Observational Learning

- Albert Bandura (Bobo the clown research)
- Mirror neurons
Thorndike’s Law of Effect

- Rewarded behavior is likely to recur.
B.F. Skinner

- Reinforcer – any event that increases the frequency of a response.
- Positive reinforcement – a “reward”
  May be primary (i.e., food) or secondary (i.e., money, verbal praise)
- Shaping – a procedure in which rewards are used to guide an animal’s natural behavior in the direction of a desired behavior.
Punishment vs. Negative Reinforcement

- Punishment – an event that decreases the probability of a behavior recurring (i.e., placed in time out)
- Negative reinforcement – a behavior that prevents a punishment from occurring (i.e., putting money in parking meter prevents you from getting a ticket).
Operant Conditioning: Partial Reinforcement Schedules

- Ratio Schedules = # of times
- Interval Schedules = period of time
Ratio Reinforcement Schedules

- Fixed Ratio – Reinforcing a response after a specified number of responses (e.g., get a free meal at a restaurant after filling a frequent diner card with six stamps)
- Variable Ratio – Reinforcing a response after an unpredictable number of responses (e.g., winning some money playing a slot machine)
Interval Reinforcement Schedules

- **Fixed Interval** – Reinforcing a response after an specified period of time (e.g., your employer pays you every Friday).
- **Variable Interval** – Reinforcing a response at unpredictable time intervals (e.g., time your mail arrives; it may get there at noon, or 2:30, or 4:00, or 5:30).
Determine the Partial Reinforcement Schedule (FR, VR, FI, VI)

1) Buying state lottery tickets and winning
2) A hotel maid may take a 15-minute break only after having cleaned three rooms
3) Watching and seeing shooting stars on a dark night
4) A teenager receives an allowance every Saturday
5) Checking the oven to see if chocolate chip cookies are done, when baking time is known
6) A professional baseball player gets a hit approximately every third time at bat
7) Checking the front porch for a newspaper when the delivery person is extremely unpredictable
8) A charitable organization makes an average of ten phone calls for every donation it receives
9) Calling a garage mechanic to see if your car is fixed yet
10) A student’s final grade improves one level for every three book reviews submitted
11) A blueberry picker receives $1 after filling 3 pint boxes
12) Going to the cafeteria to see if the next meal is available.
Applied Operant Conditioning

- Use of **Home Token Economy**
- Controversial Skinner Books
  - Walden II
  - Beyond Freedom and Dignity