

# Personal behavioral conditioning

Psychology



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Personal Behavioral Conditioning: The Role of Conditioning in the Acquisition of Manners, Punctuality, and the Fear of Reptiles Here Your Affiliation Here Behavioral conditioning can be attributed to several behaviors acquired in early childhood and adolescence. Classical conditioning transpires when a behavior is elicited by a specific stimulus (Lieberman, D. A. Learning: Behavior and Cognition LBC). Operant behavior occurs in situations presenting various stimuli and appears to be induced by the subject or organism (Lieberman, D. A. LBC). In this instance, the individual decides how and when to respond to the stimulus. Because classical conditioning is affected by an event that precedes the behavior, it can be distinguished from an operant response that is affected by the consequences or events following a behavior (Lieberman, D. A. LBC). Though my own experience provides innumerable examples of behavioral conditioning, my manners, punctuality, and fear of reptiles can best be ascribed to classical and operant behavioral conditioning.

Good manners are often taken for granted, but they are not arrived at through chance or coincidence. Manners are learned behaviors that are acquired from years of behavioral conditioning. As a child, my parents required me to say " please" and " thank you" when requesting items at the dinner table. If I neglected to say " please" when asking for something to drink, my mother would prompt me to remember my manners, and the drink would be withheld until I reformatted my request accordingly: " May I please have something to drink" When I applied my manners appropriately, I was rewarded with the item of request commonly accompanied by praise. This operant conditioning reinforced the behavior, and I still say " please" and " thank you" at the dinner table.

<https://assignbuster.com/personal-behavioral-conditioning/>

Punctuality is frequently depicted as a personality trait genetically inscribed in one's DNA. A person is either punctual or habitually late, but the current trend of thought gives us little choice in the matter. Punctuality is not an accident, but a learned behavior cultivated and fostered through operant conditioning. Several consequences correlate with tardiness. If I woke up late for school, I did not have time to eat breakfast and I sometimes missed the bus. Consequently, my parents would reprimand me on the way to school, and I would begin my day hungry. Positive incentives for being on time were a well-balanced meal and a pleasant ride to school with my friends. Aversive stimuli that motivated punctuality were missing breakfast and being scolded by my parents. After years of operant conditioning, I remain a prompt and punctual person.

Human fears are also learned behaviors usually attained through classical conditioning. When I was a young child, I had a bad encounter with my neighbor's pet snake. I was holding the non-venomous snake when it unexpectedly bit me on the hand. The pain and shock I experienced immediately following the incident were allocated to all future encounters with reptiles. I have been classically conditioned to associate reptiles with pain and shock. And, when presented with reptiles, I usually apply aversive techniques in order to avoid the negative stimuli.

J. B. Watson and B. F. Skinner were two major contributors to behavioral psychology. Rather than concentrate on the intricacies of the mind, both scientists aimed to unravel connections between discernable stimuli and behavioral responses (Guthrie, E. R. *The Psychology of Learning*). Many of the behaviors that define personality can be credited to behavioral conditioning. Though we take these behaviors for granted, they are not <https://assignbuster.com/personal-behavioral-conditioning/>

acquired by chance, but learned. It is not to my credit that I am well mannered, punctual, and afraid of reptiles. I owe these qualities to the classical and operant conditioning of my youth.

#### Works Cited

Guthrie, E. R. (1952) *The Psychology of Learning*. (Revised Edition) NY: Harper &

Row

Lieberman, D. A. (1993) *Learning: Behavior and Cognition*. Second Edition. Pacific

Grove: Brooks/Cole