiar nowadays with the hidden costs. Advertising, packaging, insurance, and legal costs are all passed on to the consumer, even when they are total waste. Once again, Bentley as journalist goes into the finer fiscal details of all this and present tables that breakdown the costs as a percentage of the cost incurred by consumers.

As mentioned in the last section, when we come later to learn more about Bentley's philosophical and abstract writings, we must not think of him as living in clouds of philosophy. A read of this book will show the stuff of which he was made. I will not trace the rest of the book, but Bentley works his way through the meat industry, transportation and privateering, the retailing industry and distribution, tacit arrangements in industry to avoid competition, information technology (primarily inventions and market information, but anticipating the great increases in this area), land use, credit and its social availability, the cost of living and its breakdown, and labor.

This whole book is a good example of a contextual methodology Bentley was to articulate more fully later. In his 1935 book, Bentley imagines a scene of a congress of scientists in a hall. He wants to 'see' through *space,* in the sense that everything there extends beyond the immediate hall: to the transport to get there, the families, the congress budget, etc. It also extends beyond the particular *time*, to the preparation, the writing of congress papers, etc. It also extends beyond the immediate *lives* of the scientists, to their education and research programs, their reputations, their families again, etc.

Bentley has outlined the full range of spaces and times to position 'governing,' whether this is political or industrial government. He has looked wider and tried to bring all the separate facets together, as he had previously done when discussing the Nebraskan farmer (1893) and the Volstead Law in his 1926 book. To investigate the injustices of the modern capitalist environment in the United States, he maps out the potential arenas and then present

pictures through the chapters from all sides and builds up a bigger picture that does not provide one single cause for everything, but provides thorough descriptions of the contextual relationships.

Going through all this work is also a theme of protecting the innocent from the power of big business and corruption, or how the different classes of society might deal with the situations at hand. Bentley set out in the Introduction that he did not want a socialist revolution, he is on the side of the small business owners, wage earners, and those in need to protect them from the whole system he has been outlining; that the system works of its own accord is argued and hence the need for some protections. Single individuals cannot change the entire economic and governmental system nor aspire to the riches of the few. The few rich cannot be relied upon for great compassion to help the needy. He does not wish to take over government, but to get some controls in place to help those not well-positioned in the system.

So what is the point of tracing these early publications for those interested in Bentley's more psychological and philosophical writings? I believe the main point to learn is that *Bentley goes beyond most psychological and philosophical approaches when writing in his later works precisely because he sees human life as embedded in economic, social, cultural, historical contexts*, and that these must form part of the descriptions of psychology. He will later claim that to understand people, the skin is not a metaphysical or psychological borderline, and so-called 'psychological' events are *transdermal*. If the reader can take into those discussions, even though Bentley is not always explicit about this, the studies presented here from his on-the-ground research practice, one can better understand I think what he meant. Human actions necessarily involve economic, social, cultural and historical contexts, not just what might happen inside the outer skin layer, so that must be an integral part of our psychology. I believe this background better helps us to understand what Bentley was trying to say.

If we wish to think about this in terms of behavior analysis and interbehavioral psychology, what Bentley is advocating is to describe the contingency environment or interbehavioral field for real people first, before theorizing or attempting to control contingency relations. For the Nebraskan farmers these findings are the material of the strategies which will develop to deal with contingency relations. We have no chance of controlling these experimentally, but we can still understand human behavior through describing what the contexts were under which they were living and what the behaviors were that emerged from these contexts.

"Relativity in Man and Society" (1926)

To drastically change how psychologists and philosophers thought about people, Bentley needed to change the very style of thinking. By the early 1920s, Einstein's theories of relativity had entered common knowledge, at least with the idea that physics was changing and some new, but very complex, ways of thinking about the world had arrived—far from everyday ideas about matter and particles. Most people had no idea what was really occurring, and many probably still do not, but it was the words and excitement that people were responding to, or as Bentley put it in a chapter heading: "The term 'Einstein'—Its meanings" (1926, p. 6).

> "Taken socially in this way, then, the meaning of Einstein may be considered in a group of workers concerned with one weak point in the old geometry of Euclid and with one bitter fact which, when laid bare in exact and unmistakable simplicity, seemed in flat conflict with all other substantial measurable human experience." (p. 9)

In this 1926 book, however, Bentley was not arguing that the relativity theories were somehow directly related to the social sciences, nor making the common error of thinking that because physicists cannot precisely locate matter and energy simultaneously then somehow this is related to us not being able to locate our car keys. Nor was he trying to introduce some pseudo-mathematics to try and predict peoples' social behavior.

What Bentley was really doing in this book was rhetoric, plain and simple; not logical argument but rhetoric. This large rhetorical argument broadly goes as follows:

> "Physics has had to revise drastically some of the most cherished and long-standing words in all the history of human knowledge—space, time, action, simultaneity, measurement, speed, mass, energy. While the changes really only impact on 'ordinary' objects when they are at enormous speeds, with tiny masses, or under huge gravitational pull, the changes in physics clearly show us how the 'scientifically' held words of centuries are really gross, vague terms that originated and still remain based in everyday conversation and social relations. What seemed like precise and detached words turn out to be useless for a scientific account in the long-run."

Bentley's rhetorical argument, then, is to make this point absolutely clear to the reader at a gut level, and then ask them *to approach the words and technical terms of psychology and the social sciences with the same humility* (cf. Guerin, 2016a). He uses the vast upheaval in modern physics to shake social scientists out of complacency, showing that they might also re-examine the mundane and misleading words and ideas they have taken uncritically from everyday conversation and social relations. While Bentley had done some of this task in the 1908 book, in the first section, he begins to make his more logical arguments clearer to readers. This became even clearer in his 1941 papers.

> "Return now from man as the center of his cosmos to man as the center of his relations with other men. If his most stable words, space and time, have crumpled under his hands, and proved to be variable factors in his experience, how much more will the same probably prove to be true with the vague and passing words which he used to denote his relations in his societies? There has been a long development, a loosening and freeing of his idea and opinion systems in his social life akin to what he has had in his cosmos. Can it strike down still further?" (p. 24)

Indeed, it can strike down still further. Bentley takes up his arguments carried over from 1908 about the words for 'mental' events, and the problems deriving from the use of those words. He begins with 'inner and outer' and 'far and near':

> "By way of transition from physics to man it is desirable to make a few remarks on the interesting little words, inside and outside, far and near. Every one of us assumes he knows all about them. And yet I am not risking very much in venturing the assertion that physics, which is our one branch of knowledge that really knows what it knows, does not know anything about them at all, has no place for them, no meaning for them, and would go ahead just exactly the same as it is going if those words, and everything connected with them were entirely removed from our language and knowledge." (p. 57)

In an argument reminiscent of his later (1941a/1975b) paper, he points out some ludicrous implications of the common 'inner/outer' distinction which is just as prevalent today:

> "Now while, as a matter of Euclidean space we still put the bread into our mouths, whence it passes to a further section of our insides, our stomachs, this Euclidean space in which this all happens is found to be only a partial approximation to the facts. And when the bread in its electro-atomic action passes on into our bodily electro-atomic action we have the process going on under conditions in which Euclidean space is most prominent for its gaps and its disappearances. This is not satisfying to contemplate. Our insides, it is true, have not become outsides, but they have nevertheless lost the distinguishing marks of their insideness." (p. 58)

Likewise he makes a few comments on 'mind' as a word, of which he writes more later:

> "As to mind, in the sense of mind-stuff, the psychologists long ago abandoned it. Likewise in all its old categories, such as sensation, feeling, will, it has passed into decay. Through pragmatisms which have accomplished much, into behaviorisms which have accomplished more, the psychologists have come ever more to a study of action, events.
> And this action of the living being, this word of the psychologist, becomes more and more friendly to the same word of the physicist. The

> physicist has passed from an actor in an environment to action, and the psychologist is doing the same. He studies a happening which he cannot study unless he includes its prospective phases with its retrospective. *No longer can he give it an instantaneous present. Instead he must give it a present in duration and space which is a full bit of the moving experience*." (p. 64, my italics)

It is hopefully clear now how the last two sentences also reflect his earlier research work: one cannot explain people's behavior without reference to the wider context and history.

However, Bentley was perhaps a bit overly optimistic about the flexibility of psychologists on this point. To give a concrete and contemporary example of what seems the very abstract argument by Bentley above, the whole cognitive psychology movement is based on two assumptions which continue with the mistakes Bentley is pointing out here (Guerin 2001a, 2016a). First, cognitive psychology has a metaphor that decisions are made in the 'instantaneous present.' Information is taken in and how the action is determined, is 'decided,' then and there. Indeed, possibly the most frequent measurement in psychology today, that is also taken as proof of this, is reaction time—the longer the reaction time the more decisions that must have been computed there and then, or the more decision stages that must have been gone through.

The second cognitive psychology metaphor is that there is an unchanging processing environment within us (presumably in the brain) that changes or processes what is 'taken in' through the eyes and other senses but which remains itself mostly unaltered during that processing. It is instructive to compare this current psychology formation with the example above given by Bentley of eating bread: If the idea of an unchanging processing environment disappears, what does that leave of the 'inside/outside' distinction?

Bentley also warns about using language as a foundation for building 'certainty' in our social science knowledge:

> "The propositions concerning language as social possess just the same kinds of values: they are not building blocks, but controls against illusory explanations, at the present stage of our knowledge. Words are created in communication. The subjects of communication are social. The participants in the communications are functioning together in a myriad of ways. The words express this common functioning." (p. 69)

He was to develop this further in the final section of his 1935 book, but I would like to point out two things from this quote. First, he sums up his entire output of life work quite nicely in the phrase given above—"*not building blocks, but controls against illusory explanations*." That is, his work was not to build up a new foundation of social science in the sense of finding facts which could act as building blocks for certainty; nothing in the sense that we can say that Talcott Parsons (Parsons, Shils & Smelser, 1965) tried to build a system of words for the social sciences, for example. Rather, Bentley saw the language and words used by all sciences, and physics is used in his 1926 book to make the point strongly, as fluid and part of the social relationships and social strategies of society, not as some firm basis for agreement.

The second point from the quote above goes against what has just been said. I believe that Bentley falls prey to his own criticism in many places. One of those places is in considering the socialness of language and how exactly this works. For example, in the quote where Bentley talks about language 'expressing' things; this is another word he might well have thought about for longer because it has the same characteristics as his other 'illusory' words. Language is action by people and there is no 'thing' to express, actions just occur or not. When I say the word 'cat,' nothing is expressed beyond the word—there is no extra 'stuff' going on. Whatever we think is expressed has really to do with other events, namely, the histories of the listeners. This also is implied by saying that "Words are created in communication." On Bentley's own terms, nothing is created, there are only events or actions.

I will come to this problem again when discussing Bentley (1935). I believe that Bentley lacked a consistent view of language and its social basis, despite his success with other carry-over words such as 'mind'. Words do things to people in just the same way that pushing does things to people.

The difference lies not in something special being created with words nor in something being expressed through words, but merely in the complexity of the histories involved. This is reflected also in Bentley's occasional misguided plea that if only we had the rightly defined terms or words, if only we could banish all the 'scientific' words and introduce a whole new clean vocabulary, all would become clear (Dewey & Bentley, 1949). He does not always make this argument, but I am skeptical of this approach, and in fact think it goes against all the other ideas Bentley has bequeathed us. If language is social action then just making clean definitions will not help in the long-run.

In Part 3 of his 1926 book, Bentley faces the biggest word problem of the social sciences, and a problem that is still with us today. This is *the interplay of the individual with society*. On the one hand, we can speak of society as nothing more than a bunch of individuals, but on the other hand, individuals are nothing without societies and indeed could not exist without societies.

Like his 1908 book, Bentley (1926) sees the solution as getting rid of the terms 'individual' and 'society' altogether, and considering the total accumulation (context) of activities or behaviors that take place, as both our conceptual and our more practical framework. Things get done; there are events; most of what gets done is a vast conglomeration of the activities of many people. Bentley here calls the total field of investigation Man-Society, calls the events that take place Activity, and calls the mixtures of individuals that produce most activities Cross-Sectional Activities. The latter is the most important term to understand, being a method of getting away from simple causes and effects—both that individuals bring about 'societal activities' and that society sets the context for individuals to act (which contingencies are possible and their structure). In talking about the investigation of the alcohol prohibition laws in terms of cause and effects:

> "The crude cause and effect statement of the type of the billiard player, the cue and the billiard ball (the player 'aims' and the cue 'pushes' the ball), however satisfactory it is in its place, it too thin and poor for interpretive use in the study of man-society. We may get certain approximations by saying in one place that the drinking custom produces the drinking trade, or in another that the drink trade forces the drinking custom. For this use or that we can emphasize a cause side and an effect side to explain an increment here or an increment there but for our wide general uses, we must take these and many other activities together, and let the understanding, the very definition of each be in terms of others. Get these cross-sectional activities as carefully analyzed and differentiated as possible, stated in terms of one another and we really begin to comprehend what is going on." (p. 107)

Like his research on the Nebraskan farmers, we must accumulate the total (as far as possible in a practical way) mixture of longitudinal activities involved in the topic of interest, and our 'understanding' will come through these activities. Fixating on only one aspect means that we will have to introduce bogus abstract terms to cover gaps in our 'explanations.' In contemporary terms, these are arguments for a systems or contextual approach, but they are more than that. They are not so much arguing for inter-disciplinary approaches or multi-disciplinary approaches as they are arguments for getting rid of 'disciplines' in the social sciences altogether.

Bentley gives some indications of this procedure in this section of the book (pp. 95-109), using the federal prohibition on alcohol as an illustration, the Volstead Law. We will not go through this example, but he shows that a 'social fact' such as this can be differentiated from all sides by all disciplines, to describe the conglomerate of all cross-sectional activities that make it up. This goes all the way from individuals such as the President signing the law, to the make-up or context of the President that allowed him to be in the position of being able to sign it with some effect, to the pressure groups that lobbied for years to bring the law in, and the bars and hotels that would go out of business.

Bentley is trying to say that all this is too complex, too multi-faceted, to speak of in terms of causes and effects (cf. Jacobson, 1964). We must look at it from all sides and see how the many cross-sectional activities emerge and form and change. This is his vision of the social sciences. Besides this

example, we have the three intensive research studies he conducted, as outlined earlier in this paper. His point is that we must do this not because he wants a utopian vision of everything put together in the biggest way possible, but because when we do conduct the research in separate disciplines we come to rely upon shorthand words that refer to fictions but which have always confused and inhibited comprehension of the activities taking place on the ground. Writing of the Volstead prohibition law and the common explanations in terms of a drinking 'habit' or even a 'social habit' of drinking (it is a 'norm' or just 'human nature'):

> "True enough it is very common to generalize the whole situation into a drink habit which may be presented as social, and over against which is set some trait of human nature which is posited in offset as individual. But the 'drink habit' and the 'human nature' are as bare and meaningless as the statistics, until they are worked out and specified in these defined activities. And the more completely this specification is carried out, the less importance the emphasis on the habit and the human nature retains." (p. 106)

Bentley has not, up to this point in his writings, said very much about psychology except for a superficial acquiescence in his earliest work to his contemporaries ('wants' and 'needs'), but he now begins the challenge that will go through his later works, and his 1935 book in particular. In writing about social facts or terms that psychology appears to do without, he comments:

> "If statements in terms of factors of individual psychology have shown a steady tendency to reconstruction in such ways as to eliminate most of these terms and leave the rest without terminological agreement among the workers who use them; if the statements in social terms are expanding and giving promise of terminological agreement; and if the psychological terms tend to show themselves, not so much as errors, but rather as crude approximations to the values of social statements, then not merely is the probability in favor of the social statement, but it becomes scientific requirement that these statements should be carried out to develop their full value." (p. 103)

This is really the first approximation to comments in his 1935 book I will discuss later. It will become one of Bentley's main points which separates him from other social theorists: the ability to see *social relations as the basis for 'psychological' words*. Psychologies typically gloss over this by using abstract words that encompass the real social events. For Bentley, the individual does not so much disappear as become substantial in the fullness of all the (social) cross-sectional or contextual activities:

> "We can conceive of these cross-sectional activities of man-society as qualitatively dimensional, and intersecting in the individuals of the society. The individual will answer to his name and respond to his characterization *as the locus of this intersection*, under certain rough descriptive terms of temperament, mental and moral qualities, habits, conduct, social position and so on. If the whole process of man-society can ultimately be described in terms of the cross-sectional planes, that will bring no hurt to the individual as an intersection of so many planes, but instead give him in the end, if needed, much fuller and better characterization.
> It is to be remembered, of course, that what we have in society is not abstracted surfaces, but activities, with duration, extension and energy aspects. Observation of them gives them to us in this way.
> The illustration in terms of planes is thin and poor, but for all that in a slight degree helpful. Counting human heads, we have different groups of individuals in each plane, each group taken not as so many men as individual wholes with a space line around them, but as a group activity formed of this one aspect of the lives of the men counted in it, that aspect an activity, the connections and constructions of which are to be determined through hard and careful search, free from extraneous prior determinations by non-functioning terms; the statement of that aspect as activity having precedence over the statement in terms of individual men." (1926, pp. 108-109)

What he is saying is that the social contexts are determining 'individual' behavior but the psychologists and others ignore these and the have to use abstract words to hedge them. The following is a great example of this: "The smoker reports himself to us in personal terms of his own life. He cannot avoid his craving, or he can let it alone. *But his 'can' and 'cannot' become social when analyzed*" (p. 149, my italics). So the psychologists' words 'can' and 'cannot' hide a lot of social functioning that does not get analyzed and then gets left out of interventions to change the behaviors. Bentley does not develop this clearly enough to be immediately useful (see Bentley, 1935), but the point is an important one for the future of psychology as a discipline: how the social context replaces the talk of individual functioning (Guerin, 2016a, b).

Before going on, there is one extremely interesting quote from Bentley writing in this regard about psychoanalysis:

> "Consider what psycho-analysis has done in broadening our understandings of the specific positions—behaviors—of individuals in man-society. It has gone beyond the immediate durations and immediate space contacts, and spread out the interpretations far and long. It is fearsomely concrete in its statement of the individual, even though, or perhaps rather because, it adds his concrete sub-conscious to his previous concrete conscious description. It is inclined when it gets interested in society around the man, to carry up its extended concrete individual into explanations that become ludicrous to almost every reader of them. All that does not matter: It is scaffolding or by-play. *The important thing is what it does in the hospital and the clinic, by adding far more and wider facts to the first observations. All its facts are social activity facts,* and it is not improper to bring its widenings of observation into comparison with the widenings that have been going on in the last generation of study of society and that are insisted on for their full scope and meaning here." (pp. 138-139, my italics)

The view of language as activity is then resumed in his book, putting language use as a way of getting things done that is intermeshed with all the other cross-sectional activities and contexts that need describing by research. Bentley uses public opinion as his example this time, making the point that public opinion is not a summation of individual opinions, but that all opinions are strategies for things getting done through social influence, coming from the social web of activities and re-shaping it as time goes on.

Bentley goes on to look at three sociologists and how they have approached similar problems: Ratzenhofer, Durkheim and Simmel. Although not agreeing with everything they wrote, Bentley endorses their "determined struggle to reveal in that material what is its peculiarly and truly social content" (1926, p. 157):

> "This quality they have in common, this characteristic which they have sought in society, we cannot call it objectivity—the word is one-sided: nor can we call it positivity—the word is too vague: perhaps for the moment we may call it observational coherence in the material, the social facts, permitting a unified study of it in its own right." (1926, p. 158)

What he gets from each is a method of understanding social facts without reductionism or individualistic pseudo-science:

Ratzenhofer:"For him therefore all the energy aspects of the social facts lie directly within those social facts as such and are not imported to them from outside" (p. 160)

Durkheim:"Social facts must be explained only by other social facts, and never by reference to individual psychologic facts" (p. 161)

Simmel:"State, law, religion, morals, run far beyond the individual in any definition we can give them. Yet they do not need a psychic bearer, a social mind, a social person. They are facts, social facts, to be taken as such and studied in their social forms" (p. 165)

As is well known, Bentley is most pleased with Simmel:

> "...perhaps the keenest and most searching investigator society has yet had, undoubtedly the one with the greatest yield of permanently applicable knowledge. With society concretely

> in the sense of a mass of men here and a mass there as Ratzenhofer looked at it Simmel has little concern. With Durkheim's opposition to the posited individual he has no concern at all. But he is vastly more intimate, more subtle, than any other investigator has been, in catching the inter-influencings of social men. He seeks that which is peculiarly social in society (Vergesellschaftung). His separation is between the content and the form in society. The form is what he studies. The form is what is peculiarly social." (p. 163)

Bentley next considers a variety of classifications of groups. Having seen that 'individuals' are always really cross-sections of many social activities (hence his later word *transdermal*), how can we describe or talk about groups without falling into old word-traps? As is Bentley's common method, here and in his later works, he goes through the formulations of a large number of writers in the area, and (politely) criticizes their attempts to help the reader get the ideas he has put forward. In the present case, Bentley goes through the idea of groups in common sense first (family, clan, state, town, etc.) and finds them either purely geographical or else individualistic and hence tautological, depending upon inner determination of the members. He then looks at Cooley, Ellwood, Maciver, McDougall, Boodin, Wiemann, Pepper and Perry, and scathingly comments: "For the most part these definitions *are hardly worth quoting except to show how erratic are the paths of men when lost in a verbal fog*" (p. 173). He then outlines the famous idea of Tönnies that there are two types of community of groups: Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. He suggests that the authors listed above have not gone beyond Tönnies.

At this point, Bentley develops some more terminology of his own, to supplement that of man-society, cross-sectional activities, and social fact. This section is perhaps a weak part of the book, and Bentley does not make use of these terms ever again in future writings. *Dominance* means the control by one set of activities over another set, although he reminds us, as is only now common in the social sciences, that dominance is two-directional:

> "It is not merely government that dominates underlying activities but underlying activities that dominate government. It is not merely opinions that dominate underlying activities but underlying activities that dominate opinions. The values and meanings must be worked out in both ways before they can hope to be understood in either." (p. 180)

Bentley next argues that activities, besides showing differing amounts of control over each other, also are associated together in many ways: "The activities cohere, they are clotted" (p. 182). He uses the term *clot* to show these cohesions and to avoid assuming the pre-formed words for cohere groups such as business organization, government, religious systems, or non-governmental organization, to use a more recent version. He does this because we cannot guarantee that because we have common words for these groupings that they therefore must and do exist.

In this way, Bentley is perhaps following Simmel, although Simmel is not mentioned in this section. Earlier Bentley had praised Simmel for showing some very subtle and intricate forms of social activities that do not necessarily have recognized names, perhaps what we would today call 'variables'—activities that can be shown to cohere, but do not necessarily have a lay person word. Simmel, for example, studied the 'stranger,' although this is meant in a very different sense to the normal English meaning. He also studied 'secret societies.'

I think this is perhaps the most important point to get out of this introduced terminology—that social variables can cut right across accepted uses of language. We should not rely upon common words to determine what are social facts or not, nor what are social relationships or not. However, I believe that Bentley's idea here, which continues even in his Dewey collaboration, does not work either—the idea that to solve the issues, we need to find or invent new words instead.

The final section of the main part of the book is also weak. Bentley illustrates his terms using frictions, revolutions, progress, and world peace (written 1924-1925). For each he argues against some older ideas that rely on 'human nature' and the like,

and tries to show how we need to come at these through multiple cross-sectional activities. He nicely calls what is being done *socio-analysis*, and this is echoed in his final comments about a world peace:

> "Because we stand at a time of great conflicts we have no right to say those conflicts are irresolvable. All social life is a resolution of conflicts, provisional always, with new conflicts arising, with the intolerable activities being driven out, with new methods being secured, with destructions at times and places, but with new creations succeeding.
> Knowledge of our group attachments and their relativities—that, and that alone, can give us the greater approximations to virile peace which is what we all most crave, and of what we all most despair in the hidden parts of our lives, while our values are given us in darkness." (p. 199)

This is perhaps the newspaper editor talking rather than the critical writer of the rest of the book, but the book does not stop there. Bentley now has two chapters that examine what he has already written. The first is called *The Argument Inspected.* The second is called *Hints for Guidance in Study.* The first gives a kind of summary of what is being said, particularly the "rebellion against verbal tyrannies." The second re-emphasizes that common or lay ways of thinking and talking about things and people are poor guides for what is actually happening, and they occur for many reasons other than that they are 'true.'

That ends the 212 pages of the book proper. This is immediately followed, however, by another 143 pages of comments, references, and an afterword. Some of this just gives references or some background (e.g., a little about the major works of Einstein). But other parts give interesting commentaries on what has been said. Much of this I have already included above in discussing the book itself, and I will not go through all this material, but included are some interesting personal valuations of his own material and some extra ideas which were not included in the book proper. When reading this book, it is worthwhile reading these comment sections concurrently.

For example, while giving passive acquiescence to psychoanalytic theory within the text itself, in his commentary on page 274, Bentley shows some of the absurdities of psychoanalytic interpretations and word play, especially when applied to social behaviors: "Anarchism is the faithful social projection of the uterus with repudiation of the manifest uterus-wish" (from Kolnai).

Another interesting comment I want to expand upon comes from his extra section on arguments against the use of instincts and needs to 'explain' behavior:

> "Another profitable line of consideration will be found in the difficult problem of the origin of custom and law of incest. *Take a series of writers on this subject; observe how far each of them goes until he introduces instinct; try to determine from his work just why he introduces instinct at the point he does*; and then compare with them all Simmel's interpretation in terms of conditions of social living." (1926, p. 284, my italics)

This is an interesting procedure. For example, more recently, cognitive psychology put a lot of the 'driving' of behavior into cognitive structures, as if the structuring 'causes' behavior. What we can do, using Bentley's procedure, is to read the major works of cognitive psychology and see the point in their explanations when they need to clarify what this means but they instead insert an abstract word. Such a procedure is useful for tracing the points when psychologists introduce 'needs' or 'desires' or 'cognitive structures' into their explanations. Indeed, these passages indicate that Bentley was beginning to make a thorough reading of psychology, which was to lead to his 1935 book and another very large series of unpublished notes and papers on psychology and its conceptual problems. We will see below that in his 1935 books he traces many psychologies of his day and looks for how they deal with, gloss over or else ignore key features of understanding people. Like the list of sociologists earlier, most psychologies fail in this with the exceptions of Kantor and some behaviorisms.

What he begins with this point is, I believe, one of his most important discoveries of method: treat social science and psychology words and theories as social strategies or discourse; examine how they

are used by social scientists; and then examine the theoretical and empirical contexts that are in place when the writers start using these terms. *Bentley's fascinating method is really the beginning of a contextual and discursive examination of the writings of psychology and the social sciences*: At what point in the text does the writer bring in the term 'instinct' and discover why it is precisely there that the term is needed.

"Behavior Knowledge Fact" (1935)

We have seen in Bentley's early works that he variously ignored psychology, took early psychology naively at its word, or gave casual criticisms without going into any details, at least not in the same way that he gave details and examples of everything else he criticized. With his 1935 book, *Behavior Knowledge Fact*, he at last comes to grips with psychology. He carries out a thorough and critical review (a *deconstruction*) of the psychologies of his times and develops an alternative way of describing the events they purport to describe. I believe his own proposed method of description was ultimately unsuccessful, but the special interest for this paper is that 'psychological' events were in general to be replaced by social events. Bentley starts out with his basic ideas in a Preface:

> "Knowledge, whether regarded as the wisdom of the individual or as the accumulated intellectual treasure of the many, is always in some sense the behavior of men... Many of the behaviors of men present themselves to us in the highly specialized and long-enduring forms called 'social.' ...Their more recent exploration by the psychologies and the sociologies has not yet given them the clarification they need... As the case stands today, sociologists find little security in the data offered them by psychologists; psychologists, in their turn, are far from a state of ease in their dealings with socializations. The confusions are great, and increasing." (pp. v-vi).

Bentley's aims are to go through the theories of psychology and deal with them, and then to try to "identify, describe, and name certain behaviors of the 'social' type" (p. vii). The problems remain, however: "At every step in such inquiries the investigator faces situations in which 'words' and 'facts' are complexly tangled. Where 'facts' can be approached only through an elaborate technique of 'words,' and where 'words' that must be used are far from reliable as certifiers of 'fact,' the perils of analysis are great," (p. viii).

In reading this, we must return to his early works. The 'intrusion' of the social develops out of his early research studies that ignored disciplinary distinctions and tried to understand what people did by describing their social, economic, cultural and historical context thoroughly. He is now looking at how psychologists have incorporated these features—or not.

The book is broken into three sections: Psychology as Knowledge, Knowledge and Fact, and Social Fact. In pursuing the first of these, Bentley's strategy is typical. He goes out of his way to find the phenomena which are being talked about: "In such inquiry the first duty of the investigator is to obtain definite phenomena for examination. The word 'psychology' covers many varieties of laboratory experimentation and behavioral observation, including an older form known as 'introspection'; it covers also a multitude of practical activities, and beyond these the doings of many charlatans" (p. 3).

Bentley focuses on what we would call theories of psychology, psychologies as presented in language, and he is basically doing a discursive analysis. For example:

> "Psychology has in great measure lost its reliance on the 'reality' or 'actuality' of 'mind,' in which it formerly had overwhelming confidence. It has transferred its attention largely to 'body'... we find it toying with 'mechanistic' presentations, with 'activities,' with 'patterns,' and with 'psychological organisms.' What, however, are these but devices of contemporaneous linguistic construction for the display or hoped-for display of the 'facts' and of the 'knowledge' which the psychologies seek to discover? The values of such devices—and even of the words 'body' and 'matter' as they are today before us in technical use—do not run beyond those of a developing coherence of language, first for the particular investigations under way, and then in linguistic connection with the sciences round about." (pp. 7-8)

A few things come out of this already. Bentley is not evaluating these psychology theories, but looking at the words they use and the discursive strategies used by the theorists, actually like a deconstruction as postmodernisms know it or a textual or discursive analysis (e. g., Billig, 2005; Guerin, 2003; Hepburn & Potter, 2003). Second, Bentley is not out to rid psychology of 'mind' and vindicate 'body' or 'matter.' He is just as critical of these latter terms and, despite being called a behaviorist by some who have only read *The Process of Government*, he is equally critical of most forms of his contemporary behaviorisms except Kantor (see 1935, p. 89; and Bentley, 1928/1975). Finally, he sees the anguish and debate over these theories as being essentially over the coherence or consistency with research, data, common sense, and other knowledge from the other sciences. The debate is not about 'facts.'

For the materials to use in his textual analysis of psychological theories, Bentley selected essays gathered in two volumes edited by Carl Murchison, *Psychologies of 1925* and *Psychologies of 1930*. These essays amounted to twenty-six psychologies, but he also looked at the writings of fifty other psychologists but found only three more that could not be subsumed under someone else's presentation in the two volumes—Dashiell, Kantor, and Ogden. This made a total of twenty-nine psychologies to examine, although he immediately eliminated eighteen of them. They were omitted for a variety of reasons, primarily because their focus was too narrow for Bentley's purpose here. He writes more about some of the others in short form:

> "McDougall: His dependence is upon a particular linguistic surface, "fact so familiar and well-established that it has become embodied in the very structure of all language." ... Here he erects as 'primal urge' and as "man's nature to do" what is before him only in the form of 'man's present custom in talk.'" (p. 16)

It is important to see what Bentley is doing here. He is selecting psychologies that have put full arguments and 'facts' into language in a way that can actually be examined, so we can find out the connections between these 'facts' and the knowledge systems employed in these theories and descriptions:

> "With regard to the rejected constructions this comment may be made. It is that they all accept as 'known' in advance of inquiry and, as the point of support for their procedures, some 'certain' or 'definitely expressed' or sufficiently well understood *fact*. Their 'points of support' lie, then, in a sense, *outside* their own ranges of workmanship" (p. 17).

Or as Bentley puts it in his Table (p. 19), the rejected ones are "psychologies with assertive factual stress (and thus constructively dogmatic with respect to the present issues of inquiry)." The eleven systems of psychology remaining are instead characterized as: "psychologies with inquisitive factual stress (and thus projectively 'scientific,' both as to phenomenal description and construction form)."

In an attempt to characterize them for discussion, Bentley proceeds with a tentative taxonomy of the eleven theories. It is worth presenting these main portions of his table here to help with discussion, as done in Table 1 below (a version of Bentley's Table 3.1). Following on from his discussions in *Relativity in Man and Society*, this is chiefly done in terms of how space and time are conceptualized.

Bentley distinguishes between language connected to a physical world, called 'body-language' or 'physical language,' and the other he calls 'mind-language' that has the psychologists' special phenomena of inquiry as the mental, psychical, psychological or behavioral. What he is trying to do is act like a theoretical taxonomist and to examine what psychologists say and *determine the moments at which they slip from one of the languages into the other*. He is not trying to say that everything should be done with the coordinates of the physical sciences, indeed he argues against this. Nor that the 'mind-language' is a waste of time, although he does get to this point later in another way. Rather, he wants to see how these explanatory systems work as they juggle themselves between the two languages—the physical-languages and the mind-languages. So a psychology that 'explained' obsessions as deriving from a mis-firing frontal lobe would be in the 'physical language' category,

whereas one that 'explained' obsessions as due to feelings that have become too powerful would be using 'mind-language'.

Table 1. A few sections selected from Bentley's "Tabular Guide to Examination" (Table 3.1)

B. Psychologies with inquisitive factual stress

I. In space and time forms adopted (expressly or implicitly) from other sciences as authoritative controls.
1. Body (organism) space-segments
   a. Mechanistic and successional
   (with extensions via the microscope) *Dashiell*
   b. Tentatively durational
   (a) with a 'psychic plus' *Woodworth*
   (b) with an excluded 'metaphysics' *Dunlap*
2. Gross-Body-Movements (mechanistic and successional)
   a. With extensions via the 'implicit'
   (a) bluntly mechanistic *Watson*
   (b) with adjoined 'epiphenomena' *Washburn*
b. Sectioned Environments
   (a) 'Common sense' *Hunter*
   (b) 'Biosocial' *Weiss*
3. Organism-Object space-segments *Kantor*

II. In an endeavor to override the constructional difficulties by way of a two-faced Aristotelian language (abortive) *C. K. Ogden*

III. Along lines prognostic of a functional factuality that will include space and time as well as phenomenal description
1. In a matrix of social experience *Dewey*
2. In a suggestion of duplex functional language *M. Bentley*

Bentley finds four discursive points at which this juggling occurs—four issues that signal that something suspicious is going on with an explanation or other discourse. He calls them the four sectors. The first is *immateriality*—the arguments that are brought forward to account for a lack of substance with the 'mind-language' constructs. How is this issue handled in an explanatory system? What has to be added to provide an answer? Is there a mind versus a body? Is it all just brain processes? What is the materiality of 'feelings'? Is a completely hypothetical construct invented by the theorist? As Bentley writes, most authors seem to believe that if they could just (magically) solve this problem, then their whole explanatory system would work.

The second sector Bentley calls the *apprehensionality* sector. This refers to the subject matter of perception, and sometimes thinking itself, that objects are 'apprehended.' Bentley's argument again is not that we should do away with all this, but that we cannot get rid of the problem just by simple ('blunt') substitutions of body for mind, or organism for subject, etc. To emphasize and remind the reader that Bentley should not be read lightly and is not tackling these fields naively as an outsider, here is his caution in this section of his book:

> "Take pains to read this last paragraph as it is written; do not distort it into something different under the slippery meanings of convention. I have not said that the fields of inquiry *are* different 'existentially,' nor that we are forbidden to proceed under a clear hypothesis of their reduction to one common field. The assertion is not either of these; it is that the technical procedures actually available today in terms of the physical language do not directly deal with any such phenomena as those of 'apprehensionality,' whether these last phenomena are set forth in terms of 'mind' or of 'animal organism." (pp. 28-29)

Beware the casual reader! But this also explains why those who read Bentley carefully become more and more impressed with him. He is not making the same old criticisms and worn out arguments, he is saying something very new and interesting in this discursive analysis of psychological theorizing.

The third sector of psychological inquiry that causes problems he calls *isolationality*, meaning that most psychological explanatory systems propose some sort of isolation of the mind or person or subject from the rest of the world. This problem needs to be tackled in any revisions and developments. Whether it is called 'mind,' 'private events' (Skinner, 1974), 'inapparent events' (Hayes, 1994), or 'generalized social exchanges' (Guerin, 2004), the assumption is always there of some (psychological) phenomena separated from the rest of the known world. How this is dealt with is an important part, therefore, of evaluating any explanatory systems.

The final sector of problems for psychological systems he calls the *environmental sector*. This refers to how an explanatory system deals with the environment in relation to the organism or whether it does at all. We later see that Bentley is very care-

ful about terms such as 'interactional' and 'transactional' to describe organisms and the environment. He is even at pains to emphasize that Kantor's word should be 'inter*actional*' rather than '*inter*actional' because the latter implies two separate parts of nature that interact, rather than a whole.

As Bentley summarizes, he is now armed with a subject matter of eleven psychological explanatory systems and four key sectors to examine how these systems both work in practice and how they squirm under our gaze. I have summarized the four sectors in Table 2 to help the reader.

Table 2. Bentley's four "sectors' that can help identify where problems lie with psychological theories wavering between mind-language and body-language.

Immateriality: how the theory accounts for a lack of substance with any 'mind-language' constructs

Apprehensionality: how the theory accounts for objects being 'apprehended', how perception and thinking fit in the system

Isolationality: how the theory accounts for some sort of isolation of the mind or person or subject from the rest of the world, including the body

Environmental: how the theory accounts for (if at all) the environment in relation to the organism and what it does

He also discusses in more detail the space-time dimension that is the main basis for his taxonomic table dividing up the eleven theories. For example, Bentley points out how those who take a Newtonian, mechanistic or physical space as the basis for their psychology always end up with the temporal aspect becoming a series of successions, rather like cognitive psychology ends up with reaction-time and decision-making as a point-to-point succession of instantaneous time-moments. In contrast, for those who take 'activity' as their basis and break the world into individuals carrying out activities, time becomes 'durational,' spread over a large number of the others' 'successions.' Bentley points out, though, that the latter theories often have other constructs that derive from a physical space idea and that gives them trouble when trying to fit them into the bigger system.

In this way, we can view Bentley as an early 'deconstructionist' because he is tackling a system (11 of them) using their own words and showing how when viewed as a whole and viewed consistently, they breaks down under their *own* weight rather than the weight of an outside assumption forced into it (cf. Derrida, 1978/67).

> "Our procedure with respect to the eleven psychologies selected for more detailed examination will therefore be as follows: Concentrating upon linguistic coherence or incoherence as our direct fact of observation, we must give attention to the types of space and time each of the psychologists uses. We must then identify the special space-segment with which he (*sic*) is primarily concerned. We must finally investigate his procedure with respect to the characteristics of immateriality, apprehensionality, and isolationality which he allots to his phenomena, whether these appear as phases of the mind-language so far as he retains it, or as survivals from it if he conceives himself to be rejecting it entirely..."
> "Psychological terms which will be most prominently before our attention are such as 'stimulus,' 'object,' 'environment,' and 'activity.' Certain other terms or phrases which are frequently used for the characterization of systems will receive no more than passing notice. Such a term is 'objective,' a word which too many psychologists of too many minds claim in too many ways emphatically for their own. The phrase 'whole organism' has almost equally many claimants, although its value rarely rises over a ratio of one part of explicit intention to nine parts of obfuscation. Even an occasional exercise of minor ingenuity directed towards the replacement of such terms would be refreshing." (p. 37)

If one reads these last two paragraphs carefully, one can see how in advance Bentley is of any of his contemporary psychologies, and, indeed, of most critical examinations of psychologies today.

Bentley works his way through all the eleven psychologies listed in his taxonomic table, even apologizing for so much detail but reassuring the

reader that cursory comments would be worse and misleading (I will not go through all the detail however). Dashiell, Hunter and Ogden are first and Bentley shows the contradictions and problems they have in terms of both space-time *and* the four sector problems. For example, Dashiell accepts physiology, neurology and endocrinology as the real make-up of persons, and tries to get rid of the *immateriality* problem this way. However, he then has problems accounting for the *isolationality* because everything is inside the brain and body and this makes problems in considering where the environment stops and starts, and how it affects the rest of the psychology. This in turn leads to problems with Dashiell's *apprehensionality* and *isolationality*.

These pages are interesting for the first indications of a problem which Bentley will state more succinctly six years later: That for all these problems the common solution to fill in a conceptual gap is to rely upon the human skin as a significant or even metaphysical boundary (Bentley, 1941a/1975). Once an inner and outer is postulated, and this includes placing all the old mind-stuffs into the physiological systems, then the "observable boundary between the two may be taken as the 'human skin,' most realistically established as *the* critical distinction of the universe" (1935, p. 45). Very few psychologies (Skinner, Kantor) play down the role of the skin as a mediational device or boundary, and few psychological systems could survive without this dubious distinction (Bentley, 1951-1952). [One could even say that with the current rapid rise in explanations (metaphors really) in terms of brain and neurological events, this has become even worse today than it was in Bentley's day.]

Hunter, one of his examples from Table 1 for example, makes the inner/outer distinction, but is clearly worried by what is implied for the skin, how much of the argument rests upon the skin being something metaphysically special. So he places the emphasis elsewhere, "the nature of the inner and outer environments *as these are reported by his subjects*" (p. 45), although this does not help in the long run because it causes other problems. That is, the reported or verbal responses of the subjects are taken as the authentic distinction instead of the skin, even though this is quite weak. This is, in some ways, the precursor to the idea of proposing 'mental representations' of the world being the missing link in the chain, excepting that Hunter has *fewer* problems with isolationality than do explanatory systems involving mental representations as mediators of activity. Bentley then paraphrases Hunter: "…for Hunter, the talking-behavior of the inner environment 'is' the outer environment; likewise it is the inner environment" (p. 46).

This gets to the hub of the problem for Bentley: *How to talk about the so-called 'inner' person or psychology without creating a new dimension or domain for which there is no other evidence excepting that these sorts of words point there*. This is still a current problem for psychology, although many attempts, including later ones by Bentley, have overcome the need for an inner and an outer.

The final point to note from this chapter concerns Ogden, whose solution is to make a *tripartite* division between symbol, thought, and referent. This is interesting here because Bentley will later use a similar distinction between intervening activities, men, and things (also Guerin, 1997, 2016a).

The next theories under the microscope are those relating to mechanistic approaches, "a slightly pompous substitute for 'mechanical'" (1935, p. 52). These treat actions as a series or succession of movements in a space, and "the specific observable movements are taken as if capable of definite severance, each from the others around, and from those before and after." (p. 53). This includes the early behaviorisms (see Chiesa, 1994; Lee, 1999). The idea was that if we can just document enough of the pushing and pulling of physical movements, then we can construct how and why people do what they do.

I will not go through all these different formulations and criticisms. The idea of what Bentley is doing should be clear now. For example, with John B. Watson he points out how the word 'implicit' is suspiciously introduced at a key point and vacillates between an old mentalistic 'inner' and an unobservable 'potential.' This word rescues Watson's form of behaviorism, but undermines it at the same time. Another group of theories substitute the word 'activity' instead, but:

> "The word of his choice, 'activity,' has for Woodworth double values. First, it gets rid of the inconvenient 'substances,' 'subjects,' or

> 'things' of the old mind-language; second, "we can combine experience and behavior under the inclusive term, activity" (p. 331), and expect this term to cover the positive findings of all schools. This, unfortunately, is the kind of procedure that proposes to eat its cake and keep it, too. It makes the individual take the form of 'activity' and nothing more, and then turns around and makes that 'activity' an individual and allots him causal status." (p. 68)

Many of the same criticisms have been made since 1935 by others (some were paraphrased by Skinner in fact), and most of these early systems of psychology are now forgotten, although it is certainly worthwhile working carefully through Bentley's (1935) book to see how many of the errors and discursive strategies are still with us today. Only Kantor remains unscathed in Bentley's close reading. I would like to highlight two conclusions, however, that run through much of this material; the first, because it is the theme of the second half of Bentley's book and, the second, because it forms much of Bentley's later writing and his collaborations with John Dewey.

The first conclusion that goes through Bentley's discussion of these forms of psychology is that of the 'social,' a point we saw highlighted in one of his earlier works (1926) stemming from his research explorations of how 'individual' behavior is permeated by social contexts:

> "The 'social,' thus introduced, is today almost as great a scandal for psychology as it has been from the start for sociology. Whether this 'social' is some vague influence upon the 'individual,' or whether it enters as an 'environment'; whether the psychologist constructs it as a 'product' of individual activity, or whether he goes far toward holding that the individual is social; the constructions are full of inconsistencies that extend often to chaos." (p. 59)
>
> "In analyzing the psychologies in Part I, we witnessed the frequent intrusion of this 'social,' and the disturbances it produced for psychological observation and construction. At one extreme we found efforts to exclude it altogether from attention, and at the other, indications that it might inundate the entire territory; elsewhere it was tacitly accepted or unwillingly tolerated. Whatever its treatment, as fact or aspect of fact it was never absent from the psychological problem." (p. 187)

The second point for our discussion is condensed in Bentley's analysis of John Dewey's chapter on psychology (he had not begun corresponding with Dewey at this point). This concerns the relationship between organism and environment. He quotes with approval a series of sentences from Dewey's chapter in the *Psychologies of 1930* book:

> "No organism is so isolated that it can be understood apart from the environment in which it lives." (p. 76)
>
> Stimulus is "functional, in a mathematical sense." (p. 77)
>
> Something "breaks in upon an activity already going on, and becomes a stimulus in virtue of the relations it sustains to what is going on in this continuing activity." (p. 77)
>
> It is always 'change' that we study. (p. 77)
>
> "A stimulus is always a change in the environment which is connected with a change in the activity." (p. 77)
>
> Durational 'trans-action' is the direct objective of psychological study. (p. 77)
>
> "Psychology is concerned with the life-career of individualized activities." (p. 78)
>
> (Bentley, 1935, giving quotes from Dewey, 1930)

This again is getting at the idea that organism and environment are only separated at the risk of those who do so, and that it is individual activities which are the subject matter rather than an individual person (cf. Lee, 1999) and we need to describe the contexts of activities as much as features of the person (Guerin, 2001a, 2004). [It is also interesting how some of these resemble but pre-date Skinner.] The term 'transaction' is also used again, which will become a theme for Dewey and Bentley later (1949). He also praises Kantor for similar arguments: "He studies organism and object just as he finds them in their joint appearance in the 'situation' and in their joint happening as 'event,' and

without survival of 'mentalist' emphasis upon *the organism, separately taken, as the locus of 'what happens.'* (p. 90, my italics)

This question was the one called 'isolationality' by Bentley earlier in his book. He now returns to it in an interlude:

> "The word 'isolationality,' clumsy and opportunist though it is, has had definite service to perform throughout the preceding inquiry. It has named and held before our attention one of the most pregnant characteristics of the old mind-language: namely, that characteristic wherein each human being as an 'individual' is inspected in sharp severance from every other." (p. 105)

Or as he later wrote to John Dewey:

> "The organism, of course, seems in everyday life and language to stand out strongly apart from the transactions in which it is engaged. This is a superficial observation. One reason for it is that the organism is engaged in so many transactions." (Dewey & Bentley, 1949, p. 138)

We now come to Part II of Bentley's (1935) book on knowledge and fact. He draws together a number of themes that have come out of the material of Part I – the different systems of psychology. Of special importance is the method of inquiry being proposed and being used:

> "In our pursuit of inquiry under this chosen hypothesis a technique of sharply marked characteristic appeared. This technique rested in the refusal ever to let judgment depend upon an assumed dominant bond between 'word' and 'fact' – upon any specific use in a psychological system of some particular term as a 'true' parallel or representative of 'true' fact." (pp. 131-132)

It is here, then, that Bentley continues his investigation into the relations between knowledge and fact, an investigation that was to result in a book with John Dewey some years later (Dewey & Bentley, 1949).

> "We are now to undertake inquiry into the functional organization of Language and Knowledge. In the background lie many insistent questions. If Language is a fact or a behavior what is Knowledge? With what right may Knowledge be regarded as substantive? If it may be so regarded, must Language then be taken as instrumental or operative with respect to it? Or can Language, on its side, find substantive presentation? Is it possible that both Language and Knowledge are aspects or phases of some more comprehensive situation in such a way that no separate investigation of either, taken as apart from the other, will have validity for our more general purposes of inquiry? If this last be the case, how may we, or how must we, envisage this larger situation of which they are aspects?
> When such questions as these are brusquely approached, the answers, where not formally philosophical, will ordinarily depend upon implicit attitudes taken by the questioner towards certain of the very contents of inquiry that are at issue. Such implicit attitudes have to do, as is at once evident, largely with the status of the human being regarded as psychologically or mentally in action…
> Our procedure will be empirical in the sense that to no one of the leading words we employ will there be allotted, prior to the investigation or authoritatively, any precise theoretical construction of its own." (p. 139)

Bentley now joins this nicely back to his discussion in Part I about the psychological theories and their loci:

> "If, as a surface surveyor, I should now attempt to frame my exhibit solely within the walls of the room, the week of the meeting, and the living of those present, it would be to show myself painfully deficient in skill. My approach would be no better that that of an investigator of rivers who, finding a level stretch of stream bed, would attempt his examination with eyes closed to the fall of the land above and below.
> Again, if I should concentrate all of my attention upon some one fascinating feature of the

> situation, my approach would be scarcely better… Our obligation, therefore, is to keep alert to all that we can find and have power to see, and see it all as set within its wide frames of progression." (p. 141)

Now, there are problems in trying to observe or measure everything about a situation all at once, and much research has floundered because of that. But the point we should take from Bentley here is that to not do this is even worse. Like his early sociological and economic research studies outlined earlier in this paper, we should always be looking to "all that we can find and have power to see." The psychologies dealt with in Part I of Bentley's book made these two errors, focusing attention on one small part of what is happening (the events) – such as looking at thumb-sucking in 5-year old children – or looking only in one limited situation – such as studies within the workplace which do not consider extra-work activities and relationships. As Pronko (1988) put it:

> "For Bentley, starting with a set of assumptions under which events, happenings, or occurrences are primary, to begin with preanalytic organisms or objects as if independently existing prior to inquiry is going about things backwards. If you begin with the total event, then for certain limited purposes within that framework, Bentley would approve your teasing out the role of various factors, but you must never lose sight of the fact that the variables selected for special study are only aspects of the entire system under observation." (p. 91).

These points especially apply to knowledge, language and fact, concepts that are examined in this interlude. Language and thought, for example, are not found in the head or in a mental domain: "locus is not some 'point' in the brain – itself linguistically as incoherent as the 'pointless' psychic – nor the brain as a whole, nor even the human organism as a whole. *As for 'language' so also for 'thought.' The locus lies in many human beings interacting with all of their interconnecting materials and processes, not in some arbitrary space and time adopted from the procedures of other branches of investigation*, but in such space and time as may be developed in the full range of the study: a space and time which we may label for our convenience, in advance of its more thorough examination, 'behavioral space-time.' (p. 149, my italics)

Behavioral space-time, then, will become the idea that events stretch out from what is immediately in front of us. The method of inquiry is to describe and trace out all those contexts of other space and time that bring about or constrain what is taking place in front of us in the Euclidean space-time. Language is one practice that needs such an analysis, for to do otherwise is to misunderstand its functioning and role in social life. This pre-dates two claims of behavior analysis in psychology: that the unit of study is the contingency relations between behaviors and environment, and that these contingent relations 'exist' over space and time (Chiesa, 1994; Guerin, 1997; Lee, 1999; Skinner, 1953).

The conclusion from all this discussion is that language and knowledge (and experience, Chapter 19) are activities, not existing things, not found in separation, and not as facts or things separate from people. While this might be easier today to come to terms with, that knowledge is something we do rather than something we have or possess, the common philosophy of Bentley's time was against this way of thinking. Knowledge had been inherited from Aristotle and Plato as a thing, perhaps an ethereal thing, but a thing all the same.

The third and final part of the book is called 'social fact.' Bentley first discusses some of his earlier concerns about facts and what is described as the 'social.' He again eschews any formulation that places the social outside of the human, observable realm, and also eschews any attempts to subsume it under the 'psychological,' since this begs the question. The social is useful because it allows those extensions of duration and space required for better contextual descriptions of activities, but it is another vague word that needs to be refined or not used:

> "We should be fortunate indeed if we could carry forward our investigations free from the influence of either of these vague words, 'social' and 'psychological.' Perhaps we could then observe whatever we found to observe, just as it came. The use of these words, however, can-

> not always be avoided; if we were to omit them, we might find ourselves in a worse state than ever, since many of their implications would be at work in their absence. It must then be understood that wherever these words appear in the early stages of the inquiry, their application will be limited to loose provisional description. Thus the word 'psychological' will be associated with the implications of the word 'individual,' while the word 'social' will indicate, loosely, those characteristics of behavioral phenomena, those puzzling situations of inquiry, which do not attain adequate description and interpretation in the 'individually psychological' way; it will not be until the end of our investigation that definite assignment of meanings for these terms can be reached." (pp. 191-192)

Bentley wants to make an inquiry into the social that does not assume any abstract qualities and can be observed under normal conditions.

> "Our inquiry as to the 'social' then becomes: Can we, in the specific case of the 'social,' select, under verifiable observation, definite presentations which, by the broadest tests of present-day technique and construction, are separable from those other presentations which are dealt with by the techniques and constructions of the physical and biological sciences?... With respect to such an inquiry I repeat: (1) The presence of many sociologies and social sciences is no evidence that such a 'social' can be found, (2) The antagonistic outcry of many psychologies, so long as these themselves display incoherence of organization, is no evidence that it cannot be found..." (p. 195)

To work through these issues, Bentley tries to establish the *visibility* of the social and then the *factuality* of the social. This closely follows from his earlier papers on society and individuals which were outlined above (e. g., Bentley, 1895), but he has clearly developed these into to a new position:

> "If, in conversation with a friend, I chance to remark upon the visibility of the social, he will be quite sure to smile as he replies: "Its invisibility is what you mean." He will talk to me fluently about society and its events, usually with much more confidence and assurance than I can show. But as for actually 'seeing' the social, that is another matter...
> Do we regard the State itself – phenomenon 'factual' and social' alike – as directly and immediately visible? Most certainly we do not, if we hold to the ordinary conventions of inquiry. We take the State to be fact, but, as fact, we do not grant it its own immediate observability. The direct observations which we permit are confined to presentations such as the man who is king or president or premier, to those other men who are congressmen or judges or sheriffs or criminals, to armies and public buildings and penitentiaries, to forts and battleships. All of these are visibly observable facts, and, when their additive accumulation is complete, the task of eyesight and the constructions of observation are assumed to be finished. The State, however, has not itself appeared." (pp. 198-199)

The State is too complex to begin with, so Bentley focuses on human vocal speech, but before getting into this, he has a useful discussion of the verb 'to see.' Seeing can be transitive or intransitive, although Bentley limits discussion to the transitive uses only, when there is an 'object' being seen. The intransitive use implies capacities and often mental assumptions: 'I can see,' 'I perceive.' "It is this full behavioral event, inclusive of both the 'seeing' and the 'seen,' with which we must concern ourselves" (p. 200)

Bentley also makes an important distinction that follows through in this work and his later writings: "It is desirable to divide our immediate inquiry into two parts, the first stressing observation as activity, and the second, observation as factual report" (p. 201). It is still common in psychology to blur the distinction between doing something and the report or talk about that doing something. Likewise, when postmodernists and relativists say that "there is no true reality," it is unclear if this

means that the *reports* or the *talk* about 'reality' can never be true (I agree) or the doing of things can never be true (I disagree).

He then draws out four points about observation:

- observation is not done by individuals but built up by many people
- observation is not about the eye alone but uses tools
- observation is not an 'innate power' or a given but requires training
- observation works within a bigger construction of 'scientific observability'

> "That which we are accustomed to observing is not all that we can observe. That which we call 'seeing' in the most limited, direct rendering of the word is not all the 'seeing' that we do, it is not even a fair expression for the general situations of our seeing. What we may observe is connected with our need for observation, and is conditioned by frames of observability that we possess in fixated or expanding forms." (pp. 203-204)

What Bentley is getting at is that common usage of the verb 'see' revolves around phrases such as, "I see a bird." These are cross-sectional and not longitudinal or durational uses. He wants now to include other phrases such as, "I see a bird in flight." Notice the difference? The second phrase is spread over duration and space, and there is no single 'thing' looked at, and it becomes contextual to examine. I have referred to these respectively, 'causal observation' and 'contextual observation' (Guerin, 2016b).

He goes on to comment that we should also use 'see' to mean any sort of seeing. When I say, "I see a bird," I should include the circulation system, cells, feathers, breathing, etc. If we can use 'see' in the sense of "I see a bird in flight," then we should allow seeing of the whole bird. What does "I see a bird" mean anyway? I see the wings, the feet, the plumage, the beak? We never see a whole bird when we make such a comment and, more importantly, we do not even know (cannot verbally report) what bits we did see. The whole phrase is directed at the listener and not at a universal, independent report of eternal verities. The whole activity of talking about 'seeing' a bird is about influencing a listener or future listener, not about a spontaneous commentary on what is happening in our lives.

As should be clear now, Bentley wants to take this sort of usage and apply it to humans interacting, to say that *we can 'see' or 'observe' the social in the same way as we 'see' a bird in flight* (contextual observation). Most of the psychologies he discussed earlier, and the early behaviorisms in particular, wanted to pull events such as 'the social' into a fixed physical, thing frame. This is the criticism that psychologies typically turn activities into a stimulus-response, material, physical events, cross-sectional cuts which actually exclude what is of most interest. Bentley was arguing against this in 1935. This goes against the early behaviorisms and against modern cognitive psychology, both of which, as mentioned earlier, want to draw all activities back into a moment-by-moment frame of immediate decision-making and information processing (Guerin, 2016a).

Bentley is under no illusion that this re-visioning is going to be easy. He remarks on two obstacles that commonly remain (pp. 208-209). First, the tendency to put cause onto the individual almost always forces theorists to specify or describe the situation in terms of muscles, and stimuli and physical objects alone (body-language). Second, the tendency to remove the historical and social contexts of any activities by using a label: the person's history, socialization, culture, etc. These act as if those contextual surroundings are peripheral and the individual currently acting is doing the decisive stuff.

> "Where speaking and hearing are considered together in the conversational remark we extend the duration under consideration, and we have before us 'one event' for the whole, just as truly as we have 'one event' for either the hearing or the listening separately. The behaviorist, in his time, extended the event under his observation by passing from a brain-cell or a 'mind' to the examination of a 'movement-segment' of space: but he has no authority to say that the process of extension must stop there. The extension to a space and time that includes two men is just as legitimate: all depends upon purpose

> and upon efficiency in inquiry. It is essential to any such extension, however, that it be, not arbitrary, but 'functional' in the sense in which that word is now commonly used." (p. 210)

In the following section, we find out more about Bentley's ideas of fact and observation, since facts are about language use, "the most efficient language." More importantly, following from what has been outlined above, these reference facts are "not that of ultimate fixation, but [are] always made in the full spirit of the expanding powers of science. The individual scientist may fail to recognize this at some stages of his work, but the development of science across longer periods always takes care of the referential outcome" (p. 217). As Bentley argued above for observing a bird in flight, the criticism goes back at least to Descartes who based his method of skepticism upon a fixed, unmoving observation at one point in time, gazing in a dark room at a wax candle (Guerin, 1990, 2004). He would have learned more if he had got up, turned on some lights and walked around the candle and put his hand in the flames. His skeptical doubts would have disappeared.

Bentley explores the idea of 'social' more and calls his conversational remark, the speaking-heard, a 'dicaud.' He keeps the ideas of psychological and social preliminary, as the 'meaning' must be fixed during its use rather than before starting. He does make some interesting remarks about them, however:

> "By the word 'psychological' we may understand for provisional convenience, and so only, that in the examination of behaviors attention is being roughly directed towards the 'separately-considered' or 'individual' human organism. By the word 'social' we may similarly understand that attention is being roughly directed towards behavioral situations which are under inspection as involving many organisms in what we call 'society.' (p. 230)

This is the beginning of the trend in Bentley's thought to be rid of the ideas of an individual having special within-skin powers or agency. It will culminate in his two better known 1941 papers.

> "The typical student of society starts by positing a psychological 'individual' as his basic fact; nevertheless he must deal with social phenomena as something of a different order from individual phenomena. In order to get a formal presentation for his own materials of inquiry, he implicitly accepts 'act' as floating off from the 'individual'; he uses it as a building-block for his 'social,' and out of a complex of such 'acts' he presumes to present a social realm distinct from the realm of the psychological." (p. 238)

These are the ideas Bentley works through as he tries to establish the dicaud as a unit of observation (like a bird in flight). We can observe it; it does not require mental or any other faculties; it involves more than one person; it is real in the sense that it is not an 'act' unconnected with anything else. There are no individuals who combine to make up the 'social,' but the social does not exist unless there are preconditions of organisms with histories of acting together. Putting it all together, with Bentley's earlier point about 'seeing' over time and space, as in "I see a bird in flight,' neither is the 'social' caught in some incorporeal nether world between the two individuals. They, the dicaud, are just as observable. 'Individuals' alone are not non-social; everything they do alone is predicated in the conditions for those events to happen by their actions with others (Guerin, 2001b, 2016a, b).

Bentley here introduces some further terms, the Communact and the Communicane. Having got the points stressed immediately above, from discussing the dicaud, I do not wish to elaborate much on the communact and other terms. Bentley did not use them ever again in his later writings. I also believe he introduced an inconsistency here. Bentley is trying to avoid the use of referent, objects, perceptions, communication, etc., but I am not convinced that his introducing objectane, personane, perceptan, communican, C-objectan, P-objectan, etc., gets rid of the problem. He really means to define events as they are in use, as things being in the process of being done. His problem is that of putting this into words, especially his neologisms, which drags all the other verbiage in that he does not want. But until we get rid of the idea that the processes, objects, persons, or whatever are

'in' words, and I am arguing that Bentley did not fully escape that, we are still in the same mess (cf. Bentley, 1941c, 1947). That he does not use these terms in his future writings perhaps indicates that he also saw this problem of contradicting his own principles.

Following this, Bentley addresses the question of organisms and objects. We have already seen that *isolating* either of these leads to problems:

> "Psychology and sociology are alike in that their investigations deal with situations in which organisms and environmental objects are involved together in durational events. The systems of such events provide the subjects-matters for both of these sciences. *Neither psychology nor sociology is ever able to concentrate its exclusive attention upon the organism taken in isolation, nor upon the environmental object so taken*." (1935, p. 283, my italics)

He moves here to developing a type of systems approach or a field approach in Kantor's terms. He also goes on to develop the theme of his better-known 1941 papers—stating that making a 'surgical' (p. 286) cut between organism and environment is problematic; the skin is not a metaphysical dividing line. In the present context, this follows quite well from the discussion of 'seeing' a bird in flight. The cutting is quite artificial. There is another conclusion, however, that is of equal importance:

> "To obtain a fair understanding of the organization of organisms and objects, of the system of knowledge in which they can be observed and studied, is therefore a problem that is almost the exact equivalent of the problem of the differentiation of the sciences. The two problems must be worked out together." (p. 307)

So to clear up the problems of psychology, Bentley argues, we must halt the differentiation of psychology from the other social sciences and from biology, and this is why a good knowledge of his early research-grounded papers is important. They show how these fields can be brought in together and that this must be part of a proper psychology, not an individual or brain separate from everything else. All the arguments made by Bentley also argue for the unification of the social sciences.

> "In summary, I have never found a situation of behaviors in which I could assume a substantive separation between psychological behavioral facts taken as 'individual' and other behavioral facts taken as 'social,' in such a way that I could regard it as reliable *for the more general purposes* of the organization of behavioral knowledge and the pursuit of behavioral research. I have never found social *things* in basic separations from individually psychological *things;* nor individually psychological *things* in basic separation from social *things*.
> Such being the case, I cannot establish a coherent distinction between the functional techniques of psychology and sociology upon the basis furnished by any rough-and-ready distinction set forth or purporting to be guaranteed by the dubious words 'individual' and 'social,' or by any of their substitutes." (p. 329)

The next section of the book outline the techniques of psychology and sociology in terms of Bentley's Communucane, Perceptane, etc. While interesting in its own right, it does not get us far once the book is finished, unlike the other conclusions I have been drawing from Bentley's work. Interesting comparisons could be made to Bourdieu's (1990) idea of *habitus,* closely related to these ideas of Bentley's. The common denominator, of course, is both wanted to find a way of including environment and organism together without giving priority to one or the other.

In summary, the main ideas to get from Bentley's (1935) book are that observation is not limited to points of time and space; it makes sense to think of observation as durational and spatial. From this, our terms must reflect such extensions because history has made them blind to this. Once these changes are made, many of our older ways of viewing our subject matter change. Individuals are not segmentary units, psychology cannot be separated from sociology, and we must study the full contexts, biological, individual and social, that bring about other events, or are the crucible in which activities occur. While Bentley's suggested new terminology for this does

not help, I believe that the main points are extremely revolutionary in the social sciences and his later work develops them further. Bentley's ideas were given authority and recognition by the interest of John Dewey in his work, and his development of these ideas was aided by the collaboration of John Dewey (Dewey & Bentley, 1949).

The Legacy of Arthur F. Bentley

Working through Bentley's early writings, we can see some clear developments in his thinking around key themes. His earliest work focused on the relations between individuals and the social domain. This is the origin of even his later writing about the false bifurcation of the world at the point of the skin (Bentley, 1941a, b). This comes through the so-called 'inner' person actually being social and part of the social world, although readers of only these later papers will not see this foundation in the thinking. This is one of Bentley's most important contributions. That there is no inner person and instead of ridding theories of 'inner' by introducing spurious abstract concepts or brain metaphors, we need to locate all those events in the person's context, especially their social context.

This early work also began his focus on how to observe 'the social' which led both to his intensive multi-disciplinary research studies and to his focus away from cross-sectional or causal observations to thinking and practicing observation as a contextual or durational event. It was shown how Bentley engaged in several social science research projects that were multi-disciplinary, done over time, used flexible and varied methods—including both interviews, group discussion as well as solid quantitative data analyses—and were directed to practical problems that sometimes included action research components.

His early work also started a life-long theme, but one which is not prominent in his best-known writings, that observation should not be causal or cross-sectional. We should observe events over time and from as many angles of contexts as possible. Indeed, this is his model of how it should be done. This was given in his main points about observation presented earlier in this paper.

In terms of the old "Wise men and the elephant" story of biased observations by the three wise men who were blindfolded and came back with very different observations of an elephant, it would be suggested that this is an extremely poor model for observation. The observers should have:

- taken off their blindfolds
- spent a lot more time interacting with the elephant and its parts
- explored more of the elephant
- observed the elephant over time when it moved or changed
- shared their observations while making them

These points still need developing in terms of critiques of all our current methodologies, including most qualitative methods.

Bentley was also ahead of his time in ignoring the factuality of the social sciences and psychology and focusing instead on the words they used in writing. He pre-dates the discursive or textual analyses that are current today. Perhaps of most value is his methodological approach here:

- naming difficult points in conceptual analysis tracking each of the many psychological and social theories to the points at which they must engage with these difficult points
- mapping the discursive strategies they used to get around, hedge or deal with these difficult points
- giving four key sectors that a commonly difficult points in theorizing

This also beautifully illustrated how these early psychologies produced 'solutions' to the difficult point, but only by introducing abstract words which gloss over the further problems that they caused, meaning that the solutions were not really solutions. A more recent example traces how the main contemporary psychologies deal with catharsis and uncertainty as drivers of behavior, and the strategies they use to patch up pitfalls in theorizing in these ways (Guerin, 2001a).

The main issues he used in his textual analysis are still current today and most recent cognitive psychologies, behavioral psychologies, and espe-

cially cognitive-neurological psychologies should be examined in the same way. The issues were *immateriality*, *apprehensionality, isolationality,* and *environment.* Two examples of how cognitive psychologies still make untenable assumptions were given above. Most of the psychological theories were found wanting, although Kantor's interbehavioral psychology and Dewey's psychology seemed best at dealing with these four issues simultaneously and not glossing over a problem by introducing spurious terminological words to hide the problem, as most of the theories were found to do.

Finally, it was found through many parts of his writings that, despite extensive discussion about the nature of language as social interaction, and his innovative use of discursive analysis of psychology-talk, he did not ever present a final or satisfactory (by his own criteria) version of how language is truly a social event. He introduced several versions of terminology, all of which can be found wanting by his own criteria.

My hope is that this outline helps put Bentley's later writings into a more accurate perspective. Arthur F. Bentley was not an arm-chair philosopher but someone who had spent many years in field and action research and intensive archival and political analyses. His major themes have not been properly dealt with even today in the current psychologies that abound: getting rid of the inner/outer distinction is usually done by similar patch-up discursive strategies, and Bentley's early work I hope shows that we should fill in this division with descriptions of social and economic context. If we follow his innovative methods for thinking, critique and research, it would help develop psychology and the social sciences into a more useful integrated field that would allow better understanding of why people do what they do in context.

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