takes place in the context of a reinforcement history that goes all the way back to the very first
time the rat was reinforced for pushing on the bar.

**View of human nature**

Skinner conceived of personality as a pattern or collection of operant behaviors. From infancy,
we display many behaviors and those that are reinforced will strengthen. Patterns that other
psychologists called neurotic or abnormal behavior was nothing more mysterious to Skinner than
the continued performance of undesirable behaviors that have somehow been reinforced.

**Schedules of reinforcement**

Skinner pointed out that that in everyday life our behavior is rarely reinforced every time it
occurs. E.g. a baby is not picked up and cuddled every time he/she cries. After observing that his
rats continued to press the bar at a fairly constant rate even when they were not being reinforced
for each response, skinner decided to investigate different reinforcement schedules to determine
their effectiveness in controlling behavior. Among the rates of reinforcement he tested are the
following:

- Fixed interval
- Fixed ratio
- Variable interval
- Variable ratio

**Fixed-interval schedule of reinforcement**

**Fixed-interval schedules** are those where the first response is rewarded only after a specified
amount of time has elapsed. This schedule causes high amounts of responding near the end of the
interval, but much slower responding immediately after the delivery of the reinforcer. An
example of this in a lab setting would be reinforcing a rat with a lab pellet for the first bar press
after a 30 second interval has elapsed. Fixed- interval schedule of reinforcement means that the
reinforcer is presented following the first response that occurs after a fixed time interval has
elapsed. The interval could be 1 minute, 5 minutes or any other fixed period of time. The reward
is not based on the number of times the response occurs but on elapsing of the set period of time.
Examples of such life situations that operate in accordance with the fixed-interval reinforcement
schedule are: monthly salary which is not paid on the number of items one produces (no.of
responses) but on elapsing of the month. Skinner showed that the shorter the interval the greater
the frequency of response. He also established that, the response stopped sooner if the rats had
been reinforced continuously and the reinforcement was then stopped than if the rat had been
reinforced intermittently. Give examples.

**Fixed- ratio  schedule of reinforcement**