TOWARD COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOR BETWEEN PRAGMATIC BEHAVIORISTS AND MARXIST BEHAVIORISTS: PHILOSOPHICAL, EMPIRICAL, AND SOCIAL ACTION CONSIDERATIONS

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Abstract

Behaviorists interested in promoting social change are likely to identify primarily with one of two broadly defined social action philosophies, namely pragmatism (liberal, democratic reform) or Marxism/Socialism. This paper advances two arguments: (1) Behaviorism is compatible with many significant aspects of both philosophical approaches and can serve as the "umbrella philosophy," and (2) for behaviorists, a focus on the very real differences between the philosophies is currently not warranted on empirical grounds. Finally, concrete suggestions for cooperative behavior between pragmatic behaviorists and Marxist behaviorists are offered.

The social change philosophy of pragmatism (e.g. Dewey, 1957) has been described by Marxists as incompatible with the Marxist approach to social reconstruction (Novack, 1975; Trotsky, Dewey, & Novack, 1973). Pragmatism is seen as fundamentally different from the Marxist perspective in that it relies on opportunistic, experimental, trial-and-error techniques, is based on indeterminism, individualism, and relativism, and lacks backbone, "first" principles, interest in the evolution of causes, and a consistent, committed approach to the human condition (Novack, 1975, pg. 28-31 and 76-84). Thus, pragmatism is seen as the philosophy of the middle class liberal reformer caught in the intermediate social-economic position between the ruling class and the working class. This placement in society is seen as forcing the middle class pragmatist to vacillate on social issues and initiate social action in a gradual way aimed, ultimately, at bolstering the corrupt existing order. Thus the liberal reformer has his/her cake and eats it: the disadvantage (oppressed) people's lives are materially improved by the gradual, pragmatic interventions, while the middle-class liberal reformer retains a somewhat favored — certainly comfortable — place in the current social-economic structure.

Thus, pragmatism as a philosophy and methodology of social change has become a conditioned aversive stimulus to Marxists. But that consequence may be the problem of pure philosophy analyzed and expounded in only one context; it may be what is known as "dogma." Philosophy encounters negative reaction, that is, it often becomes a conditioned aversive stimulus, when stated in a simplistic and absolute manner, with the assumption that its assertions have face and perhaps some criterion validity (i.e. "truth"), and that the one context in which it is promoted exhausts the universe of phenomena to which it can profitably be applied. Thus, for Novack (1975), pragmatism is a noxious stimulus. But other philosophies have acquired similar qualities through similar means. Behaviorism is one example (e.g. Willis & Giles, 1978), ultra-left Marxism is another (Hansen, 1973).

While each of the three philosophical approaches to social change (pragmatism, Marxism, behaviorism) has had its eminent leaders and supporters, and each has had some success in terms of immediate goal attainment, none has reached the ultimate goal which they share, which is, globally, "human liberation" (cf. Nicolaus, 1979). For Marxists, this is operationalized as an increase in control over nature and a decrease in aversive control over other people (Trotsky et al., 1973, pg. 48). For pragmatists, the goal involves means "to set free and develop the capacities of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class, or economic status" (Dewey, 1957, pg. 180). And for behaviorists, the goal is operationalized as a planned environment that provides adequate personal positive reinforcement, minimizes control via aversive means, induces people to work for the good of others (with a possible reduction in personal reinforcement), and brings remote consequences to bear on behavior in order to assure the survival, stability, and flexibility of the culture (Skinner, 1971; also see Nicolaus, 1979).

Thus, the general goal of "human liberation" is shared by all three philosophies, despite numerous real and perceived differences among them in terms of specific goals and the means by which to attain them. Given the above, I will develop the following arguments: (1) Behaviorism is compatible with many significant aspects of both pragmatism and Marxism, and can serve as the "umbrella philosophy," at least for the present; and (2) for behaviorists, a focus on the real differences between pragmatism and Marxism is empirically premature and counterproductive behavior in terms of the attainment of the mutual general goal. Finally, I will suggest that the acceptance of the above contentions generates numerous concrete, operationalized, intermediate target behavior goals to which we can actively devote our current effort.

Behaviorism: Pragmatism and Marxism

Recently, two detailed, scholarly analyses concluded that behaviorism and Marxism were complementary philosophies (Kolbe, 1978; Ulman, 1979). Commonalities include an emphasis on empiricism, environmental determinism of behavior and consciousness, materialism, and the dialectical nature of all phenomena. Indeed, at times it would be difficult to distinguish Marxist from behaviorist assertions in "blind" analyses:

It is true that for human beings experience and nature are always to be found together, since experience results from the interactions between ourselves and the external environment (Novack, 1975, pg. 88, original emphasis).

The fact that one set of events or conditions in the past regularly precedes the occurrence of another, and that this sequence is invariable, suggests some causal connection between them. But . . . mere association or concommitance is not enough . . . . The inquiring mind must go deeper into the relations of the events. Cause and effect are seen to coexist not merely in the external relation of succession, which may have an adventitious character, but in the internal connection of mutual determinism . . . . (Novack, 1975, pg. 93, original emphasis).

Thus "cause" and "effect" reciprocally determine each other as two sides of an interactive process — and the initiating and most determinative factor in their mutual dependence is labeled the cause (Novack, 1975, pg. 94).

Without disputing (that "creative intelligence" has to step in and do the job), it still does not answer the all-important question. What determines how people behave in this society and what kinds of behavior is intelligent and creative? (Novack, 1973, pg. 90).
In addition to theory, another area of compatibility between behaviorism and at least some varieties of Marxism lies in the philosophy of tactics: how do we get from here to there? While behaviorists lack a plan for implementing a Walden Two society (Kolbe, 1979; Nicolaus, 1979) at least some Marxists have developed a detailed transitional program for instituting socialism (Trotsky, 1973). The transitional program utilizes many basic behavioral tenets. Commentators and supporters stress that one must carefully assess the current level of functioning of the target population (i.e., the masses), that mobilizing workers for immediate, partial, and nonrevolutionary demands (such as better pay and working conditions) initiates the behavior changes necessary to foster appropriate attitude changes (i.e., class consciousness), that adjustment in tactics must be based on the reaction and action of the masses, and that the judgment of the ultimate success of the program must be ascertained from the outcomes of real life experience (Hansen, 1973; Novack, 1973). What we have here is a well-designed, sophisticated, empirical shaping program identifying specific, operationalized intermediate and final target behaviors. In addition, the sensitivity toward the understanding of the target population is clearly evidenced in numerous reminders that the targets are in a place far removed — behaviorally and cognitively — from the goals, and that rapid change and/or coercive or aversive interventions are likely to be counterproductive. Most operant psychologists would probably agree that this transitional program, developed while Skinner was still learning about rat behavior, is a remarkable behavioral program. This technical compatibility between behaviorism and Marxism supplements the theoretical homogeneity discussed in detail by Kolbe (1979) and Ulman (1979).

Much of the pragmatist philosophy as espoused by Dewey presents significant problems for scientists — and, therefore, behaviorists (cf. Novack, 1975, especially Ch. 6: “Dewey’s conceptions of nature and science”). However, pragmatism itself asserts that there is no logical necessity to accept the entire philosophy if only parts of it are useful. In particular, two aspects of the pragmatic approach appear compatible with behaviorism. The first involves the influence of subjectivity in science. While Dewey (1960) seemingly overemphasized the subjective aspects and failed to accord an appropriate importance to the objective facets, he seems to have anticipated the current assertions of contemporary philosophers of science such as Kuhn (1962) and Mahoney (1976). Dewey (1960) asserted that scientific principles were products of the scientist to be used by the scientist for specific purposes, usually ones designed to increase the control over events and the potential to change them. However, no eternal, absolute truths are discovered by scientists. Kuhn (1962) and Mahoney (1976) argue that scientific data, and the theories and “facts” they support, are determined only partially by the stimuli contained in independent and dependent variables. On a micro-level, the Rosenthal (1966) effect is well known and replicated. On a macro-level, the sociopolitical (economic) determinants of “facts” are also well demonstrated; two prominent examples would be Arthur Jensen’s (1969) conclusions regarding the “Negro I.Q. Deficit” (cf. R. G. Jensen, 1979; Kamin, 1974) and Wilson’s (1975) formulation of sociobiology (cf. Stevens, 1978). Szasz (1960; 1970; 1973) describes how witchcraft, drug addiction, and mental illness were all scientific “facts” discovered and institutionalized to maintain political control. Homosexuality also falls into this category (Halleck, 1970; Szasz, 1979).

Political determinants then lead to errors in logic, such as reification of metaphorical concepts and circular reasoning, which prevail until new theorists, also motivated by political or subjective stimuli, first seek new conceptual frameworks and then new data to support their position. Scientific revolutions occur therefore not when sufficient data supports a new position or theory, but when enough new, usually young, people support a new position or theory (Kuhn, 1962).

Behaviorists must adhere to this philosophical position because the bedrock of behaviorism, the so-called “laws of learning,” can never be proven to be “true.” Quite to the contrary, the numerous disconfirming experiences necessitates either the uncomfortable adoption of extensions and clarifiers or the search for a new theory (e.g., Bandura’s [1977] self-efficacy theory of behavior change). However, the basic “laws of learning” are tremendously useful, whether or not they are true in an eternal sense. Similarly, systematic desensitization is a valid intervention despite the majority of the current “facts” which suggest its “true” basis is not counterconditioning, extinction, or reciprocal inhibition (cf. Kazdin & Wilcoxon, 1976). The Marxist emphasis on absolute truths (within dialectical materialism) may also profit from this relativistic perspective; Broyer (1976) asserts that its central concepts (e.g., class struggle) are generic symbols and abstractions which have been reified into absolutes. It may also be noted here that some social scientists assert that the very nature of social data precludes a social science, since the data impacts on the social arena itself, changing it, and therefore making the data historical (Gergen, 1973). One can argue that socialist successes in unionization in the U.S. have changed the “facts” deduced about worker opposition and militancy.

Instrumentalism is the second aspect of pragmatism that is congruent with behaviorism. Instrumentalism is a methodology, one that Novack (1975) justifiably criticizes as lacking consistency and basic principles. However, there is another, much more helpful (pragmatic?) manner in which instrumentalism can be utilized: it asserts that no intervention whether planned or improvised is on a priori theoretical grounds either necessary or unacceptable. Immediate utility is the major evaluative criterion. This is important to behaviorists because at times favored techniques will be inappropriate, necessitating immediate, innovative substitution. Behaviorists also now realize that previously unacceptable interventions can be appropriately adapted to behavioral analysis (e.g., Rorschach and TAT used as samples of cognitive and perceptual behavior, rather than as the traditional signs of underlying unconscious processes, cf. Goffried, 1979). The atheoretical instrumental philosophy, judiciously incorporated within a behavioral framework, provides the necessary flexibility to meet and at least temporarily resolve the inevitable, unforeseen obstacles to change. In addition, the pragmatist’s emphasis on gradual change tactics, and restriction of violent (aversive) techniques to very few situations is congruent with the behaviorist’s emphasis on shaping, positive reinforcement, and the limited effectiveness of coercive change strategies.

**Comments to Pragmatic Behaviorists and Marxist Behaviorists**

The differences between the social change philosophies of pragmatism and Marxism are profound, as Novack (1975) demonstrated. However, from our perspective as behaviorists, these very real differences may be of only modest importance at this point in time. Perhaps ten or twenty years from now, if we are lucky, significant social advances will have been made which will render the differences critical. But a behavioral analysis suggests that the current situation can be responded to most effectively by the emission of cooperative, rather than competitive and antagonistic, behavior.

Neither pragmatism nor Marxism have attained their goals in this country. Supporters of both positions can explain this easily within their basic theoretical-philosophical framework,
but perhaps it is prudent for empiricists to acknowledge that, despite our strongly conditioned values and biases, we really do not know how to actualize the general mutual goal ("human liberation") in the context of the real world.

Clearly, neither the "creative, inventive, and cooperative intelligence" advocated by Dewey (1939) nor the "love and good will" of Broyer (1976) have solved our basic social-economic inequities. While the basic tenets of pragmatism force the conclusion that virtually any liberal reform is a partial success, an objective assessment can legitimately conclude that such changes may (1) serve to bolster a corrupt, crumbling system (capitalism—Novack, 1975); (2) create unworkable bureaucracies that hurt the oppressed as much as helping them (e.g. welfare); and (3) aid the middle-class reformers themselves by providing them with social service and government jobs designed to help the oppressed people while simultaneously insulating them from the oppressed in the basic interactions of daily living (Gilder, 1979).

On the other hand, despite some remarkably accurate analyses and predictions, Marxism has encountered numerous empirical setbacks. For example:

Unlike Hegel's 'epochs of the spirit', Marx's 'historical stages' lend themselves to empirical study; but it is just this which has thrown the entire construction into disarray, for the close of bourgeois epoch has not yielded the anticipated results. Post-bourgeois industrial society, whether capitalist or socialist, does not accord with the expectations current in the nineteenth century. If no new ruling class is visible which could take the place of the aristocracy or bourgeoisie, there is all the more stratification of a type unappealing to liberals and socialists alike. Moreover, the working class, so far from generating a spontaneous drive towards socialist democracy, has shown an alarming tendency to acquiesce in patterns of socio-political domination which promise to guarantee economic advance and full employment at the cost of freedom. The least one can say is that the Marxian perspective of a socialist transformation propelled by labour's collective drive towards emancipation seems rather less plausible that (sic) it did a century ago (Lichtheim, 1973, pg. 388).

Parenthetically, both the problem of social stratification and of labor's docile, acquiescent behavior in the U.S. might be profitably analyzed from Skinner's (1971) perspective of control: in the last hundred years the control of workers and the oppressed has shifted from obvious aversive means to those based on thin schedules of intermittent positive reinforcement. Such a contingency arrangement would be expected to stimulate very little countercontrol behavior.

The October Revolution provides another example of erroneous Marxist predictions. While there is no question but that the Bolsheviks provided a jewel in the crown of Marxism, "the 'transitional epoch'... has endured much longer than the Bolsheviks in 1921 had any reason to expect. The main cause of this was the unforeseen rise of Stalinism and the counter-revolutionary role it has played (which) has given rise to extraordinary complications" (Hansen, 1973, pg. 27). A side issue can be noted here. Despite an analysis as to the causes of the bureaucratic, authoritarian exercise of power in the Soviet Union, and the absence of those conditions in the United States which leads to the conclusion that a democratic, socialist America is possible (Novack, 1971), the problem remains central to revolutionary movements (Calvert, 1979). Many intellectuals of diverse political persuasions view the socialist concentration of power and economic resources as producing at least significant, if not insurmountable, obstacles to "social democracy" (cf. "Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy: A Symposium", in Commentary, April, 1978).

Many Marxists argue that the theory of permanent revolution, based in large part on the law of uneven and combined development, explains many of the failures to establish democratic socialism in this century—the Soviet Union representing the prime example (Novack, 1971; 1972). While Marx and Engels (erroneously) expected the socialist revolutions to occur first in the highly productive, industrialized countries, due to the presence of an organized, highly skilled labor force, it has been individual underdeveloped, backward countries—those in which capitalism is weakest—that have provided the initial socialist experiences (Novack, 1971). This has almost inevitably precluded the formation of truly equal, classless, democratic societies. The isolated backward country is caught in "the vise of imperialist encirclement" (Novack 1972, pg. 233). It is cut off from world markets, forced to produce low cost products for export while importing expensive goods from industrialized nations, must rely on an unorganized peasantry instead of a proletariat, and is impelled to defend itself against internal and external counterrevolution. In the struggle to survive, the backward socialist state must initiate massive modernization and defense programs utilizing its own inadequate resources, resulting in bureaucratization, the return to power of the privileged elite, and the elimination of democratic socialism (cf. Novack, 1971; 1972). According to Novack the key to avoiding this lies in an international orientation:

Any national state, no matter how great its resources, is too narrow a framework for the building of a harmonious socialist society that will be in all decisive respects superior to and stronger than the most advanced capitalist countries. The only way out of its internal difficulties and external dilemmas will be found in the international arena. This is the principle lesson to be derived from the economic and political experiences of the Soviet Union during its fifty years...The workers in the highly industrialized countries have an indispensable role to play... (Novack, 1972, pg. 141).

This may be true, but then as behaviorists we are faced with a familiar empirical problem. Behavioral interventions with individuals and small systems require a behavioral analysis that assesses the environmental limits to potential behavior change (e.g. Kanfer & Salslow, 1969). Goals must be formulated which are congruent with those limitations, even if they are not the theoretical ideal. For example, the goal for a person described as a "chronic schizophrenic" who lacks personal, social, and financial resources may have to be "marginal but adaptive functioning" rather than the full range of "normal adaptive functioning." Similarly, if every isolated socialist country cannot establish or maintain "true" socialism due to environmental forces beyond its control, then only world-wide revolution is the answer. The behavioral question then becomes: is such a revolution a realistic goal, given the complexity of the environment involved. The answer would appear to be a pessimistic one.

Recently, the social and political unrest in the 1960's led to Marxist formulations of revolutionary strategies for Black liberation and revolutionary youth (both reprinted in Trotsky, 1973). Analyses of these movements, as well as of automation, inflation, public squallor, foreign competition, and wage differentials led one Marxist scholar (Mandel, 1969) to predict:...the political radicalization of the working class, and therewith socialism, will become a practical proposition in the United States within the next 10 or 15
years, under the combined impact of all these forces which have been examined here. After the black workers, the youth workers, the students, the technicians, and the public employees, the mass of American workers will put the struggle for socialism on the immediate agenda in the United States. The road to revolution will then be open.

This prediction clearly has not been fulfilled in the ten years since it was written.

Finally, the strong Marxist implication that violent revolution will be the necessary and justified means through which capitalism will yield to socialism (Trotsky, 1973; Trotsky, et al., 1973) cannot be an inevitable truth, applicable in all contexts. Nyerre's election in Tanganyika and Allende's election in Chile (even though tragically and perhaps predictably unsuccessful—see Evan, 1974) disconfirm that hypothesis. And, though a long way from the locus of real control, the election of avowed socialists to the Detroit City Council and to judge in the Detroit criminal court system (cf. Coeckel, 1979) is at the very least provocative.

If neither philosophy has successfully attained its goals, and indeed, if both have encountered unpredicted difficulties, it may be premature to assert the superiority of one or the other. Since both share the same general goal, perhaps the exact topography of the behavior leading to the goal can remain unspecified at the present time. To stretch an analogy somewhat, this is common behavioral practice. When the goal of behavioral intervention is, say, assertive or non-phobic approach behavior, few behaviorists would attempt to specify the exact verbal and nonverbal components of the response until at least some significant general behavior change has occurred. Thus, we teach a person how to say "no" first, and then refine the response so that it is congruent with the person's "style" and the specific situations he or she must deal with.

If the empirical arguments are not sufficient to convince pragmatic and Marxist behaviorists that cooperation is the indicated strategy, an additional reason may be found in their respective methodologies. Pragmatists, being opportunists, will utilize and support whatever promises to result in immediate, positive consequences. Thus, there is no reason why they cannot "use" Marxists today, as they have in the past (Novack, 1975) to further social reform.

Marxists, particularly those who advocate the gradual shaping of revolutionary behavior and attitudes, must approach liberals and pragmatists at their current level of functioning. While these intellectuals are usually seen as armchair theoreticians beholden (whether they realize it or not) to the status quo (Wald, 1974), there is no a priori reason to exclude this group from others regarded as potential allies. Other groups, such as farmers and the urban petty bourgeoisie, are seen as future allies of the working class (Hansen, 1973). A socialist revolution may require behavior and attitude changes among all non-ruling class elements—workers, farmers, urban petty bourgeoisie, and intellectuals.

Summary

The contention has been advanced in this paper, and others, that behaviorism has much to offer towards progressive and revolutionary social change. But the implications of this contention go well beyond the content of philosophy and methodology. As behaviorists, we must act as behaviorists first and Marxists or pragmatists only secondarily—at least at this juncture in time. Such a position, which apparently seeks to be "everything to everyone" may in the end be "nothing to anyone"—but I do not believe that that must inevitably be the result. For myself, at least, it is a workable model for the present time. While my own subjective acquisition, analysis, and interpretation of the currently available objective facts and scientific principles suggests a very strong bias toward the Marxist position, as a behaviorist I can have little confidence that such a bias is anything more than that—namely, a bias. More important than our personal pragmatist or Marxist biases are the behavior and attitude changes that we as behaviorists can attempt to engineer—indeed, independent of dogmatic ideology.

Shaping "Appropriate" Social Activist Behavior Among Intellectuals

The preceding discussion essentially advocates the construction of a broad base of social activists across ideological preferences. Two groups of "intellectuals" seem to be reasonable targets for behavioral intervention designed to shape more appropriate activist behavior. First, we must reach out to potential allies outside our discipline by structuring new learning experiences for them with the currently aversive stimulus of "behaviorism." Second, we must connect with behaviorists not presently identified as social activists by reinforcing their current "appropriate" behavior, and attempting to prompt and gradually shape additional activist behavior. As behaviorists, we must recognize that our interventions must emphasize the rearrangement of the environment rather than verbal persuasion in order to efficiently and effectively change behaviors and attitudes. Concrete suggestions are presented below.

Target behavior: emission of accurate verbalizations by nonbehavioral social activists

Ritzer (1975) noted that while behaviorism is one of the paradigms in sociology, it is also most misunderstood and the one many sociologists would deny adherence to. Thus, while Marxists are certainly not unique in this regard, they provide several outstanding examples of an utter lack of comprehension regarding contemporary behavioral theory. The need for this class of target behavior has been demonstrated by Ullman's (1979) analysis and critique of Mishler (1976). The errors and dogmatic biases, effectively attacked by Ullman, are similar to the ones articulated by Taylor, Walton, & Young (1973) in their very influential book advocating a Marxist orientation toward understanding the sociological subfield of criminology. It is readily apparent that, like Mishler, Taylor et al. lack even a minimal understanding of what contemporary behaviorism encompasses. Several examples will suffice.

(1) Taylor et al. include behaviorism within positivism, and then conclude the former shares "the consensus world view" of the latter (pg. 26-28; 31). This, of course, is simply false (cf. Bandura, 1969, pp. 3-9, 99; 1975; Kanfer & Phillips, 1970, pp. 537-539; Krasner, 1969). Ethical questions arising from potential conflicts of interest are not only recognized, but strongly emphasized in the theory. The theory itself demands considering conflicts of interest and ethics by its very nature—for its positivism nothing absolute—including deviacy, psychopathology, or mental illness, which are considered to be unhelpful, confusing, hypothetical constructs. Instead, all behavior is considered to be "normal" because all behavior is learned according to common principles; hence it is societal conflicts and the social labeling process which define certain behaviors as deviant (Ullman & Krasner, 1979). Thus, it is obvious that "multiple realities"—specifically society's, the intervenor's, and the particular individual's—are intricately involved in every application of behaviorism. The absence in any particular instance of such considerations is due to the intervenor and not to the theoretical requirements, as Taylor et al. assert (1973, pg. 26-28). Many of Ullman's (1979) arguments under the heading "practical reasonableness vs. computational rationality" also refute this erroneous belief.

(2) Taylor et al. believe that a behavioral interpretation of
events necessarily requires an automatic, noncognitive response to a stimulus (pg. 49-50). They ignore all conceptions of choice except by free will, including behaviorism's concept of nonautomatic, though determined, selection among response alternatives.

(3) Taylor et al. assert that behaviorists believe punishment is inappropriate because the person, in lacking control over his behavior, bears no responsibility for it. They confuse metaphysical responsibility for behavior with accountability for behavior. More seriously, they ignore the fact that the uses and limits of "punishment" have been determined empirically. In fact, punishment is occasionally very appropriate, especially when applied in conjunction with other techniques; the general inappropriateness of its application as the sole intervention is due to its empirically demonstrated ineffectiveness (Bandura, 1969). Further, they proclaim that the "emphasis of punishment is the reason behaviorists feel "a sense of rationality and humanitarianism" (pg. 30-31). There are, obviously, more charitable interpretations regarding the determinants of those private responses of behaviorists.

(4) Like Mishler, Taylor et al. believe behaviorism omits notions of human purpose and meaning, as well as choice (pg. 60-61). Skinner (1953; 1974) has addressed these issues, and whether or not his analysis is correct, the concepts are definitely not "omitted."

(5) Taylor et al. attack Burgess & Akers' (1966) operant extension of differential association theory for describing the "non social" learning of criminal behavior (pg. 130-131), calling it "a travesty" (pg. 132). Yet a theory more palatable to them is praised for stressing "motives existing in the wider culture independently of direct intimate association. That is, direct social and symbolic support for deviance need not necessarily exist before deviant action is undertaken" (pg. 129-130). Here they get entangled in their own semantics and ideology. The "wider culture" they allude to can teach many behaviors and attitudes through various non-social interpersonal means (cf. Bandura, 1979; Skinner, 1953). In insisting that learning to steal must be social since the goods are socially defined as desirable, Taylor et al. completely misinterpret Burgess & Akers' discussion of learning in a "non-social" situation (i.e. without direct interpersonal contact). Perhaps most distressing, Taylor et al. conclude this discussion by expressing their shock and dismay at the publication of such a "reactionary" article in an otherwise progressive and, one may presume, ideologically "correct" journal.

(6) Taylor et al. wearyly repeat the straw man criticism that the concept of reinforcement is circular (pg. 132-133), despite Burgess & Akers' clear and succinct discussion differentiating the empirical description and classification of events in terms of their effects from the circularity inherent in utilizing the description as an explanation for the observed effects.

(7) When discussing the evolution of values, Taylor et al. assume that behaviorism explains value "in terms of automatisms propelled through their lives like Skinnerian rats" (pg. 133).

Of course, Skinner (e.g. 1971), as well as others (more recently, Kolbe, 1979), have addressed the development of values in considerable detail.

Other prominent sociologists of deviant behavior emit similar erroneous comments. Davis (1975) believes behaviorism excludes institutional determinants of deviance, while Mankoff (1971) alludes to the passivity inherent in behavioral theory. It is clear that there is an urgent need to communicate accurate behavioral concepts to these potential allies in the struggle to effect real change. Behaviorally, this implies a need to teach the basic components of the appropriate response, the necessity of prompting the behavior, and, of course, then reinforcing reasonable approximations. Simply presenting the environmental stimuli among ourselves will not change their behavior! Concrete interventions designed to teach the target behavior might include the following:

(1) Behaviorists for Social Action (BFSA) Communication Committee: This group can develop a "reprint file" of BFSA Journal and other selected articles which could be sent to various social scientists to provide them with accurate behavioral theory. Examples of appropriate articles include Kolbe (1978; 1979), Ulman (1979), Calvert (1979) and Holland (1978). The general BFSA membership and the Communication Committee can suggest individuals who might benefit from information from us. The committee could also request that certain scholars active in relevant areas automatically send their new material to us to help us monitor the various fields to at least some small degree. This suggestion essentially extends the "feedback" section initiated in the BFSA Journal 1979, 2. 22.

(2) BFSA Interdisciplinary Convention Committee: The BFSA paper and symposium activity at ABA conventions can be expanded to include the invited participation of nonbehavioral social scientists' structured in such a way so as to insure maximum reinforcement as the consequence of their participation.

(3) Individuals in BFSA can attempt to present relevant papers at nonbehavioral, nonpsychological conventions, and/or submit their manuscripts to journals in other disciplines (e.g. Rakos, Benson, & Rakos, 1977). This behavior may result in less immediate, tangible reinforcement, and have to be sustained by the reinforcement inherent in behaving in congruence with "personal values." Alternatively, BFSA could provide additional reinforcement if only through public recognition for such behaviors, (e.g., in a special section of the BFSA Journal).

(4) Political Education Committee: The behavior of many members of political parties, particularly the relatively small ones on the left, can be construed as the behavior of political scientists, not just of politicians. These people need to learn about behaviorism too. Educational links need to be established with groups such as the Socialist Workers Party, the Community Party, New American Movement, Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, Citizens Party, other Socialist groups (e.g. DARE, the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy), unions, and "liberal democrats." We might, for example, send them selected articles and invite them to participate in seminars, colloquies, and workshops.

(5) All of our behavior emitted in an attempt to attain the above goals, or similar ones, must avoid producing the aversive, conditioned, verbal stimuli associated with behaviorism or avoidance and aggressive behavior will be maintained in response. Behaviorism must become a new SD.

Target Behavior: Shaping appropriate behavior of behaviorists.

To be maximally effective, we must encourage our colleagues' efforts that are compatible with our general goal that of social activism aimed at promoting 'human liberation. Several suggestions designed to facilitate this goal follow:

(1) We must recognize — reinforce — the legitimate contributions of our colleagues; we are quick to criticize them when we disagree (e.g. Schwade, 1979). Either individually or via a committee structure, BFSA could monitor the major
psychology and behavioral journals for instances when appropriate behavior is emitted so as to directly reinforce it or at least recognize it in our own work. Thus, for example, Sanderson's (1979) article discussing the inherently regressive nature of the medical model concept of "homosexuality" might have avoided the serious omission of Davison's (1976; 1978) work. He has been advancing the same argument eloquently and forcefully for a number of years now. Besides missing the opportunity to recognize and reinforce appropriate behavior, Davison has so far been excluded from contributing or participating with us. Another example of efforts meriting our attention involve Bandura's (1975; 1978) work. He has stated that:

one issue (concerns) the relative attention devoted to changing individuals or to altering social conditions that have widespread detrimental effects. If psychologists are to have a significant impact on common problems of life, they must apply their corrective measures to detrimental social practices. Practitioners . . . are reinforced more powerfully for using their knowledge and skills in the service of existing systems than for changing them. Idealistic and socially oriented efforts are difficult to sustain under uncertain and meager reinforcement supports." (1975, p. 0 18-19). We must augment these "uncertain and meager" positive consequences!

(2) The behavior emitted in the BFSA Journal must be a model for appropriate behavior. For example, the Journal should prompt and model nonsexist language. Unfortunately, this behavior is not consistently emitted (e.g. Culvert, 1979, p.p; 26; Kolbe, 1979, p. 32).

(3) BFSA Intradisciplinary Committee: This committee's behavior would parallel the Interdisciplinary Committee's work but be focused on behaviorists not participating in BFSA.

(4) Paralleling suggestion number 3 in the preceding section, individuals can submit "social activism" papers to the established behavioral journals and conventions. Holland (1978) provides us with a courageous model! BFSA could provide additional reinforcement for such behavior by recognizing it publically.

(5) Our behavior emitted in the attempt to attain these goals, or similar ones, must avoid producing the aversive, conditioned, verbal stimuli associated with dogmatic political ideology - or we can predict that avoidance and aggressive responding will continue. Marxism and pragmatism must be dealt with in such a manner so that they acquire different meanings, i.e. become different 5!! Then, behavior and attitude changes become more probable.

Summary:
The above target behaviors, and suggested interventions, are obviously not exhaustive nor fully developed. But they can constitute a start. Wald (1974) has noted that

"Intellecutals are distinguished by an over - riding concern with theory and creative ideas, which extend beyond their professional or occupational pursuits . . . but . . . it is not sufficient for intellectuals to stand on the sidelines proclaiming support for revolutionary goals, ideals, or struggles in the abstract; preaching vague generalities (against war, fascism, etc.) without voicing a program of alternative action can lead directly down the treacherous path of the fellow - traveler . . . " (p. 31)

This paper, by offering concrete suggestions deduced from a theoretical and philosophical integration, may hopefully help stimulate a necessary "program of alternative action" for the intellectuals in BFSA. I hope for this in recognition of and despite the divergent views among us. Marin (1979), writing about the activism of some members of the Catholic Church in promoting land reform in Equador by encouraging the peasants to physically occupy the land, noted the limitations of orthodox church doctrine. His thoughts may be relevant to us:

"Here, where the consequences of action become clear, doubt must assert itself — as a sign that conscience is still alive. Dogmatism gives way to something more essential: the consciousness of fallibility that ought to mark all political life ... The sisters ... have entered a complex nation's - land of competing values, in which they stand simultaneously near the furthest edge of conscience and at the heart of moral life ... What is (necessary) is the notion that one may be wrong, that one's truth is only partial, and that it must be judged by how it affects others ... It is where absolute belief ceases, dogma fades, and doubt begins . . . that a true community of equals comes alive." (Pg. 15, original emphasis)

Notes
1. The author wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Janice R. Cline in stimulating discussion and ideas in the course of preparation of this manuscript.

2. Schwartz, Schuldenfrei, & Lacey (1978) advance a similar argument concerning social science data:

We have suggested, in discussing industrial capitalism, scientific management and the overjustification effect, that the analysis of behavior changes the world. It does not do so only conceptually . . . It changes the world by changing the very phenomena which need to be understood . . . Factory behavior can be understood in terms of operant principles because operant principles made factory behavior what it is . . . What we must realize is that operant analysis is not the discovery of "natural laws," but the creation of laws which will be "natural" only as long as operant principles are applied to social institutions . . . p. 253

3. While Ritzer (1975) believes behaviorism is likely to gain significant prominence in sociology in the future, we can note only a few efforts in that direction (e.g. Burgess & Bushell, 1969; Kunkel, 1970).

References


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"The individual consciousness not only cannot be used to explain anything, but, on the contrary, is itself in need of explanation from the vantage of the social, ideological medium."