Relative effects of omission training and extinction training in obese subjects.
Topping, Jeff S; Surratt, Cynthia M; Barrios, Billy A.

AB Compared the behavior of 40 obese and normal weight undergraduates in a response suppression situation. Specifically, Ss were allowed to stabilize their response rate on an intermittent reinforcement schedule and then were switched to a response suppression phase in which either omission training or extinction training was in effect. No significant differences in the performance of the obese and normal weight Ss during the response suppression phase were obtained. The methodology employed also provided a test of the D. Singh et al (see record 1974-11499-001) response-inhibition hypothesis, which states that obese individuals are deficient in the ability to inhibit habitual responses even when such responses are no longer appropriate. It follows from the response-inhibition hypothesis that the obese Ss should have performed less efficiently than the normal weight Ss during the response suppression phase. Since the results do not support this prediction, the present findings cast some doubt on the generality of the response-inhibition hypothesis.