

"BACK TO FREEDOM + DIGNITY"

I. Intro: (Sam Schechter recently): Prof. to class: my business - to leave your - to listen. If you finish first, let me know...

- A. N.Y. Times review B.F. Skinner's Beyond Freedom + Dignity - "if you're going to read only one book this year - this should be it."
- B. As of 4 months ago, shortly after publ. - sold 75,000 or. (> FDZ RR)
- C. Tom - use SK as excuse discuss J. AHA F, FW, then - BFD.

II. Free Will

A. FW as obvious, intuitive expc. A 1000 choices every day...

YET - observation: cause + effect. ... laws so apparently → DETERMIN.

B. Historically - 3 forms Detm:

1. Ante Grecia - Pre-Socratics (Thales, Pythagoras, Parmenides).

Determinists: "everything is Act' - what was, is, or will be"

2. Middle Ages - Theolog. formul'n - instead Nature - divine foreknowledge - or predestination: so we

3. Mod. Science - Back to nat'l Detm. Galileo, Newton.

Spinoza: if stone could speak... LAPLACE: compreh. mind...

Contemp period - Detm = sci; economic; historic; psychol...

C. J. AHA's - response to a dilemma:

• One hand - FW = essence Truth: $p \rightarrow q$ / $\neg p \rightarrow \neg q$ / $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$ / $q \rightarrow p$

• Other hand - G-A knows all, past/present so future as well...

if future is known then past/present is known

So which is it - FW or div. predestin?

III - NOW: SKINNER

A. Psychol. Defn - Behaviorism. Starts w. John Watson 1913 - Psychol. not talk consciousness, inner feelings, only ACTS: premed, control BEHAV.

B. SK in SFD = non-fiction version WALDEN II. ...

C. SK's Thesis: Fm, FW = illusion. Betw. genetics & ENVIRT, man totally controlled: no stand, decision, choosing, freedom.

- ex: ENVIRT. If ENVIRT controlled, behavior as predictable as chemical reaction (shows Laplace)

- previous theories: man's Fm, Dignity, Reason, Admirability, originality, creativity - looks good. They attributed Behav → "inner man," Autonomous man. SK: function of ignorance, is myth.

- ∴ nothing wrong, empty or morally, w. ppl who behave badly.

No bad ppl, only defective environments. And this - SCIENCE

- s.o. BEHAVIORAL TECHNOLOGY. Learn fr. animal expts - can, right ^{control} ~~control~~

- 2 kinds envirt control: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT (= reward);

AVERSIVE REINFORCEMENT (= punishment)

- we must design culture, via behav Techn, in which AVERSIVE plays only threat, maximize POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT - so ppl no fear not bec. choice fr, but bec. must, ...

D. EVALUATION SK's Thesis:

1. If he's right - let's all close shop. No 3rd. rel, morality, dignity, reason - none of things that depend on Fm & that make life worthwhile & meaningful. JUST: you're an automaton - just know that it's survival (if SK right - why?) - submit yr life, envirt, to SK & he will make you happy & good & euphoric.

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2. SK's cynicism.

- a. (p. 5-6): comparing Plato's dialogues still assigned students although no light from behavior. Nonsense! SK too ancient (Thales, Democritus, Parmenides...)
- b. protutor resentment - READ p. 54 ... Soviet Gown?
- c. Don't steal - READ p. 67; 114 ... Bernstein: a'1 GUN; R. Elimination of ... whole history moral heroism
- d. straying - READ p. 119 ... SKELSON

3. other psychol, philos, humanists - attack him:

Jos. W. Kravitz: ... denies that a unique being called man exists...

C. S. Lewis: ... man is being abolished

"The chief source of man's dignity," Reinhold Niebuhr wrote, "is man's essential freedom and capacity for self-determination." Carl Rogers has asserted that "over and above the circumstances which control all of us, there exists an inner experience of choice which is very important. This is the kind of thing Skinner has never been willing to recognize."

Skinner's detractors attack the whole concept of behaviorism, which Novelist Arthur Koestler, who has high amateur standing in psychology and other sciences, maintains is nothing but pseudoscience, "a monumental triviality that has sent psychology into a modern version of the Dark Ages." In ignoring consciousness, mind, imagination and purpose, Koestler says, Behaviorist Skinner and his admirers have abandoned what is most important. Similarly, Historian Peter Gay speaks of "the innate naïveté, intellectual bankruptcy and half-deliberate cruelty of behaviorism."

The gravest menace from Skinner is his authoritarianism in the view of his critics. They reject the notion that man can no longer afford freedom and believe in fact that he cannot afford the opposite. Says Harvard Social Psychologist Herbert C. Kelman: "For those of us who hold the enhancement of man's freedom of choice as a fundamental value, any manipulation of the behavior of others constitutes a violation of their essential humanity, regardless of the 'goodness' of the cause that this manipulation is designed to



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Existential Psychoanalyst Rollo May believes that Skinner is a totalitarian without fully knowing it. "I have never found any place in Skinner's system for the rebel," he says. "Yet the capacity to rebel is of the essence in a constructive society."

In light such criticism, popularity SK, & his BFD reminds me central thesis Erich Fromm's Escape from Freedom

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E. Critique of SK.

1. "science". as if fancier terminology... and: negative: he asserts that eventually - all won't ... ∴ believe in him
2. I feel he extrapolates from specific & abnormal circumstances.
READ SK p. 66... but cases he mentions are those virtually w/o freedom to begin with!
3. Fallacy REDUCTIONISM - be very suspicious of "nothing but".
S: man = Neth. Bñ Animal; Anim = N.B. machine; ∴ Man = machine
4. Further - SK concept Man = blank, w/ a priori - counter to Kant - esp. Lenin NOam chemistry - psychohistoristics....

F. NOam Chemistry. raving BFD in My Review of Books.

"pure dogmism; virtually no sc'ic evidence; not even the form of an interesting hypothesis; simply incoherent"

1. ^{ch:} SK. takes commonplace as startling theories "p'syche physics".
D-c env't has effect behv. Hrt → beach; CNA → thins.
2. ^{ML:} Fin means precisely will's to follow env't cues, or choose alternatives.
But alternatives are given. Fin not mean I can create dream world or nihil. ST - old lady - can't rattle - Gave her
3. In amazing New York Times reviewer - rave SK - then wrote another piece - retracting!!
4. v-c Bhv can be controlled. But not deny Fin man. dignity.
Circ-camp. FRANKL: the last of human freedoms - to choose your attitude

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G. Totalitarianism. Political/moral criticism: is benevolent despotism.
who will control the controllers? - 1984 - only 12 gr. army.

SI. Has. Rabbi Heaven - Hasim pray not - talking extremely bitter
girl: This your inn Heaven? Rabbi: Oh no - I'm her Hell!

SK wants to design a Heaven for vs. I'm afraid - he's over Hell.

H. Finally - logical attack. By pro-fm philo/geny vs
Determin; unknowingly adopted by Heaven wheeliv (centrism)
• N. in chemistry (above) vs. SK.

1. simply stated: Detm can never prove self - since statement of Detm. self statement

2. ~~what~~ vs. what makes vs accept vs stat it as self or true, & another
as nonsense, superstition, incredible? Ex: set emerging lab:
world: electromagnetic, electrons... And escaped lunate-
world imposed it /ppp/... One has weighed evidence,
can prevent, is objective, verifiable, has chosen bet.

alternatives. Other - irresistible impulse... no weighing, choosing.

BUT if everything is result previous cause, if all
behavior = env't - then no way making bet.

prot. program: & random lunate, sense nonsense -

• this thing too is same category, i.e. - /ppp/ or /a

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IV - Summary

- A- traced history probl FW-DET. showed background
antiquity of M.A. Josephus. Pharisaeus. Some
J. philes. resolution. Paradox. Pessim.
- B- Skinner - evaluation - museum - pseudo-scientific -
reactionist - chemistry attacks - totalitarian - logic inextensible.

V - Conclusion:

- A- One of my favorite authors, Loren Eiseley, in chap in new
book (The Night Country) refers to sunken health -
Macbeth & witches. He believes their prophecy - & that's
why it becomes true for him. So we all those who
tell us that they, sci - who today enjoy benefit of doing
they create future by prediction, it - a future with
fun, dignity, respect, creativity; a future "in which
man is abolished."
- B- As Shakespeare freedom -
"It hath been taught us from the primal state
That he which is was wished until he were"
- We become what we wish to become.
 - Kretzschmar on Tolstoy - 138 - Maimonides ... i.e., whether
they exist or not depends on whether you believe in them
 - Most remarkable exmpl is: FM. If you believe in
FM - you become free. Deny it - & you become

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a slave, ready for citizenship in Walden II where
SK & his behavioral technologists will manipulate
you & shape your life Pinocchio's nose...

But back to Loren Eiseley & his closing comment on
Shakespeare's, "That he which is was wished until he were":

This is not the voice of the witches. It is the clear voice of a great poet almost four centuries gone, who saw at the dawn of the scientific age what was to be the darkest problem of man: his conception of himself. The words are quiet, almost cryptic; they do not foretell. They imply a problem in free will. Shakespeare, in this passage, says nothing of starry influences, machinery, beakers, or potions. He says, in essence, one thing only: that what we wish will come.

I submit that this is the deadliest message man will ever encounter in all literature. It thrusts upon him inescapable choices. Shakespeare's is the eternal, the true voice of the divine animal, piercing, as it has always pierced, the complacency of little centuries in which, encamped as in hidden thickets, men have sought to evade self-knowledge by describing themselves as men.

כאן נגמל אפניך ביום אר הי"ז ואר ג'ל
ואר המורואה ה'ד -
והתרמית, למען תחיה אתה וצריך