

John b watson theory essay



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Perspectives of John B. Watson, B. F. Skinner, and Edward C. Tolman Learned behaviors come from forms of conditioning stimulus. The two forms of conditioning: classical and operant. Each one has an effect on a person's behavior. Classical conditioning is when a behavior is from a neutral stimulus along with another stimulus of significance. Operant conditioning is a learned behavior that comes from the effect of receiving consequences for ones actions. Both of these learning conditionings cause phobias and behavioral addictions to occur.

Behavioral Psychology specialized in the relationships between stimuli and response (Goodwin, 2008). During the 19th Century behavioral psychology was beginning to strongly evolve with American psychologist. John B. Watson, B. F. Skinner, and Edward C. Tolman were influential psychologist that their theories and practices changed behavioral psychology through the ages. John. B Watson In 1913, John B. Watson was invited to speak at Columbia University and Watson shared his theory of behavioral psychology.

Behaviourism John B. Watson

The lecture that Watson delivered at Columbia University was published during the same year with an insulting title “ Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It” (Goodwin, 2008). This publication was known as the Behaviorist Manifesto. Watson was sounding the charge against introspection and declared that there was no relationship between animal behavior and human behavior during his lecture (Horowitz, 1992). Goodwin (2008) quoted the opening paragraph from the called Behaviorist Manifesto, Psychology as the

behaviorist views it is purely objective experimental branch of natural science.

Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behavior. Introspection forms no essential part of its methods, nor is the scientific value of its data dependent upon the readiness with which they lend themselves to interpretation in terms of consciousness. The behaviorist, in his efforts to get unitary scheme of animal response, recognizes no dividing line between man and brute...(p. 343) Watson opening paragraph that contained just four sentences is the most quoted psychology passage (Goodwin, 2008).

It explained how psychology is a part of natural science, sets clear goals for scientific psychology, rejection of the consciousness or one's own thought, fully accepted a genetic model of behavior (Goodwin, 2008). In 1920, Watson was involved in the nature-nurture controversy (Horowitz, 1992). Watson theory was that learning principles acquired was the only logical explanation in controlling human behaviors. Watson turned his attention to the study of behaviorism and began to observed infants and young children.

The same year, Watson and his assistant, Rosalie Alberta Rayner, conducted an experiment with a boy under the age of one. The boy was called Albert in the experiment and is now know in the world of psychology as Little Albert. Watson and Rayner wanted to prove that they could condition a behavioral response from Little Albert. The choice to use Little Albert was because he was an unemotional child that rarely cried (Beck, Levinson, & Irons, 2009). Watson did not want to cause injury to the test subject and believed that a child that was unemotional and rarely cried would not experience harm.

The conditioning experiment of Little Albert was conducted with a white rat and led to Little Albert's fear of all furry objects when the experiment was finished. Watson's theory of classical conditioning displayed how a phobia was developed in Little Albert with furry objects. B. F. Skinner B. F. Skinner transformed behaviorism to a new height while building on the contributions of John B. Watson. Skinner furthered the study by developing the theory of operant conditioning which holds that repeated behavior is directly dependent on the positive or negative consequence of the behavior (Goodwin, 2008).

Skinner studied operant conditioning by creating operant chambers; they were structured and controlled environments that came to be known as Skinner Boxes by Clark Hull. One of Skinner's experiments involved a cat in the operant chamber. The cat was in a cage and food was presented. When the cat rubbed near the latch it caused the latch to open (Kowalski & Westen, 2009). The cat was put back in the cage and once again presented with food. It again rubbed the latch. A learned response was generated. Another experiment of Skinner's involved pigeon while researching for a government contract.

He discovered that the pigeons when they are waiting for food would repeat what they had done earlier when the food arrived. The pigeons would stand on one foot each time until they were fed. Skinner labeled the behavior as superstitious. Skinner filmed all of his experiments for future evaluation.

Edward C. Tolman Edward C. Tolman attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and graduated from their in 1911. Tolman's earned a

degree in electrochemistry. Tolman went to Harvard to pursue a graduate degree in psychology.

Tolman's theory was rats do not learn from stimulus-response, but from memory (Goodwin, 2008). Cognitive psychology is how an individual processes information. It is focused on memory and learning. Behavior psychology overlooked that there was an ability to acquire a behavior from environmental stimuli (Dowd, Clen, & Arnold, 2010). Conclusion According to Kowalski & Westen (2009) the lines between classical and operant conditioning are not always hard and fast, but the major distinction regards what comes first for the individual; did it occur in the environment or was it a behavior.

With classical conditioning some form of environmental stimuli occurred and in operate conditioning it was a behavior. Watson theory of behaviorism had a form of environmental stimuli that had a operate conditioning effecting the behavior. Most of our behaviors are voluntary reactions and this would be operant conditioning. B. F. Skinner theory was that there were consequences for one's actions. While Tolman theory was behavior was developed by environmental stimuli. All three of these men contributed to today's psychology.