

COGNITION CREATIVITY AND BEHAVIOR

- “Old behaviors tend to come together in new situations to produce new and interesting behaviors. The emergence of new behavior in such situations is what leads many people to speak of ‘cognition’ or ‘creativity.’ By offering the environmental histories that produce such behavior, Epstein and Skinner offer a more objective account.”

I. SELF AWARENESS

- A. Since the 1950s psychologists have used a child’s behavior towards its own reflection as a measure of the self-concept. In the 1960s the rouge test of self-concept was devised in which some rouge is smeared on the young child’s nose and then the child is encourage to look in the mirror. If the child touches the rouge spot he/she is said to have “awareness” of itself and possess a “self-concept.”
- B. How did Epstein & Skinner define a child’s behavior when he/she is in front of the mirror? How did they go about demonstrating that their explanation can explain the behavior?
 - Example: Pigeon with a blue dot place under a big and then put in front of a mirror.

II. INSIGHT

- A. Wolfgang Köhler (1917): Insightful problem solving behavior in chimpanzees.
- B. What did Epstein & Skinner attribute such “insightful” problem solving behavior to? How did they go about demonstrating that their explanation can explain the behavior?
 - Example: Pigeon solving the box-and-banana problem.

- Skinner: “What we’ve done in the Columban Simulation Project is to show that by exploiting what we know about the contingencies of reinforcement, we can produce extremely complex behavior which would ordinarily be attributed to higher mental processes of one sort or another.

