



# **Bridging Philosophy and Psychology Using the Example of Behaviourism and B.F. Skinner's 'Beyond Freedom and Dignity'**

*Christian Kuhn*

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Seminar paper from the year 2004 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Other, grade: 1 (A), Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg (Institute for Foreign Language Philology), course: The Beautiful and the Sublime, language: English, comment: The paper is a philosophical discussion of the psychological school of Behaviourism, relating the philosophical ideas of B. F. Skinner to early English empiricists, John Locke and David Hume. Including facts towards Behaviourism and Empirism, also comprising a summary of B. F. Skinner's "Beyond Freedom and Dignity". , abstract: It seems impossible to give a precise definition of the term philosophy and the teachings that are connected with it. Generally, philosophers' concerns are questions for the reason and the origin of all being. In a way, these questions unite all of today's arts subjects. As an effect, though, the boundaries between arts often become blurred, all the more since psychology from the early ancient world until the 19th century has merely been regarded as a philosophical field. With the emancipation of psychology as a scientific discipline on its own, teachings were partly in opposition to the traditional way of thinking, if being based on empirical evidence rather than theoretical considerations. Thus, fundamentals of human psyche happen to become a somewhat delicate matter. With this paper I have touched philosophical and psychological problems using the example of B. F. Skinner's "Beyond Freedom and Dignity", trying to show the relationship and the margins of both fields. The author - Burrhus Frederick Skinner (1904-1990) - is regarded one of the most radical 'scientists' among all psychologists. Skinner counts for a distinguished representative of a psychological theory that strongly tries to separate psychological findings from anything experimentally unobservable - (American) behaviourism. Nevertheless, Skinner's book Beyond Freedom and Dignity of 1971 largely leaves out any deta

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