

On Being Controlled

by
Helen Brown

In his already famous book, "Beyond Freedom and Dignity," B.F. Skinner attacks the establishment's assumptions concerning the solution to the world's problems with a radical and challenging plan based on a technology of behavior.

Skinner declares, "What we need is a technology of behavior. We could solve our problems quickly enough if we could adjust the growth of the world's population as precisely as we adjust the course of a spaceship, or improved agriculture and industry with some of the confidence with which we accelerate high-energy particles or move towards a peaceful world with something like the steady progress with which physics has approached absolute zero."

This, however, is not Skinner's first attempt to introduce his stunning plan for altering human behavior. Those of us who have read "Walden Two" are slightly aware of the type of manipulation he is talking about. In this book, as well as in "Walden Two", he attempts to demonstrate that scientific manipulation of human behavior can make a valuable contribution to personal happiness and world peace.

It is evident in both books that his plan involves challenging many of our most sacred ideals and personal freedoms. It is therefore not surprising that the book has already created nationwide debate due to force and shock of its ideas. Already some of his own colleagues are calling him radical. There is undoubtedly a great deal that can be said for an against his plan for solving the world's problems.

However, I am going to confine this article to a few of my own personal opinions concerning several of his ideas. The ideas expressed in "Beyond Freedom and Dignity", are quite consistent with those expressed earlier in "The Science of Human Behavior." Therefore my comments will focus mainly on the ideas expressed in this in this earlier book, since I feel that those ideas are the foundation for his plan to alter human behavior.

In his book, "The Science of Human Behavior" Skinner presents a very good argument for a science of human behavior. His theory appears to be based on the belief that what a man does is the result of specifiable conditions and that once these conditions have been discovered, we can anticipate and to some

extent determine his behavior.

He argues that although human behavior is complex, it presents no grave problem. He further asserts that our study of behavior is not limited to the laboratory. There are, he states, considerable degrees of control over many relevant conditions that affect our lives, such as control in industry in the form of wages, in schools in the forms of grades, etc.

There is, I believe, much to be said in favor of his argument, however, I doubt that these and other such arguments are sufficient to use as evidence for extending the results of a laboratory science to the interpretation of human behavior.

The type of environment that he would need for the successful operation of such a method as the one described in "Beyond Freedom and Dignity" would be one similar to that in "Walden Two" in my opinion, our western world is not ready for that type of control. I do not believe that behavior can be accounted for adequately by considering any one stimulus factor. I'm convinced that both internal and external factors play an equally important part in determining behavior.

If we are to apply such a method as Skinner has suggested to controlling behavior, we are admitting that there is a general type of behavior that can be attributed to all. This is, then, in direct contradiction to the belief that we are all unique individuals and that it is this difference that makes us complex and difficult to study as we would some unchangeable object.

It is hardly surprising that people are shocked and outraged after reading this book. The essential characteristics of his plan appears to be the error of turning persons into things. Scientific investigations are usually conducted on objects, things, or patterns of relations between things, events, etc. People are distinguished from things in that they experience the world, whereas things do not.

It we accept the belief that we are different from an object or thing in this respect then the question remains, Is a technology of human behavior possible? I doubt it, but maybe.

HAND NAMED CAMPUS STATE AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS HEAD

Irving Hand, associate professor of state and regional planning at Capitol Campus, has been appointed director of the Institute of State and Regional Affairs at the campus.

Mr. Hand's additional duties were approved at the weekend meeting of the University Board of Trustees in Hershey.

The institute was established at Capitol Campus earlier this year as an interdisciplinary research effort. It is concerned with developing research activities in various disciplines, including regional planning, and utilizing them in terms of broad public service.

Specific activities will include contract research; policy, planning and program advice to public officials and industry; training programs, conferences, seminars and workshops.

Mr. Hand joined the Capitol Campus faculty last September after serving seven years as executive director of the Pennsylvania State Planning Board. He had been teaching on a part-time basis in the campus master's degree program in regional planning since it was established in 1967.

A native of New York City,

Mr. Hand was graduated from City College of New York. He received his master's degree in city planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and studied for his doctorate in public administration at New York University.

Prior to his appointment as executive director of the State Planning Board in 1964, he served for 11 years as a planning director of the Metropolitan Planning Commission in Nashville, Tennessee. He had held a similar post in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for four years and previously served on the staff of the Westchester County, New York, Department of Planning.

He has been guest lecturer and conducted seminars at universities in Tennessee, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania and at Fels Institute of the University of Pennsylvania.

A nationally known planning official, Mr. Hand is active in a number of professional groups and served as national president of the American Institute of Planners in 1966-1968.

RICHARDS SEES DECLINE OF MATH PROGRAM

by
R.W. Bonaker

Dr. Winston A. Richards, Asst. Prof. of Mathematics and Statistics, is an outspoken individual deeply involved in many areas of university activities. In addition to being an advisor to the Black Student Union, he has, in the past year, presented two papers at prominent conferences involving mathematics.

He is also a Capitol representative on the University Faculty Senate, serving on the Intra-University Relations Committee. Richards, in a recent interview, discussed many topics, ranging from the degree of "autonomy" Capitol enjoys from main campus to a situation regarding the decline of the Math-Science Program since the inception of the division structure.

Richards said the Intra-University Relations Committee has passed guidelines for faculty organizations throughout the Penn State system. "Once organizations comply with those regulations, then responsibility can be delegated, such as has been done with Capitol's autonomy," he related. "Before the autonomy measure was passed last year, undergraduates course had to be approved by the Capitol Campus Committee of the Senate. Now, the courses received approval by the Academic Affairs Committee of our Faculty Council. Other areas of autonomy are not clearly defined, but I am certain that the faculty does have more freedom than the administration." He said the autonomy has meant different things for the Capitol Community, maintaining a belief that autonomy can be effectively utilized by how well the campus provost can fight for his programs at main campus.

Richards displayed genuine concern over the plight of Math-Science Program. He said that in 1971, "without prior consultation," the Math group was placed into the Division of Engineering and Technology, humiliating the program chairman, which resulted in a "loss of energy and a crisis in leadership." He said that previously, the program was stressing a series of Actuarial exams, the development of a graduate degree emphasis and a brochure to recruit students into the undergraduate Math-Program. But since the division structure was implemented, those goals are not in sight, he said.

Richards, who contends that the Math-Science Program is "not robbing other programs of true Math students," recommends that faculty who teach mathematics here should remain in one cohesive program. He said that all the math taught in other programs, such as engineering and business are interrelated.

"It would make sense to have bigger sections of Introductory Statistics and then break into smaller sections for the more advanced sections. It would save money and free faculty to teach a wider variety of courses, enabling specialization."

Thank You

To the Members of the Youghiogheny River Invasion:

I would like to take this time to thank all the people who participated in the White-water trip for their cooperation in what turned out to be a great experience.

Also thank your help we made a clean getaway from Fayette Campus and have been invited back next year. Thanks again.

Bob (Hubie) Brannan

P.S. When in doubt -- Back Paddle!

BLACK EXPRESSION



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As students we will have occasion to someday look back upon our schooling and remember the good times, the problems and the notable events.

It is not often, however, that students can recall with both pride and gratefulness an instructor. Proud because they had the benefit of his dedicated manner of teaching, proud because they knew him and grateful because he chose to instruct at their school, grateful for his kindness and humanitarian interest in all people.

We, the Black students of Capitol Campus are both proud and grateful that we had the benefit of an educational and personal association with Dr. Winston A. Richards.

For the past four years, Dr. Winston A. Richards has been a bulwark to the Black students. His guidance and services to them will never be forgotten.

As the Advisor to the Black Student Union, he guided and accomplished the establishment of the Black Student Union Choir. A Capitol Campus first. Under Dr. Richards' capable hands the choir attained notability through singing engagements at various schools such as the Mansfield State College, Lebanon Valley College, etc. Dr. Richards saw to the establishment of the Black Student Union Scholarship Fund. Through this fund a Revolving Loan Fund and a Tutorial Fund was initiated. These loans were granted without the requirement of collateral. Dr. Richards suggested that these loans be granted on the basis of trust in your fellow man.

Educational trips have been accomplished through the undying efforts of Dr. Richards. One of the most outstanding of the many outstanding trips was the Cross Cultural Conferences trip to Canada. An interracial group of students were chosen to participate in this event by Dr. Richards. The trip entailed a display of cultures throughout the world. The purpose of the trip was to establish the feasibility of starting a C.C.C. at Capitol Campus. As Treasurer of the Conference on Black Higher Education, Dr. Richards has many times brought students and faculty to the conferences.

He attended such a conference in Pittsburgh this fall. He contacted students for attendance at this conference. The Honorable K. Leroy Irvis presided.

During the 1973 Black Arts Festival, Dr. Richards' guidance was invaluable. Because of Dr. Richards, we were honored by the presence of such notables as Dr. Donald Henderson, Associate Provost of the University of Pittsburgh and Dr. Lloyd Bell also of the University of Pittsburgh. Without his invaluable assistance, many of the fine things accomplished at this festival would not have been accomplished.

Dr. Richards, realizing the present difficulties many of the students are having in obtaining employment, aided the Black students by contacting individuals directly involved in this area. Two such people were Mr. Robert L. Alberts, Executive Director of the Affirmative Action Council, Mr. John P. Tunson, Claims Supervisor for Aetna Insurance Company. Applications and interviews were obtained from these gentlemen and will mean summer employment for many students. Some students have and will soon have permanent jobs through Dr. Richards' outstanding and tireless efforts.

We are grateful also for the personal counseling and understanding that Dr. Richards has given us. He has on many occasions disregarded his own personal life to give of his time to students. Dr. Richards has taken students for job interviews, Graduate School interviews, choir rehearsals and tutored those who needed academic help.

With all of these involvement, Dr. Richards is a most amazing man. He manages, and quite capably, to perform his duties as a Faculty member, a member of the University Faculty Senate, Intra-University Committee, a member of the Academic Affairs Committee and a leader in the fight for Autonomy at Capitol Campus.

Many individuals were polled as to their thoughts concerning Dr. Winston A. Richards. Here are a few of the many fine comments:

"To me Dr. Richards is the Martin Luther King of Capitol Campus. He was a light in the storm for me. I owe him more than I can ever repay."

Mrs. Twyla J. Brown

"He looks out for your better interest. He's always there when you need him."

Miss Joyce Akins

"Dr. Richards is a "Hip Dude." He treats students as people and talks to people on their level, not like "Hey look, I got a Ph.D., I know you haven't so therefore you don't know. He helps students immensely."

Francis Riley

He is loved and respected by students and Faculty. The Black students at Capitol Campus soon learn that they have a very special friend in "Doc." We all agree that Doc's O.K.

Dr. Richards, we thank you and we are most grateful that you chose to come to Capitol Campus. But most of all we say thank you to your lovely and gracious wife Kathy. Mrs. Richards is quite a lady. Thank you Kathy. We love you both.

Elizabeth Suber