Perspectives on knowing and knowledge.
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AB Compares cognitive, behavioral (Skinnerian), and interbehavioral (Kantorion) perspectives on knowing and knowledge. Major similarities among these theories include a common rationale for the study of knowledge problems and a belief in the determining role of an organism’s behavioral history in knowing acts. Differences include the manner in which historical variables exert control in current circumstances and the extent to which knowing events are observable. The cognitive position regards knowledge as a possession of the organism, while knowing is taken to be an unobservable mental process. B. F. Skinner conceptualizes knowledge events as overt behaviors, primarily. J. R. Kantor regards knowing as implicit orientational activity which might or might not constitute observable interbehavior. The relative merits of these theories are evaluated according to 3 criteria: first, the possibilities afforded by the theory for empirical validation; second, the extent to which theoretical statements about events are derived from event sources; and third, the degree to which the theory gives rise to useful and novel investigations. By these criteria, the interbehavioral perspective proves to have the greatest relative merit.