

PSY 402

Theories of Learning

Chapter 10 – A Synthetic Perspective on
Instrumental Learning

Avoidance Learning

- Avoidance learning is puzzling because the reinforcer is not obvious.
 - What sustains running to the other side in a shuttlebox?
 - How can something that does not happen be a reinforcer?
- Mowrer's two-factor theory was the first explanation.

Two-Factor Theory

- The first factor is Pavlovian fear conditioning.
 - A light is a CS that warns of a shock.
 - The CR is fear.
- The second factor is reinforcement of avoidance behavior.
 - The avoidance response terminates the fear (CR) and the experience of relief (negative reinforcer) rewards the behavior.