

Empty Organism

In the recent past, a prominent psychologist was accused of posing humans as an empty organism because he/she required experimental evidence before accepting a principle related to humans.

The Full Human:

(1) An Ancient group performs a dance to the Sun God until an eclipse ends. The dance is apparently the controlling variable since the eclipse always ends if they dance long enough.

(2) A buzzer sounds and a grasshopper is shocked. After repeating this procedure the grasshopper eventually jumps when the buzzer is presented. It is conjectured that the decision making process of the grasshopper is in the legs. To prove this, the legs of the grasshopper are cut off, and it is found that the decision making of the grasshopper is changed, for he/she no longer learns to jump when the buzzer is presented alone.

(3) "To what do you attribute your 100 years?" the interviewer asked. "I never smoked, I never drank liquor and I never overate, and I always rise at six in the morning!"

To that the interviewer remarked: "I had an aunt who acted the same way but she only lived to be eighty. How do you account for that?"

"She didn't keep it up long enough."

All of the previous examples "explain" behavior. Most readers agree: Evidence obtained in this way should not be presented.

(4) An empty organism is better than one filled with garbage.

26-1 Although the term has had negative connotations historically, an empty organism approach is useful in science because it suggests less conjecture, mentalism, etc. The organism is, in a sense, empty, and is to be "filled" with data derived from controlled _____ inquiry.
(experimental)