


Social Learning Theory

Learning can occur simply through observing others - also known as MODELS - in our environment



How might we link this to Social Learning Theory? How do the children learn?

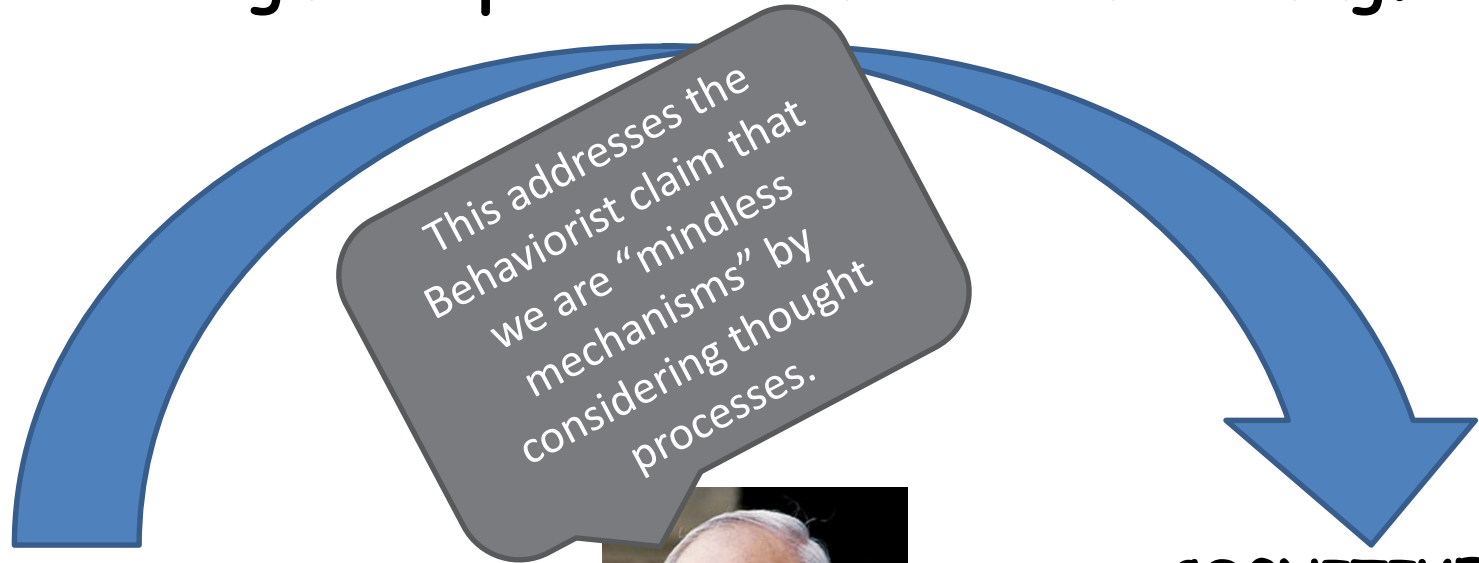


Social Learning Theory

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Mind-Behavior-Environment

The cognitive processes involved in learning.



BEHAVIORISM

FOCUS ON HUMAN
BEHAVIOR IN
RESPONSE TO
REWARD/PUNISHMENT



COGNITIVE

FOCUS ON THE
INTERNAL MENTAL
PROCESS BETWEEN
STIMULUS AND
RESPONSE

Social Cognitive Theory

- Individuals learn through imitating others who receive rewards and punishments.



SCLT - Tenet 1

- **Tenet 1:** Response consequences (such as rewards or punishments) influence the likelihood that a person will perform a particular behavior again



SCLT - Tenet 2

- **Tenet 2:** Humans can learn by observing others, in addition to learning by participating in an act personally.
- Learning by observing others is called **vicarious learning or observational learning**.
 - *The concept of vicarious learning is not one that would be subscribed to by classical behaviorists.*



SCLT - Tenet 3

- **Tenet 3:** Individuals are most likely to model behavior observed by others they **identify with**.
- Identification with others depends on the degree to which a person is perceived to be like one's self.
- The degree of emotional attachment that is felt toward an individual also plays a role.



SCLT – Main Tenets

- Consequences of behavior influence the likelihood of the observed behavior being repeated.
- Behaviors are more likely to be learned if the observer identifies with the person modeling the behavior.

EXAMPLE:

Shelby is five years old and is watching her favorite cartoon.

The cartoon shows a young girl helping her father with the house work and the father praises the daughter for doing so. After Shelby then offers to help her father with the house work.

Shelby is not receiving any DIRECT reinforcement to persuade her to help her mother?

- Why does Shelby do this?

VICARIOUS REINFORCEMENT

- She observed the girl in the cartoon being praised for her behavior and is now motivated to replicate this behavior herself in order to gain similar praise.



When an individual learns without direct reinforcement, but solely from the observation of another person's experience, *vicarious reinforcement* has taken place.

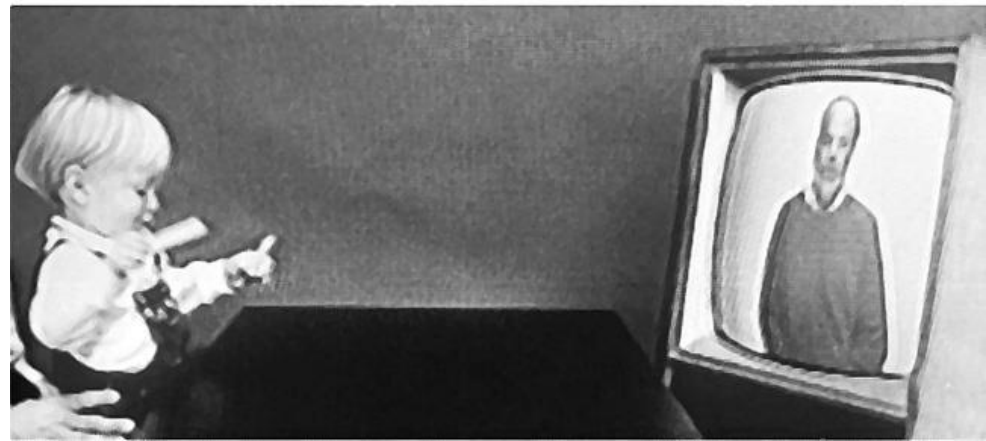
(Shelby did not receive reinforcement, but saw another person perform the action and be reinforced for doing so.)

VICARIOUS REINFORCEMENT OR PUNISHMENT

- The likelihood of acting on vicarious learning changes when we see the consequences of other people's behavior.
- Vicarious reinforcement or vicarious punishment affects the willingness of people to perform behaviors they learned by watching others.

Imitation Onset

Learning by observation begins early in life. This 14-month-old child imitates the adult on TV in pulling a toy apart.



The BoBo Doll Experiment

- AIM: To see whether children would imitate aggressive behavior
- Hypotheses: Children exposed to an aggressive model would produce more imitative aggressive acts than both the other conditions (control and non-aggressive).

Children exposed to the non-aggressive model will show less aggression than the group that saw no model.

METHOD:

72 boys and girls from the
Stanford University
Nursery School.

Mean age = 4;4

Aggressive Condition

24 children observed an
adult being aggressive to a
bobo doll

Non-Aggressive Condition

24 children observed an
adult playing and ignoring
a bobo doll

Control Group

24 participants

RESULTS

1. Boys more physically aggressive than girls

I don't feel like hitting the BOBO right now but I might shout at it later

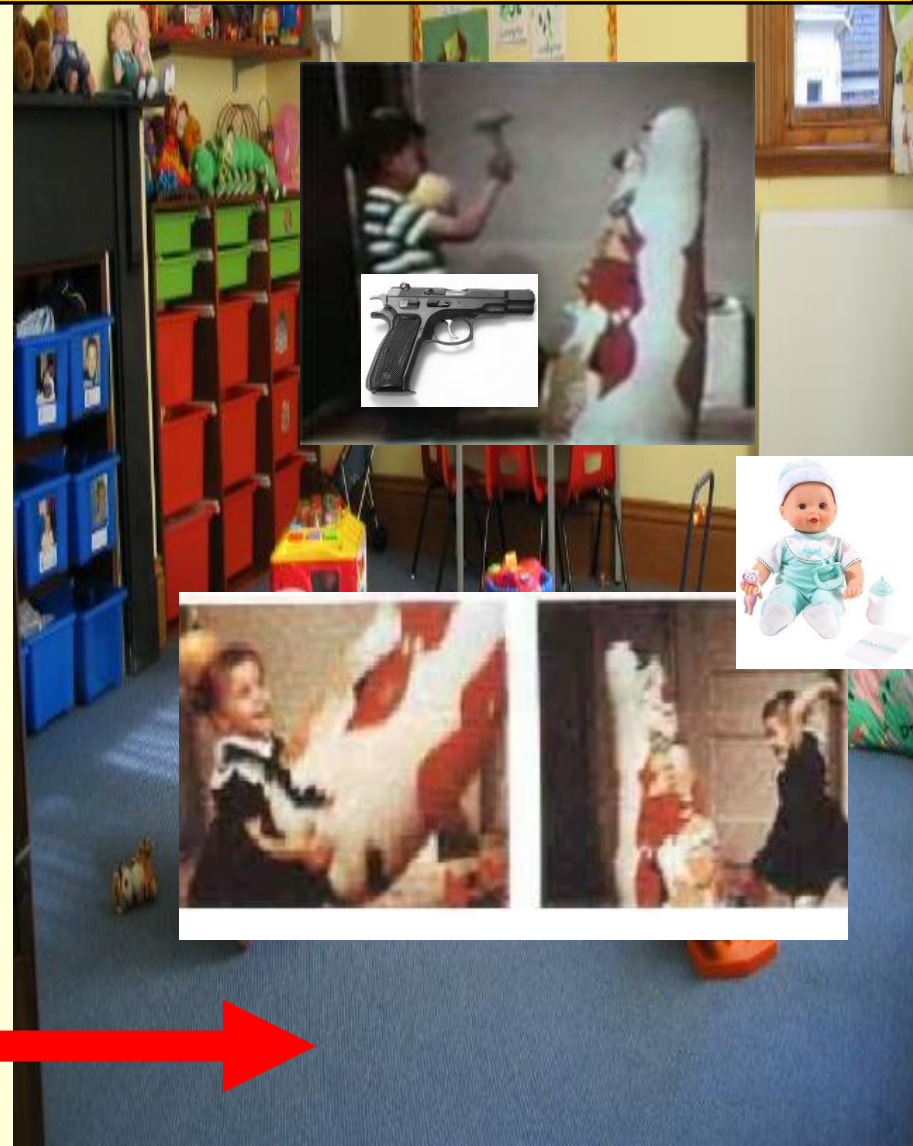


GRRR
PUNCH



Verbal aggression was found to be equal with boys and girls.

2. The children in the aggressive model condition made more aggressive responses than the children in the non-aggressive model condition.



Novel Ways of being aggressive also used
Such as Doll/Hammer/Gun
Even though it was not modelled



Girls seemed to be more influenced by the **NEGATIVE COMMENTS** from the video than boys.



STOP IT!



The man said you should not do that!



Conclusions

- The findings support Bandura's Social Learning Theory.
- That is, children learn social behavior such as aggression through the process of observation learning - through watching the behavior of another person.

Children learn in conjunction with other MEDIATING COGNITIVE FACTORS.

monkey see . . .



. . . monkey do

Bandura - Bobo Doll



Applications of Observational Learning

- Unfortunately, Bandura's studies show that antisocial models (family, neighborhood or TV) may have antisocial effects.
- Disinhibition/Desensitization:
 - Observation may get rid of a phobia or fear by watching someone else engage in similar behavior
- Fortunately, Bandura's studies also show that pro-social models (family, neighborhood or TV) may have pro-social effects.



Possible Evaluation Points for SLT

Strengths

Takes into account
COGNITIVE
PROCESSES

Has many
applications
(expose gender
roles)

Weaknesses

Does not explain individual
differences - e.g.
reinforcement to one child
might not be the same for
another

Does not account for ALL
behaviour e.g. becoming a
criminal, despite not
associating with criminals

Retrieve and Remember

- Match the learning examples (items 1–5) to the following concepts (a–e):
 - a) Classical conditioning
 - b) Operant conditioning
 - c) Latent Learning
 - d) Observational learning
 - e) Biological predispositions

1. Knowing the way from your bed to the bathroom in the dark
2. Speaking the language your parents speak
3. Salivating when you smell brownies in the oven
4. Disliking the taste of chili after becoming violently sick a few hours after eating chili
5. Your dog racing to greet you on your arrival home