**Observational Learning of Eating: Dolls to Toddlers**

This exercise will explore further the role of observational learning in consumption.

1. As a review, ask students to watch the following video about Bandura’s studies of observational learning:
   * Crash Course Psychology, Episode #12: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=128Ts5r9NRE>
2. Ask students to share their experiences with observational learning effects in their consumption.
   1. Did they develop a tendency to eat particular foods or drinks by watching their parents?
   2. What effect does the observed consumption of alcohol, sweets, or else in the home have on kids’ tendencies towards consuming those substances?
   3. Have students experienced any *vicarious punishment* effects related to eating, which could be marked by seeing someone eat or drink something and experience a negative outcome?
   4. Ask them to consider whether animals learn to find and prepare food by watching each other’s behavior. Then share the following video in which macaques wash potatoes in salt water:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=uZ8HCdgEwCs>

1. Introduce to students a trend from 2019 that created a firestorm on social media. Several parents posted videos to social media in which a doll or stuffed toy was hit after pretending it refused to eat. In other words, the parents were attempting to capitalize on vicarious punishment by beating up a doll when the doll refused to eat a food.

Some possible videos to use include:

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKvSBw37sO4>
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EIccbvj05cE>

Show students the video and discuss. Some discussion points appear below:

* What is some of the positive attention received by parents for using this strategy?
* What are some criticisms of parents who participated in this trend?
* What learning processes do you see at work in this video portrayal, for child and parents?
* Ethically, what is your reaction to the video?
* What other strategies do you think might be better than beating a doll in order to improve a child’s food acceptance? (This last question is a good lead in to the next chapter of the textbook.)