

# Albert Bandura

## Observational Learning

### **What is observational learning?**

-We learn by observing others

### **Examples**

-A boy watches his older brother play a card game. He observes carefully and learns how the game is played. The next day, the boy is able to play the card game, too

-A girl watches her mother put a diaper on her baby sister. She later imitates her mother as she puts a diaper on one of her dolls

-A boy witnesses his best friend getting yelled at by the teacher for slamming his textbook on the desk. By observing this interaction, the boy learns that he should not slam his textbook on the desk

-A woman is never late to her agency's meetings after seeing her co-worker get fired for being tardy

### **Necessary components of observational learning**

#### **1. Attention:**

-We model the behaviors of others, but they must first grab our attention!

-Many factors influence who/what we pay attention to. For example, we are more likely to pay attention to behaviors that are rewarded, figures that are "high-status"/prominent (i.e. children modeling celebrities), etc.

#### **2. Retention:**

-In order to imitate behavior, we must *remember* the behavior!

#### **3. Reproduction:**

-In order to imitate behavior, we must have the ability to perform the behavior!

-Sometimes, we are limited physically or mentally (i.e. a 2 year old would not be able to drive a car like his parents)

#### **4. Motivation:**

-We model behavior when we are motivated to do so

-We consider rewards & punishments (we are more likely to model behavior if the rewards outweigh the costs)

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. What other components (besides attention, retention, reproduction, & motivation) might be necessary in order to reproduce behaviors?**
- 2. What are some factors that would motivate you to model someone's behavior?**
- 3. Whose behaviors did you tend to model when you were younger? What about now?**
- 4. In what ways can observational learning be dangerous?**
  - \*Example: Children who witness domestic violence may copy the violent/aggressive behaviors of their parents**
- 5. To what extent do television shows, video games, & movies affect our behaviors?**