

Inner and outer, psychology and Wittgenstein's painted curtain

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Abstract

Much thinking in psychology and related forms of psychotherapy is in the grip of a conception of inner–outer relationships that distorts the reality of our lives and world. In his later work, and in the last years of his life especially, Wittgenstein battled against this. In the course of his criticism, he developed vivid images that challenge this picture, revealing its limitations and opening the way to better understanding. Although 70 years have passed since Wittgenstein died, it remains the case that psychology and psychotherapy can be strengthened through more careful attention to his criticism. The present discussion endeavours to show why and how this is so.

KEYWORDS

Inner–outer distinction, J.L. Austin, Ludwig Wittgenstein, neuroscience, psychology, self-deception, theatre

A picture held us captive. And we couldn't get outside it, for it lay in our language, and language seemed only to repeat it to us inexorably (Wittgenstein, PI, §115).

Imagine that you go to the theatre with a friend. From time to time during the performance, the friend leans over to you and whispers: 'The lighting is effective, isn't it? ... Aren't the costumes good? ... That mist you can see swirling around the stage—they make that with dry ice, frozen carbon dioxide... Oooh, thank goodness that's not real blood!' They seem to be enjoying themselves, but you wonder whether they are really seeing the play. Your friend's inclination to look behind what is happening on the stage seems to suggest that there is something there that is more real than the action of the play.

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You naturally suspend disbelief and become absorbed in the action of the play; they see that the actors are just acting, their attention is held by how it all works, and that is what they take to be real. In a sense, they are right, aren't they? What we see on the stage are people talking to one another, apparently expressing their feelings, having arguments, insulting one another, getting angry, making promises, keeping secrets, getting married, killing one another, and yet all of this is pretence. Their behaviour is no different from the behaviour of people doing things in real life, and so it is only because this is in a theatre, on a stage, that we commonly follow the story and take seriously what is going on: we suspend our disbelief. But then your friend, who seems not quite to let go of this disbelief, seems to be touching on a more general problem. We see the actor whose behaviour expresses anger, and in the context of the play we take this to be anger, but we do not know what the actor is genuinely feeling; in real life we see anger behaviour, but we do not know whether this is genuine anger, or whether, say, it is a parent affecting to be angry to discourage her child from doing something, even though, secretly perhaps, she may be amused by what the child has done. What we see is nothing more than outward behaviour, and what seems to be real could always be put on in a variety of forms of pretence and deception, with benign or malign intent. The reality of the intent, of the mental life behind the behaviour, is hidden from view. From time to time, both psychology and philosophy have been drawn to the idea that behind the outward scene of our words and actions, there is an inner mental life and that this is the location of our true thoughts and feelings. In psychology, the dominant picture of the inner–outer relationship has been of the isolated subject gathering data from an object world: mental life is within.

The theatre you go to with your friend is, we are imagining, of a traditional proscenium-arch style, with its curtains drawn until the start of the performance. Behind these, and receding into the space of the stage, are several layers of hanging curtains, each of which can be used both to change the scene and to screen what is going on behind. Behind these screens and out of sight of the audience is the backstage, where the actors wait to 'come on' and where the machinery of the stage—the props, lighting, curtains etc.—is controlled. It is easy to see how aptly this physical structure figures the inner–outer relation that is our concern. In fact, in Shakespeare's plays, the physical nature of the stage—although somewhat different in structure from what is described here—is often alluded to in a way that allegorises its relationship to the nature of the real world. The range of this reference extends from the light-touch melancholy of 'All the world's a stage', in *As You Like It* (II, vii, 139), to the savage nihilism of 'Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player / That struts and frets his hour upon the stage / And then is heard no more', in *Macbeth* (V, v, 18–20). And study guides to Shakespeare reiterate the message that the abiding concern of his plays is the contrast between appearance and reality. We can be deceived by appearance; there is reason to doubt what people say and apparently do; reality lies behind appearance. The very structure of the stage seems to bring this home.

It is interesting, then, to find occasions when the implications of the stage–backstage contrast exploited here are, as it were, reversed. My discussion begins with reference—albeit quite brief—to a critical moment, rather well known, in J.L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (1963). Austin's ostensible concern is with what it is to make a promise. But it gradually becomes apparent that what is said about this has wider significance for human psychology, especially with regard to the relationship between the inner and the outer. Following this, I turn to an example drawn from Wittgenstein's late writings on psychology, which I explore at some length.

SELF-DECEPTION: SOLID MORALISERS AND SUPERFICIAL THEORISERS

The critical moment in Austin's discussion of promising comes with his reference to an earlier classic play, Euripides' *Hippolytus*. For sure, this work, like other Greek tragedy, takes us into some of the most tortured aspects of human psychology and the moral life. Austin focuses, however, on just one line.

Hippolytus has made a crucial promise, but it is one that he regrets and, so he indicates, did not fully intend: his tongue made the oath, but his heart did not. Austin shows that the very nature of promising lies in what one actually says, in the scene of words and action and not in any realm of intention lying behind it. Here, in his own translation of Hippolytus' words, he artfully inserts a parenthesis:

my tongue swore to, but my heart (or mind or other backstage artiste) did not. (Austin, 1963, pp. 9–10)

Austin's theatrical affectation of the word 'artiste'¹ is pointedly inappropriate to the solemnity of the play and at odds with the aura of Greek tragedy, but it serves to debunk the air of moral rectitude with which Hippolytus is rationalising what he has done. And the light touch here lays the way for the devastating lines that follow:

It is gratifying to observe in this very example how excess of profundity, or rather solemnity, at once paves the way for immorality. For one who says 'promising is not merely a matter of uttering words! It is an inward and spiritual act!' is apt to appear as a solid moralist standing out against a generation of superficial theorists: we see him as he sees himself, surveying the depths of ethical space... Yet he provides Hippolytus with a let-out, the bigamist with an excuse for his 'I do' and the welsher with a defence for his 'I bet'. Accuracy and morality alike are on the side of the plain saying that *our word is our bond*. (pp. 9–10)

In a footnote to his translation, Austin remarks: 'I do not mean to rule out all the offstage performers—the lights men, the stage manager, even the prompter; I am objecting only to certain officious understudies, who would duplicate the play' (pp. 9–10). This acknowledgement of the complex conditions of expression—in the theatre *and, by analogy, in ordinary life*—might be read in addition as a rejection of any crude behaviourism, of bogus theorising and of the purveying of ideology of various kinds.

Some readers have thought that Austin's interest, in focusing on promising, is in a curious aspect of language use but one that is just a backwater to the mainstream. Most kinds of sentences, they assume, describe what is happening in the world; there are just a few kinds where the words do not describe but *do* something. And, in fact, this sense of the marginal importance of what Austin is saying is amplified by the fact that this performative role seems to be characteristic only of statements in the first person: to say 'I promise...' is to *do something*, whereas to say 'She promises...' is simply to describe what someone else is doing. To see that what concerns Austin here is certainly not just a backwater to the mainstream of usage, we need to take the discussion a step further. 'She promises...' may be true or false, but in 'I promise...' it is not truth that is at issue: the statement is an action; the promise may, of course, be kept or not, and may or may not have been sincere, but either way it remains a promise. The 'force' that Austin identifies here, and that runs through a range of other examples (such as 'I name this ship...' and 'I do' in the marriage service, or for that matter the signing of a contract), is the force of what we do with words. It becomes apparent, moreover, that this force is not confined to first-person utterances of the kind we have considered but extends into statements of a more obviously descriptive kind. 'Your house is rather small' or 'she is late again' may or may not be true, but at the same time there is likely to be some further point to the expression. Why say this now? To embarrass, to condescend, to chastise, to sympathise? *Someone* is being addressed, in a particular context. In real contexts of use, it is likely that some such colouring of what we say, of why we are using these words now, on this occasion, contributes in a fundamental way to the fabric of our lives and world. Austin's example has obvious moral significance, but—less obviously—this colouring helps to show how morality goes 'all the way down', into the ordinary circumstances of our everyday lives with one another.

Austin develops his argument through the meticulous examination of a range of different examples of language use, but it is important that these are elaborated against the background of a larger attack on the inner–outer distinction. The so-called ordinary language philosophy that he develops pays careful attention to the things we do with words. What we do with words—far from their being merely a 'means of communication' with the purpose of representing or describing the way things are, as philosophers and psychologists have often assumed—in fact, provides, as we saw, the fabric of our experience and world. The idea of our mental life lying behind our words is the product of a confused conception of the inner–outer relationship. This is a conception we can easily be lulled into, it is a picture that holds us captive, and it opens paths to self-deception and immorality.

Austin draws his example from Euripides' play, in much the same way as he might have taken a similar example from real life. Things are complicated, however, by the fact that his discussion of what Hippolytus says is pointedly theatrical, taking us via his footnote into the machinery of staging and the production of a play. Wittgenstein's remarks, developed most of a decade earlier, raise problems of the inner and the outer across a more diverse range and by way

of more explicit analogy with the theatre. In pondering the relation between acting in real life and acting on a stage, he casts light on the nature of human expressiveness and on its central importance. What he says provides an indictment of psychology, at least in some of its dominant forms, and a diagnosis of problems arising from its widespread influence in contemporary life. What he offers is also a vision of human psychology that offers better prospects for the discipline and for our mental health.

SELF-DECEPTION: PSYCHOLOGY AND THE PAINTED CURTAIN

During the last few years of his life, Wittgenstein made copious remarks about psychology. The questions he addressed were ones that had preoccupied him for many years, but in these late notes they acquired a sharper focus. What was the relation between the brain and the mind? How was the relation between inner consciousness and the outside world to be understood? Was this the right way to think of the mind? And what exactly was the discipline of psychology—still supposedly a relatively young science. When Wilhelm Wundt established the Institute for Experimental Psychology at the University of Leipzig in Germany in 1879, this had the important effect of separating psychology from philosophy and of reconceiving it as an experimental science. In the century that followed, the subject developed rapidly, and it had immense influence on the understanding, and in the reconceptualisation, of both education and mental health. In the time since Wittgenstein's death, this success has not abated, and the connection with physiology and biology, which was a major factor in Wundt's approach, has extended today into neuroscience.²

Writing in the 1940s, Wittgenstein was unsparing in his criticism. He remarks:

The confusion and barrenness of psychology is not to be explained by its being a 'young science'; its state is not comparable with that of physics, for instance, in its beginnings. (Rather, with that of certain branches of mathematics. Set theory.) For in psychology, there are experimental methods *and conceptual confusion*. (As in the other case, conceptual confusion and methods of proof.)

The existence of experimental methods makes us think that we have the means of getting rid of the problems that trouble us; but problem and method pass each other by. (Wittgenstein, 2009, p. 371)

But to be unsparing in criticism is not necessarily to be right! Let us try to test out what the grounds are for these scathing remarks about psychology by looking at how Wittgenstein fleshes out his sense of what is wrong, precisely in those extensive notes that he went on to make. It is worth remembering that these remarks are *notes*. Some surely have a powerful aphoristic quality to them, but it is important, I think, not to treat them as pearls of wisdom from a great mind: they are notes, but they do cohere in a broader, more carefully elaborated picture, one that the reader must struggle to come to see, just as Wittgenstein struggled to produce it. 'Light dawns gradually over the whole' (Wittgenstein, 1969, §141).

Wittgenstein several times comes back to analogies involving the theatre and actors on a stage. I want to consider several of his remarks, in particular two that relate explicitly to the theatre and a connected thought that imagines the workings of the brain. Here is the first:

The 'inner' is a delusion. That is: the whole complex of ideas alluded to by this word is like a painted curtain drawn in front of the scene of the actual word use. (Wittgenstein, 1992, §84)

We need to pause first over what Wittgenstein means by 'inner'—a word that he presents in scare quotes. The word works as a shorthand for a range of expressions that name what we might think of as 'mental processes', those operations of the brain that must, so it is often supposed, lie behind what we ordinarily say and do; these form the 'complex of ideas' alluded to. The scare quotes indicate further that what people often have in mind when they speak of the

contrast between the inner and the outer is a clear-cut structural division. This seems to bring with it four basic assumptions, which, with the dominance of psychology in the age we live in, can now seem simply to be matters of common sense. The first assumption is that mental states are inner, whereas behaviour is outer. What counts as a mental state can range from moods and emotions to perceptions and beliefs, involving thought processes of various kinds. Second, there is the idea that 'the mind' is a vague, everyday name for what is in fact the brain: the brain is the organ where thinking takes place. As we do not typically have access to the workings of the brain, this means, so runs the third assumption, that the only access we have to another's mind is an indirect one, via what we observe in their behaviour. And fourth, there is the belief that, with the advances of neuroscience, we now have the prospect of directly examining what someone is thinking—that is, by examining the processes in their brain.

Given that these assumptions are implicit in Wittgenstein's scare quoting of 'inner', what are the implications of what he goes on to say? The whole complex of ideas alluded to by the idea of the inner is, he claims, like a painted curtain. But what exactly is a painted curtain?³ In the theatre conventions that developed with the proscenium-arch stage, it became common practice for an ornate curtain to be displayed, perhaps just before the start, perhaps between scenes of the play, that depicted something of the setting, story and themes to be presented. Wittgenstein's purpose is surely to draw a contrast between the simplified, static images displayed on the curtain and the dynamic drama of the play itself—the dialogue and action on the stage. The effect or function of the curtain is to hide, albeit temporarily, the scene of the action in which, if the play goes well, the audience will become absorbed. The comparison works further to press the point that the *picture* of the 'inner' hides the 'scene of the actual word use'. He is saying that the use of the word 'inner' itself now takes on a kind of metaphysical role, at odds with the reasonable localised ways—that is, the varied contexts—in which that word is commonly and appropriately used; but there is the implication also that the 'whole complex of ideas', the conception of mental processes that the 'inner' alludes to, acts as a barrier to seeing well the ways that we ordinarily give expression to our mental lives—that is, express and speak about our thoughts and feelings. Comparisons, however, must not be pressed too far: Wittgenstein is not implying that this curtain is likely, like the one in the theatre, to be lifted; he is emphasising the contrast between the painted representation of the action of the play and the reality of that action as the drama unfolds. A broad claim is being made here, and it is not one that is to be reached by systematic argument. Paths towards this are laid by Wittgenstein's meticulous piecemeal demonstrations of the ways in which our thinking ties us in knots, where these knots are often tied in the first place by bogus or at least faulty theorisation, not least in psychology but also in philosophy itself: such theorisation loses touch with what we ordinarily say and do. And the language of such theorisation 'goes on holiday' (Wittgenstein, 2009, §38), clearly ceasing to have its normal purchase on reality. He wants us to get 'back to the rough ground' (§107), where once again we can find our footing and make progress.

But is this not to give up too quickly on the prospects for psychology of finding a more accurate way of describing our mental states, more accurate than our ordinary language manages? It is not as though the language we use for our thoughts and feelings is always straightforward to us or that it is always clearly understood by others! We know that thinking depends in some way on the brain, so would it not follow that closer examination of the brain holds the prospect of revealing the true nature of those thoughts and feelings?

OBSERVING THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

It may be true that Wittgenstein died before psychology had made its most significant advances. Think of the resources that have been poured into the discipline over the past 70 years and the numbers of people now working in the field. It is certainly true that Wittgenstein died before neuroscience had really come on the scene. Yet, a further remark seems to anticipate developments along these lines. What he invites the reader to imagine here takes us away from the kind of theatre we have been considering and instead into something like an operating theatre—or perhaps into a science fiction film where people can see into each other's heads:

Imagine that people could observe the functioning of the nervous system in others. In that case they would have a sure way of distinguishing genuine and simulated feeling.—Or, might they after all doubt in turn whether someone feels anything when these signs are present?—What they see there could at any rate readily be imagined to determine their reaction without their having any qualms about it.

And now this can be translated to outward behaviour. (Wittgenstein, 1980, §702)

The sci-fi scenario would be an unquestionable advance on contemporary lie detectors, and it would presumably be of considerable interest to the police. They would have a sure way of distinguishing between genuine and simulated feeling, and that extends to other forms of honesty and pretence. But if this ability were generally available to human beings, deception more generally would cease to exist. In fact, in the purest form of the scenario, our access would not be merely to the words running through the person's head but to the thoughts themselves, the significance of which is even more bewildering. In any case, a strange aspect to the situation is that qualities of honesty and truthfulness would cease to have any virtuous status because they would be unavoidable, and so maybe the police would be out of a job. It also becomes difficult to see how acting on a stage—pretending to be what you are not—could continue. In fact, to take it a step further, it would no longer be possible to tell a joke (because everyone would already be able to see the punchline), or to give someone a surprise (because they would already know what you had in mind), or to have a secret with someone or to make a confession. All would be transparent. But, the objection will then be made, isn't transparency a good thing? What would be wrong with this? Certainly, in the ordinary conditions of human life, transparency is generally to be preferred to unnecessary secretiveness or the withholding of information. But those ordinary conditions—the ones in which we are sometimes sincere, sometimes evasive, sometimes frank, sometimes diplomatically oblique, tell the truth and sometimes tell lies—would no longer exist! No plays to go to. No jokes to tell. A life more or less devoid of surprise. This would be a robot world, and it might function smoothly, but it would not be a world for human beings and in that sense not a *world* at all!

Wittgenstein's train of thought is interrupted, as it were, by a further question. Might we not wonder, whether 'someone feels anything [e.g. pain] when these signs [the brain state that correlates with pain] are present'? Is this pain at all, rather than a connection between the parts of a machine? How do we normally recognise pain? How do we know what pain is? It is worth thinking here about how we learn what pain is, how we acquire the concept. This is typically not just by being exposed to those who are in pain but by a mix—of real examples of pain, certainly, but also of simulations of pain behaviour and the behaviour that goes with tending the one who is hurt (e.g., bandaging the doll when it has bumped its head, kissing the bruised part to make it better, even seeing the flattened cartoon character bounce back from cries of pain and into life). But in the new world of see-through brains, such practice seems to have no place. And then a further response takes this further with the thought that what is then seen when the workings of a person's brain are made transparent in this way could 'readily be imagined to determine' their behaviour: Everything is determined, end of story ('no qualms about it', as Wittgenstein has it). We are now seeing the human as a glorified machine.

In the remark that immediately follows, Wittgenstein pulls back as it were to the ordinary human circumstances where a confession is made:

There is indeed the case where someone later reveals his inmost heart to me by a confession: but that this is so cannot offer me any explanation of outer and inner, for I have to give credence to the confession. For confession is of course something exterior. (§703)

At first sight, it may seem that the confession makes transparent something that was inner, as though we have now seen what is inner. But Wittgenstein rejects this because a confession itself is something outer (spoken words, the writing of a letter ...). Confession seeks, and in a sense depends upon, someone giving credence to what is said: it is a testimony, asking to be believed. And belief of this kind arises in a region where evidence cannot be provided or,

perhaps better, where it is not clear what could count as evidence. The reality of our lives lies in our speaking and responding to one another, trusting and sometimes not trusting. These are not rare moments that arise against a background of evidence. They are the reality in the light of which the very idea of evidence comes into view.

Yet, a further objection that may tempt us away from what is being said here, and again a matter that would presumably be of considerable concern to the police, is to be found in the contrast that might be drawn between what we observe in someone's behaviour and what is going on in their head. We observe their behaviour, but behaviour is ambiguous, they could be pretending, and so the evidence is at best indirect: if we could see into their head, we would have direct evidence, and there would be no ambiguity. But Wittgenstein rejects this contrast: 'There is no such thing as outer mediated and inner unmediated evidence for the inner' (Wittgenstein, 1992, p. 67). It is not just behaviour but evidence that needs interpretation, and so there is no immediacy of the kind we crave.

Now this has a bearing on what we mean by 'mental'—that is, on what the mind can be; again we need to divest ourselves of the idea that the mind is an inner, hidden thing. Our natural uncertainties about the minds of others do not derive from 'what goes on in the inner: even if it does refer to the mental, the mental finds its expression in the bodily' (p. 68). What people say and do is understood from a particular aspect, seen in a certain way, and for the most part this goes on in an unremarkable way as the pattern of ordinary life. We know why this person is waiting at a bus stop, why that one is signalling to turn left, why she is sitting with an open book in front of her, why he is carrying flowers to the cemetery. 'When mien, gesture, and circumstances are unambiguous,' Wittgenstein writes, 'then the inner seems to me to be the outer; it is only when we cannot read the outer that the inner process seems to be hidden behind it' (p. 63). The person at the bus stop never actually gets on a bus, the car signalling left in fact turns right, the book we thought she was reading is upside-down, the flowers are being carried *out* of the cemetery... What is going on here? What are these people doing, what are they thinking? These questions naturally arise in these circumstances, and it makes sense to wonder what is going on *in someone's mind*. But this uncertainty about the inner, understood correctly, is an uncertainty about something outer (p. 88). The mistake would be to 'metaphysicise' this difference—to turn it into a hard-and-fast structural difference that must apply systematically. It is out of that error that fallacious conceptions of the mind are born and that we are blinded to the reality of what we say and do.

Let us come back to the theatre once more and to a succinct formulation that Wittgenstein adopts, which seems to show the intimate relationship between acting on a stage and acting in ordinary life: 'That an actor can represent grief shows the uncertainty of evidence, but that he can represent *grief* also shows the reality of evidence' (p. 67). The implication of the first clause will become clearer if the word 'represent' is italicised. Wittgenstein is asking how pretence is even possible. If there was no uncertainty to evidence (if we could see into their brain as in the sci-fi scenario), then we would know for sure what someone was doing—for example, whether they were really grieving or not. That there is this uncertainty shows the necessity of interpretation: It is the element of our lives as human beings.⁴ But then, to turn to the second clause, what is it that the actor represents? That this behaviour correlates for the most part with the *reality* of grief makes the feigning of grief possible. These are the circumstances of our real lives.

This has relevance, I think, not just for the cogency of psychology but for the ways we have grown accustomed to think about ourselves and our relation to the world. We are not isolated subjects receiving data from an outside world, and then taking that data as indirect evidence for there being other minds. We are already in relation to other people, involved in ways of thinking that extend beyond ourselves and that originate outside ourselves, in a world that is already meaningful, and where seeing things under a certain aspect, interpretation, reading in a sense, constitutes the substance of our life and world.

Let us return to the painted curtain and try to set this out diagrammatically. In the central column in the diagram (Figure 1), we see the relation between the audience, the stage (where the action takes place) and the backstage where the effects achieved on stage are made possible. The play takes place *on stage*, and it is this, perhaps against your friend's inclinations, that we have come to see. In the left column, the analogy is drawn with psychology in its most problematic form: what happens on stage is comparable (outside the theatre) with the scene of behaviour, which is taken at best to be indirect evidence of the real mental life of human beings; the reality of that mental life is to be found in the activity of the brain. In the right column, the analogy is drawn with the more accurate psychology that

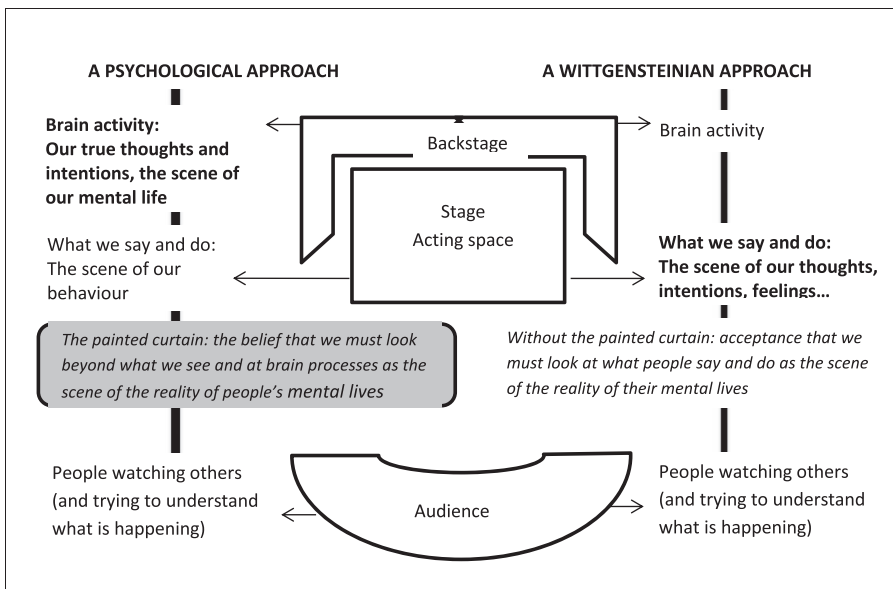


FIGURE 1 Contrasting approaches to the reality of our mental lives

Wittgenstein offers: what happens on stage is comparable (outside the theatre) with the scene of behaviour, which is direct evidence of the real mental life of human beings; for sure there is a brain that is essential for this to happen, just as there is a heart and the circulation of blood, but the reality of mental life is to be found in what we say and do. And to reverse the analogy: the meaningfulness of the play lies in the action on the stage: it is a suspension of disbelief that makes the experience of this possible and enables the kind of truth that the drama can express; pretence, simulation, deception, and play-acting are, in all their variety, part of our mental lives and our real world.

When Wittgenstein speaks of the painted curtain, he is identifying the whole complex of ideas alluded to by this word 'inner' as a barrier to seeing correctly the reality of what people say and do. The curtain hides what is happening on the stage, and substitutes for it a template of understanding in which the language of mental processes predominates. This template promises to give us direct access to the 'inner' of brain processes, avoiding the unreliability of behaviour and interpretation, the ordinary reading of the world into which we are inducted as small children and that we progressively refine through our experience and education. In the left-hand column of the diagram, the painted curtain screens or filters the meaningfulness of what we say and do; in the right-hand column, the painted curtain is removed.

OFFICIOUS UNDERSTUDIES

Austin's 'officious understudies', in the analogy, are not 'the lights men, the stage manager, even the prompter' but those 'who would duplicate the play'. So this is not to deny the brain or other components as a backstage to the mind. But the incisive snub of 'officiousness' names a vice that, I take it, might be ascribed to the legislators of an ideology of mental processes—purveyors of painted curtains, we might say. The word gives a particular taint to 'understudies'—that is, those reserve actors who can memorise a script quickly and perform at short notice, and who, we might imagine, crave the opportunity to assume a role on stage, should one of the real actors fall ill: they seem pretenders to a part in the play and capable of rising only to a semblance of its demands. They would 'duplicate the play' in that their

performance would be a parody of the real thing, the representations lifeless like images on a curtain, just as their comments as critics would, like your friend's, fail to engage with what the play is about.

Psychology and related forms of psychotherapy, still relatively new forms of science and practice, remain in so many respects captive to the picture of the inner–outer that has been the target of this discussion. From television to education itself, this picture imbues the language of mental health, whose scripts seem only to repeat it to us inexorably. Good therapists have realised this. None of what is said here is to deny the reality of problems of mental health and their worsening at the time of the pandemic. It would be foolish today to describe psychology in the sweeping dismissive way that is to be found at the close of the *Philosophical Investigations*, but this does not diminish the fact that the subject's best prospects continue to lie in acknowledgement of Wittgenstein's and Austin's insights into the mind's place in the world.

ENDNOTES

¹An 'artiste' is a performer in music hall, vaudeville, or cabaret, for example. The English adoption of the French word is a somewhat pretentious pseudo-refinement, and its usage here is touched with humour.

²See, for example, Wittgenstein's remark: 'These are, of course, not empirical problems; they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize those workings: *in despite of* an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language' (Wittgenstein, 2009, §109).

³For an example of a painted curtain, see https://www.historictheatrephotos.com/Resources/Theatre-Photos/Lyceum-Sheffield/Photos/Safety_Curtain/Fire_Curtain_from_Grand_Circle.jpg. Accessed 1st February 2022.

⁴To speak of interpretation here is emphatically not to refer to a self-conscious process of interpretation, where we reason through different possibilities etc. It is rather to describe the structures within which meaning-making is possible and to see this as the element in which human lives are lived.

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How to cite this article: Standish P. (2022) Inner and outer, psychology and Wittgenstein's painted curtain. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 56, 115–123. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12656>