

Re: Challenge to the behaviourists #2

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In article <ci51ue\$ill\$1@usenet.cso.niu.edu>, Neil W Rickert
<rickert+nn@cs.niu.edu> writes

>*The Sophist* <sophist@brown.edu> writes:

>>Neil W Rickert wrote:

>

>>> *Why do people play chess? If we could predict human behavior, we
>>> would know the outcome before the game begins.*

>

>>> *Why do we hold elections? If we could predict human behavior, we
>>> would know the election outcome before the vote.*

>

>>> *Why do we hold trials (legal proceedings)? If we could predict human
>>> behavior, we would know the verdict before the trial started.*

>

>>*Why do physicists conduct experiments?*

>

>*For many reasons. Most commonly, to better understand what they are
>studying.*

>

>> *If we could predict the behavior*

>>*of inanimate physical things, we'd know the outcome of the experiment
>>before it happened.*

>

>*They usually don't do those kinds of experiments (where you can already
>predict the answer).*

>

>> *That human behavior displays the kind of*

>>*unpredictability by us which you cite here proves nothing at all.*

>

>*It was intended to challenge Allan's assertions about our ability to
>predict. If the challenge leads to suitable clarifications and
>qualifications, then it has done its job. Whether or not it proves
>anything is beside the point.*

>

>

You should just face the fact that you don't understand how and why
prediction and control are fundamental to the empirical method and so
its inevitable that you don't understand how the terms are actually used

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in science either. Why do you presume you have skills when a quick appraisal of your own history should suffice to inform you that you don't? I know you guys all believe you have freedom of speech and thought, but don't you think you're all taking "creativity" a bit too far?

--

David Longley