

The little Albert theory

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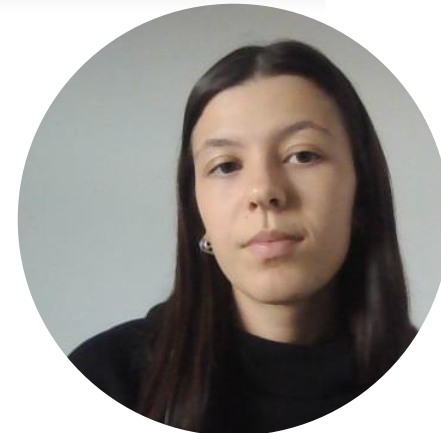
- Today in this presentation, we will be introducing one of the most influential and debated experiments of the 20th century, The Little Albert Experiment, conducted by John B. Watson, an American psychologist and Rosalie Rayner, a graduate student at Hopkins University. This experiment is a psychological study on conditioned fear and learnt behaviors on humans , where Watson and Rayner found emotional responses can be conducted through classical conditioning, which is a learning process stemming from neutral stimulus. Watson and Rayner's main goal was to prove that behavior is learnt through conditioning.



Watson and Rayner's purpose was to conduct a trial to condition a phobia response to an 11-month-old infant, "little Albert", by pairing a white rat and many other objects like a fur coat, Santa Claus and even a hammer to a loud, frightening noise by striking a steel bar behind Albert to predict how the infant would react. This was to emphasize Albert's fear was also generalized by displaying objects like the white rat.

The results then expressed that Albert showed no signs of fear at the beginning of the trial when the rat was first displayed. However, after several trials, when the noise and the rat appeared a few times, Albert's arms lifted, he started crying and showed instant emotional reactions. This was where Watson emphasized that fear is a learned behavior. Later as the experiment developed, Fridlund, Beck and many more psychologists claimed that Albert was "neurotically impaired", hence some of the critiques.

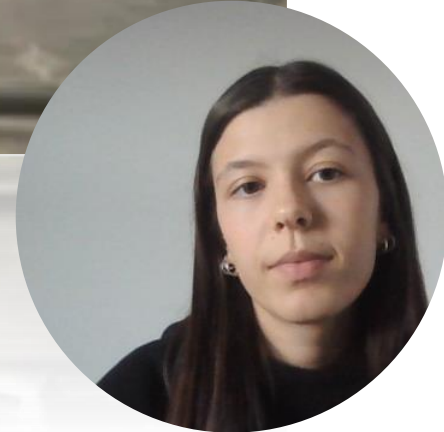
As it is understood, this experiment carries the key role in the development in behaviorism, which covers the observable behaviors rather than internal mental states to its entirety.



Overall, the Little Albert Experiment remains significant in contemporary society, as it provides evidence that behavior can be learnt through conditioning and not biologically, while also highlighting the theory's faults and strong guidelines to psychological research in modern societies.

Furthermore, Ben Harris, an American psychologist widely critiqued this experiment for its poor ethical issues and lack of informed consent, proposing that there could have been multiple other ways to interpret conditioned fear.

All things considered, the little Albert experiment provides strong evidence to the multiple approaches and frameworks used such as behaviourism approach, defining the idea that feared responses are learnt through classical conditioning.



Script (final draft)

- Announce the topic
- Brief overview of who and what
- Name the subject we will be covering
- End the intro with a flow to next person (approaches)

(paragraph 1) Today in this presentation, we will be discussing one of the most influential and debated experiments of the 20th century, the little albert experiment, conducted by John B. Watson, an American psychologist and Rosalie Rayner, a graduate student at Hopkins university (eventually got married).

This experiment is a psychological study on conditioned fear and learnt behaviors on humans, where Watson and Rayner found emotional responses can be conducted through classical conditioning. Watson and Rayners main goal was to prove that behavior is learnt through neutral objects.(in this case)

(paragraph 2) throughout this assessment, Watson and Rayner included multiple objects, such as a white rat, a fur coat, Santa Claus and even a hammer. (not on albert) this was to emphasize Alberts fear was also generalized by displaying objects like the white rat.

(paragraph 3)Watson and Rayners purpose was to conduct a trial to condition a feared response to an infant, little albert, by pairing a white rat to a loud, frightening noise by striking a metal steel bar behind albert to predict how the infant would react. The results then expressed that albert showed no signs of fear at the beginning of the trial when the rat was first displayed, however, after several trials, when the loud noise appeared, Alberts arms lifted, he started crying and showed instant emotional reactions. This is where Watson emphasized that fear is a learnt behavior.

(paragraph 4) As its understood, this experiment carries the key role in the development in behaviourism, which covers the observable behaviours rather than internal mental states to its entirety.

(paragraph 5)Overall, the little albert experiment remains significant in contemporary society, as it provides evidence that behavior can be learnt through conditioning and not biologically, while also highlighting the theorys faults and strong guidelines to psychological research in modern societies.

(paragraph 6)Furthermore, Ben Harris, an American psychologist widely critiqued this experiment for its poor ethical issues and lack of informed consent, proposing that there could have been multiple other ways to interpret conditioned fears.

(paragraph 7- conclusion on my part) All things considered, the little albert experiment provides strong evidence to the multiple approaches and frameworks used, defining the idea that feared responses are learnt.

References.

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Ai acknowledgment

I acknowledged the use of Very Well Mind on 2nd November 2025 to gain basic understanding of the little Albert experiment. I used prompts; what is the little albert experiment in psychology?

I acknowledged the use of google scholar on 2nd November (Mcleod, simply psychology) to understand what objects were attributed in this experiment. I used prompts; what objects are associated with the little albert experiment?

I acknowledged the use of google scholar on 2nd November (Critique of Ben Harris) to find critiques on the experiment. I used prompts; who critiqued the little albert experiment? Ethical issues in the little albert experiment?

I acknowledged the use of google scholar on the 3rd November (Powell et al) to figure out what Watson and Rayner's main goals were through this experiment. I used prompts ; what were Watson and Rayner's main goals in the little albert experiment?

I confirm I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work, I confirm I have copies in my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence,