

comprehensive treatment system. That system would include a sound psychiatrist-patient relationship that is part of a network consisting of hospital care (if needed) and therapy, and outpatient living arrangements and monitoring, and follow-up of patients.

The authors are favorably disposed to behavior analysis and say that the new psychology they envisage for psychiatry must rest squarely on learning theory. They describe the use of systematic desensitization in the treatment of anxiety and say that behavioral approaches seem to have been the most productive in this area. However, "while there have been some notable innovations in the application of Pavlovian and Skinnerian principles to psychotherapy, these developments have tended to be idiosyncratic and isolated" (p. 240). In their view, every psychiatrist should understand the importance of B. F. Skinner's claim that behavior is determined by its consequences and should learn to shape behavior through positive reinforcement. In addition to wrongly implying that behavior analysts believe that all behavior is determined by its consequences, Hobson and Leonard impute to Skinner the view that the brain is unimportant in setting the conditions and terms of learning.

The question for behavior analysts is the extent to which they can play a role in understanding mental illness. This question is not asked by Hobson and Leonard but is significant for behavior analysts.

References

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(P. A. Lamal, University of North Carolina at Charlotte)

MENAND, LOUIS. *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001. Pp. xii + 546. ISBN: 0-374-19963-9. \$27.00 cloth.

The Metaphysical Club was an informal group of Boston philosophers and jurists who met over the course of nine months during the year of 1872. Its most prominent members were Oliver Wendell Holmes, William James, Charles Saunders Peirce, and Chauncey Wright. From this group came (a) a revitalized account of a world in constant change and flux (see Heraclitus) and multiply caused (see J. R. Kantor's interbehavioral field); (b) the idea that beliefs are subject to consequences (see natural selection); and (c) the term, pragmatism, for the name of that idea—allegedly America's only unique contribution to philosophy. In *The Metaphysical Club*, Louis Menand offers a rich, accessible, and well-written history of pragmatism as it emerged from the chaos of the Civil War (1850-1870), as it was refined in the era of social and political Progressivism (1880-1920), and as it matured in modernist America (1900-1920).

In particular, Menand traces the development of pragmatism through the lives of Holmes, James, Peirce (characterized pithily as not having an "elastic ego"), and John Dewey, all the while interweaving the contributions of others—antagonists (e.g., Louis Agassiz) and protagonists alike (e.g., Arthur Bentley). In Menand's words, they formalized the idea that:

[a] ideas are not "out there" waiting to be discovered, but are tools . . . that people devise to cope with the world in which they find themselves . . . [b] ideas are produced not by individuals, but by groups of individuals . . . ideas are social . . . [c] ideas do not develop according to some inner logic of their own, but are entirely dependent, like germs, on their human carriers and the environment . . . [d] since ideas are provisional responses to particular and unreproducible circumstances, their survival depends not on their immutability but on their adaptability. (pp. xi-xii)

For Holmes, the Civil War taught him that “certitude leads to violence,” that “rightness and wrongness are functions of circumstances,” and that “[t]ruth . . . is just the name for what is impossible for a person to doubt” (pp. 61-63). For James, *On the Origins of Species* made him Darwinian (but not a Darwinist) and led to his view that scientific and religious beliefs are “neither foundational premises, backing one outcome in advance against all others, nor ex post facto rationalizations, disguising personal preferences in the language of impersonal authority. They were only tools for decision making” (p. 145). For Peirce, “Each mind reflects differently—even the same mind reflects differently at different moments—and in any case reality does not stand still long enough to be accurately mirrored. [His] conclusion was that knowledge must therefore be social” (p. 200). For Dewey, the “reflex arc” was a myth: “Behavior is a matter of the relation between the whole organism and the whole situation” (p. 326) (see Kantor’s “Interbehavior”); “knowledge is a by-product of activity: people do things in the world, and the doing results in learning something that, if deemed useful, gets carried along in the next activity” (p. 322); and “action, not speculation, is the supreme teacher” (p. 305).

Menand of course acknowledges important variations among the pragmatisms of Holmes, James, Peirce, and Dewey, and delves thoughtfully into them. Nonetheless, their pragmatisms do share a family resemblance. Put negatively, they are, for example, against correspondence theories of truth, representationalism, structuralism, and mechanism. Put positively, they are another name for *contextualism*. As a result, Menand not only offers a superb historical essay, but also elucidates (a) the fundamentals of contextualism’s root metaphor (the historic event) and theory of truth (pragmatism) and (b) variations within them, both the scientific and the not so scientific. And, he does so more clearly than Stephen C. Pepper’s 1942 rendering of them in *World Hypotheses* and some of the recent behavior-analytic interpretations thereof.

(Edward K. Morris, University of Kansas)