



## Conformity

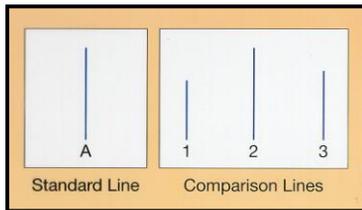
- When you yield to real or imagined group or social pressure, *even if there are not direct requests*.
- Solomon Asch - studied conformity by individuals placed with a group of strangers & asked to do a simple line perception task

**ASCH'S CONFORMITY EXPERIMENTS**

Which of the three comparison lines on the right is equal to the standard line? The photo on the left (from one of the experiments) was taken after five people, who were actually working for Asch, had answered, "Line 3." The student in the center shows the severe discomfort that comes from disagreeing with the responses of other group members.

PSYCHOLOGY IN EVERYDAY LIFE | THIRD EDITION | David G. Myers • C. Nathan DeWall  
Copyright © 2014 by Worth Publishers. All rights reserved. WORTH PUBLISHERS

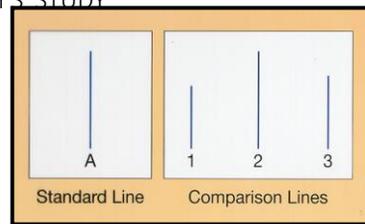
### ASCH'S STUDY



Would you go along with other's responses?

A replication: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYIh4MkcfJA>

### ASCH'S STUDY



70-75% conformed to the incorrect response some of the time

## Factors Driving Conformity

### Normative Social Influence

Conforming to group out of a need for approval & acceptance

### Informational Social Influence

Conforming because of a need for information and direction

## Conformity Research Findings

### • People are more likely to conform when they:

- Are made to feel incompetent or insecure
- Are in a group in which everyone else agrees
- Admire the group's status and attractiveness
- Have not already committed to any response
- Know that others in the group will observe our behavior
- Are from a culture that strongly encourages respect for social standards

### • Classic example:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgRoiTWk8HU>

### Effects Of Others on Performance



In some situations:

- SOCIAL FACILITATION
- improved performance in the presence of others
- true for simple or well-learned tasks



### Home Town Advantage : Social Facilitation (partly)



Sport	Games Studied	Home Winning Percent
Baseball	23,034	53.3%
Football	2,592	57.3
Ice hockey	4,322	61.1
Basketball	13,596	64.4
Soccer	37,202	69.0

### Effect of Others on Performance

#### SOCIAL LOAFING

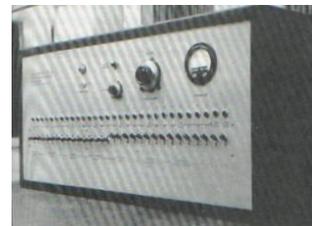
people in a group exert less effort than when individually accountable

- Examples:
  - Group projects

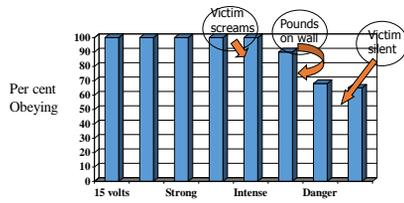


### Obedience

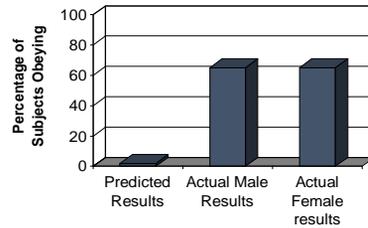
- Stanley Milgram - studied whether average individuals would obey an authority figure telling them to do something that harms another individual.
- Before the study psychiatrists predicted complete obedience in only .1% of participants (the 'sadists').
- What did Milgram find in his community volunteers?.....



### Social Influence: Milgram's Results



### Results of the Milgram Experiment



### Extensions to Milgram's Study

- Participants going all the way to 450:
  - 65% in original study
  - Similar results when conducted with women, unpaid college students
  - 48% when conducted away from Yale campus
  - 40% when sitting near the learner (victim)
  - 30% when teacher had to place learner's hand on the electric grid for a shock
  - 21% when experimenter telephoned commands

<http://thesituationist.wordpress.com/2009/09/10/replicating-milgrams-obedience-experiment-yet-again/> Modern day example



### Social Roles & Norms

- Whenever you are with others, there is a tendency for the group & situation to generate social norms & social roles.
- Social norms: standards for behavior in that situation
- Social role: particular positions in a social situation have different norms for appropriate behavior

### Example: Stanford Prison Study

- Zimbardo and colleagues (1971)
- randomly chosen "prisoners" and "guards"
- all "normal" college students
- instructed not to use violence



- For pictures, videos, and a detailed slide show see:
- <http://www.prisonexp.org>

The Case of Kitty Genovese  
1964

- Queens, New York.
- A total of 38 neighbors watched
- Stabbed to death over 35 min period



- The first phone call = 3:50 a.m. after Kitty was already dead.



Effect of Others on Helping Behaviors

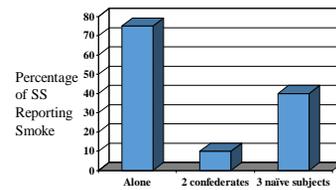
- Researchers John Darley & Bibb Latane decided to study how the social situation influences the responses of bystanders in emergencies

Smoke-Filled Room Study

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KE5YwN4NW5o> silent0

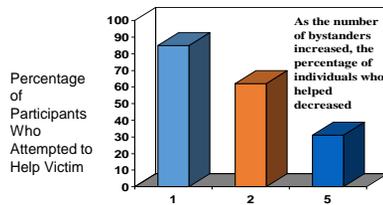
- Volunteers were asked to fill out questionnaires. While doing so, the room began to fill up with smoke.
- Tested participants in 1 of 3 conditions:
  - 1) 1 participant alone in room
  - 2) 3 naïve participants together
  - 3) 1 participant with 2 unconcerned "volunteers"
- Would they report the smoke and how fast?

Smoke-Filled Room Study

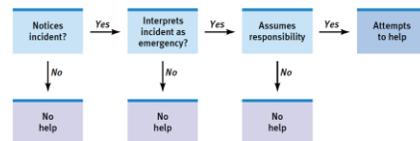


Were also slower with more people present

Darley and Latané (1968) - the "seizure" study



Bystander Intervention



## Theories About Why We See the Bystander Effect

- Informational influence theory – we use the reactions of others to judge the seriousness of a situation.

## Theories About Why We See the Bystander Effect

- Diffusion of responsibility theory – you feel less personally responsible when others are observing the same emergency

- You have just taken a drug that will make you invisible for 48 hrs. What will you do during that time?

- Deindividuation - when you don't stand out as an individual – happens in situations where you are relatively anonymous
- In a disguise or even a uniform
- Online
- One person in a crowd

## Effect of deindividuation

- Less likely to help.
- More likely to misbehave.
- More likely to express things you would usually keep to yourself.

## Summary

- Situations are more powerful than we expect
- When 'judging' the behavior of others, remember that they are subject to the power of the situation
- Obedience is easy
- Nonconformity is hard
- Helping is unlikely if people are not sure if its an emergency or do not take responsibility
- Deindividuation disinhibits behavior
- Finally ----→