

Social Learning Theory

Slide 1	Welcome to an introduction to social learning theory. This was a major innovation in the development of learning theories as it combined features of operant conditioning and cognitive information processing. My name is Bill Huitt and I am Professor Emeritus at Valdosta State University and Adjunct Professor at Capella University. The presentation is narrated by Geoff Huitt who is helping me produce these videos.
Slide 2	In the early 20 th century,
Slide 3	American psychology was dominated by the behavioral theories of
Slide 4	John Watson,
Slide 5	Edward Thorndike, and
Slide 6	B. F. Skinner. These theorists focused on how external stimuli were connected to overt behavior.
Slide 7	By the middle of the 20 th century, the cognitive theories of
Slide 8	George Miller,
Slide 9	Benjamin Bloom, and
Slide 10	Ulrich Neisser also became important with a focus on the structure and function of cognitive processes. There was a constant battle among paradigms with literature support for each of these.
Slide 11	Into this mix entered Albert Bandura
Slide 12	and his version of social learning theory,

Slide 13	which was also labeled as observational learning.
Slide 14	Bandura said that the argument over whether internal or external factors were more important for human learning missed a basic point
Slide 15	because empirical evidence showed that both internal and external factors were important.
Slide 16	His social learning theory had four steps:
Slide 17	Attention – at which point an external stimulus was perceived and attended to by the individual,
Slide 18	Retention – at which point what was observed and attended to had been placed in memory
Slide 19	These are the steps associated with an information processing approach to learning that focused on internal factors.
Slide 20	The third step was reproduction – at which point what was observed is reproduced in observable behavior, and, finally,
Slide 21	a fourth step of motivation – where external consequences were provided with the intention to either increase or decrease the frequency of the reproduced behavior.
Slide 22	These two steps are associated with the operant conditioning approach that focused on external factors associated with learning.
Slide 23	Some of the most famous of Bandura’s research studies are referred to as the Bobo Doll experiments.
Slide 24	In a series of experimental conditions, children were placed in a large room with toys, one of which was a Bobo Doll that children often hit.
Slide 25	An adult entered the room and hit and kicked and punched the Bobo Doll.

Slide 26	For some conditions, the adult was rewarded for the aggressive behavior. In a second condition, the adult was punished, and in a third condition, the adult simply left the room.
Slide 27	The aggressive acts of children were then observed in each of these conditions.
Slide 28	Bandura found that when the adult was rewarded and when no consequences were provided, the children's behavior was essentially equivalent. However, when the adult was punished, the children showed fewer imitated responses, with the girls' behavior decreasing dramatically.
Slide 29	Bandura labeled this learning as vicarious learning because the children changed the frequency of their aggressive behaviors based on their observation of consequences applied to someone else's behavior.
Slide 30	Bandura also completed a number of studies on children's behavior after they watched both aggressive and non-aggressive models. Notice that the imitative behaviors for watching human beings on film increased over those when children watched real-life aggressive behavior. Also, after watching aggressive behavior in cartoons (which many children were doing on Saturday mornings), children displayed even more aggressive behavior. Notice that in all cases, aggressive behavior was more frequent than when no aggressive behavior was observed. On the other had, children who observed a non-aggressive model showed fewer aggression than in all other conditions. Many parents in the 70s and 80s changed the viewing habits of their children when these results were popularized.
Slide 31	Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Bandura and his colleagues continued to explore the details of social learning theory. However, Bandura began to believe some important aspects of learning were not included in this theory, and, in 1986, Bandura published his work on a new theory, social cognition, which will be the focus of a separate presentation.
Slide 32	<p>Bandura, A. (1965) Influence of models' reinforcement contingencies on the acquisition of imitative response. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 1, 589-595.</p> <p>Bandura, A. (1977). <i>Social learning theory</i>. New York, NY: General Learning Press.</p> <p>Huitt, W., & Monetti, D. (2008). Social learning perspective. In W. Darity, <i>International encyclopedia of the social sciences</i> (2nd ed.) [602-603]. Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference USA/Thompson Gale. Retrieved from http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/papers/soclrnpers.pdf</p>

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