Behavior and Philosophy, *26*, 29-43 (1998). © 1998 Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies

SARTRE, SKINNER, AND THE COMPATIBILIST FREEDOM TO BE AUTHENTICALLY

Martin E. Morf
University of Windsor

ABSTRACT: An exploration of where a comparison of Sartre and Skinner takes us in attempts to better understand the relationship between the two solitudes or disciplines of psychology: humanistic and scientific psychology. From the splitter's perspective, the Sartrean world appears as the particularly human world of choice; the Skinnerian world as the physical world ruled by necessity. From the lumper's perspective, there appear a number of frequently overlooked similarities between Sartre and Skinner. Taken individually, these similarities are admittedly superficial; but considered collectively they suggest that it is possible to deconstruct the dichotomy of Sartre and Skinner and of the two psychologies.

Why Sartre? Why Skinner?

Psychology's Two Constructions of Freedom

Some construe freedom as free will, others as something associated with the fortunate situation in which people can do what they really want to do. The two constructions split psychology into its two most fundamentally opposed camps on both the level of praxis and of theory (Williams, 1992). In the dichotomizing spirit of Cronbach (1957), one can think of these camps as the two disciplines of psychology. The first discipline is that of phenomenology-based psychology, recognizing and attributing a vital role to raw, undistorted, subjective human experience, including the experience of freedom in the sense of "free will" and "free choice." The second discipline is that of scientific psychology whose ontology is determinist. Since the construct *freedom* plays very different roles in humanistic and scientific psychology, a useful step in exploring the relationship between the two may be a comparison of the two most widely known and radical interpretations of freedom, those of Jean-Paul Sartre and B. F. Skinner.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Comments by Mike Arons, Robert C. Pinto, and Andrew A. Sappington on earlier versions of this article are gratefully acknowledged. Please address all correspondence to Martin E. Morf, Department of Psychology, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada N9B 3P4. Email: morf@uwindsor.ca.

Between the two extremes of absolute freedom and absolute determinism is the soft determinist or compatibilist stance that freedom is compatible with determinism. Some soft determinists think of compatibilist freedom as the Humean freedom experienced when circumstances permit us to do what we want to do (Hume, 1739-40/1888, pp. 399-412). On the issue of freedom they are plain determinists and agree with William James (1884/1968) who argued that soft determinism is a mugwump stance adopted by those who want to have their cake and eat it too.

Other soft determinists choose a more risky path: they use the term *freedom* in the sense of "free will." This path leads to difficulties. For example, in his comprehensive review of where psychologists stand on freedom, Sappington (1990) buttressed his case for linking soft determinism and free will with a quote from Hebb: "If my past has shaped me to goof off, and I do goof off despite my secretary's urging, that's free will" (Hebb, 1974, p. 75). Contrary to Hebb and Sappington, James argues that free will must imply indeterminism of some sort.

Sappington (1990) also treated Bandura's "soft-determinist" theory of human agency as one of various "scientific theories of free will." He did not distinguish between Bandura's determinism and the, albeit modest, traces of indeterminism in the thinking of authors like Sperry (1988) and Rychlak (1981). But Bandura's disagreement with Skinner is not on the indeterminism versus determinism issue, it is on the issue of environmental versus personal determinism and on one-way versus reciprocal (and "triadic") determinism (Bandura, 1978). Unlike Skinner, Bandura holds that personal determinants which we call *beliefs*, *goals*, *expectations*, and so forth, are useful in accounting for human behavior. But is there any reason to believe that he is one iota less determinist than Skinner?

In fact, Sappington himself was quite aware of Bandura's determinism and cited a passage in which the latter rejected the idea of free will: "Persons are neither autonomous agents nor simply mechanical conveyers of animating environmental influences" (Bandura, 1989, p. 1182). They may not be machines. They may be complex systems or organisms. But they are determined. Yet, despite this awareness, Sappington surmised that Bandura's theory "deserves to be considered a theory of at least partial freedom" (Sappington, 1990, p. 22).

But can we have partial freedom, that is, partial free will? Would that mean our will is a little bit free, or that we have just a little bit of free will? Problems of this kind raised by the psychological discourse on freedom suggest that we must learn to do without the option of soft determinism and make, with James, our choice between indeterminism and hard determinism, and between the free-will stance of Sartre and the uncompromising rejection of freedom of Skinner.

The Two Disciplines of Psychology

Some think there are many disciplines of psychology. Others think psychology is a unitary and single discipline. Most seem to see two psychological disciplines, perspectives, approaches, or worlds which appear in different guises: psychology as a profession versus psychology as science, American Psychological Association versus American Psychological Society, idiographic versus nomothetic orientations, qualitative versus quantitative methods, humanist versus scientific or even behaviorist psychology.

In the last of these guises, one of the two disciplines can plausibly be equated with Cronbach's (1957) "scientific psychology" with its experimental and correlational variants and determinist in that it deals with determinate and determined events and objects. *Determinate* is used here in the sense of being in an identifiable place at an identifiable time, and *determined* is used to refer to events occurring in accordance with fixed laws. Since the standard laws are causal in nature, the latter term is usually equated with *caused*.

The determinism of scientific psychology leaves no room for free will. Humanist psychology, on the other hand, addresses itself to conscious, reflecting ("reflective," even "self-reflective") subjects who are generally thought of as able to make meaningful choices. Usually this making of meaningful choices implies "free will."

Sartre and Humanist Psychology

Sartre is generally considered to be the most extreme exponent of the position that human beings are absolutely free to choose between options (see especially Sartre 1943/1965). He was particularly interested in options which reflect courage or its opposite, "bad faith." Sartre's freedom is either identical with, or closely related to, other varieties of freedom familiar under the labels *free will*, *absolute freedom*, *transcendental freedom*, and *liberty of indifference*.

In sharp contrast to Sartre, Skinner not only rejected the concept of free will; he deemed talk of "freedom," and of the "human dignity" which it implies, to be a cause of war and other mayhem (Skinner, 1971).

While Skinner's rejection of free will clearly is representative of scientific and determinist psychology, the relationship between Sartre and phenomenological or humanist psychology requires some explication. This is especially the case when the focus is on content rather than method. While humanist psychologists tend to interpret freedom as "free will," they do not always agree on how to construe the term. Also, the link between humanist psychology and Sartre is often less than

evident because humanists value experience and eschew abstractions and theory. In particular, they do not seem compulsively concerned with rooting key concepts like *self* and *self-actualization* explicitly in the philosophy of the engaged and authentic human way of being as formulated by Sartre and Heidegger.

The relationship between Sartre and humanist psychology emerges more clearly in the context of method. Both rely on the phenomenological method. Humanist psychology differs from behaviorism in its reliance on subjective human experience, that is, on the lived world. Like the early Sartre of *Nausea* (Sartre, 1938/1969), humanist psychologists seek to capture phenomena or experiences—the proverbial "here and now"—in a way that is as undistorted as possible by labels or categories.

Why Deconstruct?

Apart from the post-modern arguments for deconstructing dichotomies because they distort things and perpetuate unfair and lopsided power relationships, the main reason for considering possible bridges across the chasm is that both the Sartrean and the Skinnerian accounts of human behavior leave unanswered questions which tempt one to look to the other account for answers.

Stevenson (1974, pp. 82, 87) pointed to a major problem which is faced by most of Sartre's readers: He "makes mystifying verbal play," he utters what sound like "absurdities," his *Being and Nothingness* is "unreadable" and "repetitious," he exhibits a "word-spinning delight in the abstract noun, the elusive metaphor, and the unresolved paradox." This may or may not be the result of the reader's, rather than Sartre's, shortcomings. One thing that seems quite certain is that Sartre accounts for uniquely human behavior, the complex behavior of intelligent and conscious creatures aware of their situation in an insecure and unpredictable world. The opposite side of the coin is that he has nothing or little to say about simple behavior, such as gradually strengthened fear responses which in the end make a person agoraphobic.

Skinner's account raises parallel questions. What is missed by restricting oneself to the vocabulary of operants, reinforcers, and discriminative stimuli? These terms serve well in accounting for the behavior of rats and pigeons. But are humans not qualitatively different from their fellow animals? The mere ability to raise this question seems to answer it in the affirmative. No other species, as far as we know, produces exemplars which ask this type of self-reflective question. Put in another way, the question is whether the Skinnerian creature is an adequate model of human beings capable of such feats as sitting under a tree, crosslegged or

otherwise, and reflecting on their own consciousness of themselves as part of an immense, majestic, and ultimately indifferent universe.

Similarly, a behavior therapist would probably not even try to explain the behavior of Binswanger's (1958) patient Ellen West. As Rachlin (1992) pointed out, a major problem facing Skinnerian behavior therapists is that behavior cannot be neatly divided into respondents and operants. Of the two it is the operants and their reinforcing consequences that are primarily of interest to the therapist. Often it is not clear what the reinforcers at work are. One need not go and look at the puzzling case of Ellen West. Rachlin asks, for example, "What reinforces the act of refusing an offered cigarette by a smoker trying to quit? (1992, p. 1376).

Sartre and Skinner are compared in what follows because they are extreme exponents of two worlds, the relatively subjective and the definitely objective, the world in which free will is experienced and the world in which it has no place. Certain similarities between the two stances are of particular interest because they suggest that the gap between them is not insurmountable. The perspective from which Sartre and Skinner are examined is that of a psychologist—not a philosopher, alas—who grapples with things called "subjective" and "objective" in the classroom.

Sartre VERSUS Skinner

Sartre's Free Will

In the following, I frankly follow Stevenson's (1974) method of picking "out some intelligible points from Sartre" (p. 82). The essence of Sartre's stance on freedom seems well-represented by three "intelligible" features of his work. First, there is his distinction between the being-in-itself of a rock and the being-for-itself of persons incorporating the rock into their projects. Second, there is his phenomenological method and focus on human experience. Third, there is his rejection of determinism.

When is a large rock a limitation on our ability to choose freely? At least some hints regarding Sartre's extremely subtle case for free will can be illustrated using his example of the rock (Sartre, 1943/1965, p. 482). By itself, Sartre's rock or boulder is "neutral." But to hikers, whose path it blocks, it is an obstacle. To youngsters intent on climbing higher to get a view of the countryside, it is a means to an end. Whether it becomes an obstructing or an empowering object for us depends on us, on our project.

Sartre says of the rock that it is a being-in-itself, and that its mode of being is being-in-itself. Sartre further asserts that beings-in-themselves "have facticity," that is, they create conditions about which the hikers in his example can do nothing. He even agrees that a hiker's past has facticity, that is, that the conditions, learning experiences and traumas the different hikers have experienced are facts about which they also can do nothing. Presumably the same is true of their physical states of fatigue or lively enterprise.

So, where does this leave freedom? It enters the picture in the context of Sartre's second mode of being: *being-for-itself.* Human beings in general, and our hikers in particular, are beings-for-themselves. For Sartre there are no necessary and sufficient causes in this human world of beings-for-themselves. The hikers cannot do anything about the facticity of the boulder, their pasts, or their physical states, *but* (here it comes!) they choose the meaning of these facticities. Is the boulder an obstacle to overcome, something to engage, something to grapple with? Is the absent father who did not teach the lesson of perseverance an excuse for failure? It apparently all depends on the meaning the Sartrean being-for-itself chooses to give to these facticities.

For Sartre, the hikers are free like the young man who is absolutely free to choose between supporting his aged mother and joining the Free French Forces in England (Sartre, 1948, pp. 35, 38). They are free like the resistance fighter who is absolutely free to choose between being executed on the spot and betrayal of his comrade (Sartre, 1949, pp. 47-74).

The raw experience of being free. One reason this construction of freedom is more than a sleight of hand is its phenomenological context. Simone de Beauvoir (1963, p. 112) graphically depicted the young Sartre's first encounter with phenomenology and his excitement on realizing that an attempt to accurately describe his experience of the apricot cocktail in front of him might be the starting point of fruitful philosophical inquiry into deep ontological issues about what there is.

A basic tenet of phenomenology is that prereflective experience is primary, while experience harnessed by means of concepts and categories is inevitably derivative and distorted. Nietzsche (1866/1965) expressed this insight when he rhapsodized an encounter with thunder and lightning as an experience of "pure will, not obscured by intellect" (p. 962).

In this phenomenological frame of mind, the experience or sense of having freely decided to pursue option *A*, rather than *B* or *C*, is not uncommon. It may be raw or it may be distorted by our belief systems to some degree, but even in the latter case, the sense that one is, or was, free to choose can still be an intense

experience. Furthermore, this experience of freedom has consequences which further differentiate the Sartrean person from the Skinnerian creature. Sartrean persons think of themselves and others as their choices and attribute guilt or merit on the basis of whether the choices were cowardly or courageous.

Indeterminism. Sartre's absolute freedom implies that humans always have more than one available way of interpreting what faces them, that the choice between options is not completely determined by the subject's environment, past, or physical state. There thus is some behavior, no matter how rare, which is not fully determined. The kind of indeterminism at issue here is the contingency central to the thinking of philosophers and psychologists like Merleau-Ponty, James (1884/1968), Sperry (1988, 1993), Rychlak (1981), and Sappington (1990). It is illustrated by Sartre's (1938/1969, p. 211) protagonist Roquentin, who finds himself looking at a universe in which at any moment a man's tongue could turn into a centipede.

Two points must be noted about this kind of indeterminism. First, it should be distinguished from the indeterminism of quantum physics. True, the prospect of Roquentin's tongue turning into a centipede seems reminiscent of the quantum theorist's marble rolling around in a bowl surprising us—in a few million years of relentless observation—by passing through the bowl's wall and materializing on the other side. In practice, however, it seems useful to differentiate sharply between those who confine indeterminism to the world of subatomic particles and those who extend it, like Sartre, to the aggregates of such particles encountered in everyday life (e. g., Honderich, 1993, p. 66).Second, indeterminism may suggest the possibility of, but does not necessarily imply, free will. The most that can be said is that the assumption that events of everyday life are not always fully determined leaves open the possibility that human choices are sometimes among the things that are undetermined.

Skinner's Compatibilist Freedom.

Where Sartre used phenomenological methods to study human experience, Skinner started out with animals and relied on objective (i. e., replicable) observations of their behavior. It is not surprising that Sartre and Skinner saw different worlds. Everything in Skinner's world is caused or determined, it is a material world of behaviors and of neural processes, although Skinner professed to have little interest in the latter.

Skinner at one point summed up his determinism in the blunt observation that "the spontaneous generation of behavior has reached the same stage as the spontaneous generation of maggots and micro-organisms in Pasteur's day" (1974,

p. 54). His materialism made him treat human beings as part of the world of rocks, crystals, viruses, insects, and fellow primates. He saw no sudden break between the material world and a mental world of intentions, goals, and self-awareness. Mental entities like thoughts and desires did not serve him as explanatory constructs of such behavior as that of Sartre's compatriot who "chose" between looking after his mother and joining the Free French Forces. In Skinner's material world such "choices" are determined by the interaction between biological predispositions and past environments which have administered different reinforcers according to different reinforcement schedules.

Skinner's ontology appears to be that of exhaustive materialism which maintains that constructs like *goal* and *expectation* in the long run obstruct the path to a clearer understanding of the material processes to which they refer ultimately and entirely too loosely (e. g., P. M. Churchland, 1988; and P. S. Churchland, 1989). In general, constructs referring to mind are dismissed by the exhaustive materialists as *folk psychological* (Stich, 1983) and as not really different from pseudoexplanatory constructs and panchrestons like witchcraft or the dormitive power of opium.

In *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Skinner (1971) argued that the notion of freedom is not only illusory, but also dangerous. There is no free will and hence no uniquely human dignity; when you look closely enough, you always see the mundane determinants of the behavior. Furthermore, believing that one possesses free will and dignity compels people to go to war to defend their sacred freedom and revenge insults to their precious dignity. (Skinner might have smiled at Mel Gibson's line in the film *Braveheart*: "They may take our lives, but they will never take our freedom").

What Skinner objected to was free will. He did not, it appears, object to *freedom* in the sense of Hume's (1739-40/1888) *liberty of spontaneity*, that is, of freedom compatible with determinism. This *compatibilist freedom* is the freedom of persons whose circumstances happen to let them do what they want to do. Prisoners live under conditions which do not let them do what they want to do (Hume, 1748/1988, p. 131). They are not free. University professors live under conditions that (sometimes) let them spend a summer on the beach pondering the nature of freedom. They are said to be free.

Sartre AND Skinner

The question now arises how the dichotomy between phenomenology-based humanist psychology, represented by Sartre, and psychology construed as natural science, embodied by Skinner, can be deconstructed, synthesized, or integrated.

The project of deconstructing this dichotomy presents itself because of a paradox alluded to earlier: However different and even incommensurable the thinking of Sartre and Skinner may appear to be, both are needed in accounting for human behavior.

The first step toward an account of the full range of behavior of interest to both Skinner and Sartre is to focus on similarities, to see what sort of Skinnerian elements we may find in Sartre and vice versa, what thoughts somewhat Sartrean in nature we may find in Skinner.

Sartre and Determinism

A closer look at the context of Sartre's (1943/1965) construction of free will suggests there is some room for moving it a little in Skinner's direction. Especially relevant are the contexts provided by the writings of Sartre's fellow phenomenologists and existentialists Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre's views on freedom expressed toward the end of his life.

What Sartre's hiker can choose to do something about is her perception of the rock's massiveness, or the meaning she gives the rock in the context of her projects. In particular, she is always free to give up, to retreat, to camp in the rock's shadow and hoist a sign protesting the unfairness of fate that puts obstacles in one's path, or even to opt out of life altogether. It is these choices between meanings assigned to things which separate Sartre from Skinner, behaviorism, and science in general.

Heidegger. The gap between Sartre and Skinner is not necessarily the consequence of Sartre's existentialism. His fellow existentialists Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty adopted more moderate positions on freedom. For example, Heidegger's facticity seems more pervasive than that of Sartre. It is an attribute of the human way of being, *Dasein*, *human existence*, or Being-for-Itself. It is the human fate of being "'thrown' into . . . concrete situations and attuned to a cultural and historical context" (Guignon, 1993 p. 8). It is, in Hall's (1993) words, "our sense . . . that we inherit rather than choose, our 'thrownness' into a world that was not our making but with which we are nonetheless stuck" (p. 137).

The freedom which survives this facticity is closely related to authenticity. Williams (1992) speaks of Heideggerian freedom as "being in the world truthfully" (p. 757) and contrasts this freedom with the alleged freedom to make choices. He notes that, unlike Sartre, Heidegger rejects the latter, the freedom we have in mind when we talk about "free will." Along similar lines, Dreyfus (1991, p. 26) translates Heidegger's (1927/1962, p. 33) freedom as a modest "owning up to" (as opposed to "disowning" or even "failing to take a stand on") one's way of

being. One hears echoes here of the challenge issued by the Greek poet Pindar and by Nietzsche: "Werde der, der du bist—Become the person you are" (cited from Nietzsche, 1965, p. 1183). What seems important about this kind of freedom in the present context is that it does not appear to be necessarily incompatible with determinism.

Merleau-Ponty. For Sartre, the rock in the path of the hikers becomes an oppressive obstacle or empowering challenge for the hikers, that is, within the context of the hikers' project. The hikers are apparently free to give it any meaning, to perceive it in any way. Merleau-Ponty (1945/1962, pp. 436, 439) begs to differ. The rock cannot be construed as anything, depending on the hikers' project, from unsurmountable obstacle to welcome opportunity for obtaining a superb view of the landscape. It has specific properties that make it impossible for anyone but a lunatic to assign any but a limited range of meanings to it. For example, the rock may simply be too vertical and slippery to be construed as an object you can climb over to continue on your path.

Hammond, Howarth, and Keat (1991) point out that Merleau-Ponty's position on freedom is like that of philosophers who think that the issue of freedom and determinism cannot be resolved once and for all, that the best we can do is describe each case, thus generating a range of cases of more or of less freedom, or in which freedom is experienced more or less clearly.

An example of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological, case-by-case approach is his treatment of the extreme decision situations which the earlier Sartre of the days of the French Resistance used to buttress his case for free will. That situation is the case of a prisoner offered a "choice" between death and collaboration with the enemy. Where Sartre endowed the prisoner with the freedom to say a resounding "no!" to his interrogators, Merleau-Ponty describes him as having "committed himself to this action [of resistance] . . . because the historical situation, the comrades, the world around him seemed to him to expect that conduct from him" (1962, p. 454). He also notes that the prisoner did not make "a solitary and unsupported decision: the man still feels himself to be with his comrades . . . he is as it were incapable of talking" (p. 454).

The later Sartre. These readings of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty harden the suspicion that the gap between phenomenological existentialism and determinist stances need not be an unbridgeable chasm. Indeed, it may be that Sartre himself, in his later years, was less the apostle of absolute freedom that he had been in the 1930s and 1940s. Elegantly and much less sweepingly than in his earlier writings, he defined freedom in 1970 as "the small movement which makes of a totally conditioned social being someone who does not render back completely

what his conditioning has given him" (Sartre, 1970, p. 22). Of course, even this modest claim of free will implies that some things are not completely determined. Sartre may have moved toward determinism, but he remained an indeterminist to the end.

Skinner, Pragmatism, Phenomenology, and Antirepresentationalism

It would probably be an exaggeration to say that the later Sartre had serious doubts about his earlier interpretations of indeterminism and freedom. Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, however, did have such doubts about Sartrean freedom, and these doubts may open possibilities for deconstructing the dichotomies of the worlds of Sartre and Skinner and of humanist and behaviorist psychology. On Skinner's side there are similar hints of such possibilities. There is Skinner's pragmatism. There are also his occasional acknowledgments of phenomenology and antirepresentationalism.

Skinner's pragmatism. The Greek word *pragma* means *act* or *deed*, and the focus on what people do is as characteristic of Skinner as it is of the existentialists and the Greek sophists. Thus Woolfolk and Sass (1988, p. 113) pointed out that unlike psychoanalysis and introspection, both phenomenology and radical behaviorism focus on "conduct in the world." True, this is merely a hint of similarity to be explored further. For example, Sartre and Skinner differ on what an act is. In particular, Skinner refused to rely on terms like *intention*; to him acts were behaviors primarily determined by environmental conditions, not the intentional, consciously chosen behaviors of interest to the existentialists (Kvale & Grenness, 1967).

Skinner and phenomenology. Kvale and Grenness (1967) argued that Skinner did not reject the private world so central to phenomenology and that he considered the description of phenomena to be a primary step of scientific procedure. Woolfolk and Sass (1988) pointed to Skinner's interest in "concrete particulars" as opposed to "abstract concepts." Fallon (1992) pointed to Skinner's interest in art, his reliance on induction (as opposed to deduction), his stand against the conventional wisdom, his focus on primary experience (as opposed to abstractions and rational constructions), and his preference for concrete particulars rather than grand designs. Fallon judged these characteristics to be compatible with a phenomenological stance.

Several readers of an early version of this paper have noted that interest in art and unconventional views may be very superficial similarities, that *primary experience* and *concrete particulars* are understood quite differently by phenomenologists and Skinner, and that Skinnerian terms like *operant* and *reinforcer*

can be construed as abstractions and rational constructions rather than concrete particulars. The plot may thicken and the indices may multiply, but taken individually these possible similarities are mere hints of areas to pursue in attempts to bridge the gap between Sartre and Skinner.

Skinner's antirepresentationalism. The evidence seems somewhat more clearcut on Skinner's antirepresentationalism. Postmodern thinkers, foremost among them Jacques Derrida, have given up on metaphysics, on certainty, on discovering basic principles (Plato's *archai*), on "discovering" reality. The extreme variant of their antirealism is antirepresentationalism (Rorty, 1991): the rejection of the idea that there is *anything* "out there" which can usefully be thought of as represented in the knowing mind.

What makes this antirepresentationalist postmodernism relevant here is that it is much closer to phenomenological than to traditional scientific stances in psychology. The former typically implies, at least in early stages of investigation, the Greek and Husserlian *epoché* or suspension of judgements and assumptions concerning a possible reality other than that of human experience, of appearances, of phenomena. The scientific tradition, in contrast, pursues the task of discovering a reality underlying appearances, one whose ultimate accessibility to the human intellect is not in doubt.

While Skinner generally adopted a realist stance on the ontological question of what there is (e. g., Kvale & Grenness, 1967), he repeatedly rejected a realist stance on the epistemological question of how and what we know. He did not see a "personal self or perceiving subject at the epistemological center of events" (Woolfolk & Sass, 1988, p. 111). Much like Merleau-Ponty (1945/1962, p. xi), Skinner rejected the notion of the "inner man," the homunculus who inspects the patterns projected on the brain by the sensory organs perceiving the external world. More generally, Skinner rejected, in the best postmodern spirit, the "double world" of subject and object, inner and outer, physical and psychological. He made no distinction between the public and the private world, other than to characterize the latter as less accessible because the "verbal community" finds it more difficult to reinforce "self-descriptive" than overt responses (e. g., Kvale & Grenness, 1967, p. 144; Skinner, 1963).

How About a Compatibilist Freedom to be Authentically?

If Sartre flirted with determinism toward the end of his life, and if the phenomenological existentialism of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty does not postulate free will, is it possible to move the house that Sartre built closer to the house that Skinner built? Similarly, if Skinner's thinking was postmodern in some

ways, might he have taken seriously the existential notion of authenticity as something which defines humans and separates them from pigeons and rats? Did Sartre really toy with determinism? Might Skinner have thought of himself as authentic under some circumstances?

Questions like these raise the possibility of shaking the rigid Sartre-Skinner dichotomy and of causing the cracks needed to motivate and make possible efforts of deconstruction. They suggest a possible avenue, or at least a footpath, connecting determinism and indeterminism on the level of human behavior.

The views of the later Sartre, and those of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, suggest that the potential for cracks on the Sartrean side is greater than on the Skinnerian side. The cat is now out of the bag: The compromise between Sartre and Skinner suggested here is much more determinist and Skinnerian than Sartrean.

The present analysis converges on Hume's compatibilism. Hume's determinist interpretation of freedom is not necessarily in conflict with phenomenological and existentialist insights pertaining to living freely and being authentically. Often what people want to do is trivial: drive their car really fast, or beat drums loudly in the middle of the night. Sometimes what they want to do is important: quit a secure job and go back to school, make a charitable contribution that actually hurts, speak up for an unpopular cause, refuse to give a comrade's name to grim-faced interrogators.

But from the determinist's perspective, there is not much difference between wanting to do something trivial like eating an ice cream, and wanting "to be true to oneself." If weighty matters are involved, we tend to talk about authenticity, of people choosing, or at least being able to choose, to do things that really matter to them and which are in tune with the central concerns that constitute the core of the self. In both the case of wishing to eat an ice cream and that of wishing to be one's very own and authentic self, the real issue seems to be whether circumstances let us do what we want to do. Is it possible that Skinner as well as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty would have agreed with this type of claim? Is it conceivable that even Sartre would not have rejected it outright?

REFERENCES

Bandura, A. (1978). The self-system in reciprocal determinism. *American Psychologist, 33*, 344-358.

Bandura, A. (1989). Human agency in social cognitive theory. *American Psychologist, 44*, 1175-1184.

Binswanger, L. (1958). The case of Ellen West. In R. May, E. Angel, & H. F. Ellenberger (Eds.), *Existence* (pp. 237-364). New York: Basic Books.

Churchland, P. M. (1988,). *Matter and consciousness: A contemporary introduction to the philosophy of mind* (Rev. ed.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Churchland P. S. (1989). *Neurophilosophy: Toward a unified science of the mind/brain*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cronbach, L. J. (1957). The two disciplines of scientific psychology. *American Psychologist, 12*, 671-683.

de Beauvoir, S. (1963). *Prime of life*. (P. Green, Trans). London: A. Deutsch and Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and time, Division I*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Fallon, D. (1992). An existential look at B. F. Skinner. *American Psychologist, 47*, 1433-1440.

Guignon, C. (1993). Introduction. In C. Guignon (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (pp. 1-41). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hall, H. (1993). Intentionality and world: Division I of Being and Time. In C. Guignon (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (pp. 122-140). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hammond, M., Howarth, J., & Keat, R. (1991). *Understanding phenomenology*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Hebb, D. O. (1974). What psychology is about. *American Psychologist, 29*, 71-79.

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time* (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). New York: Harper & Row. (Original work published in 1927)

Honderich, T. (1993). *How free are you? The determinism problem*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hume, D. (1888). *A treatise of human nature* (L. A. Selby-Biggs, Ed.). Oxford: Clarendon Press. (Original work published 1739-40)

Hume, D. (1988). *An enquiry concerning human understanding* (A. Flew, Ed.). La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing. (Original work published 1748)

James, W. (1968). The dilemma of determinism. In J. J. McDermott (Ed.), *The Writings of William James*. New York: Modern Library. (Original work published in 1884)

Kvale, S., & Grenness, C. (1967). Skinner and Sartre. *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry. 7*, 128-149.

Madison, G. B. (1988). *The hermeneutics of postmodernity: Figures and themes*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of perception* (C. Smith, Trans.). New York: Humanities Press. (Original work published 1945)

Nietzsche, F. (1965). *Werke*, Vol. 3, (K. Schlechta, Ed.). Munich, FRG: Hauser. (Original letter to Carl von Gersdorff 1866).

Rachlin, H. (1992). Teleological behaviorism. *American Psychologist, 47*, 1371-1382.

Rorty, R. (1991). *Objectivity, relativism, and truth: Philosophical papers volume 1.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rychlak, J. F. (1981). *Introduction to personality and psychotherapy.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Sappington, A. A. (1990). Recent psychological approaches to the free will versus determinism issue. *Psychological Bulletin, 108*, 19-29.

Sartre, J.-P. (1948). *Existentialism and humanism.* (P. Mairet, Trans.). London: Methuen.

Sartre, J.-P. (1949). *Intimacy and other stories.* (L. Alexander, Trans.). New York: Neville Spearman.

Sartre, J.-P. (1965). *Being and nothingness: An essay in phenomenological ontology* (H. E. Barnes, Trans.). New York: Citadel Press. (Original work published 1943)

Sartre, J.-P. (1969). *Nausea.* (Lloyd Alexander, Trans.). New York: New Directions. (Original work published 1938)

Sartre, J.-P. (1970, March 26). An interview with Sartre. *New York Review of Books. 14*(6), 22-31.

Skinner, B. F. (1964). Behaviorism at fifty. *Science, 140*, 951-958. In T. W. Wann (Ed.), *Behaviorism and phenomenology: Contrasting bases for modern psychology* (pp. 79-97). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Skinner, B. F. (1971). *Beyond freedom and dignity.* New York: Knopf.

Skinner, B. F. (1974). *About behaviorism.* New York: Knopf.

Sperry, R. W. (1988). Psychology's mentalist paradigm and the religion/science tension. *American Psychologist, 43*, 607-613.

Sperry, R. W. (1993). The impact and promise of the cognitive revolution. *American Psychologist, 48*, 878-885.

Stevenson, L. (1974). *Seven theories of human nature.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Stich, S. (1983). *From folk psychology to cognitive science: The case against belief.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (Bradford Book).

Williams, R. N. (1992). The human context of agency. *American Psychologist, 47*, 752-760.

Woolfolk, R. L., & Sass, L. A. (1988). Behaviorism and existentialism revisited. *Journal of Humanist Psychology, 28*(1), 108-119.