

PSY 402

Theories of Learning

Chapter 4 – Theories of Conditioning

Rescorla-Wagner Model

- Classical conditioning occurs only if the US (UCS) is surprising to the organism.
 - If the UCS is already predicted by a CS, then it is not surprising – it is expected.
 - When the CS predicts the UCS perfectly, no further learning occurs.
 - The **asymptote** (lambda, λ) is the point where the learning levels off (no increase in learning occurs).

Parts of the Model

- $\Delta V = \alpha\beta(\lambda - V)$
- V is the *Associative Strength* (amount of learning).
- ΔV is the change in learning (increase in *Associative Strength*).
- α and β are the salience of the CS and UCS
- $\lambda - V$ is the surprisingness of the US (the distance away from the asymptote).