

MOVING TO A NEW HOME: WILL ANYONE LIVE THERE AND WHO WILL KNOW THE ADDRESS?

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ABSTRACT: "An Academic Home for a Natural Science" argues that behavior analysis will only prosper as a science when it disassociates itself from psychology and identifies with "behaviorology." In contrast, I demonstrate that over time behaviorism has made a marked and growing impact on mainstream psychology by remaining within psychology. The formation of a new discipline forfeits both psychology's resources and social acceptance, rendering the new discipline scientifically and culturally irrelevant.

It is true that the behavior analytic tree has experienced only modest growth since it was planted in the psychological soil. Skinner (1986) himself lamented this situation, though he inferred that those who did behave as behavior analysts received contingent reinforcement as a consequence. To the very end of his life, he never abandoned his hope that behavior analysis and psychology would eventually become intellectual brethren if not essentially identical disciplines (Skinner, 1990). In contrast, a small group of behavior analysts has contended ever more forcefully that behavior analysis cannot survive, let alone thrive, if its primary academic base remains psychology. These behavior analysts insist that a new objective science called "behaviorology" is necessary to save the discipline from the taint of psychology, with its insidious pseudo-scientific, metaphysical, and mystical practices (e.g., Fraley & Ledoux, 1997). If Lawrence Fraley's prescription to abandon psychology is enacted, would behavior analysis grow in numbers of well trained scientists and practitioners, and thereby in influence? Would behavior analytic research flourish more than now, and would behavior analytic social interventions become more acceptable than they are now and perhaps even predominant? In other words, is there a tangible positive consequence in the virtue of purity for purity's sake?

I do acknowledge that Fraley is essentially correct when he notes that behavior analysis is likely to be relegated to marginal status within the typical academic psychology department. Frequently, behaviorally oriented faculty are limited to one "token behaviorist." In these departments, the identified behaviorist labors in an environment that defines intellectual isolation, and even worse, is often suffused with a bemused, condescending tolerance of the naive. Certainly, the working conditions

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of the isolated behaviorist are far from ideal. But the question we must ask-and that data rather than polemics must answer-is whether the contingencies that operate within the behavioral psychologists' concurrent schedules, including the very real issue of resources, promote or hinder growth of the field and social progress. In other words, what behaviors are selected under these circumstances? Fraley strongly implies that behavior analysts who "hang onto resources" are intellectual whores who are unwittingly selling out the "good behavioral fight" and thereby losing behavior analysis as a coherent subdiscipline. This disdain rivals the scorn experienced by the token behaviorist submerged in a sea of mentalist colleagues.

I contend that Fraley's passion is misguided: It is through the resource acquisition route that the relatively small behavior analysis community has had its academic and social impact-a significant one that is expanding even today. In reality, psychology needs behavior analysis (Skinner, 1983), and behavioral approaches are increasingly selected by the cultural contingencies. I discuss several examples below.

One major way that "playing the game" with psychology has paid off handsomely for behavior analysis is in the existence of numerous behaviorally-dominated psychology departments in the United States and around the world. One consequence of the broad behavioral influence can be seen in the orientations of clinical training programs. Behavior analysts comprise 14% of the faculty in clinical psychology doctoral programs accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) (Sayette & Mayne, 1990), with an additional behavioral impact provided by 42% of the faculty with social learning and cognitive-behavioral orientations. Another way to look at the behavioral influence is through Nevid, Lavi, and Primavera's (1987) survey of 96 training directors of clinical psychology doctoral programs. They assessed the emphasis placed in training on classical conditioning, operant conditioning, cognitive behavior modification, psychoanalytic/neoanalytic approaches, and humanistic/nondirective approaches. On a 5-point scale, with 5 equaling the greatest emphasis, 28 programs (29%) rated the operant emphasis as 4 or 5 and 44 (46%) rated it as 3. Thus, 72 (75%) training programs reported significant operant training. For comparison, fewer programs endorsed the psychoanalytic focus: 4 or 5 = 26 (27%), 3 = 23 (24%), and 3, 4, or 5 = 49 (51%). Further, an astounding 86 (90%) rated the emphasis on cognitive behavior modification as 3 or higher. "Behaviorologists" will deride the cognitive contamination and even destruction of behaviorism, but such purity misses the social significance of the data: Cognitions are now largely analyzed, understood, and modified as responses under stimulus control, albeit in a less rigorous than ideal manner (cf. Franks, 1997).

Thus, clinical psychology programs today are likely to include either a broad behavioral presence or a dominating one. These departments and their graduate training programs generate masses of data and produce cadres of highly skilled behavior analysts. But graduate training programs are expensive and require resources. In this era of shrinking academic funding, a new, minuscule, tangential, and misunderstood discipline like "behaviorology" is unlikely to garner more than token support, if that. On the contrary, the legitimate emphasis today on interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge and social intervention impels even the

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powerful psychological establishment to increasingly cast its fortunes with similar and not-so-similar disciplines (e.g., health psychology).

The natural momentum of the behavioral infiltration into psychology can be enhanced through grassroots action. For example, Thyer (1995) observed that both evolutionary theory and psychoanalysis advanced their scholarly and political agendas through the deliberate, focused efforts of a small "covert circle of disciples dedicated to the behind-the-scenes advocacy of their perspectives within the disciplinary mainstream" (p. 23). Thyer suggested several potential opportunities to effect change in psychology by investing behavior in the APA's governance structure. In effect, an inner circle of "champions of behavior analysis" would infiltrate APA governance, journals, etc., and thereby expand behavioral influence and then maintain it by fostering behavioral replacements for the pioneer "champions." In fact, this "infiltration" process has already occurred to some extent, though fairly overtly and with non-APA mainstream psychology organizations: There is a significant behavioral presence in several major general psychological associations, most notably the American Association of Applied and Preventive Psychology, and to a lesser extent in the American Psychological Society. Another structural behavioral infiltration is evident in the extensive behavioral contribution to the editorial staffs and boards of general clinical psychology journals (Wilson, 1997).

The impact of behavior analysis within psychology may be further increased through high quality instruction. This strategy focuses on improving the teaching of behavior analysis to three distinct populations: scientists and researchers, practitioners, and the general public (Heward & Malott, 1995). Through "extending the reach and effectiveness of teaching behavior analysis, we happy few may someday become the competent many" (Heward & Malott, 1995, p. 71).

In addition to the influence in the academic and governance spheres, a wide variety of political, legislative, and economic initiatives reflect behaviorism's infiltration of mainstream psychology. For example, the field of school psychology is currently undergoing a tremendous shift from a "test-label-recommend" perspective to one grounded in competencies and performances and operationalized through a behavioral-observation/functional-analysis/clinical-intervention focus (McNamara, 1997). This shift has taken many years, but conventional behavioral intervention has now supplanted traditional psychology in cutting-edge school psychology. Further, economic imperatives have also boosted behavioral interventions from the status of psychological pariah to one of managed care darling. Complete any managed care network provider application: The surest way to get on the panel is to identify oneself as a "behavior therapist" or "behavior modification expert." We can debate the merits and demerits of rationed care, but it is clear that the managed care mavens believe that behavioral interventions are what they want: operationalized, problem-focused, empirically tested, relatively short-term, cost-effective. Far from being marginalized, the uncomfortable fact is that managed care centralizes and prioritizes behaviorism.

These changes in training programs and applied practice have evolved over several decades; social, professional, and scientific acceptance of uncomfortable but legitimate ideas is a slow process. Neither Darwin, nor for that matter Copernicus or Galileo, began a "new" science in response to the early negative reception of their findings. Eventually, however, biology and astronomy accommodated the

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revolutionary data within the existing mainstream science. Thus, a call for a new discipline of "behaviorology" betrays impatience: Behavior analysis is a young science that has already made a powerful impact on psychology, even if it hasn't taken it over and must yet coexist with "lesser" sciences (cf, Skinner, 1983). Cultural change does occur, but usually rather slowly as selectionism exerts its power. Rather than abandoning what took so long to achieve, we should build upon the distinct behavioral influence now commonplace in clinical psychology training programs, managed care mandates, and school psychology practice.

The alternative to living with and within psychology entails huge risks. If **behavior** analysis abandons psychology and builds a new home, who will live there? **Who** will know who lives there? Who will care who lives there? Will social, political, economic, and intellectual "status" exist for an independent discipline of "behaviorology"? This concern reflects much more than a simple greedy battle for resources; it embodies powerful contingencies of reinforcement. An example from another field of study may prove instructive: While the actual stimulus value to society of the "field" of chiropractic is an empirical issue, I predict sound research would confirm that its value is markedly less potent than that of osteopathy, which enjoys virtual parity with allopathic medical treatment.

Fraley is not concerned with the reaction of psychology to his thesis. But the tone of the article is strident and almost combative; it will alienate those in psychology who might be our allies and even partners. Not all psychology is "scientized" as opposed to scientific. Research in physiological psychology, sensation and perception, and even social psychology can meet the most stringent tests of scientific rigor. The cavalier dismissal of psychology in an arrogant and condescending tone will not only increase the isolation of behaviorists, but also decrease the opportunities to acquire necessary resources. What kind of credibility is developed when the language communicates a pervasive sense of "the Truth is here revealed, only the hopelessly mystical or dumb believe otherwise?" We behavior analysts made this very mistake in our verbal behavior in the formative years of the behavior modification "movement," and it cost us dearly in terms of social acceptance and resource allocation (cf, Kazdin, 1978).

Fraley essentially presents a dichotomous choice to behavior analysts: sell out science for the money or abandon psychology to "consolidate and develop an integral natural science discipline" (p. 93). But an obvious third option takes the distal perspective: Because cultural change is an evolving process, albeit with some sudden alterations, we must develop strategies that maximize the available resources to better achieve our expansionist goals.

The main purpose of the functional analysis is to identify the optimal (not ideal) intervention. In a similar way, if our goal is to maximize our impact in intellectual, academic, and social environments, the optimal if not ideal way to achieve this will be to understand and use the resources that are available to us. The vibrancy of the Association for Behavior Analysis, with only a little more than 2,000 behavioral psychologists, educators, social workers, sociologists, and philosophers, is largely a function of inclusion, respect, and collaboration. But even now, we all sometimes get the unpleasant feeling that we are talking to ourselves, to the already-converted. How vibrant and powerful will "behaviorology" be-with its 100 members and handful of

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academic departments, with its rigid philosophy and dogmatic language excluding allies and sympathizers? Those 100 "behaviorologists" will have a wonderful, noncontentious, and-let me emphasize-intimate and socially irrelevant exchange.

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