### Social Learning Theory (SLT)
The SLT was introduced by Bandura (1963) and it assumes that behaviour had social origins and that aggression was learnt through a process of vicarious learning. The fundamental aspect of the SLT is that there is a role model from whom behaviour can be copied. If the aggressive behaviour is perceived to be rewarding then it is likely the child will copy that behaviour. When the behaviour is copied and the child is rewarded in some way, the child will attach value to aggression and thus, repeat the behaviour.

Main study supporting SLT comes from Bandura’s Bobo doll study. This involved children observing aggressive or non-aggressive adult role models behaviour towards a bobo doll and then being tested to see whether the child will imitate the behaviour. Participants aged 3-5, both male and female, were exposed to either the condition where an adult model behaved physically and verbally aggressively to the bobo doll or the non-aggressive condition. After exposure children were ‘frustrated’ because they were told they couldn’t play with toys. Children exposed to the aggressive condition replicated a lot of the aggressive behaviour shown by the adult ranging from kicking, punching and swearing at the doll while the non-aggressive condition exhibited virtually no aggression. This supports the theory as it shows how individuals can acquire aggressive acts by vicarious learning.

Bandura’s Bobo doll study has a range of flaws. Given the artificial environment and strange situation it’s likely children were showing demand characteristics and may have shown aggression because they were frustrated not because of social learning. The purpose of the bobo doll is to be hit which is why using bobo doll as a measure of aggression is flawed as one child arrived to the laboratory saying “look Mummy, there’s the doll we have to hit”

The theory can be said to have face validity as it makes perfect sense and there are countless of real life examples of children learning aggressive behaviour and then imitating it. The James Bulger killers (Robert Thompson and Jon Venables) watched a violent horror film, Child’s Play 3, prior to killing Bulger, this issue was highlighted dramatically by the media because its likely they imitated the aggression they saw in the film.

Bandura’s research mainly focused on children’s aggression, however, it is very likely that the SLT can also be applied to adults. Phillips et al reported that homicide in the US almost tripled in the following week after a major televised boxing match, suggesting the theory also applies to adults as viewers may be imitating the aggression seen in violent boxing matches. However, a criticism of this is it’s correlational nature and we cannot be sure of cause and effect, a range of variables could contribute nor can we conclude that those who committed homicide watched the boxing match.

### Deindividuation
This theory is based of Le Bon’s crowd theory. Le Bon described how when an individual is in a crowd their behaviour is transformed and two processes occur: the first is a decrease in self-assessment which refers to a reduction in evaluation of your own behaviour & decreased awareness referring to the limited attention we give ourselves in certain situations. During deindividuation an individual loses their identity and becomes a part of a collective group mindset, the individual thus loses self-control and are more likely to break away from social or personal norms. Deindividuation happens when in a crowd but it can also happen when an individual is wearing a mask.

Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison experiment is an example of how deindividuation can lead to aggression. Guards were issued khaki uniforms, wore sun glasses, had batons while prisoners were addressed to by numbers and wore uniforms. The guards began to act very aggressively and brutally both physically and verbally. The guards showed classical signs of deindividuation, prior to the experiment they were tested for psychological and physical abnormalities but had none and at the end of the study the guards couldn’t believe they acted in such a brutal and sadistic manner.

Zimbardo did another experiment using female undergrads in a ‘study of learning.’ A stooge student had to complete a set of tasks (similar to Milgram) and the female participants gave electric shocks if the stooges made mistakes. Half the participants wore lab coats and were referred to by name, thus making them be more individuated, the other half were not referred to by name. The deindividuated group delivered twice as many shocks as the individuated condition, because of identity and remaining anonymous (deindividuated) leads to more aggressive acts.

Deindividuation theory has practical application as it has led to more CCTV cameras being used to closely monitor crowd behaviour and has been effective in reducing football hooliganism.

A weakness of social learning theory is that it had a gender bias associated with it as it only seems to explain male aggression. Crime statistics in males and females for violent offences vary greatly yet we are all exposed to the same media, family models, etc yet males are more aggressive which the theory cannot explain.

Reductionist theory. The SLT just focuses on simple processes of rewards and imitations and thus, oversimplifies very complex behaviours. In reality there are a range of factors that contribute to human aggression such as genes predisposing people to be more aggressive, which SLT cannot account for.