

Behavioural Approach (How one thinks)

Abnormality is learnt through conditioning/social learning

- All abnormal behaviour determined by external events such as getting bitten by a dog which would then possibly develop into a phobia of dogs.
- Use learning theory to explain why many disorders have behavioural characteristics e.g avoiding dogs. People learn to associate e.g something they fear with the feeling of fear
- People also may develop a fear by a learning environment. By witnessing something e.g watching a plane crash on the news.

Components of the learning theory

Classical conditioning - association

Operant conditioning - reinforcement

social learning theory - seeing others being rewarded/punished - copy



Little Albert (Case study)

11 month old

- Created a conditioned response to white rat, rabbit and a monkey
- Startled him with steel bar when he saw any of the three stimulus 7 times over 7 weeks
- This created the conditioned response

A02 - Limitations of Behavioural approach

- Suggests people have no control over conditioning - too deterministic
- People create fears without conditioning (Seligmann - encounters that are frequent but dangerous such as FAST MOVING TRAFFIC rarely become fears)
- ignores biological factors
- Experiments lack ecological validity as non realistic but helps us establish cause and effect