In Response

The Future of Radical Behaviorism: Brief Comments on Glenn's Editorial and Drash's "On Terms"

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Radical behaviorism, with its emphasis on the scientific study of *behavior*, is at a critical point. Although applications to new areas have continually expanded, behaviorism is generally not considered by nonbehaviorists (e.g., Baars, 1986) to be a viable approach. What to do about this state of affairs has not been agreed upon. I would like to briefly review two courses of action recently recommended (Drash, 1988; Glenn, 1988) and then suggest yet another avenue.

Drash proposed changing the name "radical behaviorism" to "scientific behaviorism" as "one step" (p. 88) in making radical behaviorism more attractive to outsiders. The benefits listed included elimination of the negative connotations of the word "radical"; replacement of the negative connotations with positive ones associated with the word "scientific"; "the new term is descriptive in that *scientific behaviorism* is closely aligned with the philosophy of the natural sciences"; "nothing is lost historically, since the term has evolved both in meaning and usage since it was originally introduced in 1921"; and "the change allows us to designate Skinner as the father of *scientific behaviorism*" (p. 88).

Although Drash stated clearly that such a renaming would be only one of many steps in the "right direction" (p. 88) and his positive intent of greater acceptance is understandable, this course of action is ill-advised for several reasons: (1) This

intervention is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for the acceptance of radical behaviorism. Behaviorists perhaps need to examine more substantive philosophical, theoretical, and methodological issues that address *why* the term *radical behaviorism* has negative connotations in the first place rather than superficially and cosmetically changing the name. Relabeling radical behaviorism may detract from tackling these more substantive issues. (2) The name change would be redundant since behaviorism is scientific and the renaming does not improve communicative efficiency; as Drash stated, "whenever behaviorists use the term *scientific behaviorism* it [will] be understood that the term is operationally equivalent to *radical behaviorism*" (p. 88). (3) Such an action implies that other types of theories are not scientific and this may lead to even further alienation. (4) The relabeling may be perceived by others as a deceitful, manipulative act on the part of radical behaviorists. (5) The renaming does not benefit a clientele group (e.g., when "idiot" was replaced with "mentally retarded"). And (6) there is more than enough confusion over what constitutes radical behaviorism.

A second solution may be derived from a recent one-page editorial by Glenn (1988), who appeared to have taken a more substantive approach of *integrating* behaviorism with other related and compatible fields. She suggested that behaviorists join other social and biological scientists having similar positions in a "shared effort," examining the "family tree" and locating behaviorism's "closest relatives," and not engaging in activities that intellectually isolate behaviorists from related fields.

The author would like to recognize the reviewers for their critical suggestions as well as Arthur W. Staats for his comments on previous manuscripts. Reprints may be obtained from the author, Department of Psychology, 2430 Campus Road, Gartley Hall, Honolulu, HI 96822.

A third alternative to consider is that of paradigmatic behaviorism. Through its development over the past 30 years, paradigmatic behaviorism has attempted to address what it has considered the strengths and weaknesses of radical behaviorism. In this effort, paradigmatic behaviorism has built upon and extended radical behaviorism's tradition and has dealt with, in an integrative and unifying manner, such central issues as the relationship between classical and instrumental conditioning; the role of emotions in learning; the properties of implicit events; the acquisition, maintenance, and functions of language, including its theoretical application to psychotherapy; personality as basic behavioral repertoires; complex social interactionism; the nature versus nurture of behavior; and so on. Further, paradigmatic behaviorism has done this in a manner which opens many new directions of research, provides a means of influencing traditional psychology more extensively, and has accomplished this through a philosophical-theoretical framework that is non-eclectic and completely behavioristic in content and methodology. In this process, paradigmatic behaviorism has incorporated other fields of study (e.g., personality, motivation, language, cognitive, social, clinical/abnormal, developmental, educational, psychometrics, and others—see Staats, 1963, 1975) in psychology by elaborating its strictly behavioristic principles.

A major thesis of this brief article is that the behavioral field provides a rich foundation in theory, method, and findings. When this body of knowledge is joined with the philosophy, theory, methodology, findings, and projections of paradigmatic behaviorism, there is the basis for a behavioral paradigm that is cohesive, rich, and heuristic, that will extend radical behaviorism's appeal and influence on various fronts.

Renaming of radical behaviorism (Drash, 1988) constitutes a strategy that does not address the substantive issues that might be scrutinized. As noted by Staats (1986), "In my opinion, what is lacking is an agenda, and a framework

for solving the problems that have not yet been confronted" (p. 236). Glenn (1988) urged inclusion of disciplines external to psychology. Staats' view included the integration and unification of the valuable elements of both (1) the disciplines external to psychology and (2) the subareas within psychology. In addition, unification is required not only with regard to theory, but also with respect to the multitude of findings as well as the methodological differences that radical behaviorists have had with other disciplines (Minke, 1986; Staats, 1983). According to Minke (1987), "It is my firm belief that if behaviorism is ever to succeed in its goal of serving as a unifying theory for psychology, or even to survive as a mainstream conceptual approach, it is essential that all behaviorists broaden their theoretical and methodological horizons" (p. 335). Staats (e.g., 1983, 1987) has explicated what he calls *unified positivism*, a new philosophy of science for the pre-unified disciplines that addresses these fundamental issues.

As the common term "behaviorism" in radical behaviorism and paradigmatic behaviorism implies, there is much similarity between the two approaches. I believe that as radical behaviorism expands its theoretical-empirical base as it has in the recent past, its commonalities with paradigmatic behaviorism will inevitably become much more apparent. Rapid progress would occur if this were done systematically and without duplicating formulations already elaborated on by paradigmatic behaviorism. My observations suggest that paradigmatic behaviorism's strengths combined with radical behaviorism's research resources would yield a renewed behavioral interest and emphasis. As both approaches evolve, a more mutually beneficial working relationship may develop where the strengths of each are collectively utilized rather than spent not as productively in isolation.

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