

Homework Assignments Behaviorism 2016

1. Read excerpt on the Yanomamo and complete the following:
 - a. Make a good list of “interesting” Yanomamo behaviors and practices.
 - b. Describe what started to happen to the researcher as he spent more time and became more immersed in the Yanomamo culture.

2. Consider the following quote from Behavioral Psychologist John Watson:

“Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors.”

Now, think about if YOU had complete control of a young child’s environment, let’s say for the first 6 or 7 years of his or her life. Try to do what Watson says he could do!

- a. Choose *either* to make your kid a **doctor**, or to make your kid a **thief**.
 - b. Write down 5 or 6 ideas about **what you would do** to make your kid into either a doctor or a thief later in life. Note: Do not simply list characteristics you would want your child to have. Focus on what you would do to the child – what you would expose him or her to, or what experience or experiences you would impose on the child, or exactly how you would treat the child, or what situation you would put him or her in, etc. Have fun with this!
3. Read pgs. 191-195 (stop at “schedules of reinforcement”) and complete the following:
 - a. Write down the definition for each of the following terms, and for each term, try to come up with your OWN specific human example (not a rat example), perhaps from your own life, or something you’ve seen on a TV show or movie, etc.:
 - Positive Reinforcement
 - Negative Reinforcement
 - Positive Punishment
 - Negative Punishment
 - b. How could you “shape” me to teach from the left corner of the classroom?
How could you then extinguish this response?

4. Do Operant Conditioning Worksheets 1 and 2.

5. In a paragraph or so, tell us a punishment story. You only need to choose **one** of the following three question sets:
 - a. Describe one of the worst, harshest punishments you ever received (and that you feel comfortable sharing with us). This could be from anyone – a teacher, parent, principal, coach, etc. What made the punishment so bad, so harsh? Did you, in the end, learn from this punishment? If so, what did you learn? Also, did it change your behavior in the present and in the future? Do you more resent, or appreciate, the punishment? (Or both)... Explain
 - b. Describe the most punitive teacher, coach, or other authority figure you have ever worked with. What were the situations in which he or she punished, and what types of punishments were used? How did you feel towards this person? Was this person successful in getting you to behave the way he or she wanted you to behave? In general, how has this person affected you and your behavior? Do you more resent or appreciate the punishment or the person? (or both) Explain...
 - c. Tell the story of someone who was really, really hard on you, but you are really glad this person treated you that way. How was this person hard on you? And how, exactly, did you benefit from it? How did you feel during your experience with this person in comparison to after your experience with this person? What would have happened if this person were less hard on you?

6. Read pages 198-199 (stop at stimulus control) and complete the following:
 - a. According to the research, how must punishment be administered in order to be effective?
 - b. List the possible unwanted “side effects” of punishment.
 - c. What are possible positive and negative effects of corporal punishment?

7. Read pgs. 195 (just very bottom) – 198 (just very top). Define each of the 4 schedules of reinforcement, and come up with a specific human example of each schedule in everyday life. Do your best to come up with your OWN example, not one they provide in the text.

8. For this assignment, I want you to do both a and b:
 - a. Read *Time Stands Still: The Psychology of Casinos*. Make a list of all techniques that casinos use to keep you in the casino and continue to play the games.
 - b. Watch the TED talk called “The Game Layer On Top of the World.” It’s about 12 minutes long. If you like video games, you will find this especially interesting. Here is the address:
http://www.ted.com/talks/seth_priebatsch_the_game_layer_on_top_of_the_world
After watching this, list and define each of the four game dynamics mentioned by Priebatsch. Also, give two examples for each dynamic, showing how these dynamics can work in video games and in the real world.

9. Read Excuse Me. May I Have Your Seat? And Space: The Hidden Dimension and complete the following:
'Excuse Me. May I Have Your Seat?' questions:
- What is the experiment?
 - What norm, or unspoken rule, is being challenged here?
 - What percentage of people got up?
 - How difficult was it for people to perform this experiment? Give some examples of how difficult it was for some people...
 - List some of the variations of the original experiment.
 - Come up with a different experiment, outside the subway, that would be similar to this experiment.
- Space: The Hidden Dimension.
- Make a list of all of the differences between Arab and Western rules about personal space.
10. Brainstorm ideas for norm breaking experiments. You should be writing down at least 10 if not more. Then, select 3 norm-breaking experiments that you would be interested in performing. Star or circle these on your sheet. Each experiment should conform to most if not all of the criteria for a good norm breaking experiment. Below are the criteria. Also, I listed topics and situations that lend themselves to good norm breaking experiments.

What is a good norm breaking experiment?

- It is close to the border between appropriate and inappropriate (slightly on the inappropriate side). You must break a norm, but at the same time if you go too far people will not take you seriously.
- Different people will respond differently; you are putting it on your subjects to figure out how to respond.
 - Sometimes there are competing norms in the situation, and the subject has to choose which norm is the better one to follow...
- It attacks a norm that deserves to be challenged. The world, perhaps, may be a better place if the norm you are breaking were not followed as strictly; or at least, the norm deserves to be reconsidered. Have a little bit of a political agenda here!
- While you can do it, it challenges you.

NOTE: You may purposely choose to vary setting, or other factors, such as your dress (dress up vs. dress down for example) to see how these factors affect the behavior of your subjects. Also, pay attention to natural differences between you and your partner (gender, for example) and how they may affect the results.

Here are topics and situations that lend themselves to good norm breaking experiments. This list is by no means exhaustive; remember, there are norms everywhere!

- Restaurant behavior

- Level of showing affection
- Level of showing emotion
- More and less formal
 - o Dress
 - o Speech
 - o Ways of greeting
- Adults vs. kids
- When in a conversation...
 - o Appropriate level of sharing info about oneself
- Personal Space
- Pace of Life
 - o Fast-paced and impersonal nature of modern life
- School Cafeteria Norms
- Hallway norms
- Being a minority – become someone who is breaking the norm by his/her very existence.
- Gender/Sexuality
- Clothing Stores
- Food Court Norms
- Level of interaction with strangers
- Church

11. Watch the following video (it's about 13 minutes long) and then answer the questions below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6wwReKUYmw

IF LINK DOESN'T WORK, TYPE "ALFIE KOHN OPRAH" INTO SEARCH ENGINE

- a. In a few sentences, summarize Alfie Kohn's position on the use of rewards in school and the reasoning behind this position.
- b. Two educators speak against Kohn's ideas. Explain how each of these educators use rewards and cite any arguments they use to support their methods.
- c. In a paragraph or so, respond: Where do you stand on this? Do you agree more with Kohn, or the teachers? Why / how so? Have you had any experiences that shed light on this question?

12 on next page...

Homework # 12 - Should Grades Exist?

a. Respond to the following quote by Alfie Kohn:

“...motivation is something that kids start out with. You don’t have to bribe a young child to show you how she can count to a thousand million or decode signs on the highway. But...by the middle—or certainly by the end—of elementary school, this intrinsic motivation [meaning natural desire to learn] starts to tail off sharply —by an extraordinary coincidence, around the time that grades have started to kick in.”

Do you agree or disagree with this quote? Why? What arguments and/or personal experiences can you use to support or refute this statement?

b. Watch the following Alfie Kohn video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfRALeA3mdU>

Note: if the link doesn’t work, just type in “Why Grades Shouldn’t Exist” into a youtube search.

Below are statements from the video. **Put a star next to three or four statements that you especially agree or disagree with. Then, respond in general to the video. Do you agree or disagree with Kohn here? What arguments and/or personal experiences can you use to support or refute this statement?**

1. Grades make students less interested.
2. Grades make students less likely to pick something more difficult
3. Grades make students do things in a more shallow, superficial fashion
 - don’t push and reflect, just say, is this going to be on the test?
4. The best teachers do everything in their power to help students forget that grades exist.
5. And sometimes let students pick their own grade”
6. Grades used to compel students to do things that they understandably have very little interest in doing.
7. If I don’t have the skill to authentically engage students, then I have to fall back on bribes and threats.
8. Grades are not about assessment; they are about coercion.
9. Students get caught in the trap about points.
10. This is going to be on the mid-term – that’s the reason why kids learn it, not because its interesting.
11. We have to overcome this addiction to grades.
12. Do we have a bunch of grade grubbers?
13. Sacrifice my entire career in search of the almighty grade
14. Not being true to myself
15. Cutting corners, cheating
16. This is going to be about learning, not chasing a grade
17. Explore, learn, sample, without worrying about my GPA
18. Would be tough for bad teachers who have no lever to compel kids

13. Read text pages 180-185 and complete the following:
- a. In the classic dog experiment, identify the Unconditioned Stimulus, Unconditioned Response, Conditioned Stimulus, and Conditioned Response.
 - b. What are other examples of Unconditioned stimulus-response connections?
 - c. Go back to the beginning of the reading where the author describes a car accident and how the music playing during the accident made him flinch whenever he heard it. Do you have an example in your life where a unique personal experience caused you to have a strange reaction to something for years afterwards?
 - d. You REALLY need to know each of the following terms for the class demonstration happening in the next class. Write down definitions for these and any other notes that will help you identify these in class:
 - Acquisition
 - Extinction
 - Spontaneous Recovery
 - Generalization
 - Discrimination

14. Do the classical conditioning worksheet.