Lecture Series: Chapter 11  DOLLARD AND MILLER: Psychoanalytic Learning Theory

Principal Features

Preview: Overview of Dollard and Miller's Theory

"Dollard and Miller's theory has implications for major theoretical questions."

Table 11.1  Preview of Dollard and Miller's Theory

[Page 325]
Psychoanalytic Learning Theory: Dollard and Miller

"Dollard and Miller took on ambitious challenge: to translate Freud's theory into the concepts of learning theory … "

Question: What is the "social context of personality development?"

Four Fundamental Concepts about Learning

"Dollard and Miller drew on various theories of learning, including those of Pavlov, Thorndike, Hull, and Skinner."

"From these theorists, they borrowed the basic principles of conditioning: stimulus, response, reward, generalization, discrimination, and extinction."

Drive: Wanting Something

"Freudian theory regarded libido as the driving force behind all action, but Dollard and Miller preferred the concept of drive, from … learning theory, to refer to the motivating force."

Question: What is the concept of drive from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

[Examples] Drive.
Cue: Noticing Something

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Learning consists of strengthening the \textbf{cue}-response connection."

Response: Doing Something

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Any behavior that can be changed by learning can be considered a \textbf{response}."

[Example] Response (and \textbf{response hierarchy}).
Response: Doing Something
(Continued)

Question: What is the concept of the **resultant hierarchy** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Reward: Getting Something

Question: What is the concept of **reward** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

The Learning Process

Question: What is the concept of the **learning dilemma** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

[Example] Learning dilemma.
The Learning Process
(Continued)

Question: What is the concept of the extinction from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Question: What is the concept of the spontaneous recovery from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

[Example] Spontaneous recovery.

Question: What is the concept of the stimulus generalization from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

[Example] Stimulus generalization.
Question: What is the concept of the **discrimination** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Question: What is the concept of the **gradient of reward** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Question: What is the concept of the **gradient of punishment** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

The Learning Process

(Continued)

Question: What is the concept of **anticipatory responses** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Learning by Imitation

"Dollard and Miller advanced learning theory by suggesting that learning can occur by **imitation** … "

**Same Behavior**

Complete the following:

"For a child to emit the **same behavior** as the person being imitated, it is necessary not only for the behavior to be the same but also for the controlling cues to be the … "

[Example] Same behavior.

**Copying**

Question: What is the concept of **copying** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?
Copying
(Continued)

[Example] Copying.

Matched Dependent Behavior

Question: What is the concept of **matched dependent behavior** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?


The Four Critical Training Periods of Childhood

"The development of personality in childhood can be understood in terms of … learning principles."

Feeding

Question: How do the "circumstances of infant feeding" fit into Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?
Cleanliness Training

**Question:** How do the circumstances of cleanliness training fit into Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Early Sex Training

**Question:** How did Dollard and Miller describe early sex training from the perspective of psychoanalytic learning theory?

Anger-Anxiety Conflicts

**Question:** How did Dollard and Miller describe anger-anxiety conflicts from the perspective of psychoanalytic learning theory?

Conflict

**Question:** What is the concept of **conflict** from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?
Gradients of Approach and Avoidance Responses

"The concept of gradients, reflecting the strength of the tendency to make a response depending on the distance from the goal, provided Dollard and Miller with a powerful conceptual tool for understanding conflicts, including the intrapsychic conflicts central to psychoanalytic theory."

Complete the following:

"Dollard and Miller postulated four basic assumptions about the gradient of approach and the gradient of avoidance:

1. "The tendency to approach a goal is stronger the … (333)

2. "The tendency to avoid a feared stimulus is stronger the …

3. "The gradient of avoidance is …

4. "An increase in drive raises the …

Four Types of Conflict

"A variety of conflict situations can be analyzed by applying these principles. As a person moves nearer to or farther from the goal, the strengths of the tendencies change."
Approach-Avoidance Conflict

**Question:** What is the concept of an *approach-avoidance conflict* from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?


Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict

**Question:** What is the concept of an *avoidance-avoidance conflict* from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?


Approach-Approach Conflict

**Question:** What is the concept of an *approach-approach conflict* from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?
Approach-Approach Conflict  
(Continued)

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Donkeys do not starve midway between two equally desirable stacks of hay."

Double Approach-Avoidance Conflict

Question: What is the concept of a double-approach-avoidance conflict from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Reducing Conflict

Question: How can we reduce personal conflict from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?
Question: What is the concept of the frustration-aggression hypothesis from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?

Modifications to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis

"While the simple cause-effect relationship was a fruitful working hypothesis to begin their research, Dollard and Miller soon revised it, and other theorists have also suggested modifications."

Learning Responses to Frustration

Question: What is the learned responses alternative view of the frustration-aggression hypothesis?
**Displacement and Catharsis**

**Question:** What is the displacement and catharsis alternative view of the frustration-aggression hypothesis?

**Hostile Aggression and Instrumental Aggression**

**Question:** What is the hostile aggression and instrumental aggression alternative view of the frustration-aggression hypothesis?

**Aggressive Cues**

**Question:** What is the aggressive cues alternative view of the frustration-aggression hypothesis?

[Examples] Aggressive cues
The Role of Emotion

Question: What is the role of emotion alternative view of the frustration-aggression hypothesis?

Individual Differences in Aggressive Responses

"Research indicates that the situations that precipitate aggression in some people affect others differently."

[Examples] Individual differences in aggressive responses.
Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Language provides important discriminative cues for learning how to deal with various situations."

[Examples] Language in the context of psychoanalytic learning theory.

Neurosis

"Many types of maladaptive learning can produce neurotic symptoms."

Question: Why did Dollard and Miller call neurosis a *stupidity-misery syndrome*?
Neurosis (Continued)

Examples]  Neurosis in the context of psychoanalytic learning theory. (339-340)

Psychotherapy

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"The problems that cause people to seek therapy are learned." (340)

Question: What is psychotherapy from the perspective of Dollard and Miller's psychoanalytic learning theory?
Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Suppression is willful control of thinking … " (340)

[Examples] Suppression skills. (340-341)

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Modern research on emotion and cognition have been influenced, probably without sufficient recognition, by psychoanalytic theory … " (342)

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