

## Re: Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.

---

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.bio.evolution/2005-06/msg00284.html>

---

- *From:* "Perplexed in Peoria" <[jimmenegay@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:jimmenegay@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 15 Jun 2005 13:55:29 -0400 (EDT)
- 

"Glen M. Sizemore" <[gmsizemore2@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:gmsizemore2@xxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in message [news:d8n48e\\$18mp\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:d8n48e$18mp$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)  
> The Skinnerian (i.e., correct) view would be that singing and verbal  
> behavior ("language" sort of) arose at the same time. Indeed, both would be  
> verbal behavior by the Skinnerian definition. Simply put, all that is  
> necessary is for the vocal musculature to come under control of operant  
> contingencies. No doubt operant conditioning mechanisms were already highly  
> advanced (i.e., we were already "smart") when the necessary mutation made  
> the vocal musculature "conditionable."

How smart do you mean? I confess that I am not particularly familiar with Skinnerian jargon and theory, but it seems to me that a wide variety of organisms have conditionable vocal musculature – songbirds, cetaceans, wolves (who can learn to bark), and a host of others which are capable of learning vocalization patterns. I don't know why you would think that the condition in humans is less primitive than our "smartness". Admittedly, until we were smart, we probably didn't have much to say. And, once we did have things to say, there was probably some selection pressure to improve the "conditionability" so that we could say it more clearly. But you seem to be suggesting something different.

- 
- *Follow-Ups:*
    - ◆ ***Re: Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.***  
◇ *From:* Glen M. Sizemore
  - *References:*
    - ◆ ***Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.***  
◇ *From:* Anthony Cerrato
    - ◆ ***Re: Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.***  
◇ *From:* Glen M. Sizemore
  - Prev by Date: ***Re: Felsenstein and reproductive excess***
  - Next by Date: ***Re: There was never a moment in time when***

Re: Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.

- Previous by thread: ***Re: Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.***
- Next by thread: ***Re: Singing as prerequisite (or aid) to language.***
- Index(es):
  - ◆ ***Date***
  - ◆ ***Thread***