

Journal #1

Explore your insights, connections, opinions, connections etc. Go in whatever direction you would like, as long as it is related to what we have talked about. Don't worry about spelling, grammar, punctuation, staying on the same topic, etc.

Journal must be typed, double spaced, size 12 font, one inch margins.

Grading: 3 pages = A; 2 ½ pages, = A-; 2 pages = B+; 1 ½ pages = B

1. Any thoughts that you have about any of the interesting studies I shared with you? Which study or studies do you find particularly interesting and/or important? Why? What conclusions can you draw about human thought and behavior based on any of these studies? What experiences have you had that relate to any of these studies? How has learning about these studies added to your understanding of what Psychology is all about?
2. We have been talking about the Behaviorist idea that the environment completely controls behavior. Another way of wording this, from Skinner's seminal work, is that we are not free, and that we do not deserve credit and blame for the good and bad things we do. To what extent do you agree with Skinner and the behaviorists? How powerful is the environment in making us who we are?
3. Go back into your past and take a behaviorist approach to explaining who you are today. Rather than assuming that you have the interests, talents, values, beliefs, and preference that you do because you thoughtfully chose them, try to explain how your environment chose these things for you.
4. Think about Watson's quote: "Give me a dozen healthy infants..." Do you agree with him? Do you think that, if a behavioral expert could control the environment of an individual from birth, he or she could make the baby into any profession?
 - If used towards positive ends (for instance, a doctor but not a thief, is this ethical to do?
 - To what extent do you see parents doing this on some level today? Do you have any examples/stories on this note?
5. Thinking about what you have learned about Operant Conditioning, come up with a plan to change an annoying behavior of someone who is around you consistently (family member, friend). Be like Sheldon, but more subtle! Have fun with this.
6. Explore examples of the different types of operant conditioning around you. Where do you see examples of positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive punishment, and negative punishment? Think about various authority figures in your life – teachers, parents, coaches, etc. What types of operant conditioning do they use to control your (and others') behavior? Examples?