

**CHILD BEHAVIOR; A CRITICAL
AND EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF
YOUNG CHILDREN BY THE
METHOD OF CONDITIONED
REFLEXES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649528585

Child Behavior; A Critical and Experimental Study of Young Children by the Method of
Conditioned Reflexes by Florence Mateer

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FLORENCE MATEER

**CHILD BEHAVIOR; A CRITICAL
AND EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF
YOUNG CHILDREN BY THE
METHOD OF
CONDITIONED REFLEXES**

CHILD BEHAVIOR

A CRITICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF
YOUNG CHILDREN BY THE METHOD
OF CONDITIONED REFLEXES

BY

FLORENCE MATEER, P.H.D.

PSYCHOLOGIST, MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED,
WAVENLEY



UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

BOSTON

RICHARD G. BADGER

THE GORHAM PRESS

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	7
I HISTORICAL SURVEY OF CHILD STUDY	13
II METHODS AND RESULTS OF CHILD STUDY	32
III BEHAVIORISM AND CHILD PSYCHOLOGY	53
✓ IV THE EXPERIMENTS OF KRASNOGORSKI	73
V METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUE MODIFIED FROM KRASNOGORSKI	94
VI PRELIMINARY EXPERIMENTS AND THEIR INDI- CATIONS	113
✓ VII A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF THE CONDITIONED REFLEX	137
✓ VIII CONCLUSIONS	196
CURVES ILLUSTRATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONDITIONED REFLEXES	209
SELECTED RECORDS FROM OTHER CASES	215
BIBLIOGRAPHY	219

INTRODUCTION

"Child Study" is a term so well-worn and so widely used that its application and meaning in any one instance consequently needs definition. Studies are made of the growth of the child, his games, his vocabulary, his mental activities, and they are all legitimate branches of child study, somewhat overlapping, it is true, and all of them far more fragmentary than complete.

One of the lines along which a great deal of work has been done is that of the mental activities of the child or on what might justly be called child psychology. This division is recognized from the standpoint of psychology itself and is again given varied connotations as it deals with different features of the subject. All of these subdivisions have, however, one thing in common. They treat of the growing organism as contrasted with the predominantly functioning organism of the adult. Bearing this characteristic in mind, child psychology may be justly said to include the study of all the stages of the intellectual development of the organism previous to the stage of complete maturity of mind. Usage has rather clearly discriminated for us, however, three main divisions in this long period of development. These are usually studied separately, although not without relating the findings of any one period to those of the others.

The most widely known and best developed of these three divisions of child psychology is educational psy-

chology or psychology as it applies to the child of school age and consequently to his education. Partly overlapping this but separated from it by the rift of enormous physiological changes is the psychology of the adolescent. In its turn the study of the mind of the adolescent can be separated from the study of the mind of the adult only by rather artificial discriminations.

On the other extreme of the age-limits of childhood we have the child of the pre-school age. Here the term "Child Study" is generally used whether or no the problem attacked is a psychological one. In view of the tremendous development of intellect that occurs in this period and considering the large number of studies of such development that have already been made, it seems logical to use the term "Psychology" in distinguishing these studies from investigations dealing with physical development, social reactions, and sense functioning, despite the fact that there are necessary correlations which must be considered.

But psychology must itself be defined. Shall the term be used to designate any type of study which describes the child's mental processes through observation, analogy, interpretation, and experimentation or shall the usage be more limited? In so far as one wishes to be scientifically accurate and in accord with the accepted meaning of to-day the term should be used only to indicate the report of observations made under controlled conditions which are such that the experiments may be repeated and the results verified by any competent person at any future time.

Even so the term "Psychology" has a connotation which is very apt to be misleading when applied to the study of young children. Psychology deals with mental

processes, with images, ideas and judgments. These the young child can not report to us, nor can we study them directly in their functioning in him, but only through inference, deduction and analogy. Results obtained thus are not scientific in the sense of the natural sciences. The animal psychologists have met and conquered this same situation and now study the behavior of their subjects without dependence upon the assumption of such and such subjective processes. They are content to ascertain the exact relations existing between stimulus and reaction. It seems fairly logical that those wishing to enroll the study of the young child among the sciences should take the same step, should be content to study his behavior. Of course in its wider meaning this would include all the activities of the child but in a stricter sense we may use it to mean the study of more or less complex reaction to definitely ascertained stimuli.

The term "Child Behavior" will therefore be used in this discussion to indicate the observations of and the experimentations upon the mental processes of children under school age, as expressed in their behavior or reaction to stimuli and ascertained under conditions permitting repetition and verification. But the value of any such study will be greatly increased if several additional factors are taken into consideration. The problem on learning, memory, language, or anything else will be far more valuable if it is studied in connection with full recognition and evaluation of the physical organism, the environmental conditions, and the past experiences of the child. Also, the problem undertaken, whatever it is, should be correlated with and compared with similar studies on older children.

Moreover, if we are attempting to formulate a basis

for a science of Child Behavior, there are a few questions we should ask before undertaking any specific investigation. The answers to these questions will undoubtedly indicate the most probable lines of profitable work. The questions are the following. What work has been done and what results have been obtained regarding the mental development of the young child? To what extent do these investigations fail and what are the reasons for their errors? What improvements in technique, apparatus and method can be made in the new work to be done?

Then, when a piece of research has been completed, the results should be evaluated not only from the standpoint of the absolute findings but also from the standpoint of their interpretation, their significance for science in general and, in this age of applied values, from the standpoint of their use. Also, every problem should give, as a result of its being intimately known through experience, suggestions for modifications of use in future experiments and also suggestions for new but correlated investigations.

Let us here attack these problems in the order mentioned, trying to explain more fully by example just what is meant. First, in order to avoid duplication and to avail ourselves of the best that the experience of past experimenters has to offer we must survey the results so far obtained by those studying the young child. These results will be found in the various books on "Child Study."



CHILD BEHAVIOR