Reflection Paper

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**Partial Reinforcement**

The topic of partial reinforcement was interesting to me because of our decrepit and cataract-ridden dog Devo. Devo is notorious for begging despite being trained not to and our repeated demands that he go and lay down. My mom dismisses his behavior as a result of his age, but after reading the chapter on learning, I know that his behavior is a result of partial reinforcement. When we first began training Devo we used continuous reinforcement as a rection to his begging: this behavior was not rewarded. After a few years though, we would occasionally give him a table scrap or some popcorn. This resulted in partial reinforcement in which Devo learned that begging would sometimes result in reward. This encouraged him to perpetuate his bad behavior thus preventing begging from going extinct.

**Parasomnias: Sleepwalking**

The topic of sleepwalking was particularly interesting to me because I myself have experienced outrageous episodes of sleepwalking as well as sleep talking. My older brother and I have our bedrooms on the third floor. For years my older brother would complain that I talk in my sleep, arguing with people and saying ridiculous things. The whole family got a taste of this when, at a motel after a wedding, I arose several times in the night and began to tear the room apart. Lifting beds and tables, I turned on the lights and loudly exclaimed that there was something in the room for which I was searching. Even though my mother was able to coax me back into my bed, I repeatedly got up to look for the mystery object. As explained by the textbook, I learned that having no memory of my sleepwalking was common.

**Memory**

The topic of memory was interesting because I was intrigued to learn more about the formation of false memories. My sister has often described childhood scenes in great detail only to have the whole family deny that such an event ever occurred. The lost-in-the-mall experiments and imagination inflation explained that my sister would imagine events so vividly in terms of sound and sight that she became convinced they were real. My sister would imagine these events repeatedly before being told they were fabrications, leading to her denial of such claims. Before this class I would simply dismiss her memories as false, but now I know how to disprove them with theory.

**Dissociation**

The topic of dissociation interested me because of one of my favorite video games. Night in the Woods is a 2017 adventure game in which players follow college dropout Mae Borowski as she encounters mysterious events in her hometown. A central element of the game is mental disorders, particularly dissociation. In her youth, Mae had a dissociative episode in which everything she saw was just shapes and she beat a classmate nearly to death with a baseball bat. When I first played Night in the Woods I had no idea what dissociation was. I was excited to learn exactly what dissociative disorder is so I could better understand how it had affected Mae. I learned that dissociative disorders often cause individuals to lose awareness of recognition of everyday objects. This would explain why Mae could only see objects as shapes. Dissociative amnesia is responsible for her assault on her classmate because she had no memory of the events that caused it and only became aware of her actions as she was being pulled away from her victim. Even though Night in the Woods is only a game, I was still chuffed to have studied one of its key elements.