



Ethics in Psychology

Instructions

The American Psychological Association (APA) has a [Code of Conduct](#) which describes rules concerning ethics in psychological experiments, and review boards are in place to enforce these ethics. But in the past, the standards were not so strict, which is how some very famous studies in psychology came about.

Read about (and watch) the following psychological studies that would, today, be considered unethical.

The Milgram Experiment

Yale psychologist Stanley Milgram hoped to further understand how so many people came to participate in the cruel acts of the Holocaust. He theorized that people are generally inclined to obey authority figures, posing the question, "Could it be that Eichmann and his million accomplices in the Holocaust were just following orders? Could we call them all accomplices?" In 1961, he began to conduct experiments of obedience.

Watch the following video: [Obedience to Authority](#)

The Little Albert Experiment

At Johns Hopkins University in 1920, John Watson conducted a study of classical conditioning on a 9-month-old baby he called Albert B. The young boy started the experiment loving animals, particularly a white rat, but when Watson started pairing the presence of the rat with the loud sound of a hammer hitting metal, Albert began to develop a fear of the white rat as well as most animals and furry objects.

Watch the following video: [Little Albert](#)

The Blue Eyes and Brown Eyes Experiment

Jane Elliott was not a psychologist, but she developed a controversial exercise in 1968 by dividing students into a blue-eyed group and a brown-eyed group, in an attempt to give her

students hands-on experience with discrimination.

Watch the following video: A Class Divided

Once you have watched and learned about each experiment, choose one experiment to study in more depth. Conduct research online to learn more about that experiment, and then complete the assignment.

Choose ONE of the experiments above and construct a 2-page paper based on the following:

- 1st Paragraph: Clearly ***state the main problem or issue*** you need to consider when determining whether or not this study is ethical. Clearly explain what makes this study unethical, and why. Cite at least one outside source, as well as one or two concepts from the APA Code of Conduct, to support your statements.
- 2nd Paragraph: ***Analyze and interpret*** relevant information about this study to determine what would need to be changed in order to meet the APA's Code of Conduct and ethical standards.
- 3rd Paragraph: ***Evaluate*** this study to assess if the benefit of learning the results of this study outweighs the potential harm of conducting the study. Cite at least one outside source to support your statements.
- 4th Paragraph: Generate a comprehensive ***conclusion*** that integrates your thoughts about this study and about ethical experiments (the main problem/issue you addressed in the first paragraph).

Make sure that you cite your sources within your paper using APA-formatted in-text citations, and the last page of your paper needs to be your APA-formatted reference page. Both your first paragraph and third paragraph must have citations.

Submissions

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