

Ethical issues and tactics

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Ethics

There are many different psychological theories that help to explain why people behave the way they do, and what can be done to influence behavior. In this essay, I will explain some of them in order to foster a better understanding.

One theory is that people behave as they do because of a complex interaction between different parts of themselves, of which the conscious mind is one, and the subconscious is the other. In this thinking there is a complex relationship between three things that make up the human mind in this understanding: the id, the ego, and the super-ego. Each part has its own desires, and a person's behavior will be dictated by the degree to which each of those elements influences behavior. Some believe in this hypothesis, while others broadly discredit it.

One thing that is clear, however, is that psychological modification is possible. One form of doing this is called “conditioning.” In an experiment run by the current author, a group of animals were taught that ringing bells was a precursor to food: a bell would ring, followed by them being given food every time. What this author found is that eventually, if one took away the food and only rang the bell, the animals in question would salivate anyways: it had been fundamentally programmed into their brain that these things were interconnected. Thus behavior was modified from the outside for a particular purpose.

The underlying principles of psychology are up for question, but what is unquestionable is the fact that it is possible to modify behavior from the outside as a psychologist.

The ethical problem with this essay is the fact that it did not attribute ideas
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or programs to the people who they belonged to. For instance, I did not give Freud credit for id, ego, and super-ego theory, and failed to mention Pavlov at all in classical conditioning. Furthermore, it seems that I took credit for an experiment run by Pavlov and not by myself (though I suppose it is possible that I ran this experiment again).

I think that this would cause the reader to either not believe in the integrity of my work (if they were familiar with the ideas involved) or else they would walk away with the mistaken impression that I originated those ideas.

Fixed essay:

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One theory is that people behave as they do because of a complex interaction between different parts of themselves, of which the conscious mind is one, and the subconscious is the other. In this thinking there is a complex relationship between three things that make up the human mind in this understanding: the id, the ego, and the super-ego (Freud 1890). Each part has its own desires, and a person's behavior will be dictated by the degree to which each of those elements influences behavior. Some believe in this hypothesis, while others broadly discredit it.

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