Is variability a unifying behavioral concept?
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AB Most modern textbooks of animal behavior are oriented such that both ethology and comparative psychology are presented and, to an extent, synthesized. The present paper also is an attempt at synthesis of these 2 approaches, but by use of a different organization--behavioral variability. There appear to be at least 4 basic categories of behavioral variability: (a) taxon, (b) individual, (c) task, and (d) response. A hypothesis is proposed that behavioral variability is directly proportional to the tolerance of the environment and the functional complexity of the CNS.