

Summarize in outline
form the main points
that dr. murray
sidman discusses
concer...

[Psychology](#)



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of the of the Psychology A Review of the Contributions of B. F Skinner Q.

Summarize in outline form the main points that Dr. Murray Sidman discusses concerning the historic scientific and practical contributions of B. F. Skinner.

Outline:

B. F. Skinner was alternatively recognized as one of the most influential and controversial psychologists of his time.

Among his most astute observations of human nature is: We are what we do. But we can also change what we do for the better.

While Skinner is remembered for his work on individuals, his work is equally applicable to groups of people- in fact it reflects the whole of humankind.

Skinner and the scientific world were influenced by 3 works in the 1920s:

Charles Darwin's Origin of Species, Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis and Ivan Pavlov's experiments with Operant Conditioning.

Skinner took the work of Ivan Pavlov even further. He was able to prove that the Stimulus-Response connection worked even in reverse- that is a Response could also lead to a Stimulus, and he interjected the concept of Discriminative Stimuli.

Skinner work was also acknowledged and appreciated by other psychologists such as Dr. J. B. Watson.

Skinner proved that both in animals and humans, we tend to repeat those actions that lead to a desired response. We stop doing those actions that do not lead to the desired response.

Skinner introduced the concepts of positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement. Positive reinforcement would entail actions like praise and rewards that served for a person to repeat a certain behavior, while negative

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reinforcement would entail punishment or the withholding of a desired reward. In this way positive behavior could be enhanced and negative behavior curbed in a person or an animal.

Skinner's work is used today by animal trainers as well as parents and teachers. It is even used in offices where people who contribute towards departmental and organizational goals are rewarded, while those who did not are sidelined, and some even punished if they did bad work that put the organization into disrepute.

Skinner amazingly noted that actions performed with lesser frequency were apt to be remembered longer than those performed with more consistent frequency.

Two Additional Questions for Students taking the Course in Applied Behavior Analysis

1. If our behavior is all a product of conditioning, can a psychologist program or influence us to do things against our will?
2. In infamous experiments by Dr. Stanley Milgram and Dr. Philip Zimbardo, people were induced to hurt other people. Is this a natural state of mankind? Can the henchmen of Hitler like Adolf Eichmann and Herman Goebbels be absolved of abetting in genocide like in the Holocaust, on the grounds that they were just following orders or because they wanted to save their own lives?

Works Cited

Sidman, M.: B. F Skinner-A Fresh Appraisal. Davidson Films, 1999. Accessed <https://assignbuster.com/summarize-in-outline-form-the-main-points-that-dr-murray-sidman-discusses-concerning-the-historic-scientific-and-practical-contributions-of-bf-skinner/>

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