

BEHAVIORISM

What is essential for psychology to be a science?

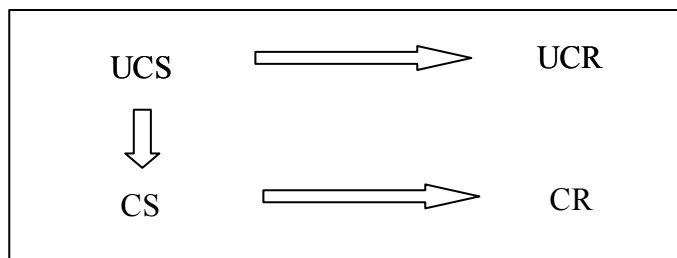
- Empirical
 - easily gained support[?]
- John B. Watson, FOUNDER of behaviorism, 1913, CLASSICAL CONDITIONING
 - argued that for PSYCHOLOGY to gain RESPECT as a SCIENCE, it should concern itself with OVERT, OBSERVABLE, MEASUREABLE variables – BEHAVIOR
 - unconscious, emotions, thoughts, feelings, etc... NOT OBSERVABLE
- Personality was the END PRODUCT of our HABIT systems
 - different LIFE EXPERIENCES accounts for the PERSONALITY variables
 - “Give me any baby...”
- B.F. Skinner, OPERANT CONDITIONING
 - argued that BEHAVIOR is simply the result of conditioned responses to particular situations

Basic Principles of Conditioning

Classical Conditioning

- S-R RESPONSE; Food and salivation in dogs

second-order conditioning, bell can be conditioned with green light



extinction

Operant Conditioning

Law of Effect – behavior is more likely to be repeated if they LEAD to SATISFYING CONSEQUENCES

Reinforcement – increase

Punishment - decrease

Positive – introduce something

Negative – take away something

Shaping – gradually reinforcing SMALL INCREMENTS to a target behavior

Generalization – APPLYING learned behavior to SIMILAR situations or CONTEXTS

- children generalize politeness to relatives to strangers

Discrimination – learning that reinforcement will not follow in different contexts

Examples of conditioned behavior

Personality for Behaviorists

How would a behaviorist look at personality?

- focus only on what is OBSERVABLE and MEASUREABLE

- we describe a person's PERSONALITY by how GENERALIZED a particular BEHAVIOR may be for the individual

EX: generally shy, outgoing, talkative, temperamental, aggressive, etc...

- PERSONALITY is a CONGLOMERATION of all LEARNED behavior.
- whether a condition is punishing or reinforcing, DEPENDS on the person, personality VARIABLES

Things that are particularly reinforcing/aversive

Is there a problem with how behaviorists view personality?

- We are no different FROM THE REST of the species here on EARTH

Which is more effective: reinforcement or punishment?

Problem with punishment:

1. does not TEACH appropriate BEHAVIOR
 2. punishment must FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY and be CONSISTENT
 3. AVERSIVE STIMULI may become associated with initiator
 4. may EXTINGUISH UNTARGETED behavior
 - punishing banging to toy on wall, may extinguish playing with toys altogether
 - punishing being late may extinguish going to school
 5. MODELING of undesirable behavior, spanking
 6. can create NEGATIVE FEELINGS
- positive punishment is seen as the LEAST DESIRABLE of behavioral modification strategies
 - should be used SPARINGLY
 - only helps to control unwanted behavior, UNTIL such a time that good behavior can be STRENGTHENED

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

- behaviorism is too SIMPLISTIC
 - “one does not learn all behavior through experiencing the requisites of such”

EX: we are taught to drive, perform surgery, make computer programs, though LEARNING, and NOT experiencing the positive and negative consequences of each

- INTERNAL STATES could have also been the result of CONDITIONING

EX: loving

- associating the good feeling to an event/person (arousal) + LABEL = EMOTION
- a matter of SUBJECTING it to MEASUREMENT

behavior-environment-behavior interactions

- how our ENVIRONMENT acts on us DETERMINES our BEHAVIOR and how WE act on our environment also DETERMINES how it (environment) responds to us.
- INTERNAL STATES can function as REINFORCERS/PUNISHMENT

EX: boost/devastation in one's SELF-ESTEEM after RECEIVING HIGH/LOW GRADES

Julian Rotter's Social Learning Theory

- viewed PERSONALITY (behavior) as being the PRODUCT of both PERSON and ENVIRONMENT
- CHANGE the way a person THINKS, or the ENVIRONMENT, then BEHAVIOR will CHANGE
- personality does not stop developing at a particular stage; continues to develop along with

- experience
- Rotter acknowledges our active participation in the whole process

Behavior Potential

- the LIKELIHOOD that a particular BEHAVIOR would be ELICITED in a given situation depending on whether we would get reinforcement (expectancy) and whether that would have any significance to us (reinforcement value)
 - PROBABILITY of BEHAVIOR to occur in a given situation
 - different from probable behavior that might be elicited; KIND OF BEHAVIOR
 - a MEASUREMENT

EX: you see your significant other with another person from the opposite sex whom you do not know options:

How would you react?

1. approach/CONFRONT them intentionally
2. pretend that you just happened to cross paths
3. hide and spy on them
4. ignore and simply go ahead with your own agenda

Expectancy

- ESTIMATIONS; we CALCULATE whether we would get something (REINFORCEMENT/PUNISHMENT) out of the responses we are considering
 - low expectancy = we DO NOT anticipate REWARDS for that behavior; NOT LIKELY to ENGAGE

EX: we predict where we would have fun the most before deciding where to go for a Saturday night out

- EXPERIENCE with similar situations play a SIGNIFICANT role
- expecting UNDESIRABLE consequences LESSENS BEHAVIOR POTENTIALITY
- SUBJECTIVE assessment of expectancies
 - can cause IRRATIONAL expectancies = pathologies
 - person's assessment may NOT BE EQUAL to ACTUAL result/probability

EX: a person may have high expectancies for being humiliated in a social gathering = SOCIAL ANXIETY

How do traditional behaviorists differ from Rotter in explaining behavior?

- ✓ Traditional: behavior is the RESULT of CONDITIONING
- ✓ Rotter: behavior is the RESULT of our ANTICIPATION of the REINFORCEMENT, they expect to be reinforced

Generalized Expectancies

- what we use to ACCOUNT for NOVEL SITUATIONS
 - we apply expectancies from other SIMILAR situations much like generalized responses
- behaviorist orientation

Reinforcement Value

- the DEGREE to which we PREFER a reinforcer OVER ANOTHER
- independent of expectancy

- how valuable a reinforcer might be, TELLS NOTHING about our expectancy for it

EX: we might value social interactions, but have a very low expectancy for it

Social Cognitive Theory

Albert Bandura

- traditional behaviorists REDUCE human THOUGHT PROCESSES and PERSONALITY too much
- believed in the INFLUENCE of both PERSON and ENVIRONMENT on behavior
 - *Reciprocal Determinism*
 - internal and external factors and behavior influence each other

Potential Environment – same environment for everyone in the situation

- OBJECTIVE environment
- influences our BEHAVIOR

Actual Environment – environment we create from our behavior; our EFFECT on the ENVIRONMENT

- the INFLUENTIAL STRENGTH of each variable can be held ACCOUNTABLE for what DETERMINES BEHAVIOR
 - sometimes, external factors override internal one's and VICE VERSA

Cognitive Influences on Behavior

- we have control over our behavior

Self-regulation

- active participation in decision making; BEHAVIOR
- behavior can also be MOTIVATED INTERNALLY, reinforced/punished internally

EX: boost is self-esteem/guilt

Observational/Vicarious Learning

- we can also learn from merely observing others
- emphasized the distinction between *learning* and *performance*
 - not all of the things we have learned, we actually do
 - we also ANTICIPATE what kind of RESULT would come out of particular BEHAVIOR
 - WE DO NOT perform behavior which WE LEARNED would lead to PUNISHMENT (internal or external)
 - our MODELS play an important role
 - seeing bad behavior NOT being PUNISHED, we are more likely to IMITATE that behavior

Applications:

Explaining psychological disorders

- many FEARS might have come about through ASSOCIATIONS made between S-R (classical conditioning)

How might certain fears develop?

EX: social situations, examinations, certain animals

If constant pairing is necessary for associations to persist, why don't irrational beliefs extinguish after not being consistently paired with the aversive stimuli?

EX:

girl falls from a slide = fear of slides

sight of slide = fear and anxiety

response = avoiding slide (reduces fear and anxiety [aversive stimulus]; reinforcement)

Behavioral Modification

- widely used in therapy

different from other forms because:

- not concerned with origin of problem behavior
- relatively shorter
- focus on changing specific behavior and replacing it with more appropriate ones

Classical Conditioning Applications

- mental images can also be conditioned
 - pairing mental images with relaxation exercises

EX: meditation

systematic desensitization

- gradually anting up the imagined scenario up until extremes

EX: fear of heights: 2 feet, up a staircase, ladder, building, skyscraper, from a plane

Aversion therapy

EX: military training/boot camp to condition tough personality

- pairing unwanted behavior (fear, shyness) with aversive stimuli (shouting)

Operant Conditioning Applications

- reinforcing good behavior and punishing bad behavior at the same time
 - not ENOUGH that we PUNISH unwanted BEHAVIOR

Token Economy

- giving out rewards that could be exchanged for more tangible ones; TOKENS

Biofeedback

- EQUIPMENT for monitoring SOMATIC responses to tell whether one is agitated, anxious or relaxed
 - clients are thought relaxation exercises to use when the machine tells they are stressed
 - reinforcement comes from being able to alleviate the tension

Self-efficacy

outcome expectation – the degree to which people believe ACTIONS WILL LEAD to some specified OUTCOME

efficacy expectation – extent to which people BELIEVE they can actually SUCCEED in bringing about the outcome

- Bandura argued that when people do not believe they can succeed in doing something, they will actually fail; MIND OVER MATTER
 - overly high standards sets one's self up for failure

- too low, then it's meaningless

What could be the likely effects of self-punishment?

Likely results of excessive self-punishment

1. compensation – superiority complex/illusions of grandeur
 2. inactivity – apathy, boredom, depression
 3. escape – drugs, fantasies, ultimate escape=suicide
- EFFICACY expectations are better predictors of behavior [?]

Sources of efficacy expectations

1. Enactive Mastery Experiences
 - successful attempts to achieve the outcome in the past
 2. Vicarious Experiences
 - seeing people reinforced in the past may lead people to think they can do it also
 3. Verbal Persuasion
 - telling people that they can do it!
 4. Physiological and affective states
 - bodily reactions may influence how we perceive our efficacy for a particular task
 - ASSOCIATION between ANXIETY and specific situation, may lead to AVERSION
- what's important is for people to believe that they could do it

Guided Mastery

- similar to systematic desensitization

Strengths

- solid foundation on empiricism
- application is clinical setting; therapies

Criticisms

- narrow in its depiction of human personality
- conditioning has its limits
- reductionism
- Intrinsic motivations

RELEVANT RESEARCH

Individual Differences in Gender-Role Behavior

What role does conditioning play in gender role expectations?

- we are already LABELED from birth – (OPERANT CONDITIONING)
 - PUNISHMENT for INAPPROPRIATE behavior and reinforcement for GENDER appropriate ones
- GIRLS/BOYS are TREATED DIFFERENTLY early on
 - blue/pink for boys/girls = (CLASSICAL CONDITIONING)
 - experiment: parents describe girls already as beautiful, soft, finer, less attentive than sons
 - they hardly differ in any of these
 - it's not alright for BOYS to CRY, little girls should always help around the inside of the house, boys is the outside

- role of OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING
 - early in childhood, children learn from their surrounding about how males and females should be; CLOTHES, PLAY, ACT, etc..

Gender Type and Psychological Adjustment

1. Congruence Model/Masculinity/Femininity
 - people pay a significant price when they violate social norms regarding gender-roles
 - feminine males may become the laughing stock of peers(PUNISHMENT)
2. Androgyny
 - could be regarded as well-adjusted people
 - they can be assertive one moment, and empathic the next
3. Masculinity Model
 - argues that since SOCIETY'S DEFINITION of SUCCESS is SYNONYMOUS to traits assigned as being MASCULINE, people who score high in this trait have been argued to be more well-adjusted

Observational Learning of Aggression

Four step model (for aggression)

1. attend
 - they must pay attention to the model for it to have a significant influence on them
 - frustrated children attend more to aggressive acts
2. remember
 - practice and mental rehearsal can make memories vivid
 - role playing (power rangers)
3. enact
 - learning and performance
4. expect rewards/motivation
 - children would most likely imitate aggressive acts when they see that rewards follow that act
 - killing every single member of a mob to save someone
 - when they see that the aggressive act is justified
 - superhero throws around bad guy
 - raising war on Iraq

Factors that motivate modeling

- PAST reinforcement/punishment
 - PROMISED reinforcement/punishment (rewards/threats)
 - VICARIOUS reinforcement/punishment
- question of whether aggression is caused by television or aggressive people just watch violent shows more
- studies consistently show a very high correlation between TV violence and aggressive behavior

Learned Helplessness

- helplessness experiments are also attainable with human being
- people who think they are helpless, perform worse than those who do not feel helpless
 - even simply being told they were helpless, significantly affects performance

Learned Helplessness in the Elderly

- fully structured nursing homes may be initiating learned helplessness among the elderly

- experiment showed increased levels of happiness and activity when they were allowed to take control of their lives

Learned Helplessness and Psychological Disorders

- depressed people inappropriately generalize helplessness in one area of their lives to other areas
- continuous mental repetition of unfortunate situations may accentuate feelings of depression
- repeated exposure to stimuli related to the helpless event, prolongs prognosis

Locus of Control and Well-being

internal

external

Psychological Disorders

- people with disorders are usually external; external and depression are highly correlated
 - they lack the sense of being in control of their lives
 - they feel that there is usually nothing they can do about the influences that the external world have on them
- external locus of control also correlates with suicidal tendencies

Psychotherapy

- clients tend to become more internal after therapy
-

Achievement

- internal LoC correlates with academic achievement
 - they believe they control whether they would pass in a given exam or not

Activity: Design a therapy program based on the principles of behaviorism and systematic desensitization for each of the following cases to help the client.

1. *Britney has been a loner for most of her life. She prefers to be alone during gatherings, and chooses to do school work on her own. She would usually fail to socialize whenever she went along with her friends and would simply mind her own business during parties. At times when people would initiate a conversation, she would quickly find reasons for her to leave or end the conversation. Recently, she has been socially excluding herself from others. She is beginning to suffer from extreme social anxiety. She has had trouble making new friends in the past and her existing relationships are slowly deteriorating.*
2. *Ever since Kevin was bit by a dog, he has developed an extreme generalized fear for all animals that had four legs, a tail, and teeth. When walking home, he would choose to go around two blocks farther than the most convenient route just so he could avoid running into a house that had a pet dog. During one of their visits to a family friend's house, he fainted when a poodle suddenly cuddled him from behind while sitting on a couch. He would scream and throw tantrums whenever animals would approach him.*