

Advanced Placement Psychology Summer Assignment

Introduction

Have you ever wondered where emotions come from? If you have, you are not alone. The source of emotions has fascinated behavioral scientists throughout psychology's history.

This study by John B. Watson and Rosalie Rayner (1920) on **conditioned (learned) emotional responses** was a strikingly powerful piece of research when it was published more than a century ago and it continues to exert influence today. You would be hard pressed to pick up a textbook on general psychology or on learning and behavior without finding a summary of their findings. (Excerpted from "Little Emotional Albert" in "Forty Studies that have Changed Psychology --- Explorations into the History of Psychological Research" by Roger R. Hock; 1992)

Answer this question first!

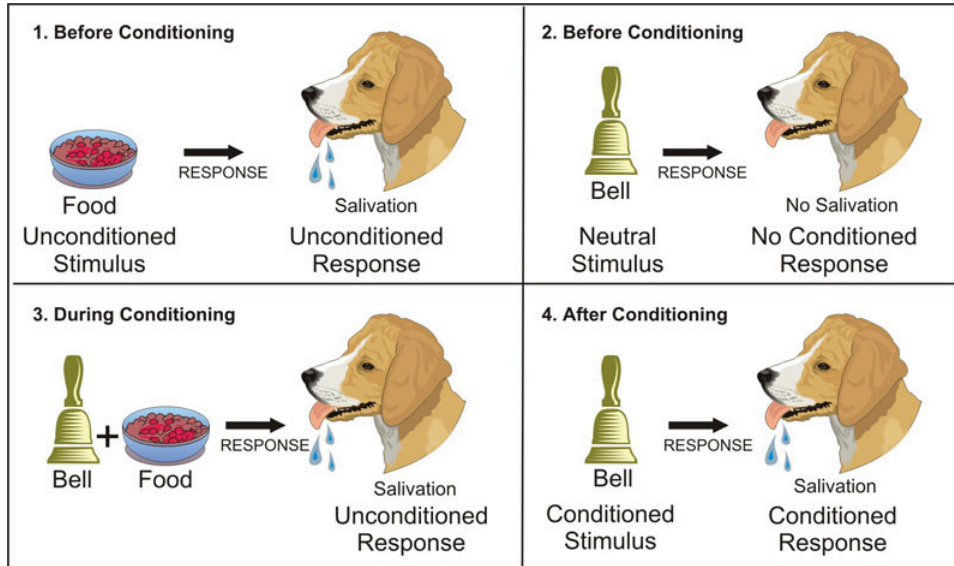
Part A. A naive reflection on the origin of emotions - (here, naive, means prior to going on the rest of this assignment and your Advanced Placement Psychology course.)

- 1.) Analyze the origin of an emotion: (do a little introspective self-analysis!)
- You are alone in your room; suddenly you feel anxious. Where did the emotion of anxiety come from?
 - You are alone in your room; suddenly you feel joyful. Where did the emotion of joy come from?

Classical Conditioning

Vocabulary: classical conditioning, unconditioned stimulus (UCS), unconditioned response (UCR), neutral stimulus (NS), conditioned stimulus (CS), conditioned response (CR)

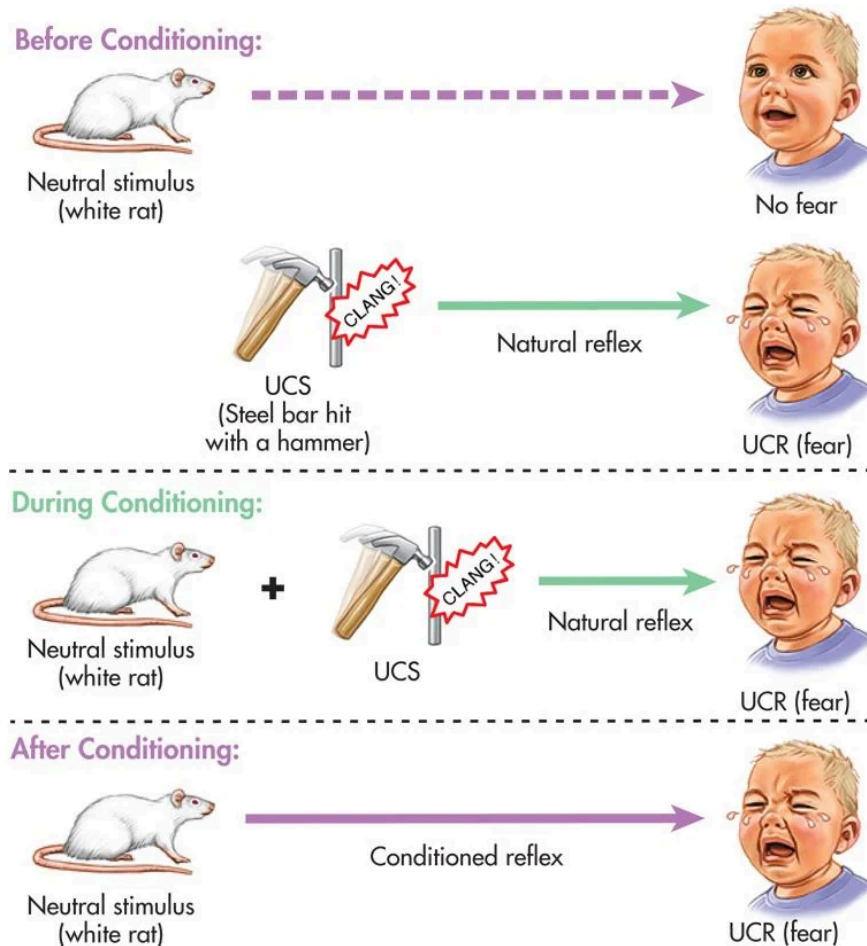
*Below - Ivan Pavlov's Experiment on Conditioning Dogs to Salivate to a Neutral Stimulus (NS)
(Dogs do not naturally salivate to the ringing of a bell)*



Classical Conditioning

Classically Conditioned Emotional Responses - Watson and Rayner's Study

Below - Watson's Experiment on Conditioning a Baby to Have a Startle Response to a Neutral Stimulus. (Little Albert at first demonstrated no fear or startle response upon the presentation of a white laboratory rat)



[The Little Albert Experiment](#) - verywellmind

[Baby Albert Experiments](#) - Youtube

[Journal of Experimental Psychology](#) - Conditioned Emotional Reaction by John B. Watson and Rosalie Rayner - (1920) - Transcript of Original Research Study

Overview

The three links above will provide you with a good grasp of Watson and Raynor's famous research on conditioning emotional reactions in a baby; a baby known to history as *Little Albert*.

- The first link, *The Little Albert Experiment*, is an excellent overview of Watson and Raynor's research presented in an easy to understand format. Read this first! We will refer to articles in verywellmind.com throughout the school year.
- The second link is a Youtube video that has actual footage from Watson and Raynor's experiment. My approach to psychology includes the presentation of many Youtube links to original studies.

- The third link is the original article describing the Little Albert study, published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* in February, 1920 - *Conditioned Emotional Reactions*. After having read the verywellmind link and watching the Youtube video, you should be thoroughly prepared to read this actual journal article, and you are on your way to thinking like a psychologist and understanding the scientific approach to understanding human behavior!

Instructions for Your Written Assignment

- Make sure that you answered Part A at the top of the page. Do not begin answering the rest of the questions until you have read the two articles above and watched the Youtube video.
- All assignments must be written **in your own words**. Cite any outside sources that you may use, but the links above should be sufficient and you need not cite them.
- Your responses should not be longer than what it takes to minimally respond to the questions - **this means a short paragraph of two to three sentences for each.**
- By way of an introduction to your course, we will review this assignment during our first class; make sure that you review this assignment and your responses to it in the days leading up to the beginning of the school year.
- When I set up your Advanced Placement Psychology Google Classroom, you will submit your assignment by the first day our class meets in September.
- Be prepared to discuss this assignment in class!
- Your written and participation grades will be entered into Power School as your first grades for Q1.

Questions - Part B

- 1.) How did John B. Watson and Rosalie Raynor demonstrate that *classical conditioning* could be used to condition an emotional response in a baby. Identify the unconditioned stimulus, unconditioned response, neutral stimulus, conditioned stimulus and conditioned response.
- 2.) (from the Journal of Experimental Psychology Link) In your own words, summarize Watson's description of Albert B. ("little Albert")
- 3.) What does the word "*stolid*" mean? Why was it important for this study that the research subject (little Albert) was stolid and unemotional?
- 4.) Look up the word *temperament*. (A foundational element of one's personality) How would this study be different (or even possible) if Little Albert had an *anxious temperament*? (not stolid)
- 5.) Read Watson's description (from the Journal of Experimental Psychology article) of Little Albert's reaction to the sound of striking a hammer upon a steel bar. Summarize Little Albert's response and then respond to the two bullet point statements below - argue both sides of the issue:

- “Treating Little Albert this way, even for the sake of scientific knowledge, is an example of child abuse.”
 - “Treating Little Albert this way for the sake of scientific knowledge is not an example of child abuse.”
- 6.) Explain the concept of *generalization*. (Watson uses the word *transferred*) What did Little Albert come to fear in addition to the white laboratory rat?
 - 7.) Examine and share one fear that you have that was acquired through classical conditioning and whether or not this fear was transferred (generalized) to other objects, persons, animals or events. (These fears, when they are irrational, are typically called *phobias* and the importance of understanding this topic is that most of what we call classical conditioning occurs in the natural environment and not in a scientific laboratory)
 - 8.) What prevented Watson and Rayner from removing Little Albert’s fears? (a process now called *extinction*)
 - 9.) (from verywellmind) Examine some of the ethical and moral issues of the Watson and Rayner experiment.
 - 10.) The following link is in the verywellmind article: [APA Code of Ethics: Principles, Purpose, and Guidelines](#) and included is this statement:

Client Welfare: *Due to the role they serve, psychologists often work with individuals who are vulnerable due to their age, disability, intellectual ability, and other concerns. When working with these individuals, psychologists must always strive to protect the welfare of their clients.*

The *American Psychological Association Code of Ethics* was first published in 1953 and so it did not apply to Watson and Rayner’s study. Respond to the following:

- Imagine that this *Code of Ethics* did exist in 1920: Would Watson and Rayner’s study be a violation of the *client welfare ethical issue*?
- What are some of the potential consequences for a psychologist who violates the APA’s *Code of Ethics*?