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NEVER AGAIN OUT OF PRINT: A BRIEF HISTORY OF REPRINTING *PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY*

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B. F. Skinner Foundation

One of the books most responsible for training behavioral professionals in the last century was *Principles of Psychology: A Systematic Text in the Science of Behavior*. It was published in 1950 by Appleton-Century-Crofts, making it the first textbook on the science that B. F. Skinner began. The book underpinned courses at Columbia University during the years that its authors taught there. After selling well for many years, eventually sales decreased enough that the publisher, Appleton-Century-Crofts, could not justify printing another 500-1000 copies. The book went out of print.

Today, when you can download books over the internet, it is hard to imagine how difficult it was in the late 20th century to access books that had gone out of print. As late as 1990, the year that Skinner died, there were no websites where you could buy or download books. The first webpage on the internet didn't even exist until 1993. To get a book that was out of print, you had to physically go to a bookstore to see if it still had one, or visit a used bookstore or a Goodwill shop to rummage through discarded books in hopes of finding a copy.

By 1990, both Skinner's *The Behavior of Organisms*, and Keller and Schoenfeld's *Principles of Psychology* were out of print. Many professionals still wanted classics like these for their own use or for colleagues and students. That required someone reprinting the book.

One possibility for reprinting behavioral books was the Association for Behavior Analysis (ABA, now ABAI). In the late 1900s, ABA had a Publication Board made up of former editors of *The Behavior Analyst*. The Publication Board looked into reprinting *The Behavior*

of *Organisms*. Possible printers were contacted by Scott Wood and by other members of the Board. The members evaluated different kinds of bindings, obtained costs for different numbers to be printed, and got information on storage and distribution channels. Scott Wood summarized the Publication Board's proposal for reprinting *The Behavior of Organisms* for the ABA Council meeting at the annual ABA convention. But the ABA council would not support the reprinting project. Disappointed, Scott Wood, Julie and Ernie Vargas, along with Margaret Vaughan, and Jack Michael, met to find a way to "do it ourselves." That meeting resulted in the formation of the B. F. Skinner Foundation. The Foundation's original plan was to reprint books.

By the Spring of 1991, the B. F. Skinner Foundation brought back into print *The Behavior of Organisms*. *Verbal Behavior* also had gone out of print. The Foundation published it in 1992 with new forewords by Jack Michael and Ernie Vargas. The next project for reprinting was *Principles of Psychology*. This book was the first book published by the B. F. Skinner Foundation that was not written by Skinner. The Foundation asked Murray Sidman and Richard Shull to contribute forewords for the new edition. They readily agreed. In 1995, *Principles of Psychology* was printed with a blue and gold cover, like the colors of Columbia University. To this day, "Keller and Schoenfeld" remains the only blue and gold volume among the Harvard crimson and gold of all the Skinner books. It is still the only book published by the Foundation that is not by Skinner. It thus reflects the special regard given by the Foundation to *Principles of Psychology*.

Since those early days, many changes have occurred in the publishing business. The B. F. Skinner Foundation's publication of *Principles of Psychology* came out just a few months before Amazon began selling books as an on-line bookseller. In 1998, the first ISBN book identifier was registered for an eBook. The first decade of the 21st century saw "print-on-demand" become available. All of the Foundation's publications, including *Principles of Psychology* are now available in multiple formats. No matter where one lives, with an internet access anyone can read Keller and Schoenfeld's book. Along with its other publications in

our science, the Foundation will continue to make *Principles of Psychology* available to interested students, scientists, and scholars as well as to the general public. Keller and Schoenfeld's classic text will never again go out of print.