

Choosing to Change Behavior


Operant Conditioning
Module 18

Operant Conditioning

- Unlike Classical Conditioning, behavior is strengthened if followed by a reinforcer or weakened if followed by a punisher.
 - Classical Conditioning does not address voluntary behaviors.
- B. F. Skinner believed that more behaviors can be explained through Operant Conditioning than through classical conditioning.

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The Law of Effect



- Edward Thorndike was the first to examine this process of conditioning in the 1890's using puzzle boxes
- Thorndike believed that if a response is rewarded (*reinforced*) then the response is learned.
 - Any event that strengthens the probability of a response
- If the response is not rewarded, it gradually disappears.

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Your boss announces that the most productive employee will receive a \$5000 bonus check next month.



Can I change your behavior?

- If you come to every class, I will give you 4 extra credit points.
- The test starts today...if you take it before Friday I will give you 20 extra credit points on that test.
- If you are caught texting in class, you will lose 20 points off your final grade.
- If you spend more time studying the material in PsychPortal, you will earn all the possible points. ⁵

Conditioning allows us to *shape* behavior



B.F Skinner

- By making _____
_____ complex behaviors can be gradually shaped.
- Skinner believed that an organism's behavior was directly related to consequences.
- Skinner also believed that we continually and unintentionally reward and shape others' behaviors in everyday life.

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The Skinner Box

- The "*Skinner box*" was designed as a controlled environment with responding mechanisms and consequence delivery



Reinforcement

- A reinforcer is any event _____

- Reinforcers _____ behavior can be positive or negative.

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Reinforcement

■ Positive reinforcement is the _____

■ Example:

- Every time you raise your hand in class, you receive your favorite candy.



Negative DOES NOT mean BAD

■ Negative reinforcement _____

■ Example- If you do not participate three times per class, I will take away 50 points from your final grade.



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Regardless of which method of reinforcement is used, the end result is the same. The probability that the student will participate in class has



Parents often fall victim to the “Negative Reinforcement game”



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- *Avoidance (active avoidance)*
 - This procedure involves an aversive stimulus that is to be presented some time in the future

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Negative reinforcement

- While driving to campus one morning you get stuck in heavy traffic. The next day, you leave home earlier than usual and don't run into heavy traffic. You leave home earlier again the next morning and again you avoid heavy traffic.
- What's the negative reinforcer?



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Positive reinforcement

- Martha was a five-year-old girl who attended preschool. She seldom played with the other children. Workers at the preschool began praising and admiring Martha when she engaged in cooperative play with other children. As a result of this procedure Martha's level of cooperative play with the other children increased.
- How was Martha reinforced?



Positive or Negative Reinforcement?

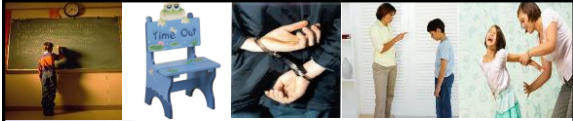
- Linda buys her 3 year-old daughter candy to stop a temper tantrum.
- George shoots up heroin to prevent the symptoms associated with heroin withdrawal.
- A high school teacher began disapproving of the students' disruptive behaviors when they occurred. This resulted in an increase in the level of disruptive behaviors.
- Diane's supervisor compliments her on her hard work.
- If Billy cleans his room, he will no longer have to stay inside

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Schedules of Reinforcement

- Four schedules are based on _____
- These schedules can be _____
- Two are _____
- based on time periods
- Two are *ratio schedules*
- based on _____





“Don’t DO that!!”

Punishment can also be a consequence

- Punishment is any consequence that _____

- The process of delivering an unpleasant stimulus, or removing a desired stimulus.
 - _____ Punishment receive something to decrease unwanted behavior
 - Negative Punishment _____ to decrease unwanted behavior

Is Punishment the same as Negative Reinforcement?

- Punishment is often confused with Negative Reinforcement _____
- The _____ than that of reinforcement.

Positive Punishment



- _____

- Your teacher gives you an F on your exam if you get too many questions wrong
- _____
for going 15 mph faster down the highway than you should have

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Examples of Negative Punishment



- _____

- A child is sent to her room after hitting her sister
- You come home past your curfew and your parents _____

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Did you get it?

Negative reinforcement or Punishment

- Because Kathy did not clean her room she must stay inside.
- Your Professor says you won't have to take the final exam because you did so well on your other exams.
- Riley is placed in "time out" because she would not listen to her mother.
- Megan's mom is always nagging her to wash the dishes and when Megan does the dishes, her mom stops nagging her
- A parent takes away a teen's cell phone following a poor report card.

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Does punishment work?

- It only suppresses existing behaviors. Punishment cannot _____

- Punishment can teach _____ and inconsistent punishment may lead to _____

- Physical punishment may increase _____

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Can we learn just by watching?

Module 19
Observational Learning

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Observational Learning

- Humans can learn without direct experience through *observational learning*

- This tendency to imitate the actions, feelings of others is biologically based and related to _____

- These neurons mirror the actions of others and enable _____

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Our inclination to copy others stems from a mechanism that

whatever we see around us.

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Can aggression be learned?




- Albert Bandura is a pioneer on observation learning theory.
 - Bandura suggested that an organism learns new responses by _____
- Whether we imitate a model depends, in part, on _____
 - Those received by the model and the imitator.
 - “Bobo Doll” experiments

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Social Learning Theory

- By watching we learn to _____

 in situations like those we are observing
- We are especially likely to imitate



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Applications of Observational Learning

- Bandura's studies show that models (family, neighborhood or TV) may have good or bad effects on behavior.
- Television, movies, and video games are a powerful source of observational learning and studies have found a link between viewing violent programs and aggressive behavior



Next Class

- Memory

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