



Albert Bandura: December 4, 1925–July 26, 2021

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We note, with sadness, the passing of Dr Albert Bandura, pioneer of the theories of social learning and of self-efficacy, and of the concept of moral disengagement, whose research contributions informed current understanding of human behavior. Since 1992, Dr Bandura was a member of the Board of Consulting Editors of *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*.

Keywords

Albert Bandura; obituary

We note, with sadness, the passing of Dr Albert Bandura, whose research contributions informed current understanding of human behavior. Dr Bandura pioneered the theories of social learning and of self-efficacy, developed the concept of moral disengagement, and conducted the Bobo Doll studies on learned behavior. Since 1992, he was a member of the Board of Consulting Editors of *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*.

Internationally recognized as one of the world's most influential social psychologists, in a 2002 issue of *General Review of Psychology*, Dr Bandura was ranked the fourth most eminent psychologist of the 20th century, behind B. F. Skinner, Jean Piaget, and Sigmund Freud.

Born in Mendare, Alberta, Canada, to parents who did not speak English or have formal education, Dr Bandura was the youngest of seven children. His parents encouraged him to learn and in 1949 he received a bachelor's degree from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, then a master's degree (1951) and PhD (1952), both from the University of Iowa, IA, USA. In 1953, he joined the faculty at Stanford University, CA, USA, where he remained for the rest of his career, transitioning in 2010 from his long-held teaching position to professor emeritus.

In 1961, Bandura began the Bobo Doll studies that became synonymous with his name, in which children who observed an adult hitting and yelling at an inflatable doll, called Bobo, were more likely to display aggressive behavior toward the doll when playing with it later. Later in his career he worked with others to create programs based on the principles of these studies, showing people acting out scenarios related to family planning, social injustice toward women and girls, climate change, and protecting against HIV/AIDS.

Among the works Dr Bandura authored are 17 books, including *Social Foundations of Thought and Action* (Bandura, 1986), *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control* (Bandura, 1997), and *Moral Disengagement: How People Do Harm and Live with Themselves* (2016). He also wrote and coauthored hundreds of papers on a variety of subjects, including interpersonal interaction, social learning, the development and violation of personal moral codes, and self-belief as a determinant of success.

In 1974, Dr Bandura was elected president of the American Psychological Association and in 1980 he

became a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Among his numerous awards and honors are the Outstanding Lifetime Contribution to Psychology Award from the American Psychological Association, the James McKeen Cattell Award from the American Psychological Society, the Gold Medal Award for Distinguished Lifetime Contribution to Psychological Science from the American Psychological Foundation, and a President's National Medal of Science from the National Science Foundation, Virginia, USA. He also received 19 honorary degrees through the course of his career.

Given his research on the power of self-efficacy, one of Dr Bandura's most often-cited contributions in his own Stanford community was how he inspired faculty and students to believe in themselves and their work. One of his graduate students, Professor Elizabeth Ozer, of the University of California, San Francisco, commented, "He was brilliant and prescient at applying theory to the most urgent transdisciplinary challenges facing humankind—such as climate change and the earth's population—and the importance of the engagement of youth in saving our world."

References

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