



# Affordances and Action Settings

## How Learning Environments Shape Our Lives

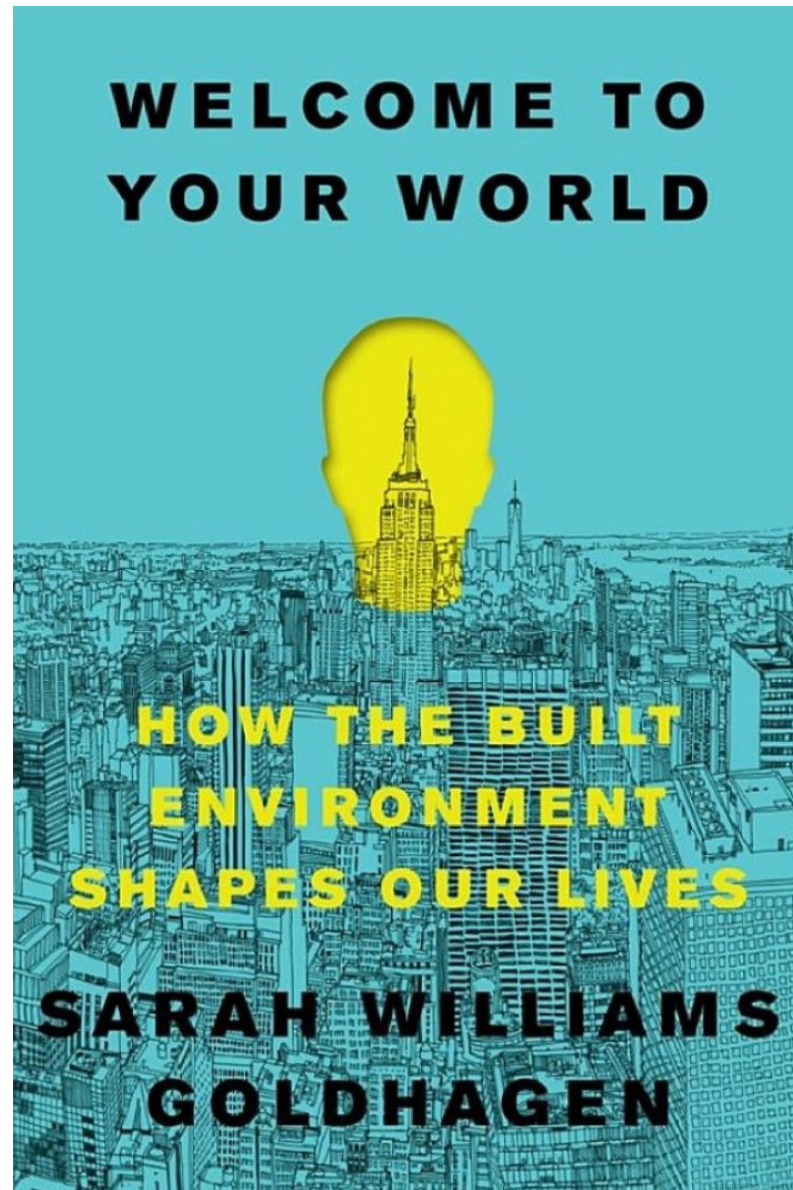


## Topics

1. The Revolution in Neuroscience and Cognitive Studies: Implications for Facilities Design and Education
2. Two Concepts: “Affordances” and “Action Settings”

## Using *Welcome to Your World*

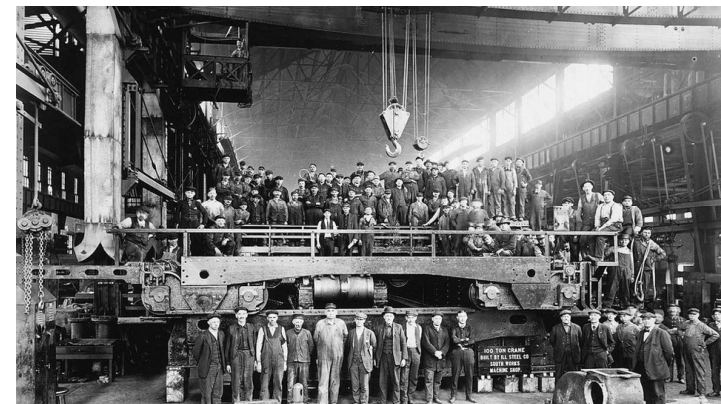
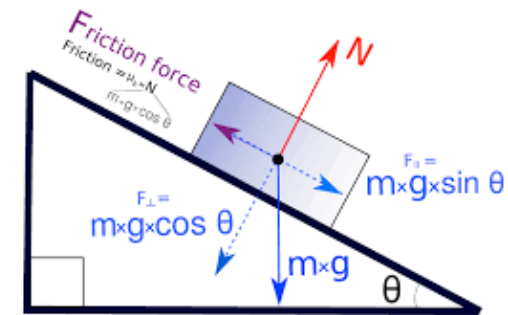
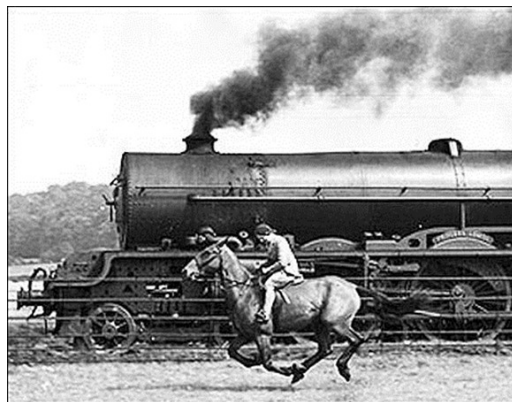
- » YouTube of Keynote and Super Session @ A4LE LearningScapes, Anaheim, 10/5/19
- » Other Materials





# A Brief History of the Psychology of the Architecture of Learning

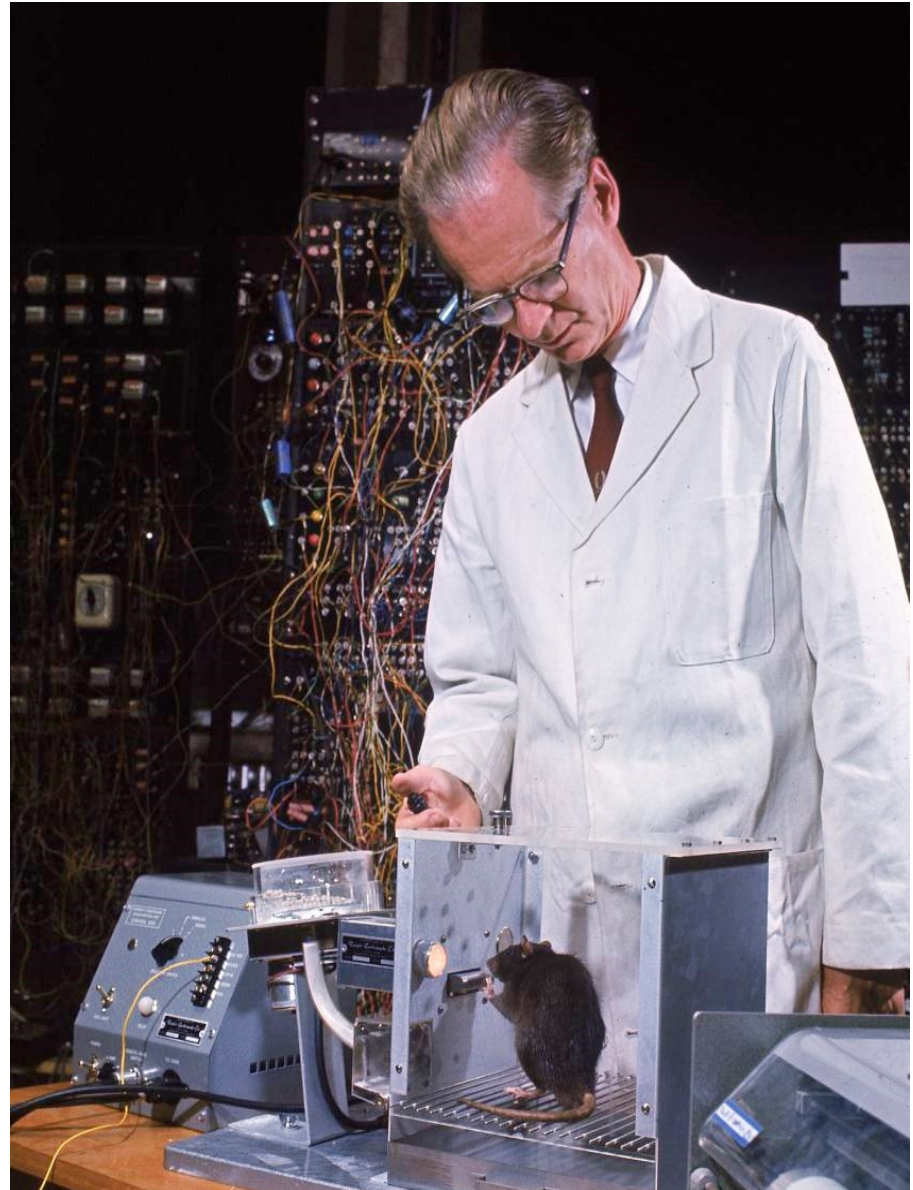
» Early-mid 20th Century  
Determinism:  
Newtonian Physics is the model for everything, “People are nothing but..”





# Behaviorism

- » Dominant paradigm of 20th Century Psychology
- » Consciousness cannot be studied, so we ignore it
- » “Stimulus/Response” & “Operant Conditioning”
- » Research based on controlled lab



# Echoes of Deterministic Behaviorism





# Echoes of Deterministic Behaviorism

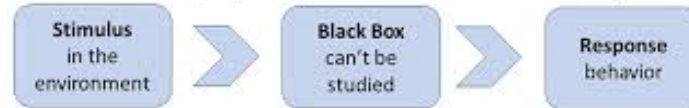




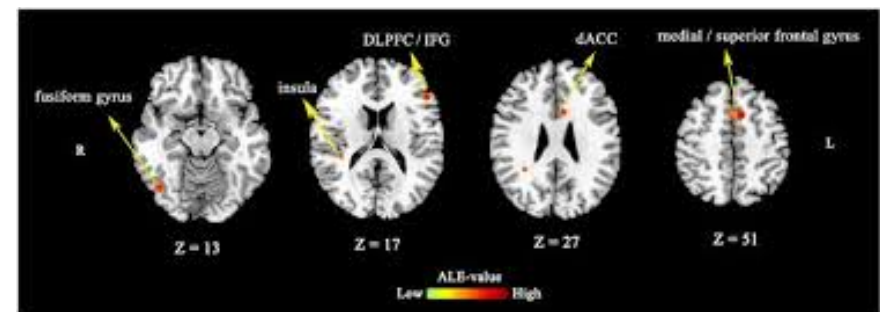
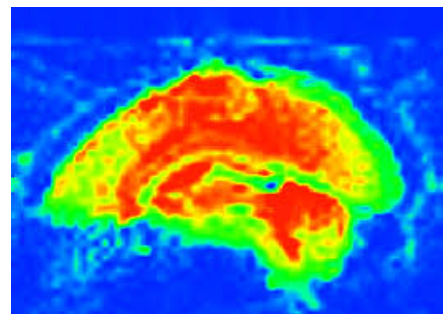
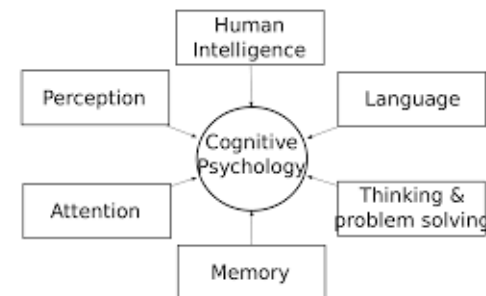
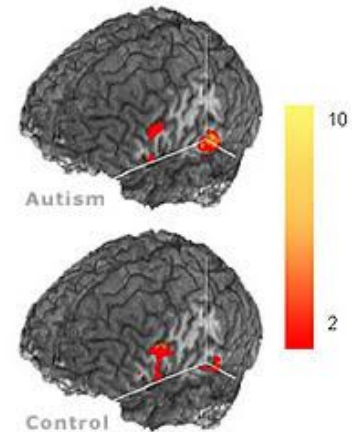
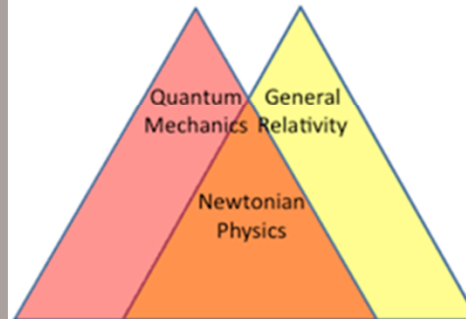
# Alternative to Behaviorism: Cognitive Studies

- » Interdisciplinary
- » Brain science
- » Mental Processes: perception, language, memory, creativity, etc.
- » Lab and field research

Behaviorist Model (only study observable / external behavior)



Cognitive Model (can scientifically study internal behavior)



# Alternative to Behaviorism: Environmental Psychology

- » Interdisciplinary
- » Observation of people (and animals) in their natural settings
- » The body is the vehicle for thinking: “Embodied Cognition”



# Affordances



» “The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill.” James J. Gibson, 1979

» “...the properties of an object or features of an environment that suggest to us how it is to be used.” Sarah Williams Goldhagen, 2017

» Implies a relationship between the animal and the environment

» Examples: Chair, Doorway



## Action Settings



- » Three Components: Person, Environment, and Social Context
- » Roger Barker's study of action spaces as predictors of children's behavior
- » Refer to Chapter 5, *Welcome to Your World*, "People Embedded in Social Worlds"



## Goldhagen's criteria for how we engage with a particular place (i.e. "Action Setting")

1. How does it facilitate human activities and the correspondence among those activities?
2. What is the patterned arrangement of objects in space?
3. What associations do the place's forms elicit?

# Action Settings: Outdoor Learning Areas





## Action Settings: Outdoor Learning Areas



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