Chapter 2

Classic Theories of Social & Personality Development

*University of Guelph*
Psychology 3450 — Dr. K. Hennig
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Chapter in outline

**Historical chronology**

- Classical Ethology: Darwin (C. 3, p. 69)
- Psychoanalytic Theory: Freud
- Behaviorism
- The Cognitive Revolution
  - Social Learning
  - “Third force” (Rogers, Piaget)
  - Information Processing Model
- The Second Cognitive Revolution (C. 3)
  - includes motivation and emotion (our neurobiology)
  - relationships (including wider systems) & culture
CLASSICAL ETHOLOGY:
Darwin-19th c. (C. 3, top p. 69)

- animals are born with biologically programmed behaviors ("instincts")
- adaptive for individual survival
- evolve gradually in process of:
  - natural selection, operating on
  - random permutation (variability)
- note. no concept yet as to DNA, genes, etc. until Mendell’s peas (1865); Darwin’s *Origin of Species* (1859)

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY:
FREUD

- Neurologist... neurotic patients... important discovery... unconscious
- founded a new science
- new method of treatment
- paid heavily - resistance aroused
- succeeded, formed Int. Psycha Association
Symptom presentation of Freud’s “neurotic patients”

- presenting issues of “neurotic patients:”
  - conflicts over sexual and aggressive impulses, guilt, excessive involvement with parental images which interfered with intimacy in current relationships, failed sexual gratification, fear of assertion and success (the Victorian age)
- pathological entities -> disease
- why not pathological ideas -> mental dis-ease (in the unconscious)

Example: glove anaesthesia (Today: psycosomaticization)

- lack of correspondence between symptom and anatomical fact
- but when people talked (free associated) about their ideas them from there was symptom relief
  - unblocked cognitions and affects from natural expression
Repression
Barrier
(working memory)

Structural Model:
Id, Ego, and Superego

"I"/consciousness

Conscience/
Civilization

Unconscious
mind

Id

Instinctual (or drive)
impulses; "Nature"

"It"

Conscious mind

"Ego"
**Turner & Romantic “nature”**  
**Thanatos AND Eros**

“All day the wind had screamed and the rain had beaten against the windows… we were forced to… recognize the presence of those great elemental forces which shriek at mankind through the bars of his civilization, like untamed beasts in a cage.” *(italics added; from Doyle’s “The five orange pips”, author of Sherlock Holmes)*

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**Freud: Central points**

- Role of the unconscious
- Defense mechanisms (e.g., repression)
- Origin of neurosis (psychological problems) in childhood (Level 4: past determines the present)
- Past relationships with significant figures influence one’s perceptions and interactions with current persons (i.e., “transference”)
- Stage theory (Psychosexual stages)
- Father of the “talking cure” (the importance of ‘sorting oneself out’)*
THE BEHAVIORIST VIEW:
Person as rat

- Freud said the third blow to mankind's egocentricism is that our behavior is motivated outside of our conscious mental awareness.
- The behaviorist agrees and goes further...Get rid of talk about “un/conscious minds” (as well as “selves”) and focus on behavior/actions which are “objective” (intersubjectively verifiable).
- Three types of learning:
  - Classical conditioning -- paired association
  - Operant conditioning -- reinforcement
  - Observational learning

Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936)

- Born Ryasan, Russia
- 1904 Nobel Laureate in medicine
In technical language...

**BEFORE TRAINING**

- **US** (food in mouth) → **UR** (salivation)
- **CS** (e.g., tone) → No relevant response

**TRAINING**

- **CS** (tone) + **US** (food in mouth)

**AFTER TRAINING (that is, conditioning)**

- **CS** (tone) → **CR** (salivation)

UCS = our “biological programming” (the goal of the behaviorist is to minimize our biology to maximize the role of the environment/learning)

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**Classical Conditioning: Everyday Examples**

- siren + police
- bed + insomnia
- Music/Movies
  - “Psycho,” “Jaws,” “Candle in the Wind,” “Blair Witch Project”
- TV advertisements: perfume, sex, shopping at Sears
Operant conditioning
Rewards and consequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General principle</td>
<td>Child smiles</td>
<td>An outcome or consequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Infant smiles when adult enters the room</td>
<td>which produces</td>
<td>which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Child writes on wall with crayons</td>
<td>which produces</td>
<td>Attention and playful gestures from a caregiver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observational learning

- Albert Bandura and modeling (e.g., Bobo doll)
- children are big imitators
- Social Learning (see below)
Behaviorism: Basic assumptions

- Emphasis on environmental causes of behavior (nurture) - few inborn tendencies/reflexes (e.g., rooting, sucking)
  - train animals with food rewards (primary reinforcer)
- Environment shapes behavior through learning (humanity is perfectable-parental blame)
- Social development reflects a person’s set of learned responses to the environment
- How does a person become aggressive? “Aggressive behavior” is a conditioned response.

THE 70’s COGNITIVE REVOLUTION

“Skinner, people are so much more than mindless rats!” (Koehler)
**Insight: tool use in chimpanzees**

We need a more complex theory to account for this...

- Insight involves generation of a new idea, being *creative*
The 1970’s “Cognitive Revolution

- The development of the computer
  - a model of “thinking mind”
  - computers are individual, non-relational entities
- Cognition back into respect - but emotion and relationships remain problematic)
The trade-off

- E.g., felt pain vs. c-fibers firing
- Or, the view from “in here” (subjective) vs. objective behavior
- Depth <-> parsimony/scientific rigor
- Terms: mind, consciousness, the self
- “the seat of consciousness, thought, volition [will], and feeling” (Oxford Dictionary)

‘Mind’ as mediating inputs (S) and outputs (R)

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S  →  R (behaviorism)  →  Rf
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“she gave me that look”

Input (computer)  Output

Mind

Rodin’s thinker
Piaget's Cognitive-Developmental Theory

• “Children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves, and each time that we try to teach them something too quickly, we keep them from re-inventing it themselves.” (Piaget)

  vs.

bucket theory of learning – fixed capacities

Piaget (contd.)

• The person as an active, goal-directed constructor of reality
• children develop knowledge about “reality” by inventing, or constructing, reality out of their experience [I would put it: “reality is the outcome of the above process of insight & verification]
• seeing -> believing (Naive Realism) believing -> seeing (e.g., wine tasting, music)
• e.g., toddler notices shadow attached to his feet is his own (creative but not arbitrary)
Piaget (contd.)

- We adapt to the environment via two processes:
  - assimilation (psychic reality, phantasy)
    - “everything looks like a nail to a hammer”
    - interpreting actions or events in terms of existing schemas (an organized, repeatedly exercised pattern of thought or behavior)
    - “all objects are categorized as ‘suckables’
  - accommodation
    - the modification of schemas to fit reality
  - disequilibrium (the world wasn’t what I thought) -> revised schema

Piaget’s stages

- Sensorimotor period (0-2yrs.)
- Preoperational (2-7yrs.)
- Concrete operational (7-11 yrs.)
  - conservation (appearance vs. reality distinction)
- Formal operational (12 yrs. - )
  - thinking like a scientist (the ‘end’)
**Sensorimotor Substage 2**  
*Primary Circular Reactions (1 to 4 Mos.)*

- Circular reactions reproduce or continue a chance result
  - like operant conditioning but...
- The reaction is “circular” because the infants tries to repeat the event again and again -> the chance response becomes strengthened into a scheme
- Primary circular reactions are .
  - Oriented toward infant’s own body, e.g., bring the hand before the face repeatedly
  - Motivated by basic needs
- Purpose: discover the limits and capabilities of one’s own body (calibration); begin’g of volition (control)

**Substage 3**  
*Secondary Circular Reactions (4 to 8 Mos.)*

- Infants sit up, reach for, manipulate objects
- Secondary circular reactions:
  - involve external objects
  - reproduced to see what happens when some movements are slightly different their initial equivalents
- After accidentally knocking the doll, “hitting” scheme develops with repetition; improved control permits imitation
- *Note.* This shift from body focus to external focus will form a key point later in the course.

- e.g., lip smacking after feeding -> finds intriguing -> repeats until becomes an expert
- motor habits: sucking thumb, hands
Substage 4
Coordination of Secondary Circular Reactions (8 to 12 Mos.)

- Intentional, goal-directed, behavior
  - prior actions leading to new schemas were chance based
  - Combination of schemes to solve problems

- These action sequences are a sign baby appreciates physical causality.
  - Causal action one object exerts on another through contact

- The sensori-motor stage ends with the acquisition of object-permanence

Pre-operational thinking

- Instead of just acting upon objects, thinks then acts
- reflects a different approach to the world - one based on mental representations (internal depictions of the world that can be manipulated)
  - images (mental pictures)
  - concepts (or categories that group perceptually similar objects under a description, e.g., chair, apple)
Mental representations

- baby seagull will pick at the “red spot on a long thin thing”
- meaning = food
- the mental representation is in the gull’s (organism’s) head, has meaning - it is hardwired

Evidence of mental representations in children

- marks the transition from Piagetian sensorimotor stage to preoperational stage
  - but evidence found in children much younger
- Evidence:
  - arrive at solutions suddenly (insight) - pause “as if to be thinking” - infer they are trying out solutions in their head before acting (manipulating representations in their head)
  - deferred imitation - remember and copy the behavior of a model not currently present
    - at 2 yrs. also the intentions of the parent (e.g., pouring raisins)
  - make-believe play
Limitations of preoperational thought

- Egocentricism
  - three-mountains problem
  - animistic thinking (animate objects have intentions, or minds: “the moon is following me”)

Preoperational vs. concrete operational stage

- Inability to conserve
  - 1) Centration - focus on one aspect and neglect others
  - 2) perception bound (appearance vs. reality) - easily distracted by the concrete appearance of things
  - 3) state vs. transformation focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservation Task</th>
<th>Original Presentation</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Are there the same number of pennies in each row?</td>
<td>Now are there the same number of pennies in each row, or does one row have more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>Is each of these sticks just as long as the other?</td>
<td>Now are the two sticks each equally as long, or is one longer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>Is there the same amount of water in each glass?</td>
<td>How is there the same amount of water in each glass, or does one have more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>Is there the same amount of clay in each ball?</td>
<td>How does each piece have the same amount of clay, or does one have more?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What we learn from Piaget

- Gave a rigorous account of the mind’s involvement in the world
- Individual as an active agent in knowing and being
- Becoming a mature adult is a developmentally hard won activity
- But, Piaget generally underestimated the capacity of infants and young children
- places too much emphasis on rationality