

THE INTERBEHAVIORIST

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The Agora

In this issue's cover quote, Compton provides excellent examples in support of a distinction between what the interbehaviorist calls "response" and "response function." Furthermore, in suggesting that the analysis of the two classes of events "reveals a different structure and system of relations," Compton is agreeing with the interbehaviorist that bodily movements and organismic "acts" must be understood in terms of entirely different fields of determinants. Ironically, Compton (a philosopher-theologian) proceeds from the distinction to make a not very naturalistic but intriguing point. He argues that just as there is an "I," a behaving individual who is needed in the field representation of psychological events but who clearly does not intrude upon (and is in fact irrelevant to) the sequence of bodily movements underlying functional responses, so too is there a "God" who is needed as the "agent" of all natural events, but who need not (and should not) be conceived of as intervening in the sequence of happenings constituting the course of natural history. A reading of his paper is recommended, and an interbehaviorist critique would be appreciated.

* * *

Another quote with a strong interbehavioral flavor comes from a very different source:

More encompassing features of the total environmental context and of the organism's behavioral history appear to coalesce in determining the effects that drugs and other environmental events will have on behavior. The effects of behaviorally relevant events have typically been examined under conditions that minimize or preclude the influence of such factors. Ongoing behavior can be exquisitely susceptible to influences that may be quite remote, but the degree and extent to which these factors may modify drug effects has not been studied extensively. The effects of drugs on behaviors that appear to be quite similar can be radically different depending on the behavioral history, on characteristics of the maintaining event, and on behaviors occurring under different environmental conditions. It is significant that the influence on these factors can emerge when a drug is administered.

James A. Barrett. Effects of d-Amphetamine on responding simultaneously maintained and punished by presentation of electric shock. *Psychopharmacology*, 1977, 54, 119-124.

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Noel Smith provides us with the news that Kantor's *Interbehavioral Psychology* (1959) has recently been published in Spanish translation by Editorial Trillas of Mexico. Magdalena Varela was the translator.

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This issue contains the second installment of Edward Blewitt's detailed analysis of Skinner's *Science and Human Behavior* (1953), described by Blewitt as the book in which Skinner most clearly synthesizes his laboratory research and its social implications. Preceding this is a short paper by Dennis Delprato that should be of particular interest to those who teach interbehavioral psychology.

AN INTERBEHAVIORALLY ORIENTED UNDERGRADUATE COURSE IN
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

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The present writer was led to the interbehavioral approach especially out of disenchantment with the truncated views of learning and behavior offered by traditional "animal learning" psychology on the one hand and human mentalistic approaches to learning on the other. Gradually, my undergraduate learning course changed to the point where I feel that it is legitimate to consider it an interbehaviorally oriented approach to the psychology of learning. An outline of the course is presented to provide a stimulus for feedback from other interbehaviorists and to perhaps offer a useful suggestion or two to other interbehaviorally oriented instructors.

Goals. As a consequence of a course in learning, students should be able to effectively interact with empirical principles of behavioral change. This means they should be able to use these principles in their everyday observations of events in the world and to recognize the applications of learning principles to the modification of the behavior of organisms. In addition, because students' interactions with learning principles cannot be separated from the broader context (interbehavioral field) in which they occur, a major task of the course is to present a context for learning general psychology that is conducive to a naturalistic approach to the subject matter.

Texts. N. H. Pronko's *Panorama of Psychology* (2nd ed.) is used to demonstrate the breadth and advantages of a learning-developmental perspective on behavior. L. K. Miller's *Everyday Behavior Analysis* is used to provide the student with ample opportunity to interact with operant procedures. The other two major classes of empirical learning procedures (Pavlovian and modeling) are presented by the instructor (Pronko also covers both of these and Miller covers modeling to some degree).

Outline. The course syllabus contains the following quotation from J. R. Kantor's *Principles of Psychology* (1924, Vol. 1):

In recent years the fact has been strenuously forced upon us that many of the most serious maladjustments of the organism can be and indeed

must be explained not in terms of physiological but of social conditions.

To the psychologist who neglects the humanistic or social side of persons may be laid the charge of the extremely faulty notions current in psychology concerning the motives and conditions of human actions. (p. 20)

This provides the starting point for discussion of the general orientation of the course. Presentations of the first topic in the course outline then begins.

I. Physiological vs. Cultural, Social, Humanistic or Learning Perspectives: Reductionism, brain dogma et al. are covered and the interbehavioral alternative is presented.

II. Basic and Applied Learning:

The role of learning principles in contemporary applied psychology (behavioral therapy, applied behavioral analysis) is emphasized. I feel this is important to counteract many students' preconceived notions that learning psychology is concerned only with salivating dogs, rats in mazes, and nonsense syllables.

III. Province of Learning in Psychology:

Three views regarding learning are covered. First, there is the environmentalist view that all learning is a matter of $S \rightarrow R$ and that this model applies to all behavior. Second, there is the currently popular view that "learning" is inextricably intertwined with "innate" (inherited) behavior. Work such as that of the Brelands and the Garcia effect (taste aversion learning) is cited here. Finally, the view that learning is a subarea of developmental psychology (Kantor, Kuo, Schrierla, Lehrman, Pronko) is presented. The role of organism-environment interactions in behavioral development (change) is stressed.

IV. Major Competing Views of Behavior:

This section of the course further introduces the student to the interactional perspective by comparing and contrasting several influential approaches to behavior: (a) intrapsychic trait approaches (b) $S \rightarrow R$ view (c) mediational or cognitive learning views (signs of interactionism are indicated here) (d) molar or radical behaviorism (Skinner's contribution to the rejection of $S \rightarrow R$ psychology is surprising to many students) and (e) interbehavioral (organismic or authentic interactional) approach.

V. Basic Learning (Behavioral Change) Principles: I.

This section and the following one cover the specific empirical and procedural aspects of learning principles. Topographical vs. functional analyses (antecedent-behavior consequences) are presented; operant, respondent, and modeling procedures are defined; and basic learning procedures (positive reinforcement, escape training, extinction, etc.) are presented.

VI. Basic Learning Principles: II.

Aversive control procedures (e.g., active avoidance, emotional learning) as well as their relationship to the development of behavioral therapy (Watson and Rayner; Holpe) are covered here.

VII. Great Awareness Controversy:

This short section enables me to provide further background regarding the use of learning principles in the analysis and treatment of human behavior because this controversy, in large part, began at Indiana University when learning principles were applied to "uniquely human behavior" (verbal behavior). Fuller's comments (Psychological Record, 1973, 23, 318-24) regarding the role of Professors Kantor and Skinner in this are noted. Of course the controversy regarding the role of awareness in behavioral change provides an excellent opportunity for me to practice my skills at presenting interbehavioral views, since this entire issue is seen as a pseudo-issue from the interbehavioral perspective.

VIII. The Cognitive Learning Approach:

By this time we have covered many matters related to "cognitive reversionism." In this section, the basic rationale for it is presented and demonstrations of how cognitions "cause" behavior are given. The interbehavioral alternative to internal cognitions is presented and integrated with learning principles (e.g., stimulus control and positive reinforcement of implicit behavior).

IX. Intelligence Behavior:

Learning-developmental alternatives to "intelligence" are presented and recent research is used to buttress the alternative.

The Necessity of Social Control:
A Critical Review of B. F. Skinner's Science and Human Behavior
(Part II)

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(Ed. note: In Part I, Blewitt discussed Skinner's important role as a 20th century leader in the "battle against the freewill concept" and against the "Aristotelian mode" of thinking. Part II concludes his consideration of Skinner's contributions to the scientific conception of human behavior, and moves on to discuss Skinner's other major set of contributions as a spokesperson for social control)

Some Objections to Determinism (continued)

(2) Determinism implies fatalism and passivity

Some critics of the determinist thesis reject it because they believe that there exists a conflict between the determinist position and the possibility of deliberate or planned human action. That a belief in determinism should not encourage fatalism was argued by Marx in his Theses on Feuerbach written in the spring of 1845:

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The material doctrine that men are the product of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are the products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances, and that the educator himself needs

educating. Hence this doctrine necessarily arrives at dividing society into two parts, of which one is superior to the other. The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be understood only as revolutionising practice.

XI

The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.

In these notes, of which Engels wrote in February 1883 (Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy) "...the first document in which is deposited the brilliant germ of the new world outlook," we find a philosophy which lies at the centre of Marx's work. The Theses proclaim the need for thought to become 'practical' and 'change the world,' and they reject the contemplative attitude in general, and German Idealism in particular. For Marx, the internal logic of the historical process culminates in making man sovereign over his circumstances. The social revolution is the agent of this transformation. Theory and practice can be unified, on the condition that the former guide the latter. For Marx, man appropriates the world actively not passively, through practice (especially through labour). As men change the world they come to know it better, and this increase in knowledge enhances their ability to change it. Man creates himself through his action upon the world. The philosophy of practice denies both the assumption that man is autonomous and can decide independently at any time (i.e., idealism), and the opposite, that man only appears to decide while in fact circumstances rule men's lives and do not admit any genuine decision. Marx saw man as a being who is necessarily capable of deliberately changing the world and yet is at the same time created by it (for a more detailed discussion, see Marx and Engels, The German Ideology).

Skinner also accepts determinism while recognising that men act upon, and change, the world in which they live, and in the process of changing the world change themselves. In Skinner's functional psychology the class of relationship between organism and environment that has been most studied is that established in operant behavior. In Science and Human Behavior (p. 65) he writes:

The term operant emphasizes the fact that the behavior operates upon the environment to generate consequences.

It is the consequences of an action, the effect of the behaviour of the organism on the environment, which for Skinner is the most important factor in determining the behaviour of organisms. In Skinner's concept of operant behaviour there is a continual interaction between the organism and the environment: a class of responses produces a change in the environment which acts upon the organism to alter its future probability of responding, and so on until the organism dies. Unlike the early attempts at establishing a behaviouristic science of psychology by Pavlov and Watson, Skinner's behaviouristic approach does not consider the organism as simply a passive receptor of stimuli. In his Beyond Freedom and Dignity (1971) for example he writes with reference to this early tradition:

When Pavlov showed how new reflexes could be built up through conditioning, a full-fledged stimulus-response psychology was born, in which all behavior was regarded

as reactions to stimuli. One writer put it this way: 'He are prodded or lashed through life.' The stimulus-response model was never very convincing, however, and did not solve the basic problem, because something like an inner man had to be invented to convert a stimulus into a response. It is now clear that we must take into account what the environment does to an organism not only before but after it responds. Behavior is shaped and maintained by its consequences. Once this fact is recognized, we can formulate the interaction between organism and environment in a much more comprehensive way (p. 17-8).

Skinner, with his concept of operant behaviour, has transcended the dichotomy of passive or active organism, and has arrived at a conceptualization which recognizes the reciprocity of the relationship. Rather than spending his time in philosophical discussion of the dilemma of whether the organism is active or passive, Skinner examines the activity of organisms in specific environmental situations. From this direct contact with the subject matter of psychology he has provided us with an account of the organism-environment relationship that recognises the effect of the environment on the organism as well as the effect of the organism on the environment.

In summary, both Marx and Skinner consider that man is not only a product of his circumstances but also the producer of them, and that man changes himself in the process of changing his surroundings. Man cannot change himself without changing his environment and cannot change the environment without changing himself. Similarly Marx and Skinner have transcended the problem of whether man or society should be changed and recognized that it is necessary to change society to change men and that it is necessary to change men to change society. The processes of changing man and society cannot be separated, they are inherently related.² In Skinner's words:

If man has no freedom of choice, if he can initiate no action which alters the causal stream of behavior, then he may seem to have no control over his own destiny. The scientific view of man according to Krutch is a "dead end." The fact is, however, that men control both their genetic and environmental histories, and in that sense they do, indeed, control themselves....Men control themselves by controlling the world in which they live ("Man", 1964, in Cumulative Record, 1972, p. 51).

We are all controlled by the world in which we live, and part of that world has been and will be constructed by me. The question is this: Are we to be controlled by accident, by tyrants, or by ourselves in effective cultural design? ("Freedom and the Control of Men", 1955, in Cumulative Record, 1972, p. 11).

² Hopefully, what has been written shows that a Marxian perspective is compatible with Skinner's psychology. Ironically, Skinnerian behaviourism is more generally regarded as being a fascist ideology, as being the supporter of an elitist, conservative social system. For the present writer, behaviouristic psychology could contribute a great deal more in the construction of a large-scale socialist society.

A final argument against the statement that determinism implies passivity and fatalism may be noted. Physical laws in no way force bodies to behave in a certain way, but merely describe how under certain conditions they do behave. Similarly, psychological laws do not force us to do anything. They merely state what, as a matter of fact, we do under certain conditions (see Pyle, 1949, The Concept of Mind). That is, an object does not behave because of a law; for example, a stone does not fall because of gravity. The law merely describes what occurs. Phenomena do not behave because of laws in the same way that a man building a model plane behaves in a certain way because of the instructions. A natural law does not determine an event in the way that the instructions are one of the factors determining the behaviour of the model builder.

(3) Determinism is not proven

Probably the most common argument in favour of the free-will viewpoint is the negative one that the determinist belief in causal processes has not been applied to the whole range of human behaviour, and, hence, has not been proven. It is not denied by such critics of determinism that causal processes have been found to apply to some kinds of human behaviour. However, they question whether previous successes provide sufficient reason for believing that a wider range of human actions will be explicable in causal terms.

Such arguments are not compelling. It is primarily on the basis of the past success of an approach or orientation that one should put faith in its future application. One is not proceeding logically if one dismisses the possibility of the future success of an approach simply on the grounds that it has not as yet confronted the events in question.

THE POSSIBILITY OF THE CONTROL OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

It is through its technological implications for social control that operant psychology has come to the public notice. Skinner's own applications to the social sphere, both in his books, Walden Two and Beyond Freedom and Dignity, and in various articles (e.g., Freedom and the Control of Men, 1955; Some Issues Concerning the Control of Human Behavior, 1956) have caused a great deal of controversy. A great deal of the reaction to Skinner's suggestions about the applications of operant behavior findings to social behaviour has been aggressively uncomplimentary. For example, Orville Prescott, in the New York Times, commented on Walden Two as "Alluring in a sinister way, and appalling too." On the basis of his more recent book, Beyond Freedom and Dignity, Skinner's utopian vision of a society based on a behavioural technology has been variously called a "behavioral scientist's enlightened despotism" (Perelman, Behaviorism's Enlightened Despotism), and the book itself a "melange of amateurish metaphysics, self-advertising 'technology', and illiberal social policy (which) adds up to a document that is a disservice to scientists, technologists, and to all who are seriously trying to improve the human condition (Black, Some Aversive Responses to a Would-Be Reinforcer).

Skinner's commitment to deliberate cultural design is sometimes said to be deficient because it is value-laden. This is viewed as a flaw because in philosophy there is a distinction between descriptive and normative propositions; that is, it is accepted that the "ought" cannot be derived from the "is". Thus it is argued, Skinner cannot assert that his prescriptions for social change ("ought") are grounded in scientific discovery ("is"), and if

so his suggestions should carry no more or less weight than our own "oughts". The most well-known analysis of this problem was undertaken by Hume in his A Treatise of Human Nature (1739). In this work Hume implied that 'ought' sentences are not logically deducible from 'is' sentences:

I cannot forbear adding to these reasonings an observation, which may, perhaps, be found of some importance. In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remarked, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden, I am surprised to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, is, and is not, I met with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence. For as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relation or affirmation, it is necessary that it should be observed and explained; and at the same time that a reason be given, for what seems to be altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution, I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded, that this small attention would subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that this distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceived by reason.

While Hume's argument is impressive, the author is unconvinced that it should carry any weight as a criticism of Skinner. The criticism of cultural design on the grounds that it contains a value judgement, and is therefore based on "moral" rather than "scientific" grounds, implies that values are somehow immune to a scientific analysis. To the contrary, what a person believes "ought" to be done is a datum for the science of behavior. What a person feels about a fact is no doubt different from the fact, but the former is a fact also.

By posing the problem of intentional cultural design, it follows that one must ask "Who is to have control?" It is in the controversy over an answer to this puzzling question that a great deal of anger and name-calling has occurred. It has been assumed by many critics of the application of operant techniques to social problems that control will be in the hands of a small group of behavioural engineers, who will impose what they regard as the correct solutions on a passive and ignorant mass. Such a concept of society is in the same tradition as Plato's Republic, Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, and Huxley's Brave New World.³

³Orwell's novel together with his Animal Farm were intended as critiques of communism in Stalinist Russia. Russia has never been, even before Lenin's death in 1924, a communist nation, as conceived by Marx and Engels, nor a transitional society, which is a myth anyway. The Communist nations - the Soviet Union, the East European Republics, China, Cuba, etc. - differ from those nations of the "Free World" - the U.K., U.S.A., Germany, Canada, etc. - in two main ways: (1) the degree of political freedom; (2) the extent to which the state is involved in the running of the economy. Instead of relying on what supporters of the various nations say, we should examine actual situations. Marx warned us to search below the stated situation to the real one: "Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so we can not judge a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life..." (1859, 1959)

The apparent reason that cultural design is associated with this type of society is that social control tends to be conceived of only in terms of explicit control using aversive stimulus contingencies (see Ulrich, 1967). The association of control with aversive stimuli is made very clear in the film "A Clockwork Orange", when the "hero" of the film is treated for his abnormal behaviour. This obvious attack on the methods of behaviour therapy is ill-aimed however. Operant research has shown that the use of aversive techniques alone is a very poor method of control (see Azrin and Holz, Punishment, in Honig (ed.), Operant Research: Areas of Research and Application, 1966, p. 380-447). Aversive control not only leads to social aggression, aimed both at the individual who is delivering the punishing stimulus and also at those present when punishment is presented (operant and elicited aggression respectively), but also to escape or avoidance of the punishment situation. Indeed, it could be argued that the most severe critics of aversive control have been those who work within the operant framework. Skinner in particular is very much against the use of aversive techniques of control in social affairs because of their behavioural effects. In Walden Two, for example, there are no references to the use of aversive control, and in Beyond Freedom and Dignity, Skinner clearly allies himself with those who write "the literature of freedom and dignity" on the issue of freedom from aversive control.

In contrast, the use of positive reinforcement is not generally regarded as a form of control because its use does not lead to escape or avoidance of the stimuli, and so the individual is not aware of the control. However, Skinner makes it clear that positive reinforcement contingencies do exert control, and that such control is ubiquitous: people are under the positive control of social, familial, religious, political, economic, and educational agencies. In a society based on positive reinforcement control, whether that control is capricious or planned, the most serious danger is a lack of awareness of the control. Roe (1959) points out that awareness is a major factor in defense against undesired control:

Awareness of our own needs and attitudes is our most effective instrument for maintaining our own integrity and control over our reactions.

Those interested in the possibilities of behavioural engineering also advocate an awareness of specific behavioural principles. The more that is known about behavioural control, the greater the potential for counter-control.

While agreeing that awareness is an important factor in counter-control, it would not be of any value unless it was linked up to methods of counter-control. It is of little use to an individual to know that he is being manipulated if there is no way he can counter it. In Skinner's view, however, behavioural control involves an inherent reciprocity, as long as the individual initiating the control can be made receptive to the responses of the controllee:

In analyzing any social episode from this point of view a complete account must be given of the behaviors of both parties as they contribute to the origin and maintenance of the behavior of the other....In noticing how the master controls the slave or the employer the worker, we commonly overlook reciprocal effects and, by considering action in one direction only, are led to regard control as exploitation, or at least the gaining of a one-sided advantage; but the control is actually mutual. The slave controls the master as completely as the master the slave, in the sense that the

techniques of punishment employed by the master have been selected by the slave's behavior in submitting to them (Skinner, The Design of Cultures, 1961, in Cumulative Record, 1972, p. 45).

One of the features of an alarmist picture of behaviour control is the separation of the controller and the controlled. It is this false dichotomy between the controller and the controlled that lies at the heart of the controversy over the question "Who is to control?" In discussions over planned societies it is always assumed that there must be a separate group that controls the masses. With a recognition of the reciprocity in behavioural control, a solution offers itself: the unification of the controller and the controlled. There is nothing in Skinner's conception of behavior that argues against the possibility of the whole of society being involved in its own control, that is, in the democratization of social life. On the contrary, Skinner seems to favour this as a means of preventing the establishment of a totalitarian regime. In 'Utopia as an Experimental Culture' (Contingencies of Reinforcement, 1969, p. 43) Skinner writes:

Democracy is an effort to solve the problem (of control) by letting the people design the contingencies under which they are to live or -- to put it another way -- by insisting that the designer himself live under the contingencies he designs.

It is unlikely that the designers will use aversive techniques if they will be affected by them, or use positive techniques which lead to exploitation if the designers are to be exploited.

As knowledge of the factors that control behaviour becomes available to greater numbers of people, the design of an individual's environment by himself, rather than by an external agency, becomes more feasible. This does not mean that the ultimate controlling role of the external environment is denied. Personal freedom in the sense of "free will" does not exist, but the behavioural scientist offers, in place of the belief in freedom that is really ignorance of the factors that control behavior, the potential for a new, more meaningful freedom:

From a scientific point of view, the best approximation of personal freedom can be achieved through understanding one's own nature as a human being and learning to exploit it. Increase in knowledge and dissemination of the principles of behavior should actually increase personal freedom (Ulrich and Mountjoy (eds.), The Experimental Analysis of Social Behavior, 1972, p. 479).

There are striking parallels between the behaviourist's conception of freedom and the conception derived from the social theory of Marx and Engels. They believed that it is only through awareness of what social variables control us that we can intentionally control them for the benefit of society. Control does not necessarily lead to the negation of freedom; on the contrary, it can increase the range of human freedom. We can only agree with Engels when he writes in Anti-Dühring (1878):

Freedom does not consist in the realm of independence of natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends....Freedom therefore consists in control over ourselves and over external nature which is founded on knowledge of natural necessity; and is therefore necessarily a product of historical development.

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