Development

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Learning

It’s interesting to talk about how and why people learn, and then walk into a grocery store and watch people and experience them learning. You can see kids begging and begging for candy just enough so that they will eventually get some from their mother or fathers. In this case the child has been under the process of operant conditioning. Because they associated them whining with the getting what it is that they want. This is also an example of positive reinforcement. Which is something that strengthens a response be presenting a pleasurable stimulus. Acquisition is the initial learning of an association. Extinction is the diminished responding that occurs when the conditioned stimulus no long signals the unconditioned stimuli. Which is linked to spontaneous recovery which is the reappearance of a weakened conditioned response after a brief amount of time. Generalization is the tendency to respond likewise to stimuli similar to the conditioned stimuli. Similar to when someone has a car accident, not only will they be afraid of cars, but soon they will be afraid of streets and traffic as well. Human learning presents many interesting phenomena, from psychological disorders, to subconscious assumptions. Learning is very apparent in everyday life, therefore it is good to know exactly how it is that not just humans, but animals as well, learn. Knowing how we learn can then tell us how we should go about teaching people. Once you know how the brain works, it suddenly isn’t so difficult to teach a dog how to sit, or to come. Phobias also are an obvious form of classical conditioning, because someone his simply just learned to associate a normal day object/experience with a bad object/experience. Just like how Watson taught a child to be afraid of a white rat. And it’s also interesting that the reverse these effects on people, all that needs to be done is the same conditioning, but reversed. It now makes sense why, in order to overcome a fear, you must experience it. That way you can associate that experience with a positive memory. Learning will always be of interest in the psychological field, and scientists will hopefully continue to learn about the brain and the amazing learning/associating abilities it has.