

BEHAVIORISM

Thomas Nelson and the issue of introspection

William James: study of consciousness

John Watson: study of behavior

Stimulus-Response

- 1. Vigorous application of the rules of science**
- 2. Academically based in contrast to clinical**
- 3. Focus of environmental variables as stimulus and measurable behavior as the response**
- 4. Explaining behavior to terms of the learning mechanisms**

Stimulus Response arcs

Classical and Operant conditioning paradigms

S-O-R

(Stimulus-Organic Variable-Response)

S-r-s-R

S= External stimulus

r = Internal response

s = Internal stimulus

R = Measurable response

Robert Sears
Positive Identification Theory

RADICAL BEHAVIORISM

“So long as external variables go unnoticed or are ignored, their function is assigned to an originating agent within the organism. . . .the best way to dispose of any explanatory fiction is to examine the facts upon which it is based. These usually prove to be, or suggest, variables which are acceptable from the point of view of scientific method. In the present case it appears that . . [personality] is simply a device for representing a *functionally unified system of responses*. . . . Personality may be tied to a particular type of occasion—when a system of responses is organized around a given discriminative stimulus. Types of behavior which are effective in achieving reinforcement upon occasion A are held together and distinguished from those effective upon occasion B. Thus one’s personality in the bosom of one’s family may be quite different from that in the presence of intimate friends.”

Skinner, 1953 pp 283-285

Operate Conditioning

Edward Lee Thorndike's Law of Effect

The word “operant” will be used [because]. . .the behavior *operates* upon the environment to generate consequences. In operant conditioning we “strengthen” an operant in the sense of making a response more probable or, in actual fact, more frequent.

Intermittent Reinforcement