

Special Issue

Foundations for Experimental Social Psychology: Requiem for Classic Social Psychology

Robert D. Mather Savannah Brand

Special Issue Editors

University of Central Oklahoma

The field of social psychology is relatively young, and has been touched by many different areas, including experimental psychology, sociology, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience. During the course of the field's development, many perspectives have contributed to the work of individual researchers in exciting ways. However, most introductory social psychology textbooks give very little coverage to the stories behind the classic social psychologists. This is not an indictment of introductory social psychology textbooks. They serve their purpose and do so very well—to survey the research and theories in the field and to place it in a broader context of application. This issue is dedicated to providing a readable digest of information that may be of interest to our readers.

Kurt Lewin earned the title of “Father of Experimental Social Psychology” by attempting to understand the connection between one’s self and their environment, along with looking at how a group of individuals think when together. Leon Festinger contributed important research with his theory of cognitive dissonance, which allows psychologists to understand how individuals can soothe themselves when they are dealing with an uncomfortable emotion and how individuals deal with difficult decision-making. Floyd Allport helped to move the psychology field away from mere speculation by insisting upon the use of objective methodology and experimentation, allowing the field to become more science based. And his brother, Gordon Allport, focused on making personality psychology its own sub-field, and had an influential impact on psychology, as a whole. Solomon Asch, who also examined attitudes along with the psychology of groups, researched groupthink and conformity, in depth. The inaccurate report of the Kitty Genovese murder sparked John Darley’s interest in understanding the bystander effect; that is, how individuals can ignore or minimize the help that others might need. Stanley Milgram’s studies showed us just how far individuals are willing to push their own limits when dealing with the requests of authority figures. Philip Zimbardo’s work also examined the relationship between authority figures in social situations with his Stanford Prison Experiment, which was ended early due to the extreme situations that occurred during the experiment. Robert Zajonc looked at how the presence of other individuals affects the behavior of others and influences our attitudes. These are just some of the basic contributions that each of the following psychologists have made to the field. In this issue, we look at the psychologists behind the major theories and foundations of psychology and beyond just the individual theories. We also take a look at the burgeoning field of forensic psychology, which more people have been expressing interest in than ever before, and take it a step further to examine the evolutionary aspects behind it.

Send correspondence concerning this article or reprint requests to Robert D. Mather or Savannah Brand, Department of Psychology, University of Central Oklahoma, Box 85, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73034; e-mail: rmather@uco.edu or savannah.brand@gmail.com.

Kurt Lewin: Life Overview and Social Forces

Evan England Shari Chernauskas-Beecher

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

Kurt Lewin founded extremely relevant research in social psychology, which broadened the nature of the field considerably. Field theory is one concept he developed in order to explain social behavior through the connection between perceptions of the self and the environment. Another theory, termed group dynamics, involves understanding the functions of group cognition through the study of the social perceptions of individuals within the group. He founded the change management model that was used to explain the different psychological aspects that manage an individual's ability to change. In studying human behavior, he created an equation to represent behavior as the function of the person and their environment. His contribution to modern social psychology earned him the title of the "Father of Experimental Social Psychology."

Keywords: Kurt Lewin, field theory, group cognition

The field of social psychology has changed and evolved considerably over the years due to the contributions of Kurt Lewin. He created the field of experimental social psychology and thus earned the title of the Father of Social Psychology (Coghlan & Brannick, 2003). Various situations that occurred throughout Lewin's life were the inspiration for most of his research. He used personal life experiences to form most of the theories for which he is known. In doing so, Lewin used experimental, hands on, field study approach to social psychology that focused on mathematics and quantum physics. The work of Kurt Lewin is the foundation for many theoretical constructs used today and found implemented in both social and industrial/organizational psychological realms.

Biography

Childhood and schooling

Kurt Lewin was born to Jewish parents in the village of Moglino, the Prussian province of Posen (now currently a part of Poland) on September 9, 1890 (Daniels, 2003). He had four siblings of which he was the second oldest. During his early childhood he lived above a general store that his father owned. His parents also owned a farm that was located outside of the town in which he lived. His time at the farm helped him to gain a great appreciation of nature, which helped to lead him toward his future career (Daniels, 2003). At the age of 15, his family moved to Berlin, Germany where he attended the Gymnasium, somewhat like an advanced placement school of today (Lewin, 2008). During his time there, he gained an interest in Greek philosophy, which remained one of his passions for the remainder of his life.

Lewin enrolled at the University of Frieberg in 1909 where he first studied medicine in order to become a country medical doctor (Daniels, 2003). Later, he transferred to the University of Munich where he chose to study biology. It was during this time that his interest in philosophy increased to the point that he became interested in earning a doctorate in the subject. Eventually, with advice from one of his professors, he went on to the University of Berlin where he wanted to learn the theories of science (Daniels, 2003). It was at this university that he earned his Ph.D. in 1914 (Lewin, 2008; Lewin, 1998). After earning his Ph.D., he became a professor despite the trend of anti-Semitism that was pervading most German universities during that time. He and his students would eventually become involved with the young socialist movement at the time and, as a result, were able to organize a successful education program which dealt with the potential of socialism and democracy in German society (Daniels, 2003). It was also during this time that he became influenced by what was, at the time, a popular field of psychology: Gestalt psychology.

Pre-U.S. move

During World War I, Lewin served in an artillery unit in France and Russia for two years. His time in the Kaiser's army ended when he was injured during combat. One year later, in 1917, he wrote what is considered to be an extremely important article called *The Landscape of War* (Daniels, 2003). This article dealt with perceptions of the battlefield in relation to behavior. He considered behavior to be related to connections between physical and psychological space. The article would be the first step towards what would eventually become his field theory (Daniels, 2003). His theory relating to life-space also has its origins in the article, due to the considerations of different spaces (fields), which he related in some degree to behavior.

While serving in the military, he married Maria Landsberg and had two children named Esther (girl) and Reuven (boy) (Daniels, 2003; Lewin, 1998). This was a time when he wrote many different journal articles focusing on his ideas related to human behavior. At the University of Berlin Psychology Institute in 1917 he went on to do various lectures and even seminars in both psychology and philosophy (Daniels, 2003). Lewin's marriage with Maria ended with divorce after a short ten years in 1927 and with their two children plagued with schizophrenia for years. In 1929, Lewin married his second wife Gertrud Weiss and eventually had two children, Daniel (boy, 1931) and Miriam (girl, 1933) (Lewin, 1998). Also that year he took his first trip to America to attend a meeting of the International Congress of Psychologists that took place at Yale University. It was not long before the meeting that his research was translated into English for the first time (Daniels, 2003).

One year later, Lewin was invited to be a visiting professor at Stanford University (Cherry, n.d.). This invitation was the result of Edwin Boring, the Director of the Psychological Laboratory at Harvard University, recommending Lewin after hearing about him during a meeting that took place at Yale (Daniels, 2003). During his California trip, Lewin chose to stop in New York to be a guest of the Columbia University Faculty Club. It was here that he met a young Gardner Murphy who would be greatly influenced by Lewin's research. After this stop in New York, Lewin finally made it to California and Stanford University. After his six-month term at Stanford, the Lewin family chose to return to Germany in order for him to continue his research. He made it as far as Japan where he briefly visited the University of Japan to meet with his colleagues (Daniels, 2003). Hearing that Hitler had occupied and took over Europe, Lewin's family decided to stay in New England, while Lewin himself traveled back to Germany.

Nazi Germany fueled his understanding of group dynamics and behavior. In his studies, Lewin worked under Carl Stumpf at the Psychological Institute at the University of Berlin with known Gestalt psychologists Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Kohler and Kurt Koffka (Ullman, 2000). Lewin embraced the Gestalt of the whole-part relationship and this theme is evident in his research (Heidbreder, 1937). The Russian psychologists Tamara Dembo and Bluma Zeigarnik were some of the first women students of the university and studied under Lewin. When Hitler took over Germany in 1933, Lewin, being a Jew, knew he had to find work elsewhere (Lewin, 1998).

Post-U.S. move

Lewin did not stay in Germany long due to the Committee on Displaced Scholars and a child development specialist named Ethel Waring, whose combined efforts gave him the opportunity to return to America at Cornell's School of Home Economics for a term of two years (Daniels, 2003). Lewin looked for a position at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem before this, but ultimately ended up at Cornell University in an economic position. The Committee that brought him to America urged Lewin to pursue another position at another university so the committee could give work to another scholar seeking refuge from the war (Lewin, 1998). In 1935, a position became available at the State University of Iowa in the Child Welfare Research Station. It was here, in 1935, that Lewin published and described his philosophical approach to psychological science, *Dramatic Theory of Personality* (Lewin, 1935).

Later, Lewin was invited by the faculty of Harvard University to teach as a visiting professor for two spring terms (1938 and 1939) (Daniels, 2003). Lewin gave seminars at the Psychological Clinic, directed by Henry Murray (Daniels, 2003). Murray welcomed Lewin's research and seminars as a guide for his own future studies. U.S. citizenship in 1940 allowed Lewin to research problems related to the war that required a higher clearance that a non-citizen could not own (Daniels, 2003). Lewin became part of a team that helped with war effort mobilization when America entered World War II. This research helped to increase the understanding of the social and emotional issues of soldiers (Daniels, 2003).

In America, Lewin continued his research and branched out into other areas such as child psychology. He moved to MIT where he focused on more overt scientific experimentation and "action research" (Daniels, 2003). To Lewin, action research represented a more direct way to study behavior in more scientific and mathematical way using real life examples of social behavior and norms. Lewin would continue his brand of research and influence many different types of psychologists in the process. One experiment involving discussion groups as a way to understand intergroup tension led to the creation of the National Training Laboratories (NTL) (Daniels, 2003).

Lewin died in 1947 before the NTL was completed, but his work lived on through it and other psychologists of the time.

Research and Theories

Throughout his life, Lewin wrote many articles which all had a connection to some of his earliest theories. His approach to personality is one aspect of his research, which was integrated in many of his studies. In considering the personality one must consider the dynamics of the associations that occur in order for a personality to occur. The actions that occur as a result of those intentions must be considered. He also believed that the way a person is viewed affects the personality to some extent. Personal structure and child developmental personality changes are also aspects of personality that he deemed worthwhile to understand.

At one time Lewin saw associations, called energy, that were required for personal growth. Lewin believed that these associations were connections that added to the personality as more connections were made (Daniels, 2003). This means that new connections are made on a constant basis in order for an individual's personality to function. Later research showed that if these connections are broken or damaged there could be the manifestation of personality disorders or other personality-related problems. Lewin's approach would suggest that associations are more deliberate and voluntary than what other psychologists would like to believe. This shows the personality to be an aspect of a person that may be more influenced through extreme means.

In explaining the role of intentions in relation to personality, Lewin considered how actions occur in relation to intentions. For intentional action to occur there must be a motive, otherwise intentions will not be a factor in behavior (Daniels, 2003). He also considered the goals and motives of and the individual paramount in considering intentions. Lewin maintained that there are psychological influences at work that affect individual intentions. In order for the personality to function, certain forces must come together in a way that allows for positive action in relation to intentions, which are almost always related to a specific goal or motive that requires direct action in order to achieve (Daniels, 2003).

Lewin's view is that a person is a combination of various systems that regulate different aspects of the person's "field" (Daniels, 2003). A "social field" is defined as a representation of the whole group and its environment as compared to a 'force field' that includes people, attitudes, habits and customs. This 'force field' is not static, but a pattern of balance between opposing forces, driving forces and restraining forces. These forces work in opposing directions and try to maintain equilibrium (Lewin, 1947). The person as a concept is one main system that is made up of different subsystems such as emotion and cognition. Each subsystem must work together in order for the person to correctly function in the social world. As the individual personality changes and becomes more complex new subsystems are created in order to allow for more regulation (Daniels, 2003). Without certain subsystems there are aspects of the individual personality that would incorrectly function. Lewin believed that human nature could be described as an aspect of the personality, which is made up of several subsystems, all of which require constant regulation in order for normal human behavior to occur.

The personality of a child is constantly developing in relation to the amount of stimuli that they perceive at any given time. Lewin considered the child as an individual who has a constantly evolving system of personality (Daniels, 2003). As the child grows and matures their psychological environment begins to take on more complexity and changes from a world that could be considered exaggerated, to one where logic is dominant (Daniels, 2003). The role of a child also changes as their personalities become more complex. This allows for more types of stimuli to be processed allowing for an increase in social views. In time, a child will discover roles of a social nature that were at one time unfamiliar to them. At that time they will have the cognitive ability to choose the role that they prefer, or to simply try out different roles to become more educated about them before actually choosing one (Daniels, 2003).

Group dynamics

Lewin's findings in social psychology have broadened the nature of the field considerably. Field theory is one concept he developed in order to explain any form of social behavior through the connection between perceptions of the self and the environment. Another theory involved what Lewin termed group dynamics, which involves understanding the functions of group cognition through the study of the social perceptions of individuals within the group. He also founded the change management model that was used to explain the different psychological aspects that manage an individual's ability to change. In studying human behavior, he created an equation which was used to explain it which is $B=f(P,E)$, meaning behavior is the function of the person and their environment.

It is in the book *Dynamic Theory of Personality* that Lewin introduced his famous mathematical formula expressed as $B = f(P, E)$ (Lewin, 1935). This book was based on the Gestalt properties of whole-parts. It was his first published work in America and Lewin proposed that this 'dynamic theory' involving psychological processes include both the environment and the person are bound together and function as a whole to produce behavior

(Lewin, K., 1935). The equation was used as a way to bridge mathematical and scientific expressions in relation to psychology. In founding the formula he chose to simplify his findings on human behavior in a way that would be not only scientifically relevant, but would allow for significant elaboration through continued research of constantly increasing quality (Lewin, 1935). By stating that behavior is the function of a person and their environment, he was able to significantly change the essence of what the study of human behavior was at the time.

In Lewin's second American publication, *Topological Psychology*, a presentation of a concept and tool that he believed would bring psychology coherence and unity is born (Heidbreder, 1937). This approach used diagrams and mathematical geometry to show the relationships between factors that influence behavior and learning. Regions that had boundaries were assigned components in the dynamic (Cooper, 2009). The comprehension of human behavior is explained with regard to the objects that are present including events, termed environment and the person. The total situation includes the environment and the person, which Lewin defines as the life space (Heidbreder, 1937). Lewin used his mathematical method also in his field theory.

Field theory

Field theory is based on Lewin's belief that human behavior is the result of actions that occur in what he termed a force field. He defines a field as "the totality of coexisting facts which are conceived of as mutually interdependent" (Lewin, 1951). This field represents the space in which the different aspects of the individual's environment coexist. It is through various interactions in the field and between the fields of other individuals that behavior occurs (Neill, 2004). Every individual has a field, but no two fields are exactly alike due to a wide variety of individual differences. As more information about the environment is processed, the individual field changes to accommodate the new information. It is those changes, which help to define the individual (Cronshaw & McCulloch, 2008).

In creating field theory Lewin also founded the term "life-space" which represents everything in the field that makes up the individual (Daniels, 2003). It changes based on the places that an individual goes, as well as the people that the individual meets. The feelings associated with various places and people also contribute to life-space changes. It is through these constant changes that individuals learn about themselves and their environment. Behavior is an extension of the changing life-space in that, according to Lewin's field theory, it is through the reactions, which occur as a result of the various changes that most behavior is allowed to take place. Without change in an individual's life-space there would be very little stimuli to process, which in turn would drastically limit not only the growth of the individual field, but also prevent complex social behavior (Hall & Lindzey, 1978).

Leadership styles

Due to the result of having to flee Germany and the circumstances that led to his export, Lewin broadened his research interests to studying the factors involved with the social rejection of his personal concept including culture and ethnic background (Lewin, 1998). This sparked interest in studying styles of leadership, especially democratic leadership. It was with two University of Iowa graduate students named Ralph White and Ronald Lippitt that democratic and autocratic leadership styles were investigated (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939).

This study involved groups of 10-year-old boy scouts. The leadership styles were assigned specific operations to define the terms for the study. Through test and retest a more precise definition may give way or the realization that there are several more categories of democratic leadership. The method involved the two graduate students playing both autocratic and democratic leaders, just at different times. This was to eliminate the extraneous variable of personality in the graduate students. The Boy Scout groups made paper mache masks. Directions under autocratic (dictator) leader just told the Boy Scouts to tear strips of newspaper. Under the democratic direction, the boys were told reasons why they were tearing the newspaper and the future steps that would be involved in the project. White, one of the graduate students accidentally took on a more laissez-faire leadership role that gave little direction (Lewin et al., 1939).

Results concluded that those boys who received autocratic leadership became submissive and docile around the leader. After the leader was not present the boys became aggressive. The boys subjected to democratic leadership were playful and social. Aggression was not extinct, yet what little was perceived did not involve hostility. Those in the laissez-faire group acted disorganized and lacked constructive motivation. The boys frequently showed frustration and members interfered with other members often which led to aggressive behavior (Lewin et al, 1939).

Food studies

Lewin's study on leadership styles led to an interest in group dynamics and social change. During World War II, Lewin worked with the government to help find ways to make food shortages and rationing less negative on people (Lewin, 1998). Lewin incorporated his field theory in his research involving food habits and change. Food is said to move through channels and is governed by forces that have resistance and attraction. Channels can include, but are not limited to, farms, stores and gardens and resistance and attraction can include price, pleasing

family and health, among others. Participants were asked to change eating habits by lecture. One group was just asked by the lecturer to change and the other group used “group decision” (Lewin, 1943). The “group decision” group used the “Democratic” method from the Boy Scouts study (Lewin et al., 1939) that gave the housewives facts about the situation, allowed for open discussion and the choice for change (Lewin, 1943).

Results showed that those in the group that were just asked to change eating habits, only 10% of them actually did. In the “Democratic” group, involving “group decision”, 52% changed their eating habits. Food situation and the dynamics involved are all variables that effect food eating behavior, but ultimately, the gatekeeper that governs the food channels has to decide to change the food habits of the family (Lewin, 1943). A limitation of peer-pressure should be taken into effect involving the “group decision” individuals.

Organizational development

Lewin went on to investigate change in groups, societies and organizations. His three-step model is considered to be a main contribution to organizational development (Burnes, 2004). Lewin believed that three steps were involved in order for change to happen in a group. The first step is called unfreezing and involves unrestraining forces and becoming non-stabilized. This allows for old behavior to be removed and new behavior to fill in (Lewin, 1947). The second step for Lewin is moving which involves the identification of the various forces by the individual in order to allow for change. The last step in his model is called refreezing, which involves stabilization and reinforcement to anchor the desired behavior.

Schein (1996) elaborates on unfreezing and believes that three processes need to happen for unfreezing to be implemented. These processes are, “disconfirmation of the validity of the status quo, the induction of guilt or survival anxiety and creating psychological safety” (Schein, 1996). The current beliefs must be challenged in a way that strongly invalidates them. At this point the individual must feel psychological guilt, which makes changes feel worthwhile. Finally, the need to change is reinforced through the motivation to find safety in conformity of social beliefs. When these steps are complete it is possible for change to occur without fear of psychological or behavioral repercussions. The more that the change is felt to be necessary, the easier it will be to allow that change.

The second step, moving (also called transition) involves the process in which the actual change takes place (Schein, 1996). The forces, which are needed for change, are identified and processed in order for the change to occur. This step represents what Lewin considered to be the actual process of change (Kurt Lewin Change Management Model) (Schein, 1996). He was one of the first psychologists to consider change as a process that required certain psychological and social factors to occur (Schein, 1996). This stage is considered the hardest because it involves actually accepting the change, and in the process trying to understand the change and why it is deemed necessary (Kurt Lewin Change Management Model). Some ways found to make this stage easier is the use of role models to reinforce the change, as well as giving the individual undergoing the change the opportunity to understand what the change means and supporting them as it happens. Communication is also a valid way to help to reinforce change (Schein, 1996).

In refreezing, the final step, the individual evaluates and identifies the forces at work and uses trial and error to find available options. When a desired state appears and appeals to the individual, change occurs. With reinforcement, this change should be long lived (Lewin, 1947). Through this stage the change that has occurred is strengthened in order to prevent further change. This stage has been criticized due to a large amount of research that shows that change happens constantly. This makes the concept of freezing difficult to accept because it is difficult to understand how it could occur when change happens so rapidly. Current theories consider this stage as much more flexible than Lewin allowed in order explain some of the inaccuracies that were present in his version (Kurt Lewin Change Management Model) (Schein, 1996).

In considering the last stage of change Lewin saw it as exclusively a group activity; a successful change involved the transformation of group norms and routines (Lewin, 1947). In an organization, such as a company or business, change stabilization requires the whole organization to adopt new norms, policies, culture and practices (Burnes, 2006). Recently Lewin’s three-step model of change has been implemented inside the classroom teaching a course on managing planned change at MIT (Schein, 1996).

Action research

In Lewin’s three-step model, the “Action Research model” is incorporated in the moving (step 2) process. To move from one behavior to another, an individual/group has to research, take action and research further. There are three questions involved in this process. First an individual/group has to ask: what the current issue/problem? Next, the individual/group has to find out if there are threats or dangers. Finally and most importantly, the individual/group needs to figure out what should be done (Lewin, 1946).

Action Research is rooted in Lewin’s (1946) foundation of Gestalt psychology, which states that change occurs successfully by helping individuals/groups to reflect and acquire new insights into the whole situation they are in. It was first investigated by studying violence between Jewish and Catholic teenage gangs (Lewin, 1946).

Lewin believed that routines and patterns in-group behavior play a positive role in imposing group norms. The overall concept includes aspects of his Group Dynamics by trying to understand why the gang members behaved a certain way when they are subjected to certain forces (Lewin, 1947). For Lewin, research could not be conducted without action and there is no action without performing research (Burnes, 2007).

Group dynamics

Lewin's Group Dynamics (1939) states that a group is not based on how similar or dissimilar the individuals are in a group, but the interdependence of fate. The group shapes the behavior of the individual. Lewin wondered what it is about the origin and attributes of a group that causes it to behave to the forces affecting it, and how can the forces be manipulated in a way to cause a more attractable behavior to occur? Change, Lewin believed, happens when factors such as roles, socialization processes, group norms and interactions are studied at the group level (Lewin, 1939).

Today Group Dynamic principals and the Action Research method are currently implemented in the field of nursing. It has become an alternate method to bridge theory, practice and research together and allow nurses to have a direct role in defining problems and help develop interventions. This method of Action Research provides straight access to investigation in areas of great importance in the nursing discipline. The patient can gain from Action Research also by helping the nurses to address individual problems involved with patients from their perspective. Development of other change theories has yet to be as generic and diverse as Lewin's (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993). This keeps them as relevant today as they were when first conceived.

Implementation at Harwood

The first implementation of Lewin's field theory was seen in the Harwood studies. This longitudinal study started in 1939 and is still ongoing although the research practices have now become more of a way of life for the corporation (Burnes, 2007). The experiment included field experiment elements such as objective performance measures, transcripts of meetings and control and experimental groups. The study began addressing employee turnover issues and progressed to self-management, group decision-making, stereotype change and leadership training. This study functionalized Lewin's elements of group dynamics, action research field theory and the three-step model of change (Burnes, 2007). The democratic leadership style and stereotype change helped Harwood increase production from 75 units per hour to over 90 units per hour. Lewin's theoretical conceptions and philosophical ideas became practiced in real-world situations at Harwood Manufacturing. These studies were used to bring understanding to group behavior and identify change options for companies using the three-step model. Harwood and Lewin together formed a foundation known as organizational development.

Conclusions

Lewin made many contributions to the field of psychology that had such a strong influence that his research is still considered extremely relevant. From the beginning of his interests in philosophy to his later research in what is now social psychology, his focus was always on human behavior. While many psychologists focused purely on the experimental aspects inherent to psychology he chose to consider a broader range of study which would form the basis for most of his research. He also chose to consider mathematics and physics in order to give psychology a more scientific form of research. While it is true that some of his research is flawed when compared to newer theories, his most famous theories are still able to fit current beliefs with little change. Most social psychologists chose to build on his theories due to how well thought out they are. As a result, he has become known as the "Father of Social Psychology" (Coghlan & Brannick, 2003).

References

- Burnes, B. (2004). Kurt Lewin and the planned approach to change: A re-appraisal. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(6), 976-1002.
- Burnes, B. (2007). Kurt Lewin and the Harwood studies: The foundations of OD. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 43(2), 213-231.
- Cherry, K. (n.d.). *Kurt Lewin Biography*. Retrieved from http://psychology.about.com/od/profilesofmajorthinkers/p/bio_lewin.htm
- Coghlan, D. & Brannick, T. (2003). Kurt Lewin: The "practical theorist" for the 21st century. *The Irish Journal of Management*, 24(2), 31-37.
- Cooper, S. (2009). Kurt Lewin: Field theory of learning. *Continuing Education*. Retrieved September 10, 2011, from <http://www.lifecircles-inc.com/Learningtheories/gestalt/Lewin.html>
- Cronshaw, S. F., & McCulloch, A. N. (2008). Reinstating the Lewinian vision: From force field analysis to organization field assessment. *Organization Development Journal*, 26(4), 89-103.

- Daniels, V. (2003). *Kurt Lewin Notes*. Retrieved September 14, 2011, from <http://www.sonoma.edu/users/d/daniels/lewinnotes.html>
- Hall, C. S. and Lindzey, G., 1978. *Theories of Personality*, 3rd Ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Heidreder, E. (1937). Special review: Principles of topological psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 34(8), 584-604.
- Holter, I. M., & Schwartz-Barcott, D. (1993). Action research: What is it? How has it been used and how can it be used in nursing? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 18, 298-304.
- Kurt Lewin: Change Management Model*. (n.d.). Retrieved September 14, 2011, from http://www.change-management-coach.com/kurt_lewin.html
- Lewin, K. (1935). A dynamic theory of personality: Selected papers. (D.K. Adams & K.E. Zener, Trans.). pp. 239-273. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Lewin, K. (1935). *A dynamic theory of personality*. McGraw-Hill, NY.
- Lewin, K., Lippitt, R. and White, R. (1939). Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created "social climates". *Journal of Social Psychology*, 10, 271-299.
- Lewin, K. (1943). Forces behind food habits and methods of change. *Bulletin of the National Research Council*, 108, 35-65.
- Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics. In Cartwright, D. (ed.), *Field Theory in Social Science*. London: Social Science Paperbacks.
- Lewin K. (1939). "When facing danger," In Lewin, G.W. (Ed.). *Resolving Social Conflicts*. London: Harper & Row.
- Lewin, M. A. (1998). Kurt Lewin: His psychology and a daughter's recollections. In G. Kimble & M. Wertheimer (Eds.), *Portraits of pioneers in psychology*, Vol. III. (pp.105-118). Washington DC : American Psychological Association.
- Lewin, Kurt. Complete Dictionary of Scientific Biography. 2008. Retrieved September 10, 2011 from Encyclopedia.com: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2830905863.html>
- Neill, J. (2004). Field Theory - Kurt Lewin. Retrieved September 14, 2011, from <http://wilderdom.com/theory/FieldTheory.html>
- Schein, E.H. (1996). Kurt Lewin's change theory in the field and in the classroom: Notes toward a model of managed learning. *Systems Practice*. 9(1), 27-47.
- Ullman, D. (2000) 'Kurt Lewin: His Impact on American Psychology, or Bridging the Gorge between Theory and Reality. Retrieved on September 14, 2011, <http://www.sonoma.edu/psychology/os2db/history3.html>

A Review of the Work and Influences of Leon Festinger

Justin Gibbons Ge'Andra Johnson Sharayah Russo

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

There are few projects that Leon Festinger developed and cultivated throughout his career as a pioneering social psychologist, that are not seen as pillars of the field today. To have so many aspects of his work integrated as cannon is nothing short of remarkable. His work in propinquity, social comparison theory, and cognitive dissonance has proven to have the staying power, which manifests in popular culture as well as post-graduate textbooks. Our attempt here is to provide a brief synthesis of his body of work. An abridged exploration into Leon Festinger's personal life, as well as his most well known and lesser-known studies are evaluated. We finish with a look at Leon Festinger's legacy and how his research has affected the world of social psychology since his death. Leon Festinger was one of the great masons, feverishly working to construct the acropolis. His work is an integral part of the ever-evolving field of social psychology.

Keywords: Festinger, social comparison theory, cognitive dissonance, propinquity

Leon Festinger was born on May 8, 1919, in Brooklyn, New York to an embroiderer and a homemaker. He attended Boys' High School and City College before attending the University of Iowa as a graduate student. It was at the University of Iowa that he became a student of Kurt Lewin. He worked with Lewin as a research associate for two years before working for two years as senior statistician on the Committee for Selection and Training of Aircraft Pilots during World War II. In 1945, he rejoined Lewin as an assistant professor at the Research Center for Group Dynamics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Throughout his career, he moved with the Group Dynamics Center to several different universities, including University of Michigan in 1948, University of Minnesota in 1951, Stanford in 1955, and the New School for Social Research in 1968. In a memoir written by Stanley Schachter, Festinger is described as being both original and provocative as a scientist. Schachter writes that working with Festinger was always fun, and that they were able to discover things no one had known before together. Schachter also notes that this was non-negotiable for Festinger. He did not conduct experiments unless the purpose was to discover something that was not previously known. The goal was always to revolutionize the field, or to change the way people saw things. It is said that the moment things became dull, or he found himself repeating the same experiments, Festinger would shift his interests to something new (Schachter, 1994).

In 1989, Festinger contacted a close friend and colleague, Michael Gazzaniga and discussed that he was concerned about his fluctuating body temperature. The friend feared that it was cancer and encouraged Festinger to go see a physician. The doctor informed him that he had a tumor in his lung and needed aggressive lung surgery. Being not only a scientist but also a statistician, Festinger calculated the odds of his survival for a man his age. Seeing that his success rate was very little in comparison of the risk, Festinger, despite the protests of friends and family, decided to not have the surgery. In his final days, he visited with many of his old research friends, many of which were shocked at how relaxed he was when he discussed dying. Festinger passed away February 11, 1989. Although many lamented his death, none noticed the void that was left more than the academic field. Festinger's dynamic personality and critical intellect not only helped shape a new era in the science of psychology, but opened the door to a new way of looking at experiments and human behavior.

One story that captured Festinger's personality and playfulness was a story by two of his best friends. After Festinger death, two of his closest friends and fellow researchers, Gazzaniga and Schachter, had lunch with one another in an attempt to deal with their loss of such a great friend and intellectual mind. As they exchanged stories,

Schachter recounted, "I played backgammon with him the afternoon before he died, and you know what? The son of bitch took \$2.25 off me, and he wanted to be paid" (Gazzaniga, 2006).

Another close friend of Festinger was another well-known researcher, Kurt Lewin. Although there are probably many sources that influenced Festinger's research, none were more influential than Kurt Lewin. Lewin heavily guided Festinger as a person and in his research. Festinger's early work on levels of aspiration concerning social comparison was actually conducted under Lewin's supervision and merged with much Lewinian terminology (Jones, 1991.) Both would continue to travel and work together for the some of the best years of research in their lives. Festinger would continue to incorporate Lewin's work and ideas within his own for the rest of his life. Lewin and Festinger were crucial players in the effort to change psychology from simply stimuli-response research to experiments that involved deeper processes. One of Festinger's signature strengths was his ability to gain knowledge in different fields independently and successfully. Although this type of material was harder to measure, the results generated more information about the human processes than much of the previous data before. In essence, Festinger helped change psychology into a dynamic model of study (Schachter, 1994.)

Lewin was the first of the two to change his focus on what he called "group dynamics" (social psychology.) Festinger, uninterested at the time with such research, strayed from Lewin and continued to focus on his continued development of Lewin's older principles. However, after time, Festinger rejoined Lewin. In 1945, Festinger took an assistant professor position to work with a cutting edge research team lead by his mentor Kurt Lewin (Gazzaniga, 2006.) Although neither person had any experience with social psychology, Lewin was intrigued with it, and so started a group to delve into the mysteries of society. Self-named the Research Center for Group Dynamics (RCGD) based at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), this group made many great contributions to science. However, when Kurt Lewin passed away only two years later, Festinger relocated to another research team located at the University of Michigan (Friedman, 2000.) Here he continued his research of communication, beliefs and attitudes. His ingeniously well-designed experiments produced much data that supported his previous findings. His research there awarded him the prestigious title of one of the top ten most promising scientist according to *Fortune* magazine. This was especially exciting to all fellow psychologists as they too fought to have their work viewed as science (Schachter, 1994.)

Leon Festinger's (1949) earliest published psychological article dealt with the analysis of the current psychometric issues of his time. Particularly, Festinger was looking at how to analyze sociograms, which were as he described the most popular measurement of techniques in the field of social psychology. For example, researchers would use questions like "Who are your best friends?" or "What people do you like most to be with?" It was his experience that an almost infinite series of variations existed for those sociometric questions. However different the questions were, each data point was always the person mentioned by each response to the prompt. Festinger focused his attention on the patterns of interconnections among individuals. Those interconnected pathways of interpersonal relatedness were the structure of each sociogram.

The issue of Festinger's article was to rectify the problem of dealing with the vast complexity of sociograms of any reputable size. The pattern of interconnectedness among members of a group was virtually impossible, unless the group was very small. The difficulty arose when the size of the group increased. Therefore, the analysis of such large groups was largely neglected in any functional academic terms. The initial attempts to analyze the group dynamic were to draw a crude linear structure connecting each member of the group in their respective forms. Imagine a kind of social flowchart with lines and arrows demonstrating the important relationships (Festinger, 1949).

Festinger proposed that the sociometric measures could be treated by algebraic methods, that is, links could be transformed into variables. Kurt Back, one of Festinger's collaborators described the process as such, "Sums of linking can be used as a measure of popularity, and the whole group structure can be represented in a matrix and manipulated according to the rules of matrix algebra. Matrices can then be divided into types that characterize structures." (Back, 1950). This type of analysis allowed for the quantitative reliability that was at the heart of social psychology's attempt at its own *field theory*.

In 1950, Leon Festinger wrote his book, *Social Pressures in Informal Groups*. The two-part book examined the relationship forming habits of married veteran students at MIT. Specifically, Festinger was looking at friendship patterns, group formation, structure, standards, and the process of communication. This was the beginning of his contribution to social network theory. As opposed to the concept of how groups and friendships form which was supposedly centered on shared interest and common ground, Festinger showed that proximity was a far better predictor of social interaction.

Festinger explained that physical distance between dwellings, design, location of corner lots and staircases influenced the opportunities for contact between those students. Here, he continued his use of algebraic matrices to analyze the sociometric patterns involved in understanding that social network. He showed that friendship patterns

were those that the group standards were built upon. This classic study was the basis for the propinquity, the tendency for friendships and romantic relationships to form based on the number of interactions (Festinger, 1950).

Another contribution to the field of psychology that Festinger gave was his work with how strict theory should be. In his article on informal social communication, Festinger (1950) writes on the current state of psychological theorizing. The importance of a strict theory in developing research was becoming recognized as a paramount issue. He reflected the attitude that there were considerable disagreements on how strict and precise a theoretical formula needed to be. Too much uninhibited theorizing could degrade the empirical integrity of the field. There were those however, who felt that too precise a theory too early could also hinder the development of an area of knowledge. Festinger understood that a theory too vague needed be tightened and tidied, while too precise a theory needed room to grow and evolve. He made this point clear before introducing his work on informal social communication. Festinger proposed three mediators of pressures to communicate in a group with the first being communications stemming from the pressures toward uniformity. That is, the magnitude of the force to talk, the choice of one's recipient, the change of the recipient, and the tendency to reject non-conformers. The second mediator was blocked communications and restraints against one's communication in varying social structures. The last mediator was the effect of emotional states on communication.

Leon Festinger also did early explorations in the effects of anonymity in his study looking at group interaction. Festinger concluded that observing people in groups and observing those same people individually yielded radically different behavioral sets according to the two social situations. That is, people in crowds will frequently do things that they would not allow themselves to do under other circumstances. He explains that there sometimes occurs in groups a state of affairs in which the individual acts as if they were submerged in the group. This results in a state of *deindividuation*, which was defined as individuals who are not seen or paid attention to as individuals. Furthermore, under conditions where the member is not individuated in the group, there is likely to occur for the individual a reduction of inner restraints against doing various things (Festinger, 1952).

Festinger set out to demonstrate two consequences of deindividuation with his study. That the phenomenon of deindividuation in the group occurs and is accompanied by a reduction in inner restraint for the members and, that groups in which inner restraints are reduced are more attractive to their members than groups in which this does not occur. That is, Festinger attempted to provide the conditions, which would facilitate deindividuation in a laboratory setting. To do this, participants were brought in groups of 7 to discuss a fictitious study about resentments toward parents. The discussion material was designed to create conditions in which the phenomenon of deindividuation might occur. During the 40-minute discussion a confederate categorized statements in terms of whether they reflected positive or negative attitudes toward parents. Festinger looked at the relation between the frequency of negative attitudes toward parents revealed in the discussion and the ability to identify who said what, as well as the relation between the frequency of negative attitudes revealed in the discussion and the attractiveness of the group for its members. Festinger was able to show a positive correlation for both deindividuation and reduction of inner restraint, and that deindividuation reduces the overall inner restraint of the group.

Although not discussed in his 1952 study, it is interesting that the research leader responsible for studying deindividuation and reduced self-awareness or self-restraint, which are pivotal aspects of understanding the effects of anonymity, should go on to study and develop dissonance theory. And in fact, Festinger's study of deindividuation was a precursor to his work in cognitive dissonance. Part of what he wanted to demonstrate in his study was that deindividuation results in the reduction of inner restraint and that the occurrence does tend to increase the attractiveness of the group for its members. This is in line with the Festinger's later idea about the attractiveness of one dissonance reduction strategy over another.

Leon Festinger is, of course, most renowned for his work on cognitive dissonance. As one of the most endearing aspects of social psychology, the concept of cognitive dissonance has survived more than a half-century of self-correcting research. Festinger, who had up to this point been so engrossed with the individual's part within the whole of the social context, turns his attention to how the individual is concerned with one's self. That is, what happens within an individual when a conflict arises between his own self-perceptions and reality. As Festinger himself puts it, the existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance. When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information, which would likely increase the dissonance. This was his basic hypothesis, which he wrote about and developed in his book (Festinger, 1957).

Leon Festinger worked to modernize and pump vitality into a field that he thought was lacking rigor and direction. The organism social psychology had found its self in great need of adaptation in this new and terrifying world of mass genocides and nuclear weapons. The body of thought put in motion by Plato, Aristotle, and Kant, had to coexist with the contemporary theories of biology and physics. Festinger was able to impart to that collection of ideas, a framework and a language that is still hardwired in the genome of the field.

Festinger's work in cognitive dissonance, social comparison theory, and propinquity has spurred a great deal of further research that has worked to bolster the foundations of social psychology. Although mostly remembered for his work with cognitive dissonance, Festinger contributed much more to the field of psychology. Some of his less known, but still greatly influential research included, "laboratory rats and mazes; the voting behavior of Catholics and Jews in mixed groups; coalition formation in competitive bargaining; the effects of unethical behavior on the people who engage in it; a mathematical model of decision-making; the meaning of minute eye movements in formulating a theory of the conscious experience of perception," and many other areas (Festinger, Schachter & Gazzaniga, 1989.)

Although he is most often put into a category of a social psychologist, Festinger dabbled in almost every area of science such as perception, animal experimentation, education paleontology, psychology, history and theory (Brehm, 1998.) Another pivotal contribution of Festinger was his contribution to the field of education. Festinger, also an amazing statistician, developed some of the first nonparametric tests (Schachter, 1994.) Festinger also wrote or helped write as many as fourteen books and over thirty articles that although typically focused on social psychology, covered the spectrum of human behavior and the experiments that help shed understanding on human behavior (Friedman, 2000). Festinger's wide interest in the general area of human activity, development, interaction and behavior is one of the components that made him such a pivotal theorist in history, specifically the field of psychology. His contributions to other areas outside of cognitive dissonance affected numerous avenues of research and knowledge.

One of these contributions was his social comparison theory. This theory states that people have a need to evaluate themselves accurately and will often do so by comparing themselves to others when other objective measures are not at their disposal (Dijkstra, Gibbons & Buunk, 2010.) He further branched out by saying that there is an upward social comparison and a downward social comparison. An upward social comparison occurs when people compare themselves to people they perceive as better than themselves. People mostly do this type of comparison in an effort to better themselves, and study the characteristic they feel they need to reach their goal of being in that social status. They are able to contrast their current technique to a more efficient technique they would like to acquire. In contrast, downward social comparison is often done to make the person doing it feel better. Downward comparison is also a way to protect oneself from criticisms. Festinger's theory has grown and evolved since he published it in 1954 however, and has fallen in and out of interest (Dijkstra, Gibbons & Buunk, 2010).

Another avenue of research that differed from his research on cognitive dissonance and social comparison theory was Festinger's work with visual perception. Although highly contested at the time, Festinger concluded that visual perception was experienced according to an already learned set of efferent "readinesses". Visual input activates this process in the brain and the already learned processes determine the experience of the visual perception. Festinger, never one to fear going against the grain, put much time and effort into this theory although he is better known for his work done in other areas.

Later in his life, Festinger became increasingly interested in the Latin West in contrast to other cultures. Although Festinger pursued many studies and gather much valid information on the subject, which he collected in manuscripts, he never published anything. Festinger would not publish anything without first making sure a full analysis was conducted. Although these manuscripts never were officially published, they have led many other researchers down an enlightened road for further discoveries.

While we remember Leon Festinger most for his work on the theory of cognitive dissonance, his work was influential in many areas, not only in the field of psychology, but in several other fields as well. Festinger was a very intelligent man who had a very interesting way of looking at the world. Although Festinger passed away over two decades ago, his legacy lives on through his many groundbreaking contributions to the field, and through the way his research changes how we view others and ourselves.

References

- Black, K. (1950). The exertion of influences through social communications. *The Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology*.
- Brehm, J. W. (1998). Leon Festinger: Beyond the obvious. In G. A. Kimble, M. Wertheimer, G. A. Kimble, M. Wertheimer (Eds.), *Portraits of pioneers in psychology*, Vol. 3 (pp. 329-344). Washington, DC US: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Dijkstra, P., Gibbons, F. X., & Buunk, A. P. (2010). Social comparison theory. In J. E. Maddux, J. Tangney, J. E. Maddux, J. Tangney (Eds.), *Social psychological foundations of clinical psychology* (pp. 195-211). New York, NY US: Guilford Press. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.

- Festinger, L. (1949). The analysis of sociograms using matrix algebra. *Human Relations* 10,153–158.
- Festinger, L. (1950). Informal social communication. *Psychological Review*, 57, 271–282.
- Festinger, L. (1957). A theory of cognitive dissonance. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.
- Festinger, L. Schachter, S. Back, K. (1950). Social Pressures in Informal Groups. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Festinger, L., Schachter, S. (Ed.), & Gazzaniga, M. (Ed.). (1989). Extending psychological frontiers: *Selected works of Leon Festinger*. New York, NY US: Russell Sage Foundation. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Festinger, L., Peoitone, A., Newcomb, T. (1952). Some consequences of de-individuation in a group. *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology and Social Psychology*, 47, 2, 382-389.
- Friedman, B. (2000, November). An historical review of the life and works of an important man: Leon Festinger. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 61, from EBSCOhost.
- Gazzaniga, M. S. (2006). Leon Festinger: Lunch with Leon. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1(1), 88-94.
- Jones, E. E. (1991). Leon Festinger: From Level of Aspiration to Visual Perception to Archeological Anthropology. *PsycCRITIQUES*, 36(7), 561-563.
- Schachter, Stanley. (1994). Leon Festinger. *National Academy of Sciences*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.

Floyd Henry Allport: Giving Social Psychology a Personality

Brittney Becker David Weed

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

A number of unique circumstances encouraged Floyd Allport to grow into his reputation as the father of experimental social psychology (Katz, 1979; Nicholson, 2000). Allport's perspective came from early exposure to creative viewpoints, relationships with a number of influential figures in the history of psychology, and unique characteristics of his own. From his groundbreaking book, Social Psychology (1924a), to his insistence on experimentation and objective methodology, Allport steered the field away from speculations. Furthermore, he gave social psychology an identity independent of sociology or anthropology; and distinguished it from psychology in general. Though his name is less familiar than other psychologists of his time, his legacy is no less important.

Keywords: Allport, experimental social psychology

In social psychology, names like Triplett, Lewin, Sherif, and Allport are familiar and commonly cited. Triplett's early observations (i.e., that the presence of others improved individual performance) are often referred to as groundbreaking and foundational to the development of social psychology. Lewin is often cited as the father of modern social psychology or the founder of social psychology. Sherif's synthesis of interdisciplinary concepts in articulating social norms and group processes were formative in modern social psychology. Furthermore, textbooks frequently quote Gordon Allport's definition of social psychology as "an attempt to understand and explain how the thought, feeling and behavior of individuals is influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others" (G.W. Allport, 1954; p. 68).

It is puzzling that far fewer citations extend the Allport familiarity to Gordon's older brother, Floyd. This is even more perplexing in light of Floyd Allport's contributions to the more familiar and more frequently cited social psychologists. For instance, over 20 years after Triplett's initial contributions, Allport actually labeled Triplett's phenomena social facilitation (Aiello & Douthitt, 2001; F. H. Allport, 1920a). Allport's emphasis on the individual, departure from instincts, and interest in personality within the social context culminated in his popular 1924 textbook *Social Psychology* (F. H. Allport, 1924a) and earned him the less frequently recited title as founder of experimental social psychology (Katz, 1979). Although other texts and many of the ideas presented on social psychology already existed, Floyd drew the information firmly into the realm of psychology and created a turning point for the discipline by popularizing his perspective (Barenbaum, 2000). He may be the lesser-known Allport, but he is a pivotal figure in social psychology's divergence from sociology and its development as a line of scientific inquiry within psychology; and, his contributions continue to influence the course of research today.

Floyd Allport's Personal Side

Floyd Henry Allport was born on August 22, 1890, to John Edward Allport and Nellie Edith Wise in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Wozniak, 1997). His father was a physician and an entrepreneur with several business ventures besides his medical practice. During his life, he founded a cooperative drug company, built and rented apartments, and constructed/supervised a number of hospitals (Wozniak, 1997). Allport described his father's ventures as both imaginative and creative (F. H. Allport, 1974). Through the early years of Allport's life, his mother was a schoolteacher and devout Methodist who inherited her strong Christian beliefs from her parents (Wozniak, 1997). However, an inquisitive nature led her to question her beliefs later in life, largely as a quest for knowledge rather than a crisis of faith. Floyd admitted that his religious upbringing probably had an impact on his view of the world, especially when the initial fervor of a new group or activity diminished and left him with his own crises of

faith (F. H. Allport, 1974). Floyd was the second of four brothers, in order of birth, their names were Harold, Floyd, Fayette, and Gordon (Dufresne, n.d.). The youngest, Gordon W. Allport, shared Floyd's interest in psychology and also became an influential figure in the history of psychology. Floyd described the Allport household as a nurturing and caring environment; and, referred to his parents and brother, Gordon, in tender terms (F. H. Allport, 1974).

The Allport family left Wisconsin and moved to Ohio where they lived in two towns just outside of Cleveland before they settled in a suburb called Glenville (Wozniak, 1997). Floyd Allport graduated from Glenville High School and went on to Harvard University where he graduated with the class of 1913 and received his A.B. in Psychology a year later, in 1914 (F. H. Allport, 1974). Allport was bored and disillusioned with academia following graduation and spent between two and three years working in Ohio (F.H. Allport, 1917). First, he worked with his father in his hometown of Glenville, then as an English teacher at his high school alma mater before taking a position as a publicity manager raising money for a hospital in nearby Barberton.

A combination of restlessness, an interest in psychology, and a love for science encouraged him to pursue his Ph.D. (F. H. Allport, 1974). He began as a fellow in anthropology back at Harvard and later moved to psychology. Some of the guidance he received during those years came from Hugo Munsterberg. At the time, Munsterberg was an influential figure among the university faculty and recommended Allport focus his dissertation on comparing independent individual performance to individual performance within a group. Munsterberg's emphasis on social psychology as a scientific endeavor likely contributed to Allport's dedication to and belief in scientific social psychology (Parkovnick, 2000). Although it was not implied in any biographical works, it seems likely that Munsterberg's death in December of 1916 contributed to Allport's self-imposed social isolation and a new wave of restlessness in early 1917. In his own words, during that second year of graduate work he was "contented, though rapidly developing, I fear, into a scientific recluse. To forestall becoming a hermit crab I took the military fever when it struck old Harvard" (F.H. Allport, 1917, para 3).

Floyd Allport was indeed commissioned as a second lieutenant in the spring of 1917 and deployed to France in October of the same year. Three days before leaving for France, he married Ethel Margaret Hudson, (F. H. Allport, 1974). Years later, he summarized the events leading to his first marriage saying "Cold nights but not feet...orders to embark. A sudden madness seizes me. I write a poem, and then rush into matrimony" (F. H. Allport, 1920c, para 2). He admitted in his memoir that the decision was too rushed but he acknowledged some fulfilling moments during their 20-year marriage (F. H. Allport, 1974). Furthermore, he cherished their three children, Edward Herbert, Dorothy Fay, and Floyd Henry, Jr.

Floyd Allport returned from the war in January 1919 after a final promotion to first lieutenant (F. H. Allport, 1920c). In June, he completed his dissertation on social facilitation, the topic that Hugo Munsterberg suggested, and received his Ph.D. Later, he reflected on his time as a student at Harvard by saying that the program lacked supervision and afforded him too much independence in his endeavors (Allport, 1974). This was later evidenced in the way he treated his own graduate students. Still, Allport admitted that H. S. Langfeld, E. B. Holt, and R. B. Perry were influential faculty members with whom he learned a great deal (F. H. Allport, 1974). In particular, Holt's behaviorist orientation was apparent in Allport's later work (Wozniak, 1997) and instrumental to Allport's developing perspectives on science and behaviorism (Parkovnick, 2000). Allport remained at Harvard as an Instructor in Psychology from 1919 to 1922. In 1920, Munsterberg's position was filled by William McDougall (Wozniak, 1997); Allport had similar disagreements with both men on many issues and described them as "uncongenial to my line of thinking since they seemed to me to lack a suitable criterion and basis in physical reality" (F. H. Allport, 1974).

As a professor, Floyd Allport provided a structured learning environment for his graduate students (F. H. Allport, 1974). He directed their dissertations according to his own research interests and designs instead of allowing them to follow their own pursuits. He admitted that his approach was somewhat selfish on his part. However, it developed in response to the unstructured nature of his own graduate and undergraduate studies and he asserted that it was beneficial overall. As for instructing, Allport later mentioned that his three years at Harvard were consumed by the "drudgery of teaching" (F.H. Allport, 1923); however, he saw himself as a "good classroom teacher" (F.H. Allport, 1974). In the classroom, Allport's teachings came mainly from the behaviorist perspective. Looking back, he realized "from among the currents and undercurrents of psychology of that day, I seized onto behaviorism,...I came later to see the excesses of Watsonian thinking" (F. H. Allport, 1974). In 1922, behaviorism was declining in popularity within Harvard's Psychology Department and Allport lost his position as a junior faculty member when the department moved in new directions (F. H. Allport, 1974; Wozniak, 1997).

Floyd Allport joined the University of North Carolina faculty at Chapel Hill in September of 1922 (F. H. Allport, 1923). During his time in North Carolina, the Allport's second child arrived. Additionally, Allport formed a friendship with John F. Dashiell (F. H. Allport, 1974) who, in 1923, critiqued Allport's completed textbook draft (F. H. Allport, 1974; Wozniak, 1997). In 1924, after two years at Chapel Hill, Allport accepted a faculty position as

a professor of Social and Political Psychology at Syracuse University's Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs (F. H. Allport, 1974). Soon after Allport's arrival at Syracuse, he published *Social Psychology* (F. H. Allport, 1924a) the book that earned him the title "father of experimental social psychology" (Katz, 1979; Nicholson, 2000). Also during his time at Syracuse, Allport and his first wife divorced in 1937. It is notable that Allport did not acknowledge any association between events in his personal life and a change in his professional trajectory (c.f., F. H. Allport, 1974). That is to say, like the death of Munsterberg in late 1916 and Allport's subsequent enlistment a few months after, he did not acknowledge the possibility that his 1937 divorce was the precipitating event behind a self-admitted turning point in his research interests and a return to previous topics.

In 1938, Floyd Allport married Helene Hartley a professor of Education and English at the Syracuse University. In his biography, Allport described his second wife enthusiastically, saying:

She was one of the national leaders in her field and a most creative teacher. Her charm and richness of personality, her deep interest and understanding of the problems in which I was engaged, and her loyalty and devotion in helping me to make those years productive have been inestimable assets. Her death in 1965 left me desolate (F. H. Allport, 1974, para 6).

The couple remained at Syracuse until 1957 when they moved closer to Helen's family in California. Allport taught for a semester at the University of California in Berkeley before retiring. Floyd Allport died on October 15, 1978 (Dufresne, n.d.) and left behind an influential and fulfilling career. His life's work continues to be an influential factor in social psychology to this day.

Collision of the Personal and the Professional: The Allport Brothers

Floyd Allport had a close relationship with his brother, Gordon, through their childhoods and combined time at Harvard. As Gordon's older brother, Floyd was a mentor and they completed conjunctive work primarily on personality. Allport later recounted:

Not long ago my brother Gordon was visiting us in California. At the breakfast table my wife took the occasion to recount to him what she considered to be certain of my "fine qualities." After her lengthy eulogistic recital my brother looked up and without a moment's hesitation added: "And is he still stubborn, lazy, and procrastinating?" Aside from the fact that they were delivered by a master of the science of personality traits, what startled and dismayed me most about these words was the glibness with which he uttered them, not needing to pause for a moment's thought or recollection (F. H. Allport, 1974, para 7).

The above quote became a popular characterization of the relationship between the Allport brothers (e.g., Nicholson, 2000) after Floyd recounted the story in his biography (F.H. Allport, 1974). While the incident captured the tension that developed between them over the years, it ignored the overall context of the relationship.

The Allport brothers shared a mutual respect despite opposing views on personality, as well as other topics, later in their careers. Floyd Allport used the above story in his biography as a blueprint for an evaluation of his own personality and largely confirmed the accuracy of Gordon's assessment. An excerpt from the same biography captured an alternative perspective on Allport's sentiments for his brother.

From a personal standpoint he helped me in many ways and stood by me in many crises. On my sixtieth birthday I received from him a warm letter of appreciation recalling what he felt that I had done for him as a younger brother in the earlier years. Unfailingly kind, he possessed a sweetness, an inner serenity, and faith in ultimates which I could not achieve; and these qualities contributed a poise and a kind of robustness to his character that were in part instrumental in his success. At his death the world lost a wise and profound scholar and a truly great person (F. H. Allport, 1974, para 29).

Though Floyd and Gordon had differing views on a few factors, Floyd pointed out that those conflicts were rare and more in the intellectual debate style than a true conflict. When his mother was alive, Allport had similar discussions on science and religion with her.

Research and Publication Contributions

Floyd Allport's work started as a graduate student at Harvard University and his first publication in 1919. Later, he had the achievement of a milestone with the publication of his first textbook, *Social Psychology*, in 1924 (F. H. Allport, 1924a). Finally, he capped his career by the release of his autobiography in 1974, a mere four years before his unfortunate death. Floyd H. Allport's publications of both his original theories and research and reviews of relevant literature helped to establish and shape the fields of experimental social psychology and personality psychology into what they are today. What follows in this section is a brief review of some of Allport's literary contributions to psychology, in roughly chronological order, interspersed with some of his own notes about research and the zeitgeist under which they were developed. This is a look at Allport's original contributions to research and

not an exhaustive review of Allport's entire body of literature – he produced at least a dozen reviews and commentaries later in his life.

In the beginning: foundations of experimental social psychology and early research. Floyd Allport's first published article, "Behavior and experiment in social psychology," was published in December of the same year that he received his Ph.D. from Harvard in psychology. The article was Allport's first call to abandon the focus on the group as a whole and instead to shift into study of the individual under the influence of others that make up the congregate surrounding them (1919). This paper, presented before the American Psychological Association, was also a large step toward establishing the field of experimental social psychology, as it is known today. That is to say, the research focused on individual processes as they are influenced by the presence or perceived presence of others. A notable aspect of this early publication in Allport's career is a series of experiments that, to those versed in social psychology as it stands today, are a foundation for future research on the topics of social facilitation and conformity, which were expanded upon by later researchers (F. H. Allport, 1974; Danziger, 2000; Parkovnick, 2000).

A second early publication by Allport is a review of literature surrounding the budding field of social psychology and its "trend... toward observation and experiment" (Allport, 1920b). The article was the first of many reviews and critiques by Allport throughout his career and it detailed the work of leading theorists of the day and their development of three leading theories in social psychology at the time. Furthermore, Allport mainly used observation and experimentation, instead of speculative essays or the "armchair theorizing" (Parkovnick, 2000) that Allport opposed. That bias and call for a shift to experimentation was apparent in Allport's comments throughout the review, for example: "The results... are probably of greater value than all the rest of the theoretical writings combined" (F. H. Allport, 1974).

The year 1924 was momentous in Floyd Allport's publication history, he saw the publication of his textbook *Social Psychology* and set forth theories and methodologies for the study of individual motivations in a social context (Parkovnick, 2000). In it, Allport postulated that social behaviors could be explained as individual functions and he linked psychoanalytic ideas into behaviorist terms. The book was revolutionary; however, it did include some racial undertones that were common for the period (Wozniak, 1997). A second publication the same year (F. H. Allport, 1924b) expanded upon Allport's previous work, to the point that many referred to it as the sequel to his doctoral dissertation (F. H. Allport, 1974). This work went into great detail about the group fallacy, the tenuous hold it still had, and its dominance in social psychology before his previous work (F. H. Allport, 1924b). Allport outlined the group fallacy for reference, the tendency to refer to a group as an anthropomorphic entity instead of a collection of individuals, and details the areas where the theory still held sway. Specifically, the theory was still dominant in social conflict, the theory of revolutions, and the theory of the super-organic. He systematically offered criticism on the theoretical foundations of these holdouts using both his own research and theories of other leading persons in the field.

Additionally, Floyd Allport further outlined the state of social psychology towards the end of the 1920's. In this article (F. H. Allport, 1927), Allport briefly described the multiple input fields that influenced the growth and understanding of social psychology. Namely, he looked at the leading theories in the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, and psychology itself; examined how they both shaped the study of social psychology; and, considered the future implications for the field. Allport first described the historical stance he helped shift away from social forces and group theories. He next went into some detail about social mind theories, social laws, and the cultural approaches social psychological study. Allport dealt primarily with social psychology from sociologists and anthropologists' perspectives. He then related two opposed views that were interesting in their dichotomous approach to the same subject matter. That is, a primarily psychological approach that held the individual as the cause of society and the sociological and anthropological approaches that held society as the cause of individuals. These two sections in particular set the tone for the final section that emphasized the behavioral approach. Allport's emphasis on the psychological stance was, if not superior in its methodology and accomplishments, at the very least the author's preference.

Interestingly, Floyd Allport divided his early period of academic work and research into two parts that spanned 1924-1937 and 1937 through his time at Syracuse University (F. H. Allport, 1974). During the self-described early period Allport focused on foundational attitudes and opinions research, establishment of a large pool of data from which his future research was spawned, personality, and his teaching career (F. H. Allport, 1974). Much of the early work on personality was completed in conjunction with Allport's brother, Gordon. It was not until 1937, according to Allport, that he returned to his academic roots and his previous work at Harvard from 1919-1924 (F. H. Allport, 1974). That second part of his early research original dissertation, follow-up, and textbook origins and focused his research towards investigation of collective and individual reality. It should be noted that, during the second period in Allport's research career, he made many more publications. Those included multiple

reviews of books and leading theories at the time, and two books - The books *Institutional Behavior* (1933) and *Theories of Perception and the Concept of Structure* (1955). The material in the latter was the focus of much of Allport's late research and included the concept of event structure and its relation to psychological research, or *enestrue* as it came to be known (F. H. Allport, 1967; 1974).

Event-Structure Theory of Perception (Enestrue)

Floyd Allport's first foray into the event-structure theory was that called researchers to re-evaluation methodology (F. H. Allport, 1954). Furthermore, Allport focused solely on quantitative datum and distinguished between covariational and qualitative methods of research. The proposed model for development and adoption by the psychological community called for a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, which he presumed, would lead to a better understanding of motivations and the perceptions behind actions. Allport additionally suggested that perceptions observed in a purely quantitative sense had no meaning without the context and were unintelligible to novices in the chosen field of research. The next article in the same vein was an empirical study of the event structure hypothesis (Tannenbaum & F. H. Allport, 1956). Allport investigated worker satisfaction of environment based on the interaction between personality structure, worker preferences, and program structure. The results followed the predicted research and Allport made another push for methodological change within psychology.

In one of Floyd Allport's final publications (F. H. Allport, 1967), he explained an expanded theory of event-structure modeling in psychological research. He called it *enestrue*, and reported on the model's 30 years of progress and development. This paper outlines a "more rigorous criterion of objectivity" (F. H. Allport, 1967) in the methodology used to study organisms, their environment, and the interactions between them. This theory was further explained and expounded in Allport's final written contribution to history, his autobiography. One of the final points that Allport made was that he could not, at the time, know how his contributions to psychology as a whole would influence the whole of science in the future.

Conclusion: Describing Social Psychology's Personality

With the advantage of hindsight, Floyd Allport's legacy is apparent within psychology in general as well as social psychology as a specialty. Allport's hallmark 1924 text was a reaction against the predominant theories of instinct and group mind. Although his polarized emphasis on the individual was viewed by some as overly strict, it freed social psychology from nebulous terms and untestable ideas and introduced more empirical research techniques. He gave social psychology its own definitions, descriptive characteristics, and fresh conceptual and methodological start (Post, 1980) - an independent personality within the social sciences. The text almost immediately encouraged generative experimental research and a number of texts on experimental social psychology. There are many notable psychologists whose work eclipsed Allport's in either quantity or apparent direct implication. However, Allport's work served as an unassuming but powerful influence on the Zeitgeists of the time.

Probably the most important contributing factor in Floyd Allport's omission from citations lies in the value of his work to his contemporaries and to future researchers. This point is highlighted, for instance, by the work of one of Allport's associates at the University of North Carolina, William Dashiell (Post, 1980). The 1924 text and his association with the author were influential in Dashiell's cognitive extensions of social facilitation (Dashiell, 1930) and later review of social influence (Post, 1980). This work laid the foundation for later research by Festinger, on social comparison, and Asch's work on conformity. Aside from the research that the text encouraged, debates on his exclusive emphasis on the individual propelled the initial research on group dynamics where Allport's definitional framework came to influence Lewin and Zajonc (Post, 1980), Sherif (Gorman, 1981), and others. Allport was also one of the first to utilize attitude measurements across different contexts, which led into his work on the *J* curve hypothesis. Although his participation was limited, Thurstone developed his own milestone work on attitude scaling based on his participation on the project with Allport (F. H. Allport, 1974; Post, 1980).

Though many see some of the events in Floyd Allport's life as crises, he seemed to rise above them and his pitfalls were by far outnumbered by his achievements (c.f. Dufresne, n.d.). The restlessness and impulsivity that guided his actions served to diversify his repertoire and afford him the unique perspectives that characterized his work. Allport made many contributions to the field of social psychology during his lifetime. His support of experimental research and unique way of doing things influenced the field in ways that can still be seen today. He was a scientist, a family man, and a visionary. His publications are still relevant, expanded upon in the field, and provide the essential groundwork for growing social psychologists and the field as a whole.

References

- Aiello, J. R. & Douthitt, E. A. (2001). Social facilitation from Triplett to electronic performance monitoring. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 5, 163-180.
- Allport, F. H. (1917). Floyd Henry Allport. In *Harvard College Class of 1913: Secretary's Second Report: June 1917* (pp. 5-6). Norwood, MA: Plimpton Press (1917): 5-6. Retrieved from http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Allport/Allport_1917a.html
- Allport, F. H. (1919). Behavior and experiment in social psychology. *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 14(5), 297-306. doi:10.1037/h0073020
- Allport, F. H. (1920a). The influence of the group upon association and thought. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 23, 537-548.
- Allport, F. H. (1920b). Social psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 17(3), 85-94. doi:10.1037/h0063748
- Allport, F. H. (1920c). Floyd Henry Allport. In *Harvard college class of 1913: Secretary's third report: June 1920* (pp. 6-7). Norwood, MA: Plimpton Press. Retrieved from http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Allport/Allport_1920d.html
- Allport, F. H. (1923). Floyd Henry Allport. In *Harvard college class of 1913: Decennial report: 1923* (pp. 5-6). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Allport/Allport_1923.html
- Allport, F. H. (1924a). Social psychology. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Allport, F. H. (1924b). The group fallacy in relation to social science. *Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology*, 19, 60-73.
- Allport, F. H. (1927). The present status of social psychology. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 21(4), 372-383. doi:10.1037/h0068028
- Allport, F.H. (1933). *Institutional Behavior*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Allport, F. H. (1954). The structuring of events: outline of a general theory with applications to psychology. *Psychological Review*, 61(5), 281-303. doi:10.1037/h0062678
- Allport, F.H. (1955). *Theories of perception and the concept of structure*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Allport, F.H. (1967). A theory of *enestruece* (event-structure theory): Report of progress. *American Psychologist*, 22(1), 1-24. doi:10.1037/h0024249
- Allport, F. H. (1974). Floyd H. Allport. In G. Lindzey (ed.), *A history of psychology in autobiography*, (Vol. 6, pp. 3-29). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. Retrieved from http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Allport/Allport_1974.html
- Allport, G. W. (1954). The historical background of modern social psychology. In G. Linzey & E Aronson (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (2nd ed, Vol 1, pp. 1-80). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Danziger, K. (2000). Making social psychology experimental: A conceptual history, 1920–1970. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 36(4), 329-347. doi:10.1002/1520_6696(200023)36:4<329::AID-JHBS3>3.0.CO;2-5
- Dashiell, J. F. (1930). An experimental analysis of some group effects. *Journal of abnormal and social psychology*, 25, 190-199.
- Dufresne, N. M. (n.d.). Syracuse University Archives Collections and Personal Papers: Faculty Papers: Floyd Henry Allport. Retrieved from http://archives.syr.edu/collections/faculty/allport_bio.html
- Gorman, M. (1981). Pre-war conformity research in social psychology: The approaches of Floyd H. Allport and Muzafer Sherif. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 17, 3-14.
- Katz, D. (1979). Obituary: Floyd H. Allport (1890-1978). *American Psychologist*, 34(4), 351-353. doi:10.1037/h0078276
- Parkovnick, S. (2000). Contextualizing Floyd Allports's Social Psychology. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 36(4), 429-441.
- Post, D. L. (1980). Floyd H. Allport and the launching of modern social psychology. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 16, 369-376.
- Tannenbaum, A. S., & Allport, F. H. (1956). Personality structure and group structure: An interpretative study of their relationship through an event-structure hypothesis. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 53(3), 272-280. doi:10.1037/h0040282
- Wozniak, R. H. (1994). Floyd Henry Allport and the Social Psychology. In F. H. Allport. *Social Psychology*. (pp. v-xxix). London: Routledge/Thoemmes.
- Wozniak, R. H. (1997). Floyd Henry Allport and the Social Psychology. Retrieved from <http://www.brynmawr.edu/psychology/rwozniak/allport.html>

Gordon Allport and Social Psychology

Julie Bakel Brittany Conover

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

Gordon Allport's early life experiences influenced his major contributions to the world of psychology. After being the editor of his high school newspaper, as well as owning his own printing business at a young age, he kept this foundation for publishing throughout his life, which led to him being the editor of the Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, for over forty years. His brother, Floyd, also had an impact on his early career, especially while he was attending Harvard University. His work on personality was controversial due to the fact that the paradigm at the time was focused on social aspects and not individuals, which was Allport's specialty. His work on prejudice was a product of his years of teaching "Personality: Its Psychological and Social Aspects," which was compiled of his student's life histories concerning intolerance.

Keywords: Gordon Allport, personality psychology

Gordon Allport (1897-1967) was one of the first psychologists to focus on the study of personality. He went against both the psychoanalytic and behavioral approach and instead focused on the uniqueness of each individual. As an alternative to concentrating on understanding past history, which was the prominent theme at the time, Allport looked at the present context. While he published over 160 articles, a dozen books, and a pair of monographs throughout his lifetime, his works are often cited much less than other well-known figures in psychology, even though he had a profound and lasting influence on the field of psychology. His works have been published in 10 different languages, including Greek, Norwegian, Japanese and Korean. Some of this influence was due to his talent of being able to conceptualize interesting topics, such as rumors, prejudice, and religion. The majority of his influence comes from the lasting impressions he made on his students during his extensive teaching career, with many of his students going on to have important careers in psychology themselves (Pettigrew, 1969).

Life History

Born in Montezuma, Indiana, on November 11, 1897, to John Edward and Nellie Edith Allport, Allport was the youngest of four sons. When he was six years old, his family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he attended public schools. Due to the fact that there were not many adequate hospitals at the time, his father, a country doctor, moved his clinic and hospital into the family home, with both patients and nurses living there. All four brothers grew up surrounded by patients, nurses, and medical equipment, which left them often assisting in the clinic. Their mother, a former teacher, was known for being forceful when promoting her beliefs on intellectual development and religion (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). The Protestant religion, as well as the Protestant work ethic, dominated Allport's home life, so much so that when he was born his mom wrote of her hopes of him becoming a missionary (Nicholson, 2003).

Due to a birth defect that left Allport with only eight toes, he was subjected to mockery from his peers, leaving him fairly isolated from others, which led to him becoming a very shy and studious child (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). While he was taught to be professional, prosperous, and earnest, he felt a special relationship with the categories and concerns that were associated with femininity, such as books, poetry, dancing, and personalized social service, that were fostered by his mother and grandmother. The emphasis on social welfare that he grew up with continued to play an influence in his life, as well as his works (Nicholson, 2003). As a teenager, Allport served as editor of the high school newspaper, as well as developing and running his own printing business. At the age of 18, he graduated from Glenville High School second in his class, which allowed him to earn a scholarship to Harvard University, where his older brother Floyd Henry Allport was working on his Ph.D. in psychology at the time. Harvard was a difficult adjustment for Allport to make because of how dissimilar the moral values and climate was from how he was raised (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

While at Harvard, Allport began not only a close relationship with his roommate, Ross, but also one with his roommate's mother, Jenny Gove Masterson, with the latter one becoming one of the main reasons he needed to separate his view of personality from Freud's. The relationship began when the United States entered World War I in April 1917, when his roommate enlisted in the ambulance corps, and was stationed in France. Ross finished college upon his return in 1919, but was never able to fully settle down and be a productive member of society. A series of shaky jobs followed him until his death in 1929, thus placing him forever in the lost generation. His inability to hold down a job, as well as failure to keep a steady relationship with women, often caused conflict with his mother. In 1926, Jenny turned away from her son and poured out her anger and accusations in a series of 301 letters to Allport. Through this correspondence, she soon became a mother figure for Allport, even making sure to send a card for every holiday. Allport later published these letters in the book *Letters from Jenny*, in 1965. In these letters, Jenny writes that Allport was the "good" son, while her own son was the "bad" son. It is thought that psychoanalytic theory, for Allport, became associated with Ross and Jenny, specifically the Oedipus complex, therefore making the need to separate out Freud's ideas from his own personality theories (Winter, 1997).

While he earned his A.B. degree in Philosophy and Economics in 1919, and not psychology, his interest in the social sciences were evident in how he used his spare time, such as conducting a boy's club in Boston, aiding foreign exchange students, and volunteering as a probation officer (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). His interest in the social sciences might have been due to the fact that his first psychology professor, Hugo Muensterberg, left a lasting impression on him (Pettigrew, 1999). Social ethics and psychology allowed Allport to create a masculine vocabulary that allowed his feminine traditions to be more socially acceptable. Harvard allowed him to question the religious and ethical certainties of his childhood, and instead hold in the highest regard objectivity and scientific prowess (Nicholson, 2003).

After graduating from Harvard, he became an early version of a Peace Corps volunteer, which took him to Constantinople where he taught English and Sociology at Robert College (Pettigrew, 1999). His time in Constantinople greatly affected his work on personality theories. After witnessing all of the squalor and poverty that was rampant in Turkey at the time, he no longer saw suffering as being uplifting as well as becoming convinced that poverty had a certain permanence to it (Nicholson, 2003). He left such a lasting impression on the students he taught at Robert College that 36 years later, on a return trip to South Africa, they surprised him with a reunion in Athens. Throughout his life he remained partially fluent in Modern Greek, which he used to order mysterious dishes at Greek restaurants for his friends (Pettigrew, 1999).

In 1920, he returned to Harvard to complete his Ph.D. in psychology, which marked the formal beginning of personality, which became his life's work (Nicholson, 2003). His first publication, *Personality Traits: Their Classification and Measurement*, was co-authored with his older brother Floyd in 1921. At the time, Floyd was a professor at Harvard as well as the editor of the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, and Gordon found the time to assist his brother with the journal, which started an association with the publication that lasted for over four decades. Allport remained a constant contributor to the journal, publishing 10 papers, 25 book reviews, as well as numerous editorial statements. Drawing on the publication knowledge he learned from his high school job, he began his 12-year stint as editor of the journal in 1937, and from 1949 until his death in 1967, he was an associate editor (Pettigrew, 1969).

Allport was quite dedicated to the journal and took satisfaction in his long commitment to it. He established the systematic inclusion of case studies, as well as endeavored to make the journal a link between personality and social psychology. Practical from his Protestant upbringing, he listed one of his greatest achievements to the journal as maintaining the five-dollar annual subscription rate, which was set in 1918. However, he did not mention his editorial genius. He was known for being one of the few genuine stylists in a profession not normally known for its writing skills. The journal, students, friends, and acquaintances used his writing skills on several thousand manuscripts (Pettigrew, 1969).

Allport earned his Master's degree while studying under Herbert S. Langfeld in 1921. In 1922, he earned his Ph.D., with his dissertation title, *An Experimental Study of the Traits of Personality: With Special Reference to the Problem of Social Diagnosis*, reflecting his commitment to both science and social concerns (Pettigrew, 1999). Allport was awarded the coveted Sheldon Traveling Fellowship by Harvard, which allowed for two years of traveling. He spent the first year in Berlin and Hamburg, Germany, where he studied with the new Gestalt School (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). During this year, he became a partial Gestaltist, but only partial because he could not accept the assumptions that the Gestaltists made about the hard wiring of cognitive processes. After learning a "secularized language of the spirit," Allport launched what would eventually end up as a scholarly onslaught (Nicholson, 2003). His main target was his brother Floyd, but the main objective was modernity itself. He sought to protect personality psychology from psychometric dissection (Nicholson, 2003). The second year of the fellowship was spent at Cambridge University, where the British psychologists were not impressed by his reports on

Gestalt developments. On the return home from England, he married a clinical psychologist, Ada Lufkin Gould (Pettigrew, 1999).

He returned to Harvard in 1924 as a psychology professor, where he began teaching the class “Personality: Its Psychological and Social Aspects”; which is thought to be one of the first personality psychology courses ever taught in the United States. In 1926, he once again left Harvard in order to teach introductory courses on social psychology and personality at Dartmouth College (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). During his four years of teaching at Dartmouth, he returned each summer to Harvard in order to teach summer school (Pettigrew, 1969). In 1930, he returned to Harvard full time where he remained till the end of his career (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

Between the years of 1930 and 1967, Allport was a long-time and influential member of the faculty at Harvard. He served on the committee that instigated Harvard’s Sociology Department in 1931. In 1933, he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). His first book, *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation*, was published in 1937, which is now a widely cited classic (Pettigrew, 1969). The American Psychological Association (APA) elected him president in 1939. He also served as president of the Eastern Psychological Association in 1943, as well as for the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues in 1944 (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

By the late 1940’s he had managed to turn his introductory course for the new Social Relations Department, which he helped found in 1946, into a meticulous and popular undergraduate class (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992). The Social Relations Department uniquely combined the clinical psychology, social anthropology, social psychology, and sociology degree programs. With 18 years of service to the department, over 300 Ph.D.’s remember him for being a rigorous, but warm, chairman for the Committee on Higher Degrees. He made sure to guide the students in their own direction, not his, in support of his doctrine that each human personality is unique (Pettigrew, 1969). He was also a Director of the Commission for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization during this time period (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

Allport was an Episcopalian who gave several famous lectures at different divinity schools, as well as conducted research on the interplay between religious beliefs and intergroup prejudice, which led to his third book, *The Individual and His Religion*, being published in 1950 (Pettigrew, 1999). Four years later he published his fourth book, *The Nature of Prejudice*. *The Nature of Prejudice* benefited from his insights of helping German psychologist World War II refugees. In 1955, his fifth book, and one of his most widely known, was published, titled *Becoming: Basic Considerations for Psychology of Personality*. The American Psychological Foundation honored him with the Gold Medal Award in 1963. The following year, he was awarded the APA’s Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award. On October 9, 1967, he died in Cambridge, Massachusetts of lung cancer at the age of 70 (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

Contributions to Psychology

Gordon Allport contributed in many ways to the field of social psychology. Yet he is best known as one of the original founders of personality psychology (Nicholson, 2000). Allport’s preoccupation with personality stemmed from his dislike of the concept of character. Allport viewed character as a moral term, a value-laden category that, unlike personality, a value-neutral category, had no place in the field of psychology (Nicholson, 1998). During the early 1920’s at Harvard University, Gordon Allport and his brother Floyd Allport worked very closely together on investigations of personality. The choice of personality as Gordon’s dissertation topic was greatly influenced by his brother. So much so, that it is said that his dissertation may be viewed as an expansion of Floyd Allport’s research program. During Gordon Allport’s graduate years, both he and Floyd had a very similar behavioristic mindset towards personality. They viewed human nature as a translucent and manageable product of the exchanges between the pressures of the environment and a set of simple impulses rooted in the instinctive systems of nervous organization. Though Floyd had a great influence on Gordon’s work, he still had his own unique features (Nicholson, 2000).

It was not until 1922 when Allport went to Germany on a postdoctoral fellowship that his view of personality began to differ from Floyd’s. While in Germany Allport studied under William Stern who was, at this time, examining real individuality. Stern described real individuality as a unique spiritual union that defied scientific comprehension (Nicholson, 2000). Allport was very interested in Stern’s desire to show that human experience was not a collection of different forms of social interactions, but something “indivisibly singular” (Nicholson, 2000). Allport’s attitude toward personality began to quickly transform. In 1924, Gordon Allport published an article titled *The Study of the Undivided Personality*. Allport argued that personality is comprised of individual traits and of a “pattern of form-quality” that links the traits together. The only way to study the unity was to use intuitive apprehension rather than experimentation. Allport’s new view on personality was not favored by Floyd Allport and ultimately led an intellectual departure between the two (Nicholson, 2000, p. 468). Though they

differed in their view of personality, they both played a very significant role in the development of personality as its own field of study.

The study of personality, on its own, did not emerge until the mid-1920's (Barenbaum, 2000). In 1921, Gordon and Floyd published the article *Personality Traits: Their Classification and Measurement*, which argued that personality is inherently social. Though Gordon had openly established his new outlook on the study of personality by the mid-1920's, emphasizing the uniqueness of the individual, the article him and his brother had published together is considered one of the most influential articles in the development of personality research. By the mid-1930's, the study of personality had become a somewhat secure forte in American psychology after being a significant topic in a number of related fields. In the mid 1940's, despite the amount of research conducted on personality, abnormal psychology was identified as the "sister" of social psychology. It was not until the end of World War II that personality became a separate sub-discipline (Barenbaum, 2000).

Though personality did not become a sub-discipline until the late 1940's, it had been a field of instruction since the early 1920's. After spending a year studying in Germany, Gordon Allport returned to Harvard in 1924, where he taught *Personality: Its Psychological and Social Aspects* (Barenbaum, 2000). In his early years as a teacher, Allport related his course material on personality to social psychology by drawing from "individual psychology, social psychology, and psychoanalysis all the data available concerning individual differences in ability, personality, mental and character types, and the reaction of the individual in the group" (Barenbaum, 2000, p. 478). By the late 1920's courses taught on personality were emerging within universities across the nation (Barenbaum, 2000). However, it was not until the mid 1930's and the appearance of psychological texts devoted to personality that the new field of personality had a respectable place in psychology. Gordon Allport, being one of the first to publish psychological texts devoted to personality, exhausted extensive efforts to establish personality as a separate field of study from social psychology (Barenbaum, 2000).

Allport dedicated much of his life to establish personality psychology as its own field of study. He argued in support for the establishment of personality psychology by stating:

I do not deny that the personality is fashioned to a large extent through the impact of culture upon the individual. But the interest of psychology is not in the factors *shaping* personality, rather in personality *itself* as a developing structure. From this point of view culture is relevant only when it has become *interiorized* within the person as a set of personal ideals, attitudes, and traits (Barenbaum, 2000, p. 482).

Allport did not see the personality completely separate from social context. He just emphasized the individual side of the individual-in-social-context paradigm. Though he was actively involved in the "culture and personality" movement Allport encouraged the study of personality of the individual in addition to studying personality of the social person. He stressed the importance of studying personality as a separate psychological topic rather than a sociological one (Barenbaum, 2000).

Another one of Gordon Allport's significant contributions to the field of social psychology was his book *The Nature of Prejudice*. The research for his book began while he was teaching one of the first seminars in prejudice, *Prejudice and Group Conflict*, while World War II was taking place (Cherry, 2000). Allport studied prejudice from multiple perspectives, with course topics that included: associations between prejudice and religion, wartime and postwar mindsets toward the Japanese or the Russians, group tensions in the media, the rapport between police and minority groups, intercultural education in academia, interracial housing, and community self-surveys. Students were also required to prepare case studies of their personal experiences with prejudice. He used this class as a way to gather information on prejudices. Allport's book was comprised of his own life history as well as hundreds of his students' life histories compiled over the period of several years of teaching this seminar (Cherry, 2000).

Though his course took a multilevel approach to prejudice, *The Nature of Prejudice* reflected a liberal democratic theory of tolerance (Cherry, 2000). This theory found the cause of prejudice to be with individuals, and that a tolerant personality was at the core of democratic life. Prejudice, during the mid-century, was said to have done psychological and moral damage to both victims and perpetrators. Allport himself saw "bigotry as an illness for which therapy or intercultural education were possible cures" (Cherry, 2000). Allport's seminar focused on efforts to comprehend the threats to democracy from racial and religious prejudice and intergroup discord and finding ways to engineer tolerance amongst laypeople (Cherry, 2000).

Allport used life histories and case studies as a way of researching prejudice and conflict (Cherry, 2000). While Allport himself was partial to the use of life histories, he often promoted the use of case studies in his teachings. In his seminar, the students were required to write "a topical life history" about their experience with racial, religious, and class attitudes (Cherry, 2000). Allport assigned this project because he believed that one way to study prejudice was to examine ones personal experience. Students were required to provide a complete account of their life and were asked to leave out any identifying information from the paper in order to reduce any prejudice

that might occur. The second part of the project required students to answer questions about their attitudes toward certain groups, and why they may feel that way. They were also asked to discuss any experiences that may have influenced their feelings, such as traumatic events, parent's attitudes, friends, and school experiences. Students were also asked to identify any other influences that may have thwarted prejudice from developing. The third part of the project examined students' personal experiences with being the victim of prejudice. Students answered questions about feelings of being disadvantaged due to belonging to a certain group and being the object of prejudice due to group involvement, personal characteristics, or handicap. Allport advised students to tell what they thought was significant whether or not it had been suggested (Cherry, 2000).

Allport believed that the personal experience was an important way of fashioning an acceptable social awareness about prejudice, and the classroom was a location of examination into the distinctiveness of individual lives (Cherry, 2000). Allport held that the only reasonable way to study a phenomenon was to repeatedly examine the specimen until its indispensable features are etched permanently into one's mind. Allport noted that his own early childhood experiences with prejudices, not as a victim but as a witness, had made him very sensitive to other people's plights and shortcomings. Allport's life history and the life histories of hundreds of his students were the foundation for *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cherry, 2000).

The Nature of Prejudice was a significant text at the time it was published in 1954. However, as the field expanded the book was criticized for its limitations. Allport was critiqued for devoting too much of his text to cognitive factors and not enough to emotional factors (Cherry, 2000). The lack of Allport's own interactions with minorities, even with the use of life histories of many minority students, had an obvious impact in the chapter *Victimization*. Though the limitations of text are apparent, as a historical text, *The Nature of Prejudice* is continuously cited as a classic text on the early research in the psychological study of prejudice (Cherry, 2000).

Lasting Influences

The Nature of Prejudice is Allport's greatest influence to the study of prejudice by serving as a tool for structuring the entire way of understanding prejudice in social psychology since its publication. His description of prejudice as "an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization" was the preferred definition for the field of social psychology until the mid-1990's (Allport, 1954). In his intergroup contact hypothesis, which was the idea that contact between members of minority and majority groups would promote constructive racial attitudes (Sigelman & Welch, 1993), Allport stressed that majority group members need to be willing to accept minority group members' point of view in order to have a lasting effect (Pettigrew, 1999). Allport's four situational conditions necessary to reduce prejudice in intergroup interactions: common goals, authority sanction, equal status in the situation, and no intergroup competition, have been continuously authenticated in research around the world. By revealing fundamental similarities between the groups, contact can reduce the adverse feelings and beliefs that the groups may hold about each other. The contact hypothesis is considered one of the most successful and enduring concepts in the history of social psychology (Brewer & Brown, 1998). Toward the end of his life, Allport acknowledged that his text was addressed to his own in-group, and on his deathbed he requested, from former doctoral students, an edition to *The Nature of Prejudice* that included current sociological material (Pettigrew, 1999).

Allport's lasting influence on the study of personality in the field of social psychology can be seen through his trait theory of personality. Allport sought to identify general traits that could be applied to a larger group of individuals. He went through the dictionary and found 4000 words that could be applied to personality traits and condensed them into three classes: cardinal traits, central traits, and secondary traits (McDougal, 2001). He defined cardinal traits as dispositions so powerful that they begin to shape one's behavior and experiences. Allport believed that cardinal traits are rarely found and develop later in life. Central traits are the rudimentary building blocks that influence behavior. To Allport, these traits were general to every individual's behavior. Secondary traits are present at the superficial level, and immediately identifiable (McDougal, 2001). Allport held that traits depict human behavior in many circumstances, and that observation of these traits can estimate what a person will most likely do in any given situation (Allport, 1966). He extended beyond the rigid beliefs of the trait theory by acknowledging and recognizing the unpredictability of traits. He believed that individual's personality stays the same, but over time traits can change due to social, ecological, and situational factors (Allport, 1966). Allport emphasized studying the mature personality, after it has been exposed to the many factors that can influence a personality, as the only way of understanding the uniqueness of an individual (Nicholson, 1998).

One of the main reasons why Gordon Allport's name is still widely known today is that he left a vast impression on all of the students he trained during his long teaching career. Due to the fact that Allport believed in the uniqueness of each individual personality, he made sure to guide the students in their own direction instead of his own direction. This guidance he imparted to his students led to many of his doctoral scholars to impact psychology in many different areas. Some of his students include: John and Jean Arsenian who contributed to

group therapy as well as children's attachment to their mothers; Raymond Bauer who applied behavioral sciences to business administration; Thomas Pettigrew who is on the forefront on studying racial prejudice; Philip Vernon who researched race and intelligence; and Leo Postman who focused on human memory. While his students rarely followed in his direct footsteps, they each received the same initial training that left them with a lifelong connection to both Allport and his wife (Pettigrew, 1969).

He also left lasting impressions on Harvard University itself, and not just the students. For instance, in 1931, he was a committee member that helped to initiate the Sociology Department, which has continued to grow throughout the years. His class *Personality: Its Psychological and Social Aspects* is considered one of the first personality psychology courses to be taught in the United States, which has led to specific degree programs focusing explicitly on personality. He helped found the Social Relations Department in 1946 in order to combine several different areas of study amongst the social sciences, allowing for collaborations in research that normally would not have happened (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

He participated in the establishment, governance, and sustaining of many institutions dedicated to the study of psychology. He took great pleasure in his four-decade dedication as editor to the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. He changed the way the journal was originally set up in order to include case studies, with them still being included in the journal today. He also strove to integrate personality psychology within social psychology, which greatly influenced the split of the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* into two separate journals: *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology* and *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. His editorial skills were not only used to better the writing of the articles within the journal, but were also used on several thousand manuscripts that might not have been published as quickly if not for his work on them (Pettigrew, 1969).

His influence on psychology was noted during his lifetime by being elected president of several different prominent psychological societies. In 1939, the American Psychological Association (APA) voted him president, as well as honoring him with their Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award in 1964. During his affiliation with APA, he served as head of an Emergency Committee in Psychology in order to help refugee scholars from Hitler Germany, such as Kurt Lewin, Wolfgang Kohler, and William Stern. He was also influential in spreading scientific knowledge throughout the world, and not just within the United States, by being the Director of the Commission for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization during the late 1940's (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

Gordon Allport's work has had lasting influences within social psychology, mainly through his work on prejudice, religion, and personality, as well as his teachings and the many different organizations he had associations with. His theories are some of the most criticized, but the questions that he raises have become meaningful to psychologists today. While he died in 1967, he was able to see psychology begin to follow in the fields he pioneered. For instance, in the 1950's, most practicing clinical psychologists, when surveyed, reported that they found Allport's work to be "second only to Freud in day-to-day usefulness" (Pettigrew, 1969). Professionally, he was able to widen the alternatives that were available to the field of psychology; publicly, he was able to make psychology pertinent to the current problems of his time as well as making them comprehensible to the general public through his numerous books and lectures (Pettigrew, 1969).

References

- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books
- Allport, G. W. (1966). Traits revisited. *American Psychologist*, 21, 1-10.
- Barenbaum, N. B. (2000). How social was personality? The Allports' "connection" of social and personality psychology. *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences*, 36, 471-487.
- Cherry, F. (2000). The nature of "the nature of prejudice". *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences*, 36, 489-498.
- Hjelle, L.A. & Ziegler, D. J. (1992). *Personality theories: Basic assumptions, research, and applications*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill College.
- McDougal, J. (2001). Gordon Willard Allport. Retrieved September 25, 2011, from <http://www.psychology.sbc.edu/mcdougal.htm>
- Nicholson, I. A. M. (2000). "A coherent datum of perception": Gordon Allport, Floyd Allport, and the politics of "personality". *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences*, 36, 463-470.
- Nicholson, I. A. M. (2003). *Inventing personality: Gordon Allport and the science of selfhood*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1969). Gordon Willard Allport. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 12(1), 1-5.
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1999). Gordon Willard Allport: A tribute. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3), 415-427.

- Sigelman, L. & Welch, S. (1993). The contact hypothesis revisited: Black-white interaction and positive racial attitudes. *The University of North Carolina Press*, 71(3) 781-795.
- Winter, D. G. (1997). Allport's life and Allport's psychology. *Journal of Personality*, 65(3), 723-731.

A Review and Examination of Solomon Asch

Jaymi Shull Erin McReynolds

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

Solomon Asch's most famous research was in the area of conformity, but he also studied in a multitude of other areas. He became interested in psychological processes at a very young age, and conducted research and taught at several universities throughout his career. His research examined how people form impressions of others by taking into account the whole person, and human memory processes. A topic related to conformity that Asch researched is groupthink, the tendency for groups to reach solutions without considering all the evidence in order to maintain harmony. He found that groupthink affects individual attitudes. He showed in his conformity experiments that people often endorse conclusions that are obviously wrong if the conclusion is supported by the majority. A final area of research that Asch worked in was the study of the halo effect, the tendency for people to consider only one trait when forming impressions of others.

Keywords: Asch, impression formation, formation of associations, independence and conformity, associative symmetry, halo effect

Why do people go along with the thoughts and behaviors of others, even when they know the group is wrong? This was not the question Solomon Asch set out to answer in his most famous experiment in which participants compared the length of lines. Rather, he wanted to show that people would *not* go along with an obviously incorrect group. The results from his line-judgment experiments led to more research into the area of conformity and, eventually, groupthink. While Asch is most know for this line of research on conformity, he also studied how people form impressions of others and human memory processes. Regardless of the specific area Asch worked, he had a profound impact on the methods and theories related to the study of human thought and behavior.

Biography

In 1907, Solomon Asch was born in Warsaw, Poland. His first foray into the influence of group pressure on perception occurred when he was just seven years old. He recalls a time during Passover when his uncle told him that at a specified time during the evening, the prophet Elijah would return and take a sip from a wineglass prepared especially for him (Ceraso, Gruber, & Rock, 1990). When the time for Elijah to return came, Asch recalls staring intently at the wineglass, and swears that he saw it go down just a little. When later asked whether this incident influenced his later experiments on conformity, he claims that he does not know, but it always comes to mind when he is discussing his work (Ceraso et al., 1990).

When Asch was twenty-one years old, he received his bachelor's degree in literature and science from City College of New York. He attended Columbia University for his graduate studies; while he was there, he became interested in anthropology and took several seminar courses (Ceraso et al., 1990). These seminar classes led to a fellowship position that allowed him to spend a summer in the early 1930s observing Hopi Indian children with the goal of describing the enculturation process of these children (Ceraso et al, 1990). In 1930, Asch married his wife, Florence, and they had a son, Peter, in 1937, who later died in 1990 (Ceraso et al., 1990; Gleitman, Rozin, & Sabini, 1997). In 1932, Asch received his Ph.D from Columbia University (Gleitman et al., 1997). He became interested in Gestalt psychology during his time at Columbia and was elated when Max Wertheimer came to the United States; Asch never studied directly under Wertheimer but Wertheimer introduced him to the fundamental tenets of the Gestaltist approach (Gleitman et al., 1997). Asch's background in Gestalt psychology played a large role in his later works on impression formation.

During his career, Asch worked at Brooklyn College, Swarthmore College, Rutgers University, the New School for Social Research, and the University of Pennsylvania, where he retired from in 1979 (Gleitman et al. 1997). On February 20, 1996, Asch died in Haverford, Pennsylvania, at the age of 88.

Impression Formation

Drawing on his knowledge of Gestalt psychology and the basic assumption of this system that states that everything is greater than the sum of its parts, Asch began studying how people develop impressions of others based on personality traits and overall demeanor. Asch posited that people do not think of others as a collection of disconnected, unrelated traits, but rather as unified wholes (Asch, 1946). Each trait is considered in conjunction with the others and the person will attempt to relate and possibly manipulate these traits so that they get an impression of the person that takes into account the many facets of their personality. This idea assumes that traits influence and modify one another; that is, they interact to form a coherent, integrated image of the person. This is the position Asch takes in his writings, the Gestaltist viewpoint that people are more than individual traits operating independently. A competing proposition is that a person is merely the sum of his or her individual personality traits. Asch discusses this position briefly, juxtaposing it with his theory (Asch, 1946). This proposition assumes that each trait should be considered in isolation, apart from other traits.

Asch (1946) conducted and reported ten experiments while testing his idea of unified impressions of people. Most of these experiments involved lists of words describing a person read aloud to the participant, then the participant writing a descriptive narrative of the person (Asch, 1946). In several of these experiments, the lists were identical except for one word in each list, "cold" or "warm". Asch (1946) was interested in how the narratives of these two conditions would differ based on this minor difference. He found that participants who heard the "warm" list characterized the imaginary person more positively than participants hearing the "cold" list (Asch, 1946). The inclusion of these words altered the participants' entire conception of the person; these descriptors colored the other traits to make them more positive or more negative depending on whether the person was described as warm or cold. Based on these differences in narratives, Asch (1946) concluded that these traits were vitally important in the overall evaluation of a person. To test this assumption, Asch asked participants to rank the listed traits in order from most important to least important. Both "warm" and "cold" were ranked relatively high. However, a sizeable percentage of participants rated "cold" as least important; Asch (1946) states that this most likely occurred because other central traits appeared in the list. The participants were also asked to select from a list of opposite pair words the word that described the person most accurately. Asch (1946) found that some words fit more readily with the "cold" person while others better described the "warm" person.

In a second experiment, Asch (1946) omitted the words "warm" and "cold" from the primary list but inserted them into the checklist from which the participants selected descriptive words. He found that when participants were not provided this primary trait, they still developed an impression that was more negative or more positive, and this tendency was also reflected in the choices of words from the checklist. Consistent with the results from the first experiment, participants who evaluated the hypothetical person positively (i.e., "warm") selected the same words as the participants who were told that the person was warm, and vice versa for "cold" (Asch, 1946). These results provide evidence for the notion that people form an overall value judgment of a person based on ambiguous evidence, and this evaluation can influence subsequent impressions and evaluations.

Almost 40 years after Asch's initial work on personality impression formation based on traits, Asch and Zukier (1984) expanded on the general idea that our perceptions of people are coherent and unified wholes instead of segmented and individualized traits. However, the gestalt conception of the human personality structure raises several issues, one of which concerns the discordant and incongruent aspects of people. Asch and Zukier (1984) wanted to answer the question of how people develop a unified image of a person when that person's personality contains traits that are seemingly at odds with each other or are opposites.

Unlike Asch's (1946) previous experiments in which participants received a list of words that described an imaginary person, Asch and Zukier (1984) provided participants with a single pair of words; each pair of words described a single person and the participants' task was to describe the person and to show how the two traits might be related. Some of the traits were congruent, such as *intelligent-witty*, while others were incongruent, such as *sociable-lonely* (Asch & Zukier, 1984). When describing the person, the participants had to account for the conflict between the incongruent pairs, and Asch and Zukier (1984) identified several common resolution methods. One interesting method Asch labeled *depth dimension* (Asch & Zukier, 1984). This technique allowed the participant to state that the imagined person was really one way but they put up a facade so that they appeared to be the converse. Another related method was *segregation*; participants who invoked this protocol separated the different traits into different spheres of the person's life; that is, in one situation they behaved this way, but in another situation they behaved quite differently (Asch & Zukier, 1984). The method of resolution used by participants varied in accordance with the qualities of the traits included in the word pairs so that not all the techniques mentioned by

Asch and Zukier (1984) were appropriate for all pairs. Some techniques were more effective at resolving the conflicting evaluations of the imagined persons for some pairs of traits than other techniques were. Regardless of the technique used, most (but not all) participants were able to account for the incongruencies and develop a complete description of the person. This research more closely resembles real life evaluations of people because most people have traits that seem to be discordant and incongruent; accounting for these disparities is vital to the accurate evaluation of an individual's personality traits.

The Halo Effect

Asch investigated individuals' central versus peripheral traits and described his findings as the "halo effect" (Asch, 1946). The halo effect highlights the human tendency to judge a person's character at first glance through a complex immersion of cues such as appearance and initial verbal exchange (Asch, 1946). Impressions of others are fluently acquired, categorized, and stored for future reference and assimilation. Subsequent observation may support or conflict with our first impression as this process is often imperfect and sensitive to an array of internal and external variables. Asch (1946) suggested that our generalized impressions "color" certain characteristics that blur and potentially misattribute characteristics and categorization of others. His conclusion of the halo effect entails that our general impression is a disposition of generalized subjectivity that should be supplemented by judging each trait in isolation.

What forms the basis and alteration of our impressions? The halo effect is a cognitive bias in which our perception of one trait influences our perception of another trait(s) within a system of trait constellation (Asch, 1946). Positive traits encourage perception of additional positive traits and vice versa. For example, good-looking people are perceived to be more intelligent and criminals tend to receive generalized negative attributions. Further, studies led by Asch (1946) evidence that attractiveness is a central trait, so we assume all other traits held by an attractive person are just as attractive as their surface attractiveness. Dion, Berscheid, and Walster (1972) conducted a study that replicated the results of Asch's experiments by showing participants photographs and asking them to make judgments about the people in the photos. Attractive people were presumed to have a good personality in addition to being perceived as sexually warm and responsive. The outcome of such experiments evidence the human tendency to rely on generalized heuristics when assessing individuals rather than examining traits in an isolative manner. Perhaps this highlights the human tendency to rely on patterns of consistency to make perceptually reliable judgments of others in order to evaluate and determine affiliative social ties or other decisions of personal interest.

Learning, Memory, and Associations

While not his primary area of study, Asch developed an interest in human memory during his time at Columbia. A particular topic of interest was the study of relations and associations. The goal of this line of research is to "account for the effects of experience upon the coherence of simultaneous and successive psychological events," or how people make sense of their world and how they relate events to form a coherent interpretation of experience (Asch, 1969, p. 92). Asch (1969) felt that previous researchers working in the area had misrepresented associations and had altogether ignored the interdependence of psychological experiences. In his attempt to demonstrate that humans naturally think associatively, and to prove other researchers wrong for neglecting this field, Asch (1969) showed that in terms of human memory, coherent, whole units, such as figures, are better recalled and recognized than the individual components that comprise those figures. He also found a similar result when he looked at verbal memory and nonsense syllables (Asch, 1969). Asch believed this topic was important to study because he realized that humans rarely encounter events in isolation; events are related to each other and influenced by one another. Asch (1969) felt that studying the relations and associations between two perceptual events was a closer approximation of the thought processes of organisms than looking at the same events independently.

Judgments and Attitudes

Asch (1940) examined the strength of individual judgments against gradients of congenial and antagonistic group attitudes as an effort to determine the potential of collective influence on the individual. He considered attitudes as sentiments, which are central to individual character and behavior. As members of society, we observe social facts and interactions and form hierarchical concerns based on our individualized perceptions. Developing a point of view (attitude) implies complex conceptual analysis of one's social reality; executions of attitude complimentary behavior are emotions, motives, and actions based on a central idea or belief (Asch, 1952).

Asch (1952) designed a study in which students ranked 10 professions by four characteristics by assigning intelligence ratings to congenial and antagonistic groups (Asch, 1940). The results of his study indicated that reactions to congenial groups result in a change of definition of the object as opposed to a change in judgment and that congenial pairings were reinforcing. The students had a tendency to reject the standards of the antagonistic; even more so if the standards of the antagonistic group were more in opposition of a group standard as opposed to a student's baseline standard. Moreover, the students changed their rankings more frequently in accordance to

comparative divergence from the uniform standards of the group (Asch, 1940). The results of Asch's study evidence the influence of groupthink on individual attitudes and judgments as an adaptive process in favor of social affiliational cohesion.

Asch (1952) asserted that it would be pointless to consider social attitudes as a simple response to momentary conditions in an isolative measure. Due to the complex nature of attitude formation and duration, he emphasized fluidity, individual flexibility, and interconnectivity when considering the structure of attitude attribution in social psychology. He assumed a gestalt position with his belief that the structure of attitudes are of a hierarchical order, each component functions in accordance to their position within the whole; individual attitudes conform to a collective schema of complimentary attitudes in ranked order of perceptual importance and efficacy. Primary attitudes form an interdependent relationship with supplementary and novel attitudes with fluid effects on the attitude schema as a whole. Importantly, he also considered attitudes to operate with a semi-open structure of functioning as an adaptive measure to a wider context of societal change and reactive individual experience. The author attributed cognitive constructs of experience as a stress response to social opportunity and oppression. The human tendency to categorize and assign value to social stimuli allows us to proactively take part in the social process by coherently interlocking behavior between individuals and groups by common attitudes (Asch, 1952). By this process, attitudes define social rank within groups and are integration and position within society as a whole (Asch, 1952). Conversely, societies and social groups impact attitudes and judgments as individual sentiments interactively impact the holistic schema of groups and societies.

Independence and Conformity

History informs us that groupthink can have dire effects on subordinate and/or alternative cohorts when consensus consists of negativistic undertones and manifestations. As a society, we should be concerned with individual and social formations of attitudes and the roles of such formations on intergroup dynamics and society as a whole. The scientific etiology of social conformity was juxtaposed by French physician Jean Martin Charcot who suspected that only hysterical clients could be fully hypnotized. Charcot's position was challenged by fellow physicians Hyppolyte Bernheim and A.A Liebault, who demonstrated the ability to sedate most people into a hypnotic trance (Aron, 1996). Bernheim hypothesized that results evidenced a normal psychological process known as "suggestibility" (Aron, 1996).

Asch (1956) was interested in situational conditions of conformity in relation to arbitrary group pressure. He developed the line test to measure the effects of predominant social opinion (the confederates) on minority opinion despite one's basic perceptions. On some trials, all confederates gave the correct answer. On other trials, confederates sequentially responded that line C was the same size as line X despite obvious line equality between Line X and B. Three-quarters of the subjects conformed at least once, one-third of subjects conformed over fifty percent of the time (Asch, 1956). Contradictory majority evidence casts doubt on our perceptual ability to reason visually. Post-test interviews indicated that most subjects claimed to doubt or deny their conforming answers; some subjects believed the conforming option was the correct choice. Eruptions in uniformity (one confederate who gives a correct or incorrect answer despite majority response) acutely reduces conformity down to 5-10%, which highlights a degree analysis of conforming opinion (Asch, 1956). Results can be further dissected by demographic factors. Female groups (a female subject with female confederates) conform significantly more often than male groups. Half of the female subjects conformed over half of the time. Comparatively, one in three men conformed to the majority response.

Independent thinking is susceptible to perceptual pressures of groupthink. In-group out-group pairings and manipulations show that conformity is significantly higher amongst in-group members. How could conformist behavior be an adaptive trait? Descriptive results of Asch's (1956) study highlight a human need to belong to groups and conform to groupthink in order to adapt to the situational climate of the group dynamic. The self is overridden by the collective to promote a homeostatic social process. The individual maintains positive social affiliation while the group is left undisturbed. Perhaps humans procedurally choose social behavioral responses of energy cost effective minimal risk, high reward as opposed to high risk, low reward. If the participant answered the question right, he would still be separated from the group by his unique response. Confoundingly, he would also experience feelings of self-doubt as consequence of majority opposition, which increases chronic stress and manifests as symptoms of anxiety, depression, and possibly anger. From this perspective, it appears that group conformity may be biosocially designed for both individual and group survival. While this may be the case for in-group processes, its survivalist functions come at the detriment of out-group members as groupthink evolves into group polarization. When group consensus is controlled through adherence to conformity, individualistic responses are minimized under threat of criticism or group dissimulation; two consequences, which go against the individual need for positive social affiliation.

Degree of conformity can be greater in real-life situations where stimuli are more ambiguous and difficult to discern. Conformity increases in the presence of subtle visuals and decreases in the presence of blatant visuals. Media satiation of aesthetic and monetarily driven norms is still a relatively new phenomenon which delivers the message that anyone of value is wealthy and instills a false confidence of eventual wealth attainment. Since these messages are presented overtly and covertly, it will be interesting to observe some of the psychological effects of normalized, narrow constructs on the age cohorts who have been embedded in this process. The outcome of Asch's experiment led to concerns about value driven conduct in relation to educational programs and other social policies.

Asch's (1956) investigation of conformity has led to evolving research on conformity and dynamical group behavior. His work shaped a framework as to how, when, and why people conform to social pressure. The humanistic need for group acceptance and cohesion is most conveniently achieved through adherence to collective uniformity – but why do social forces constrain some individual opinions and attitudes more than others, especially during an epoch of mass media, social engineering, and connectivity? Women may be more likely to conform because they are socialized to be more submissive, although this disparity is decreasing. They are conditioned to be nurturers, to set aside personal needs for the needs of others. Are women socialized to have less self-confidence or are their responses a mere effort to avoid standing out despite belief in the minority response? The majority of the subjects reported that they went along with the group to avoid ridicule or so as not to spoil the results of others (sacrificing the self for the whole of the group). Collective based conformity may be more important to females than males because they are conditioned to be more social and empathetic towards others.

Conceivably, degree of self-confidence predicts the strength of certainty in the face of majority opinion because they are more capable of internal homeostatic regulation through self- assurance and negative self talk minimization. They have developed a capacity to recover from socially induced doubt to maintain cognitive homeostasis; they are more likely to have the courage to challenge the majority. Subjects who conform to popular opinion may be more codependent and sensitive to criticism, leading to a perceived deficiency of thought that must be concealed from others.

Conclusion

Solomon Asch was a man of many interests and passions and his research opened the door for other researchers. His work on conformity was some of the first to demonstrate that the best outcomes of an experiment occur when the researcher's initial hypotheses are incorrect. This is a lesson that young researchers should learn early: if hypotheses are shown to be false, it does not mean that the research is not important. What is important is that the researcher continues to explore the possibilities of the results and studies what they love.

References

- Aron, L. (1996). [From hypnotic suggestion to free association: Freud as a psychotherapist, circa 1892–1893](#). *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, *32*:99.
- Asch, S. E. (1940). Studies of the principles of judgments and attitudes: II. Determination of judgments by group and ego standards: 1. *Journal of Social Psychology*, *12*, 433-465.
- Asch, S. E. (1946). Forming impressions of personality. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, *41*(3), 258-290.
- Asch, S. E. (1952). Opinion and attitude: Their sociological shape. In S. E. Asch (Ed.), *Social psychology* (pp. 521-561). Prentice-Hall, Inc. doi:10.1037/10025-018.
- Asch, S. E. (1952). Sentiments and attitudes. In S. E. Asch (Ed.), *Social psychology* (pp. 562-616). Prentice-Hall, Inc. doi:10.1037/10025-019.
- Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: 1. A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological Monographs*, *70*(9).
- Asch, S. E. (1969). A reformulation of the problem of associations. *American Psychologist*, *24*(2), 92-102.
- Asch, S. E., & Zukier, H. (1984). Thinking about persons. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *46*(6), 1230-1240.
- Ceraso, J., Gruber, H., & Rock, I. (1990). On Solomon Asch. In I. Rock (Eds.), *The legacy of Solomon Asch* (pp. 3-19). New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dion, K., Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1972). What is beautiful is good. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *24*:285-90.
- Gleitman, H., Rozin, P., & Sabini, J. (1997). Solomon E. Asch (1907-1996). *American Psychologist*, *52*(9), 984-985.

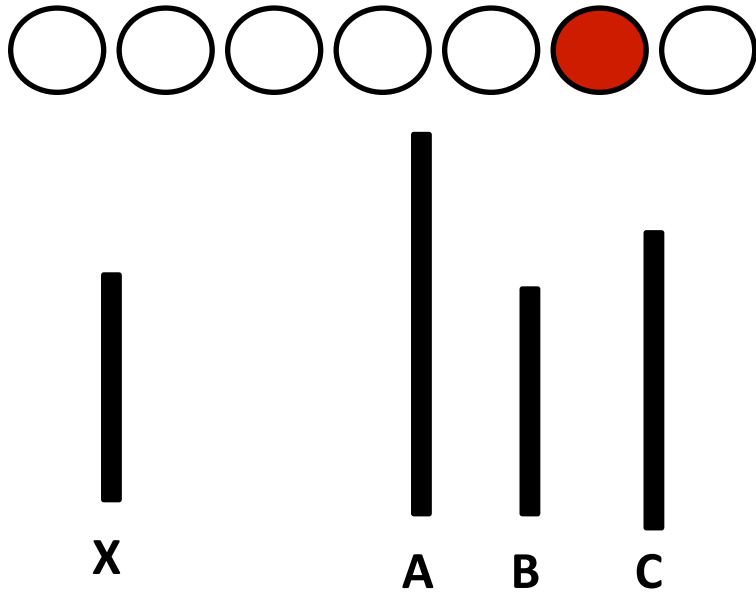


Figure 1. Line Test

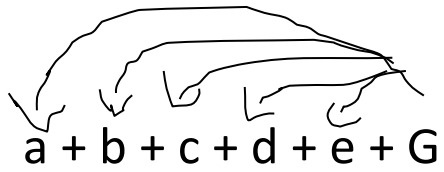


Figure 2. General Impression

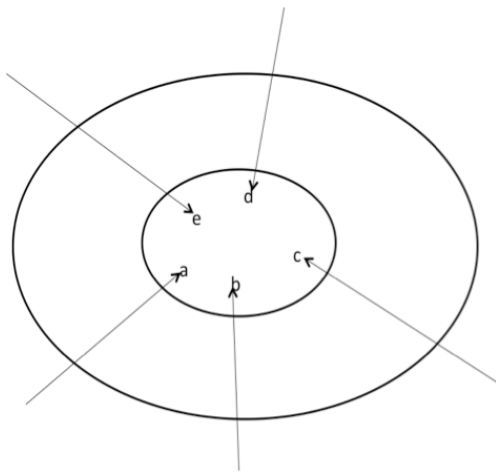


Figure 3. Impression

John Darley and the Myth of Kitty Genovese

Kyle Allen Cindy Chia Jessica Gatewood

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

The Kitty Genovese murder in 1964 raised intense interest among psychologists to research on the absence of helping behavior of witnesses in public violence situations. The behavior was later defined by John Darley as the Bystander Effect, where an individual's responsibility to intervene at a situation is diffused by the presence of other witnesses at the scene. It was believed that Genovese was raped and stabbed to death in the presence of 38 witnesses outside her home in Queens, NY, where no one bothered to attend to her screams for help. Latane and Darley (1970) explained the Bystander Effect in three psychological processes on why the helping behavior is attenuated in a public violence: (a) diffusion of responsibility, (b) evaluation apprehension, and (c) pluralistic ignorance. Bystander apathy is also influenced by group sizes, social categorization, bystander behavior, gender identity (Levine & Crowther, 2008), and the level of danger of the situation (Fischer et al., 2011). The purpose of this literature review is to explore John Darley's theory of bystander apathy and the connection to the myth of Kitty Genovese.

Keywords: John Darley, Kitty Genovese, bystander effect, bystander apathy, social influence

John Darley is a well-known social psychologist and holds many esteemed positions in the field of psychology. Darley began his academic career at Swarthmore College in 1941, located in Swarthmore, PA. He received his Bachelor's of Arts in Mathematics, minor in Philosophy with honors, and his Master's degree from Harvard University in 1962. While at Harvard, Darley studied under Eliot Aronson, and later found interest in Social Relations and received his Ph.D. specializing in the interest field and graduated in 1965. Darley is a currently a Dorman T. Warren Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs at Princeton University, as well as a highly awarded American psychologist.

Darley has held numerous academic positions, where he started off as a Psychology Assistant Professor in New York University from 1964 to 1968. He then moved to New Jersey and became an Associate Psychology Professor in Princeton University from 1968 to 1972 and then eventually became a Psychology Professor in 1972 to present. Throughout his teaching career, Darley's primary interests revolve around applied social psychology, causal attribution, ethics and morality, health psychology, helping and prosocial behavior, interpersonal processes, judgment and decision making, law and public policy, persuasion and social influence and prejudice and stereotyping.

Apart from teaching, Darley is also a former president of the American Psychological Society and a recipient of numerous national awards, including American Association for the Advancement of Science Sociological Psychological Essay Prize and Appleton-Century Crafts Manuscript Prize- both with Bibb Latane, American Psychological Foundation Media Awards, Distinguished Contributions in Communicating Psychology to the Public, and also received Distinguished Scientific Award from Society of Experimental Social Psychology in 1997. He was also honored as a fellow in American Psychological Association, American Psychological Society, and Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (darley.socialpsychology.org).

Darley's past research focused on the intersection of criminal justice and public morality focusing on actions and decisions of behavioral consequences. Later in his career, Darley co-authored with Paul Robinson in studying the rationality behind the recent tendency of the criminal justice system in increasing the time duration of

assigned punishment. He criticized the system in the psychological aspect where punishment severity has very small effect on people's attitude to committing crimes and the Draconian prison terms assigned are incongruent to public understanding of immensity of criminal behavioral consequences. In relation to that, he is also researching on interpersonal power within social interactions, and how people manipulate and/or motivate others using the incentive systems (lapa.princeton.edu).

One of Darley's colleagues, Bibb Latane, inspired much of his work. Darley was primarily known for his research on helping behavior that is studied in social psychology rather than behavioral psychology. After their education, both of these men ended up in the state of New York, where one of the most socially devastating crimes occurred. Darley researches on self-representations, where individuals construct their identity in the interpersonal world. His prominent researches include the bystander effect theory, where he studied about individual's responsibility diffusion in-group settings. He explained that people often falsely construe severity of a situation by misjudging signals portrayed from the behavior of others in emergency situations. Moreover, individuals witnessing a crisis are also not likely to intervene in the presence of other bystanders, where he further explained that an individual's responsibility to help is being diffused by their assumptions of others' possible response to the situation. The Kitty Genovese incident is what led these two men to their further exploration of the research field of helping behavior (lapa.princeton.edu).

The once rated most brutal and helpless murder case in the 1960's alarmed the nation and urged the State of New York Security Department to reinforce public safety. Twenty-four year old Catherine Genovese (aka Kitty Genovese) was raped and murdered outside her apartment on March 13, 1964 at around 3 a.m. The nightmare started when Genovese parked her car and walked towards her apartment. Winston Moseley, who has already noticed her earlier, quickly tailed her. Moseley caught Genovese and stabbed her four times in the back as she screamed for help. He stopped when a man shouted out, "Leave that girl alone!" from the Mowbray apartment window. Moseley fled but returned shortly after with a different hat and continued what he had begun by raping and slashing her to death just outside in a foyer in the back of her building (Jim, 2004). In the tranquility of Kew Gardens, Ms Genovese's repeated screams for help fell on the deaf ears of an ignoring neighborhood where 38 witnesses were believed to be present but not one came to the rescue.

The Bystander Effect

As Kitty Genovese's continual screams that lasted throughout the 30-minute ordeal, with the outcome of not a single rescue, psychologists were triggered to catechize on the many possibilities of what Genovese could have done and why the neighbors didn't help. Loftus (1990) questioned if Genovese would have been attended to if she shouted "FIRE!" instead of her original screams of, "Please help me! Please help me!" (Jim, 2004). Yelling "Fire!" has been reported as being successful at times but the risk of bluffing in situations like this may raise confusion for bystanders to help according to the situation, especially when fire is not in sight. Latane and Darley (1970), on the other hand, researched on the bystanders' ignoring behavior and name it the Bystander Effect or Genovese Effect (Loftus, 1990), where a group of people experience responsibility diffusion for the fear of intervening in the presence of others that are perceived to threaten their reactions to the potential intervention to the situation. In short, the more witnesses there are in an emergency situation, the less likely any witness will interfere with the situation.

Levine and Crowther (2008) explored the bystander effect with the interaction of group sizes, social categorization and bystander behavior. In Study 1 and 2, researchers concluded that not only is the bystander effect diffused when bystanders are friends, but also when bystanders are sharing similar social category membership. This is caused by lack of cohesiveness when social responsibility can only be made salient when bystanders knew one another better to encourage each other for helping behavior. Furthermore, social relationship in decreasing the likelihood of bystander effect is also crucial and necessary in almost all cases. Similarly, victims who belongs to the same social group as the bystanders' are more likely to receive help for group members and are more inclined to help another member (note that member does not necessarily mean there is a friendship bond) with the responsibility instilled in them as another individual that belongs to the same social category.

In Study 3 and 4, Levine and Crowther (2008) also found the significance of gender identity in helping behavior in the public. Males are perceived as masculine and heroic and are expected to guide helping behavior in public violence more than female witnesses. Moreover, females are less likely to intervene in the presence of males due to lack of self-confidence in the ability of helping. Fortunately, research also indicates that gender identity only significantly affects the helping behavior in certain situations depending on social contexts. In conclusion, Levine and Crowther (2008) conducted four studies to test their hypotheses and found that increasing group size does impede helping behavior in a public violence event, especially when bystanders are strangers, but promotes intervention when bystanders have developed some kind of a relationship. Cialdini et al. (1997) further supported the claim and explained that the feeling of oneness eliminates bystander's effect when empathy guides the direct helping behavior of witnesses as social categorization connects another person as a member of one's own group.

Fischer et al. (2011), on the other hand, also conducted studies on the bystander effect and the bystander intervention in dangerous and non-dangerous emergencies. Authors researched on the bystander's willingness to intervene and the level of danger of an emergency. It was found that bystanders are more willing to help in more dangerous situations especially when (a) the victim is seen to be physically harmed, (b) when the offender is present; and (c) when the situation is perceived as an actual emergency. In the study, Fischer et al. (2011) explained that when passersby witness dangerous emergencies directly, the scene arouses individual's guilt for not intervening, in which the author related to cost-reward model where witnesses can reduce the guilt by helping. Moreover, passersby feel more confident when there are other witnesses around to assist in the helping behavior as to reduce negative social and physical consequences on self. The last point that the authors made concern about is the individuals' rationality in helping for the fear of failing to intervene successfully; which can only be resolved if other witnesses cooperate and coordinate their helping response. This finding is consistent with the neighbors' comments when they were interviewed on their absence of intervention. Most of them thought the noises were just couples arguing on the street as they could not clearly see what was happening outside in the dark and the emergency did not trigger anyone to help because the situation was not seen as an actual emergency (Jim, 2004).

In contrary to Levine and Crowther's (2008) findings stated above, Fischer et al. (2011) also found that bystanders are more likely to intervene if it is an all-male group than all-female because females acknowledge the presence of males as physical support. The findings also state that increasing number of bystanders give additional physical, psychological and social support to the focal individual, and larger group size reassures bystanders to be more effective in resolving emergencies with group coordination and cooperation. Researchers found that increasing of group size does not necessarily produce a negative outcome of responsibility diffusion among bystanders. In the same study, the authors also found that social psychological research plays an impact in students' helping behavior, where individuals who had learned the bystander effect are more aware of their surroundings in the public and they are more likely to intervene in a bystander emergency.

The bystander effect has been extensively researched and the most prominent study is done by Latane and Darley (1970) where authors identified three psychological processes on why the helping behavior is attenuated in a public violence, (a) diffusion of responsibility, where the focal bystander's urge to intervene is weakened by the presence of other bystanders; (b) evaluation apprehension, where the focal bystander fears being judged by his/her public helping behavior; and (c) pluralistic ignorance, where the focal bystander relies on other's reactions to guide behavior.

The Thirty-Eight-Witness Myth

A new movement concerning Kitty Genovese and her story is beginning to take center stage thanks to three social psychologists from the United Kingdom. Rachel Manning, Mark Levine, and Alan Collins have all begun to question the accuracies of the events that took place that night in Queens, New York. The three emphasize that they are not second-guessing the Latane and Darley studies that produced striking evidence of bystander apathy. They are mostly consider the evidence or lack thereof with regards to the thirty-eight witnesses who supposedly watched the brutal murder of Kitty Genovese and failed to report anything to the authorities. Manning and colleagues report that the Genovese case enthused a rich, influential, evidence based foundation for the bystander phenomenon whereby being part of a group can weaken people's sense of individual accountability (Manning et al, 2007). Taking into consideration that the group is a huge supporter of the significance that came about from the Genovese incident and subsequent bystander apathy studies, it is crucial that the public understands that the three feel uneasy when considering the ensuing consequences on the field of social psychology. Moreover, Manning's contemporaries argue that with the lack of hard evidence, the Genovese story has become a story that is regrettably keeping social psychological research from examining the advantageous effects that groups could potentially have on helping behavior (Manning et al, 2007).

The establishing argument by the three psychologists begins by looking at the ten most used psychology textbooks at the undergraduate level. Of the ten most popular textbooks used, all of them tell the story of Kitty Genovese and seven of the ten books have their own heading or section that goes into much more depth about the events. When looking at the ten most used undergraduate psychology textbooks, Manning and her team found incessant consistencies of the accounts of what occurred that night throughout all ten of the books and provide a sample from Elliot Aronson's, *The Social Animal (1988)*, to showcase this:

Several years ago, a young woman named Kitty Genovese was stabbed to death in New York City. . . . What is interesting about this event is that no fewer than 38 of her neighbors came to their windows at 3:00 AM in response to her screams of terror—and remained at their windows in fascination for the 30 minutes it took her assailant to complete his grisly deed, during which time he returned for three separate attacks. No

one came to her assistance; no one so much as lifted the phone to call the police, until too late. Why? (Aronson, 1988, p. 45).

Manning and her team argue that many of the recollections of the events that took place that night take the same form as this one, implying that “neighbors” witnessed the attack, insisting they were close to Kitty. Furthermore, the authors generally make the assumption that the witnesses clearly watched the attack from their “windows” and that they observed the attack for nearly thirty minutes without ever bothering to report the event (Manning et al, 2007).

In building their argument, the group challenges the information presented by the textbooks to the reader with several facts that were given out by means of legal documentation that were associated with the case. Most notably, of the thirty-eight witnesses only some were eyewitnesses while others simply heard the attack. Also, records show that police were notified and Kitty was still alive when first responders arrived on the scene. In addition, the Manning group points out that no one would have been able to merely peer out their window for thirty minutes while witnessing the attack because a majority of the attack occurred in a corridor of an apartment building where only sounds of the attack could have been observed. During the time of the trial the jurors concluded that only twelve people could have possibly witnessed anything visually and of the twelve three agreed to give evidence at the trial. Of the three, one admitted to simply seeing Genovese and a man standing very closely, but no harmful activity was reported so the witness admitted to going back to sleep. Another witness claimed they saw Genovese laying on the ground and a man kneeling over her. The third witness professed to observing a man attacking Genovese before he yelled and startled the attacker, at which time the attacker ran off. After the attacker fled, Genovese reportedly stood up on her own and hobbled into the corridor where she met up again with her attacker for the final time. Although none of the eyewitnesses who gave evidence at the trial took the time to phone the police, it should be mentioned that none reported to witnessing anything more than what they thought was a domestic disturbance and no one admitted to seeing Genovese being stabbed with a knife. After exhausting all the legal documentation it was determined that at least three other people phoned the police. When questioning why it took the police so long to arrive on the scene, the Manning group considers two compelling facts. The lack of a 911 system in 1964, as well as a rowdy bar that was responsible for many bothersome phone calls to the police station that was located immediately around the corner from where the attacks occurred (Manning et al., 2007).

When considering the information presented by the legal documentation regarding the Genovese case it is easy to see that most psychology textbooks tell the story inaccurately. With this in mind Manning’s team argues why these errors continue to be published in new emerging textbooks and why these errors hurt the field of psychology as a whole. Manning argues that once a story becomes reputable it is harder to make changes to it. Furthermore, many books resonate information presented in other established books and later versions of earlier books rarely change much information of the book. Now that we see why the false information regarding the Genovese case is still found in most textbooks today it is important to understand why this inaccuracy is such an essential mistake (Manning et al, 2007).

Nearly all fields among science use textbooks to get information to the public as well as new members to the field. Most of these new members will become reliant on their textbooks to shape their opinions of their particular field. Psychology more than any other field among the sciences is at risk when erroneous information is presented among their textbooks. In psychology we use examples of real life occurrences to demonstrate our theories. In the case of the Kitty Genovese story many misleading facts have been presented, which has resulted in many concerning themselves with discovering the bad habits of humans (i.e., the bystander effect). The Manning group would argue that had these facts never been presented in error, it is possible that the last forty years may very well have been spent studying helping behavior in a good sense, the way psychology is supposed to be studied.

Conclusion

The once related most brutal and helpless murder case in the 1960’s alarmed the nation and urged the State of New York Security Department to reinforce public safety when in the tranquility of Kew Gardens, Ms. Genovese’s repeated screams for help fell on the deaf ears of an ignoring neighborhood where 38 witnesses were believed to be present but not one came to the rescue. Subsequent research by Latane and Darley (1970), on the bystanders’ ignoring behavior was conducted and the Bystander Effect or Genovese Effect (Loftus, 1990), where a group of people experience responsibility diffusion for the fear of intervening in the presence of others are perceived to threaten their reactions to the potential intervention to the situation, was discovered. In short, Latane and Darley (1970) concluded that the more witnesses there are in an emergency situation, the less likely any witness will interfere with the situation.

Since the initial findings discovered by Latane and Darley from the Kitty Genovese murder, the bystander effect has been explored in many different lights. Levine and Crowther (2008) explored the bystander effect with the interaction of group sizes, social categorization and bystander behavior. Researchers conducted four studies to

test their hypotheses and found that increasing group size impedes helping behavior in a public violence especially when bystanders are strangers, but promotes intervention when bystanders have developed some kind of a relationship. Cialdini et al. (1997) further supported the claim and explained that the feeling of oneness eliminated bystander's effect when empathy guides the direct helping behavior of witnesses as social categorization connects another person as a member of one's own group. Fischer et al. (2011), on the other hand, also conducted studies on the bystander effect and the bystander intervention in dangerous and non-dangerous emergencies. The authors researched the bystander's willingness to intervene and the level on danger to an emergency. It was found that bystanders are more willing to help in more dangerous situations especially when (a) the victim is seen to be physically harmed, (b) when the offender is present; and (c) when the situation is perceived as an actual emergency.

Of the late, much recognition is being given to the work done by Rachel Manning and her colleagues that is related to the events that took place the night of the Genovese murder. The plea that was given by these individuals is that when looks at the facts from all the related court documents, misleading facts arose from the occasion, and thus the 38 witness myth was created. The group does not call to question the subsequent research that has been completed regarding the bystander effect, they however question what good can come out of a social psychological approach that looks at the faults of the human race and therefore questions what might have occurred has the truth been told about the real number of bystanders who actually witnessed the brutal slaying of Kitty Genovese.

References

- Aronson, E. (1988). *The Social Animal* (5th ed.). New York: Freeman.
- Cialdini, R. B., Brown S. L., Lewis, B. P., Luce C., & Neuberg, S. L. (1997). Reinterpreting the empathy-altruism relationship: When one into one equals oneness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 481-94.
- Darley, J. M. (2005). *John darley*. Retrieved from <http://darley.socialpsychology.org/>.
- Darley, J. M. (n.d.). *Lapa faculty associate*. Retrieved from <http://lapa.princeton.edu/people/detail.php?ID=298>.
- Fischer, P., Krueger, J. I., Greitemeyer, T., Vogrincic, C., Kastenmuller, A., Frey, D., Heene, M., Wicher, M., & Kainbacher, M. (2011). The bystander-effect: A meta-analytic review on bystander intervention in dangerous and non-dangerous emergencies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137(4), 517-37.
- Fischer, P., Greitemeyer, T., Pollozek, F., & Frey, D. (2006). The unresponsive bystander: Are bystanders more responsive in dangerous emergencies?. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36(2), 267-278.
- Jim, R. (2004). Kitty, 40 Years Later. *New York Times*. pp 1-8. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Latane, B., & Darley, J. M. (1970). *The unresponsive bystander: Why doesn't he help?* New York: Appleton-Century Crofts.
- Levine, M., & Crowther, S. (2008). The responsive bystander: How social group membership and group size can encourage as well as inhibit bystander intervention. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(6), 1429-1439.
- Levine, M., Thompson, K. (2004). "Identity, place, and bystander intervention: social categories and helping after natural disasters". *Journal of Social Psychology* 144 (3): 229-245
- Loftus, M. E. (1990). The Kitty Genovese syndrome and yelling "fire!", *Article Bank*. Retrieved from <http://www.crime-safety-security.com/kitty-genovese-article-bank.html>.
- Manning, R., Levine, M., & Collins, A. (2007). The Kitty Genovese murder and the social psychology of helping: The parable of the 38 witnesses. *American Psychologist*, 62(6), 555-562.
- Rutkowski, G. K., Gruder, C. L., & Romer, D. (1983). Group cohesiveness, social norms, and bystander intervention. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44(3), 545-552.

Stanley Milgram's Obedience Studies and His Impact on the Future of Psychology

Amanda Brinkmeyer

Sydnee Collins

Sean McMillan

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

This paper is a discussion of Stanley Milgram and his impact on psychology. Stanley Milgram was very interested in obedience and how far participants would go to obey orders given from a supposed authority figure. Milgram's research sparked a large amount of controversy, as well as subsequent research studies to determine the validity of his results. In the following paper, we will conduct a literature review of the research conducted following the Milgram studies. Milgram's obedience studies impacted social, as well as personality, psychology and had a monumental effect on the shaping of ethics codes. His research led others to attempt to duplicate his results and spark curiosity among psychologists about the contributing factors (i.e., situation, personality, beliefs, etc.) that led to obedience.

Keywords: Stanley Milgram, obedience studies

Stanley Milgram was a psychological researcher who had a massive impact on the field of social psychology. His research is arguably the best-known work in the field of social psychology (Burger, 2009), and he is recognized for his work on obedience to authority. His findings had a huge impact on psychologists and still generate and influence current research. Unfortunately for the research knowledgebase, it is very unlikely that his studies can ever be reproduced exactly because many consider them as unethical. The fact that his discoveries are still so prominent in social psychology, even without the ability to be precisely replicated, demonstrates just how significant his research was and still is. Milgram's rise to fame began with humble beginnings.

Biography

Stanley Milgram was born to a lower middle-class Jewish family on August 15, 1933 in Bronx, New York. While attending Queens College, he majored in political science and minored in art, and it was not until he attended graduate school at Harvard that he began studying social psychology (Blass, 2009). Milgram immediately formed a close (and his most important) relationship with Gordon Allport, the head of the graduate program. Allport served as Milgram's mentor and chairman of his dissertation, which came about after Milgram heard a lecture from Solomon Asch and served as Asch's teaching and research assistant for a year (Blass). Similar to Asch's "line judgment task" experiment, Milgram's dissertation tested conformity levels; however, Milgram's study was pioneering in the fact that it took into account cross-cultural differences in behavior as a realm of systematic behavioral observation instead of the realm of speculation and personal anecdote (Blass). After completing his studies in Norway and France, he returned to the United States to complete his dissertation, and also gained a position as Asch's editor on a book on conformity (which was never published).

Though Milgram's job with Asch was time consuming, he managed to complete his dissertation and graduated in 1960, shortly after taking a position at Yale as an assistant professor. Shortly before going to Yale, Milgram had decided that his research would be on obedience, and in a later interview when he was asked what made him study obedience he replied, "Very often, when there is an idea, there are several points of origin to it" (Blass, 2009). However, it is believed that there were three main factors that led to his studies: they are a by-product of Asch's conformity study, his interest in the Holocaust and its aftermath, and his early graduate school decision to pursue a career in social psychology. It was early on that Milgram had stated that he "had hoped to hit upon a phenomenon, such as Asch had done, of great consequence, and then just worry it to death," and it was

during his first semester at Yale when he had come up with “the boldest and most significant experimental research” (Blass).

Obedience Studies

In Milgram’s 1963 obedience study, participants believed that they were administering electric shocks to another person as a means of punishing them for incorrect answers. A participant was given orders by the experimenter to flip switches on a shock generator every time the other person (who was actually a confederate) got an answer wrong. Participants were considered as obedient until they refused to participate any longer. Although no actual electric shocks occurred, the participants fully believed that electricity was shot into the body of the other individual each time that they flipped a switch (Milgram, 1963). The experimenters expended great effort to make it seem real. Participants saw the learner get strapped into an inescapable chair that would administer the shocks. The experimenter told the participant that severe pain could be experienced, but no permanent physical damage would happen. To give an idea of how real the study was and how the shocks felt, each participant was required to experience a 45-volt shock before they began the study (Milgram).

Stanley Milgram published his very influential obedience study in 1963. His obedience research was able to help explain how tragic events such as the Holocaust can happen. The ideas of extreme hatred, violence, and murder began in the mind of one individual (Hitler), but they were only able to become a reality because the Germans obeyed Hitler’s orders (Milgram, 1963). This may be an extreme example of the effects absolute obedience can have, but it is great for showing how the psychological process of obedience works. Someone, or a group of people, gives orders and the individuals that hear the orders either follow them (obedience) or do not (disobedience). Milgram’s study was based on the type of obedience that took place in Nazi Germany; however, he pointed out that obedience is not always followed by violence and aggression. Obedience can be a good and productive behavior, and society would cease to exist without it (Milgram).

All of the participants were male and came from a variety of occupational and educational backgrounds, from hardly any schooling to having a doctorate or similar degree level. Participants were paid with the instructions that the money was theirs just for showing up; they did not have to complete the experiment to keep it (Milgram, 1963). Every participant was the only one that had control over their actions, but they were influenced to perceive that they had no choice but to obey the experimenter. The experimenter effectively created a sense of need to continue the experiment in the minds of the participants. Even though they were told that they could take the money and leave, the majority of participants continued to participate because the experimenter said that they must do so. They continued with the experiment to the point that they believed the learner was in agonizing pain, unconscious, or dead. No participant stopped before 300 volts, and 26 out of the 40 flipped all of the switches, with the last two labeled as “XXX.” Participants were not allowed to quit the study until they refused to continue four times; however, participants were not aware that it required four refusals from them for the study to end. Most of the people obeyed even though they experienced highly unpleasant physiological and psychological sensations. Typically observed responses in participants were nervousness, sweating, shaking, stuttering, lip biting, groaning, digging their fingernails into their skin, and nervous laughter. Three of the participants experienced full seizures (Milgram).

The participants had their moral codes broken during this experiment. As a result, many of them showed disgust and disappointment in themselves for behaving so unusually. These individuals obeyed the commands of a person that had no genuine authority over them (Milgram, 1963). If so many people are willing to follow someone just because they are a scientist in a lab coat, it is no wonder that masses of people are willing to remain obedient to mass murderers like Hitler. Humans are ready to blindly follow authority figures, even to the point of murdering other humans, sometimes in immense proportions. Milgram’s study could not be conducted in the same manner today, as it is highly unethical. That being said, it is undeniable that his study provided groundbreaking information on obedience and set the stage for future research.

Stanley Milgram’s obedience experiment is undoubtedly a groundbreaking demonstration of observing behavior and the ways in which authority influences decision-making. Milgram’s experiment proved that instinct and personal beliefs could be inhibited when there is an authority other than oneself, and as Milgram reflected on his experiment, he explained:

The study, as carried out by my small groups class under my supervision, was not very well controlled. But even under these uncontrolled conditions, the behavior of the subjects astonished the undergraduates and me as well... I do not believe that the students could fully appreciate the significance of what they were viewing, but there was a general sense that something extraordinary had happened (Milgram, 1979).

After getting a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Milgram was capable of fixing some details of his experiment which included building a more authentic looking shock machine, hiring a research team, and taking time out for rehearsal to encourage authentication. They also began recruiting participants through an ad in the *New*

Haven Register as well as through utilizing mailings (Blass, 2009). When the experiments were ready to commence, over 20 variations of the experiment were conducted, and it was found through these experiments that humans have a powerful tendency to obey authority--even if it makes people act in ways contrary to personal and moral principles (Blass). Though humans learn at an early age that it is unacceptable to hurt another person, 26 out of 40 participants did so by administering 450-volt shocks (or so they thought). Milgram believed this destructive obedience to be attributed to humans believing the "person in charge has the right to prescribe their behavior, and they in turn feel an obligation to submit to that authority, causing certain internal changes to take place" (Blass). When participants were asked to divide responsibility of the administered shocks between the experimenter, learner, and themselves almost every participant gave the experimenter the most responsibility for the shocks even though the participants were the ones who administered them. These findings show how human behavior can be dependent upon the immediate situation, which is why the participants felt as though they were not the primary source of harm to the learners (Blass).

Impact and Follow-up Studies

Stanley Milgram's work is still very influential and respected in psychology and in other areas, such as movies and music (Burger, 2009). His obedience research is some of the most famous social psychological research in the world. His 1974 book, *Obedience to Authority*, has translations in 11 separate languages. His research is still prompting scientists to follow up on what he found and make new discoveries about obedience (Blass & Schmitt, 2001). His obedience study remains controversial, and there is debate about whether or not it should have happened, due to the possible harm it caused the participants. Some defend it because it had such important findings and others condemn it. Milgram defended the study's ethics and claimed that debriefings and follow-ups with participants gave him the impression that they were happy to have partaken in the study (Blass & Schmitt). Participants also stated that it was an important learning experience for them, and that psychologists should run more experiments of similar type in the future (Burger). His work may still be quite significant, but what would the results be like if his research were replicated now?

Soon after Milgram's experiments were conducted, the American Psychological Association published its first research ethical principles in 1973 and in 1974 the United States government passed the National Research Act, making it difficult for anyone to conduct any experiments similar to Milgram's (Blass, 2009). However, Jerry Burger's 2006 study on obedience took place as an attempt to see if destructive obedience still exists today. Burger's experiment was altered in many ways to meet Institutional Review Board approval. Burger demonstrated that participants were more likely to disobey in his study (33.3%) than in Milgram's original study (17.5%). The difference lies in the fact that Burger's study was far more controlled than Milgram's original study (Twenge, 2009).

In Burger's replication, a major difference was that Burger used many safeguards to prevent some of the aversive consequences Milgram's participants experienced (e.g., seizures). He removed any persons that might react negatively to the experiment, repeatedly informed participants that they could quit the experiment at any time and still receive a \$50 payment, gave participants a minor shock of 15 volts to show what the learner would feel, demonstrated that the confederate was unharmed seconds after the study ended, and had a clinical psychologist act as the experimenter so they could stop the session if the participant appeared to be overly stressed. In addition, Burger received approval from an institutional review board and used both men and women as participants (Burger, 2009).

Burger went to great lengths to try and replicate Milgram's study as closely as possible. He recruited participants in a similar manner with flyers and advertisements that had similar messages to Milgram's, used a confederate and experimenter that resembled the ones used by Milgram, had a very similar script, a matching shock simulator, and an overall procedure that was alike to Milgram's. The biggest differences are that Burger extensively tried to protect participants and make them aware that they could leave the experiment with their money and no penalty at any time. His study also stopped when participants reached 150 volts, instead of 450 volts (Burger, 2009).

Burger's study demonstrated what Milgram's study did, which is that the situation is a very powerful motivator for people. Individual differences made no difference in his study, and the results were based entirely off of the situation. Adding women, a bigger age range, probably a more diverse collection of ethnicities, and greater protective measures for participants to the experiment had no major effects. The situational factors that affected Milgram's participants affected Burger's in the same manner, even though it was decades and much societal change later (Burger, 2009).

The first step in replicating an influential study, such as Milgram's, would be to utilize many of the same style of samples, methods, and variables--Burger did not do this. Milgram's original study consisted of an all male population, whereas Burger's study consisted of a male as well as a female population (Twenge, 2009). Burger's study found no significant gender differences, which was consistent with Milgram's later experiments. Burger's

experiment also screened participants, removing anyone who was familiar with the Milgram study or anyone who might have a negative reaction to the experience (Elms, 2009). One aspect of Milgram's original study that made it realistic and applicable was its lack of screening participants; this showed that everyday citizens are capable of harming others. Elms suggested that had Burger not screened participants, those familiar with the study would be the most disobedient. This would leave Burger's study with a tainted level of obedience--having a much higher average than would have occurred without screening.

Though Burger's study had slightly different measures than Milgram's, the way in which he conducted his experiment was rational, knowing that he needed to alter some factors to be able to conduct his experiment. While some researchers have criticized Burger's studies for all of the differences between he and Milgram's study, others considered Burger's study to have "broke new ground—and set a new standard for ensuring the well-being of human participants in potentially stressful research—by using a two-step screening procedure, which included risk assessment by a clinical psychologist," a method that had not yet been looked at in obedience research (Blass, 2009). Researchers have mixed opinions on Burger's use of diverse participants. Twenge (2009) claimed that Burger's experiment consisted of a very diverse population. This, she points out, is typical for present day as well as for Northern California—which is where the experiments took place. She goes on to further explain how Asian Americans score significantly lower on individualistic personality traits, which may make Asian participants far more likely to obey than other ethnic groups. Blass, however, believes that the inclusion of diversity is not problematic because no two obedience studies found the same rate of obedience regardless of age or gender.

Perhaps one of the most famous findings of Milgram's study was the number of participants who were willing to administer the maximum 450-volt shock, which questioned the impact of social influence, a factor that was not studied until Milgram's. Burger's study allotted a maximum of a 150-volt shock, which automatically lessens the effect of his study in comparison to Milgram's (Twenge, 2009). Given all of the aforementioned differences in conducting his study, it is not a surprise that Burger's study found significantly fewer participants to be disobedient rather than obedient (Twenge). Part of what makes Milgram's study classic was that it was pure in random sampling and the manipulated variables left room for more behavior analyzing (Elms, 2009). Though Burger's experiment did not quite meet the expectations of the original Milgram study, he did succeed in exploring an area that Milgram did not touch on in his study, personality variables (Elms). Without the inspiration and influence of Milgram's original study, this "phenomena," as Alan Elms calls it in his 2009 article, would not have emerged.

Stanley Milgram's famous research on obedience has had a notable impact on current research with regard to obedience; a large majority of researchers wonder if people will always behave the way they did for Milgram. Ludy Benjamin and Jeffry Simpson wrote an important paper on the very impact discussed previously. Benjamin and Simpson's paper, titled *The Power of the Situation: The Impact of Milgram's Obedience Studies on Personality and Social Psychology* (2009), looks at the legacy of his studies especially with reference to social and personality psychology. Milgram's studies posed a lot of issues with regard to human nature; they led many researchers to wonder what made people behave the way that they did. What comes into play when individuals are in an environment with an authority figure? Benjamin and Simpson (2009) argue that the salience of Milgram's study shed a lot of light on the important issues in our society, and knowing more about these problems could produce impactful results.

It is difficult to think of another psychological study that has left such a monumental mark on psychology than that of Stanley Milgram and his obedience studies. Benjamin and Simpson demonstrate the areas that they believe have been impacted the most notably. They begin with the discussion of how ethical issues have been brought to light more readily, and researchers more serious outlook on ethics and ethics codes. Milgram's studies have launched much discussion about ethics and how far can you go with participants while still being appropriate. Benjamin and Simpson (2009) discuss the backlash that came with response to the ethics of Milgram's studies. Diana Baumrind (1964) was the first of many to criticize Milgram for his studies. She mentions the blatant psychological distress experienced by the participants, Milgram's use of deception, as well as a lack of informed consent. Milgram argued back by reporting that he never anticipated many of the reactions he received and that in post-experimental surveys many participants believed this to be very beneficial research (Benjamin & Simpson). Many researchers will argue that many of the increases in ethics codes and Institutional Review Board approvals are due to Stanley Milgram's studies. However, Benjamin and Simpson demonstrate that the social sciences were not prominent enough in the 1960s to cause such an impact; instead it was as a result of delinquent medical research, and not until the 1970s were these guidelines extended to cover the social sciences as well. Milgram's studies are certainly important to our current understanding of reasonable, appropriate research, and in the discussion of controversial research, these are always mentioned.

Milgram's studies had important impacts on more than just our current empirical interpretation of ethics and participant treatment. The fields of personality and social psychology were also greatly influenced. The world of personality psychology switched from being very trait centered—studies focused on trait assessments of the personality—to being more about the situation. Milgram exposed other researchers to the idea that our personality is malleable depending on the situation (Benjamin & Simpson, 2009). Benjamin and Simpson write that "...[the shift] may have also been accelerated by Milgram's powerful demonstration that 'strong' situations can and sometimes do overwhelm personality variables, even in well-intentioned and caring people."

Social psychology experienced change more immediately and directly than personality psychology. Benjamin and Simpson (2009) argue that Milgram's experiments led to the Stanford Prison Experiment where obedience and conformity were studied. Social psychological researchers also became much more interested in trait-behavior relations, but, perhaps, the most important impact Milgram had on social psychology was on how it influenced the manner in which experiments were conducted (Benjamin & Simpson). As a consequence of Milgram's controversial study, Benjamin and Simpson (2009) note that, "research has shifted from studies with higher experimental realism and lower mundane realism to studies with lower experimental realism and higher mundane realism." This change has allowed researchers to study people in their natural lives which could, arguably, be the most important advancement given to us through Stanley Milgram and his studies on obedience.

In his article, *Understanding Behavior in the Milgram Obedience Experiment: The Role of Personality, Situations, and Their Interactions*, Blass (1991) discusses five main points that have led Milgram to be so influential in the study of obedience with respect to many disciplines of academia. First, are the monumental results that the study holds. Second, because this particular set of research is the largest research done in the realm of social psychology. Third, there are very few other works, which have been so ardently debated as much as these studies have been. Fourth, Blass argues that Milgram's research can be extended to hold meanings in disciplines outside of the realm of psychology. Finally, Blass discusses the conclusions that have been drawn from this research and their implications in the study of human nature. Here is where Blass draws his inspiration for this paper where he demonstrates the determinants of obedience and how we, as researchers, began to think differently about human behavior following Milgram's research.

Similarly to Benjamin and Simpson (2009), Blass (1991) discussed the situational determinants of obedience. Blass quotes Milgram who speaks on behalf of the implications his study had on situational determinants:

Milgram says the disposition a person brings to the experiment is probably less important a cause of his behavior than most readers assume. For the social psychology of this century reveals a major lesson: often, it is not so much the kind of person a man is as the kind of situation in which he finds himself that determines how he will act (p. 399).

Blass (1991) highlights many of the aspects of Milgram's study that has led him to support the claim for situational factors being highly impactful. When confederates acting as subjects refused to continue the shocks, most subjects followed their lead; also, closeness of the experimenter had an important impact on the results. When the experimenter was not presently in the room the rate of obedience decreased substantially (Blass, 1991). Although, researchers are now placing a lot of importance in the situation with regard to obedience and conformity, they are not discounting the effects of personality. However, there has yet to be a concrete explanation as to what this personality basis consists of, and, yet, Blass and other researchers are still searching for some of the personality traits that are involved in contributing to one's susceptibility to authority.

Blass (1991) argues that it is possible that there are some personality traits that might determine how we behave in situations where we are expected to obey. Authoritarianism is quite clearly one of those personality traits that might have an effect on our behavior in these situations. This trait can be divided into nine subdivisions; one of them is authoritarian submission, which is defined as a submissive, uncritical attitude toward idealized moral authorities of the ingroup (Blass). Researchers have found that the more authoritarian you tend to be, the more obedient you are as well. Another personality trait that comes into play when determining obedience is that of trust. For the Milgram experiments, trust would become a part of the participants trusting that the learner has been given the proper precautions to keep them from suffering too much through the duration of the shocks. A highly trusting person would believe these things, thus leading them to be more obedient because "there will be no permanent damage to the learner" (Blass). Prior to the Milgram studies, most research was placed on studying strictly personality; and, although, we are seeing personality does play a role in obedience, we are also learning that the situation is very important with regard to subsequent obedient behavior.

Conclusion

Stanley Milgram has had a very large impact on social psychology, especially within the realm of obedience. His research has led fellow social psychologists and researchers to delve into the world of obedience.

His original research led the American Psychological Association and Institutional Review Boards to write a more stringent code of ethics to avoid some of the issues faced in Milgram's study. However, due to these restrictions it has become increasingly difficult for researchers to attempt replication. Not only did Milgram spark interest in replication, his obedience studies also encouraged researchers to determine what caused participants to obey so intently to authority figures. Thomas Blass, Ludy Benjamin, and Jeffrey Simpson have attempted to answer this very question. They, collectively, argue that Milgram demonstrated that obedient behavior has more than just to do with one's personality traits. Their research has attempted to demonstrate that the situation plays a pivotal role in how people will behave when they are in the presence of an authority figure. Milgram's studies may never be redone identically, but they will continue to influence social psychology far into the future of the field.

References

- Baumrind, D. (1964). Some thoughts on ethics of research: After reading Milgram's "Behavioral Study of Obedience." *American Psychologist*, 19 (6), 421-423.
- Benjamin, L.T. Jr. & Simpson, J.A. (2009). The power of the situation: the impact of Milgram's obedience studies on personality and social psychology. *American Psychologist*, 64 (1), 12-19.
- Blass, T. (2009). From New Haven to Santa Clara: a historical perspective on the Milgram obedience experiments. *American Psychologist*, 64 (1) 37-45.
- Blass, T. (1991). Understanding behavior in the Milgram obedience experiment: The role of personality, situations, and their interactions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60 (3), 398-413.
- Blass, T., & Schmitt, C. (2001). The nature of perceived authority in the Milgram paradigm: Two replications. *Current Psychology: Developmental, Learning, Personality, Social*, 20 (2), 115-121.
- Burger, J. M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today? *American Psychologist*, 64 (1), 1-11.
- Elms, A. (2009). Obedience Lite. *American Psychologist* 64 (1), 32-36.
- Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral study of obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67 (4), 371-378.
- Milgram, S. (1979). *A memoir, "Recollections of the Yale Psychology Department," sent in a letter to William Kessen, January 16, 1979.* In the Stanley Milgram Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, New Haven, CT.
- Twenge, J. (2009). Change over time in obedience: The jury's still out, but it might be decreasing. *American Psychologist*, 64 (1), 28-31.

Philip Zimbardo's Prominent Career and Influential Research

Kara N. Gregory Meghan Jones Jamie Welch

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to detail the prolific career of eminent psychologist, Phillip Zimbardo. The focus of the paper was to discuss Zimbardo's famed Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE). The experiment was intended to study the effects of how power is demonstrated in social situations. Due to powerful and unforeseen effects, the experiment was halted after only six days. While critics have regarded the experiment as reckless and theatrical, the authors seek to highlight the numerous positive outcomes resulting from the experiment. Striking parallels were discovered between the events at Abu Ghraib and those of the SPE. Lessons learned from the SPE have resulted in prison reform, and further research into the area of power and group dynamics. The effects of the SPE have been long lasting and continue to inform new research in productive ways.

Keywords: Phillip Zimbardo, Stanford Prison Experiment, groupthink, persuasion, conformity

Over the course of more than fifty years, Philip Zimbardo's prolific career has influenced many aspects of society. His work has made an impact on prison policy, ethical practices within psychological research experiments, business ethics, and current political events. Though known best for his famous Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE), Zimbardo has made research contributions to the fields of violence, evil, persuasion, hypnosis, terrorism, shyness, and time. His research today is still the foundation for many studies regarding authority and how easily individuals can transition into different roles. Zimbardo's studies help explain how individuals sometimes willingly engage in heinous acts of murder, rape, and torture when told to do so by an authority figure. He has written several books and served as the APA president. With over 300 publications and numerous books to his name, Philip Zimbardo is a prominent figure in the world of psychology.

Background

Philip Zimbardo was born in the midst of the great depression in Bronx, New York. One of six children, Zimbardo lived a life of extreme poverty, malnutrition, and constant uprooting of his home (Zimbardo, 2010). His mother and father lacked formal education, and struggled continually to provide for the family.

Zimbardo always had a love for learning; however, his parents did not understand his desire to further his education. Hesitantly, they agreed to allow him to pursue his Bachelor's degree on the condition that he would pay for all of his own things as well as continue to work to help out the family (Zimbardo, 2010). Zimbardo started his education at a secretarial school, but his hatred for record keeping caused him to rethink his career path. It was then that he decided to attend Brooklyn College, a four-year institution charging no tuition. Subsequently, Zimbardo attended Yale on a full scholarship where he achieved his Ph.D. (Zimbardo, 2010).

He began his teaching career at New York University (NYU), where he soon began to publish books such as *Psychology and Life* and *Influencing Attitudes and Changing Behavior*. His career fully blossomed though upon achieving a full professor tenure position at Stanford in 1968, where he replaced his idol, Leon Festinger (Zimbardo, 2010). Here he was able to enjoy teaching, pursue his research interests, and receive council from his brilliant colleagues such as Albert Bandura, Gordon Bower, and Ernest Hilgard (Zimbardo, 2010). His studies and subsequent research lead him to conduct his most prominent research study in 1971: The Stanford Prison Experiment.

Zimbardo had a special interest in human behavior and the factors, which influenced it. His prominent career features much work in the study of de-individuation, evil, persuasion, shyness, and heroism. Zimbardo believed that there is an array of influences (environmental, societal, authority, group, etc.), which can create

unusually strong effects on normal individuals causing them to engage in extreme behaviors. Throughout history there have been countless examples of normal individuals performing outlandish acts of ethnic cleansing, genocide, mass rape, violent torture, and other collective acts of violence (Zimbardo, 1999).

Zimbardo believes early Christian history is rife with examples of people engaging in evil acts. He points out that early paintings often depict Angels who have fallen into sin and transformed into demons. These depictions illustrate how humans have the capability to transform from good to evil. These paintings show the humanization of Satan himself, who symbolizes the characteristics that we view as naturally evil. More modern examples might be found in notable figures such as Stalin and Hitler who both exemplified these evil characteristics. Both Stalin and Hitler rarely committed any acts of violence personally, but rather, they incited groups into committing heinous acts. However, when acts of violence are committed an authority figure is not always at the helm explicitly commanding the situations. Sometimes all that is necessary is for an individual to create an environment of de-individuation, which sets the stage for acts of evil to fall into place without leadership (Zimbardo, 1999).

Zimbardo developed several experiments to demonstrate that participants would de-individualize as a defense mechanism when presented with a threatening environment. He conducted a series of experiments with college students placed into small groups. They were then de-individualized by replacing their names with numbers, giving them generic white lab coats, and having them wear facial coverings. The students in the group would then shock other students that were supposedly in another experiment in which the experimenters were analyzing the effects of stress on creativity (Zimbardo, 1999). The first study he assigned women to administer shocks to women and then conducted additional studies with men and military personnel. All found similar results: aggression is fostered through anonymity.

In 1971, Philip Zimbardo conducted the Stanford Prison Experiment, which combined many aspects to further study how evil people were transformed from once “good” people (Zimbardo, 1999). They evaluated the behavior of individuals who were given complete power over helpless victims, utter anonymity of individuals and the environment, dehumanization of the victims, and complete de-individuation of the authority figures, which lead to shocking results (Zimbardo, 1999).

Prior to the Stanford prison experiment, Zimbardo conducted a lesser-known study also looking at obedience and order. In 1969, he performed a study concerning vandalism. Zimbardo took two cars and placed one in the Bronx in a high-crime area of town and the other in a more affluent part of town in Palo Alto, California (Williams, 1998). The car was then abandoned in the street as an easy target for vandals. Within three days, the vehicle located in the Bronx area was stripped completely of everything, while the other vehicle remained intact for over a week. Zimbardo and colleagues then decided to try to influence the vandalism of the car by destroying it with sledgehammers (Williams, 1998). Bystanders who witnessed the demolition shouted encouragement, which induced others to participate in the destruction. This later came to be the basis of the Broken Window Theory of James Q. Wilson (Williams, 1998), which examined the influence symbols of order have on human behavior. Zimbardo also focused some of his work on fear and anxiety in a much different institutional setting: school. Specifically, Zimbardo looked at the measures, motivation, and control in relation to anxiety and fear in children. Barnard, Zimbardo and Sarason (1961) assessed anxiety in children by interviewing children with questions that were either affect-loaded or neutral in affect. Half of the children were placed in an evaluative, authoritatively toned interview and the other half were in a permissive, non-evaluative interview. This study found a relationship between the children in the evaluative interviewing group and more negative affect expression than the children in the permissive group. Using similar interviewing techniques, two years later, Zimbardo, Barnard & Berkowitz (1963), and Zimbardo, Mahl and Barnard (1963), found a relationship between anxiety level and speech disturbances in children, indicating that children in anxiety provoking situations, exhibit speech disturbances.

Perhaps leading to the interest of anxiety and social isolation that would later play a role in the SPE, Sarnoff and Zimbardo (1961) found that the desire to isolate increases as anxiety increases but that as fear increases the desire for affiliation increases. Using similar techniques to evoke fear and anxiety, Zimbardo and Formica (1963) examined social affiliation as related to fear. The results indicated that those in the high fear group affiliated with those who were not fearful and even more affiliation was observed when the subjects in the high fear group believed that they would be affiliating with those who shared their own emotional state but also had information regarding the fear-evoking event. There was less observed affiliation when the subjects believed the others did not share the same emotional state, even if they had relevant information to the situation. Miller and Zimbardo (1966) also induced fear in subjects and found that the subjects preferred to be with other people in similar emotional states but more strongly with others who were similar in personality than emotional state.

Zimbardo also looked at conformity and how it related to positive and negative characteristics of someone persuading subjects to eat fried grasshoppers (Zimbardo, Weisenberg, Firestone, & Levy, 1965). They found that subjects persuaded by a negative communicator increased their liking of grasshoppers more so than those persuaded

by a positive communicator. Zimbardo (1961) found that opinions were changed based on the level of involvement when subjects were given information on a case, were requested to give analysis of the case and then were told of her friends' opinion, then again requested to give analysis of the case. The results indicated that conformity was higher when the subject was more involved in reading about the case and when there was greater dissonance between the subject's opinion and the subject's friend's opinion of the case. These studies examined various aspects of social influence, which would play a significant role in his future work with the Stanford Prison experiment.

The Stanford Prison Experiment

Zimbardo constructed this experiment to study the effects of power and group interaction on the behavior of an ordinary individual. The participants chosen for the study consisted of a group of twenty-four college students, from the U.S. and Canada, who had previously responded to an advertisement calling for participants to engage in a study regarding the psychological effects of prison life (Zimbardo, 2011). Seventy applicants were screened for medical problems, psychological disorders, and a history of drug abuse or criminal records. The twenty-four applicants who passed the screening were compensated fifteen dollars per day, and were randomly assigned by a coin flip to the either the role of prisoner or guard (Zimbardo, 2011). The mock prison facility was constructed in the basement of the Stanford psychology building. A hallway through the basement was designated as "The Yard" where the prisoners could eat, exercise, and walk. This was the only area where prisoners were allowed outside their cells, with the exception of the restroom facilities. During restroom breaks, prisoners were blindfolded so that they could not orient themselves within the structure and determine possible exits. Additionally, a solitary confinement room was constructed from a small closet approximately two feet wide. This was known as "the Hole". Prisoners who acted up were required to stand in this space, which was devoid of windows (Zimbardo, 2011). As a result, many of the prisoners were unable to determine if it was day or night and suffered from time distortion. An intercom system was also installed so that the prisoners could be heard at all times. The goal was to accurately simulate a prison environment.

The experiment, slated to last two weeks, began on a Sunday afternoon in Palo Alto, California. The participants were surprised by real police arriving at their residences to place them under arrest for various crimes, which included, but were not limited to burglary and robbery (Zimbardo, 2011). They were then taken to the Palo Alto Police Department where they were temporarily held in detention cells. They were then blindfolded by the researchers and taken to the research site known as the "Stanford County Jail." Upon entering the jail, a warden greeted the prisoners and informed them of the seriousness of their offenses. To demean the prisoners even further, guards forced the prisoners to strip naked and to be hosed down with a delousing solution (Zimbardo, 2011). Each prisoner was then assigned a uniform, which consisted of a panty hose cap, (used to simulate a cropped haircut), sandals, and an outfit resembling a smock, which had their prisoner number on the front and back. To create a sense of anonymity, the prisoners were referred to only by their numbers, and as a constant reminder of their oppression and status as a prisoner, they were required to wear a chain on their ankle.

The prisoners were not the only members of the experiment to be given uniforms and roles (Zimbardo, 2011). Guards were also dressed in uniforms, which conveyed anonymity. An important feature of their unremarkably plain khaki uniforms was sunglasses used to hide their eyes, identities, and expressions (Zimbardo, 2011). Each guard also carried a billy club and whistle to emphasize their power. The guards were given no instructions or training on how to maintain control or garner respect from the prisoners. As a result, they did whatever they felt necessary and freely developed their own behaviors and sets of rules regarding discipline. An undergraduate from the university was designated as the warden and was charged with maintaining supervision over the guards (Zimbardo, 2011).

There were nine prisoners in the prison and nine guards who rotated in eight-hour shifts. The remaining participants were on call in case they were needed. At first, neither the prisoners nor guards quite knew how to behave in their assigned roles. Prisoners did not listen to the guard's commands at first and guards were not sure how to assert their authority. As a means to establish their authority, the guards would blow their whistles at 2:30 am daily to wake the prisoners and exert control over them. Borrowing from the abuse meted out in Nazi concentration camps, guards used pushups as a form of punishment; often stepping or sitting on the prisoner's backs as they performed these pushups to make the punishment more severe (Zimbardo, 2011). As the treatment of the prisoners became more flagrantly abusive, they prisoners pushed back.

A rebellion occurred on the second morning when the prisoners barricaded themselves in their cells and removed their uniforms. Guards were given no direction how to handle this rebellion. The morning shift guards got angry at the night shift guards, and blamed them for not maintaining control. All guards were called in for duty and they decided to use force to resolve the situation (Zimbardo, 2011). Fire extinguishers were sprayed at the prisoners to back them off of the cell doors. The guards then stormed the cells, put the lead of the rebellion into solitary confinement, and proceeded to harass and demean the remaining prisoners and strip them of their clothing and

furniture (Zimbardo, 2011). The guards then began to use psychological tactics against the prisoners. They created a “privileged cell” where those who had the least involvement in the rebellion were allowed to stay. These prisoners were allowed to keep all of their clothing, sleep in beds, and receive better meals than the other prisoners. The guards then removed the privileged prisoners, and allowed the rebellious prisoners to occupy it (Zimbardo, 2011). This created confusion and division among the prisoners. The prisoners became distrustful of one another and the guards become more solitary and aggressive, watched the prisoners closer, and become more controlling. Soon, using the restroom was designated as a privilege and some prisoners were required to instead use a waste bucket placed in their cell. The bucket was not emptied and the prisoner was forced to remain in their cell with the bucket to endure the atrocious smell as yet another form of punishment.

One prisoner in particular was viewed as the “leader”. It was discovered through monitoring his mail that he was an activist who planned to sell the story of the experiment to an underground paper. He mistakenly thought the experiment was about controlling student radicals, but he too found himself lost in the prisoner role (Zimbardo, 2011). Thirty-six hours into the experiment, the first prisoner was released from the experiment after suffering from acute emotional disturbances. Initially, they researchers intended to use him as an informant to attempt to get the other prisoners to continue with the study, but it was determined that he was truly suffering and he was allowed to be released (Zimbardo, 2011). Parents and friends were allowed to visit the prisoners one day, and surprisingly they too, bought into the illusions and followed the instructions of the guards as though it were a real prison. On visiting day, the atmosphere of the prison was altered to appear warm and friendly so that parents would not be alarmed about their son’s living conditions. When some parents expressed concern over the appearance of their sons, the guards would shift the focus of the conversation and ask “What’s the matter with your boy. Does he not sleep well?” Additionally, they would use tactics to shame the boy’s fathers by saying, “Don’t you think your boy can handle this (Zimbardo, 2011)?”

A rumored escape attempt was another issue, which challenged the guards. The guards assumed that the prisoner who had been released was gathering friends and planning to return after the visitation day to help all the other prisoners escape. In order to contend with this alleged escape plan, prisoners were preemptively moved to a storage room during the time when the escape was supposed to occur (Zimbardo, 2011). The plan was for Zimbardo to be waiting in the prison to tell the liberators that everyone had been released. A turning point in the experiment occurred when Zimbardo realized just how embedded he had become in assuming his role of prison superintendent rather than that of a researcher. This embeddedness became apparent when he got angry at his former roommate, Gordon Bower for questioning Zimbardo about what he was using as dependent variable (Zimbardo, 2011). When the escape attempt was determined to be only a rumor, the guards become more frustrated and prisoners were reprimanded with tasks such as cleaning toilets with bare hands and physical punishments. Such actions began to have further deleterious effects on the prisoners.

A priest invited into the prison soon discovered that the participants had become completely ingrained in their assigned and fictitious roles. The prisoners were unable to explain why they were in the cells and believed the only way to get out was with the assistance of an attorney (Zimbardo, 2011). On the fifth night when parents asked a lawyer come to talk to their sons about getting out, it was clear it was time to end the study. Due to these and other unforeseen factors, Zimbardo made the decision to abort the experiment over a week earlier than planned.

At the end of the experiment, the guards had gained total control over the prisoners. There was no group unity, just individual prisoners employing whatever method they could in order to cope (Zimbardo, 2011). For example, some tried to be model prisoners, while others broke down psychologically. The prisoners were behaving pathologically, and the guards with an inflated sense of power, became sadistic. There were at least two additional compelling reasons that led Zimbardo to end the experiment early. The first reason occurred when it was discovered that the guards were mistreating and punishing the prisoners in the middle of the night, when they believed that the researchers were not watching them. The second reason transpired when a recent Stanford Ph.D. Christina Maslach, protested the treatment of the prisoners after interviewing and observing the guards and prisoners. She maintained that what was happening to the participants was inhumane (Zimbardo, 2011). On the final day, a debriefing was conducted regarding the outcome of the experiment.

Discussions revolved around what each individual experienced as well as how and why they assumed their roles so strongly. The group also discussed how to interpret the results of the experiment to determine what alternatives could have been used during the experiment as well as implications that would allow the lessons learned from the scenario to be applied to a real life situation (Zimbardo, 2011).

Implications

Nearly every first year psychology student learns about Zimbardo’s iconic SPE. Much like his former classmate and colleague, Stanley Milgrim (the researcher responsible for the famous Milgrim shock experiments), Zimbardo, at times, unfortunately seems to be relegated to being remembered only for his theatrical approach to an

experiment gone wrong. Discussions of his methods and outcomes usually focus on the shortcomings of the experiment rather than the positive ways that it continues to inform our understanding of human behavior.

One such critic was Erich Fromm, a psychologist, who disagreed with Zimbardo's assertions that situational response was responsible for certain human behaviors. Fromm believed that many of the traits, which might cause an individual to behave in a violent or socially unacceptable manner, were in fact, latent, or subconscious (Fromm, 1973). If Fromm's assertion is true, the implication is that the self-reporting psychological instruments administered by Zimbardo, to his participants might not have registered such behaviors and alerted the researchers prior to conducting the experiment. In spite of the criticisms, much can be learned, however, from the implications brought forth from Zimbardo's research.

One important way in which psychologists continue to benefit from Zimbardo's research today is through the continued critical reexamination of how ethical issues should be addressed within the context of research. Two years following the SPE, the American Psychological Association (APA) sought to define guidelines for the use of deception in experiments involving humans (Baumrind, 1985). Because psychology is so inextricably tied to the research experiment, clear-cut ethical guidelines governing the process are necessary. The APA has a detailed code of conduct on which to base ethical decisions (American Psychological Association, 2010). Additionally, the Independent Review Board (IRB) has been established to ensure that participants are treated humanely. This high level of scrutiny helps to ensure that the profession of psychology is regarded as impeccably as possible in the eyes of peers, colleges, students, and the public. The constant fine tuning and revisiting of ethics in research continues to underscore the professionalism and credibility of the work of researchers who scrupulously adhere to the ethical guidelines.

Such research by psychologists has also led to the call for reformation of rules and regulations in the contemporary penal system. One might assume that the lessons learned from the SPE all resulted in positive changes for prisons, but some researchers disagree. In a study of prisons twenty-five years after the SPE took place, scientists Craig Haney and Phillip Zimbardo lamented the transformation of prisons into facilities that they believed exacerbated conditions for abuse and violence. An example of these conditions is the state of the art high security cells which tend to isolate dangerous and violent offenders from the general population. Isolations and deprivation of human contact are believed to be some of the catalysts for the types of extreme behaviors witnessed in the SPE experiment. Haney and Zimbardo point to the need for further research into situational factors in prison interactions (Haney & Zimbardo, 1998).

Zimbardo's findings also have helped explain some contemporary instances of aggression in groups such as the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse situation, which came to light in 2004, some thirty years after Zimbardo's experiment. U.S. soldiers were charged and found guilty of heinously abusing detainees in the Baghdad correctional facility. Several male and one female soldier participated in extreme acts of humiliation, religious degradation, sodomy, torture and rape. Notably, the photographs released from the Abu Ghraib incident bore shocking similarities to slides taken during the Zimbardo experiment (Zimbardo, 2007). Relatives and acquaintances of the convicted expressed surprise upon being shown the shocking photographic evidence of abuse. It seems that most of the offenders were not typically violent in their civilian lives, and were rather well liked and seemingly well-adjusted people. Once in a group situation though, these ordinary people performed extraordinarily egregious offenses against other humans. Because of the groundbreaking research conducted by Zimbardo and Milgrim, contemporary researchers are able to focus on group dynamics as the probable cause for such deviant behavior (Thornburg, 2004).

Even in seemingly unrelated fields, scientists have benefitted from Zimbardo's findings. Researchers, F. Neil Brady and Jeanne M. Logsdon assert that there is a transdisciplinary application for Zimbardo's research in the realm of situational ethics in the business arena. Brady and Logsdon assert two main implications can be drawn from Zimbardo's research, which would serve to inform management science. First, although business environments are not identical to prison environments, situational factors still play significant roles in decision making in both scenarios. Second, the researchers believed that research, which illustrated "actual behaviors and attitudes" was valuable for business students to study (Brady & Logsdon, 1988).

Not all findings from the SPE have been used to help inform our understanding of contemporary issues. Some of the behavioral factors that played out in the SPE have allowed researchers and the public alike to retroactively make sense out of past atrocities that have occurred. The carnage of the Jewish holocaust is one such example. Using the powerful lessons from the SPE that dictate that ambiguity in role boundaries, and situational ethics significantly change group dynamics, researchers have been able to more thoroughly understand and explain the duality of human nature. The adage goes, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (Santayana, 1980). Zimbardo himself exemplifies this sentiment in his quest to continually learn from the mistakes

as well as the triumphs made apparent in the wake of the SPE. Zimbardo's prolific amount of continued research is written testament to this desire to further our understanding of human behavior (Zimbardo, 2010).

Additionally, the lack of understanding of the complex processes at work in such group dynamics results in the polarization of certain groups towards others. This in-group/out-group mentality only serves to facilitate other misunderstandings and social bias. These retroactive analyses allow the researcher a unique opportunity to have a clear picture of both the antecedent factors as well as the ultimate outcomes of certain pivotal situations. This complete snapshot of an incident, in essence, becomes a field study with which investigators and researchers can evaluate their theories and findings. Such comparisons, may eventually lead to the recognition of warning signs which may indicate the impending threat of a repeat behavior when similar conditions are present. The ability to respond proactively to potentially violent situations is a promising prospect. These "preventative" measures might have application in many realms including but not limited to crowd control, riot situations, and surprisingly even business mergers and acquisitions.

There is also promising new research developing in related fields which might help to further develop some of the concepts explored by Zimbardo and his colleagues. Dr. Susan Fiske, psychologist, and professor at Princeton University, has been studying the psychology behind group processes and intergroup comparisons. Particularly, Dr. Fiske isolates the emotions of envy and scorn and how these emotions result in some rather shocking behaviors when humans are faced with making choices regarding sparing or sacrificing the lives of individuals who they perceive belong in certain societal groups (Fiske, 2011).

Post Stanford Prison Experiment Work

Shortly after the SPE, Zimbardo offered follow-up to some of the ethical criticisms of the SPE (Zimbardo, 1973). He recognized that there were initially negative effects felt by the subjects but referenced data indicating that there were not long-term negative effects and that the subjects did, in fact, learn some things about themselves.

He then went on to co-author several articles on hypnosis. These studies demonstrated the lack of hypnotizability depending on seat location at school (Monteiro & Zimbardo, 1987), the consistency of hypnotizability over the course of 25 years (Hilgard & Zimbardo, 1989), and physiological arousal as a result of posthypnotic suggestion (Zimbardo, LaBerge & Butler, 1993). Zimbardo wasn't interested in hypnosis for the sake of hypnosis itself, but he was interested in using hypnosis in modifying emotions and other states of being (Zimbardo, 2004).

Closely related to the behaviors observed in the SPE, various dimensions of aggression were examined by Caprara and Zimbardo (1996) in which a relationship was found between impulsive aggression and positive evaluation of violence and emotional responsivity. In a study examining persuasion, subjects were better able to resist persuasion if they had been instructed on the basics of persuasion first, then deceived (by an advertisement) and subsequently analyzed the situation and how they would resist the persuasion in the future, thus allowing them to 'practice' resisting persuasion (Levine, Fast, & Zimbardo, 2004).

Zimbardo has also contributed to the research on shyness. He was inspired by the behaviors of the guards and the prisoners and considered them representative of the dualistic mentalities within us (Zimbardo, 2011). In 1975, Zimbardo's laboratory began functioning as a shyness clinic where students were experimentally treated for chronic shyness. In 1982, it then became The Palo Alto Shyness Clinic and it is now known as The Shyness clinic, operating out of Menlo Park (Zimbardo, 2010). Contributing to the shyness research, Henderson and Zimbardo (1998) examined the correlations between shyness, anger, resentment and externalization of blame. They found a correlation between shame and resentment and that there was a correlation between resentment and externalization of blame. They also found that those diagnosed with Avoidant Personality disorder were high in externalization of blame and shame but not anger. Adding to the literature of shyness, Zimbardo has written several books on the topic including: *Shyness: What it is, What to do about it; The Shy Child; and The Shy Child* (reprinted).

In 1998, Zimbardo reflected on what had been learned from the SPE 25 years after the event and how the criminal justice system and prison policies had changed over the course of the years (Haney & Zimbardo, 1998). The paper looked at what the SPE set out to examine, which was the behavioral models of the criminal justice institutions. They were interested in the social situations and interactions between prisoners, guards and the policies. Throughout the 25 years between the SPE and the time of the article, Zimbardo saw the prison system go through several changes. The prison system changed from a system of rehabilitation to a system of punishment, warehousing people just to keep them off the streets. There were also changes in sentencing; originally set up for release of prisoners when they were rehabilitated, indeterminate sentencing was replaced with determinate sentencing, which fell into the category of punishment (Haney & Zimbardo, 1998, p.712). There is also mention of the over incarceration of drug offenders and the overcrowding of the prisons in general.

Haney and Zimbardo offered several lessons to be learned from the SPE. First, the prison environments need to be closely examined and changed. Healthy people can be heavily influence by the environment in which

they are placed. Another lesson to be learned from the SPE is that even without firearms, the guards still managed to be abusive to the prisoners. The subjects in the SPE were chosen because they were mentally healthy. Another aspect of the SPE that the authors suggested should be considered in prison policy is that if the prisoners are to be released back into the community, the current prison environment is essentially setting them up to fail. There needs to be a system in place to allow the prisoners to cope with the changing environment. The last point discussed is the need for more evaluation in the effect of “imprisonment and developing psychologically informed limits to the amount of prison pain one is willing to inflict in the name of social control” (Haney & Zimbardo, 1998, p. 721).

Zimbardo (2006) evaluated a study as carried out by BBC in 2002, that replicated Zimbardo’s SPE and aired four one-hour episodes on television. In this experiment, men were recruited to take part in an experiment to see how well they know themselves. This time, opposite from Zimbardo’s SPE, the prisoners were dominant over the guards and rather than prisoner’s quitting early, two of the guards quit early because of the abuse. In the critique, Zimbardo mentions the differences between the British prison experiment and the SPE. The BBC experiment recruited by posting flyers; the SPE recruited by ‘arresting’ their subjects. The BBC experimenters were ever-present during the experiment, even manipulating situations and creating a new competition to give one of the prisoners a chance to become a guard. The prisoners in the BBC study were all aware of the cameras and they were aware that the show would be shown on television. Zimbardo felt as if the random assignment in the BBC version was not actually random but that the prisoners were chosen as such because they fit the role. The BBC experiment ended a few days early because a small group of prisoners were going to make the atmosphere more prison-like. Zimbardo notes that the BBC study was less scientific and more entertainment and that the “manner in which it has been portrayed in this published article is not in the service of the best interests of our profession” (Zimbardo, 2006, p.53). Though he harshly criticized the experiment overall, in a postscript, Zimbardo added that the researchers of the BBC experiment did demonstrate how to reduce prison violence by increasing surveillance of the interactions between the guards and the prisoners.

Zimbardo has not solely focused on “evil” and the lesser desirable traits of humans. After the prison experiment and recently, he has started researching heroism and more specifically, how to train ordinary people to become heroes. Zimbardo claims his most difficult hurdle to overcome is that most people believe, “Heroes are born, not created” (Choi, 2011). To overcome this and to encourage individuals by showing them how they can become the everyday hero, Zimbardo created the Heroic Imagination Project. This is a four-step program where people learn that anyone can be a hero and through small, everyday acts, they can help change the world. The programs help people become aware of evildoers and how they try to lure them into their evil acts. They learn about integrity, and finally, how they can go out into the community to help (Choi, 2011). The program is also designed to help individuals overcome the common psychological phenomenon we see like the bystander effect. Participants are also trained to overcome group norms by standing up and speaking out for oneself against wrong, how to act with courage and integrity, and to overcome conformity (Zimbardo, 2010.)

More recently, Zimbardo examined disobedience to an unjust authority and the cognitive processes that could possibly predict the behavior. It was found that the majority of subjects who were told to give increasingly hostile comments to a victim after the victim failed a trial refused to give the hostile comments at some point in the trial. Thirty percent of the subjects gave all levels of hostile comments. They found that subjects either stopped making the comments when the victim first requested or not at all. The concluding remark in the article stated that studies examining disobedience should be encouraged, rather than relegated harshly by IRBs, with proper oversight and adequate debriefing (Bocchiaro & Zimbardo, 2010).

Reimann and Zimbardo (2011) looked at the factors that play into the dark side of humans. They found factors from social, cognitive and affective neuroscience that contribute to what makes humans evil. The authors focused on aggression and the contributing physiological factors, including a relationship between the frontal lobe and aggression. De-individuation and dehumanization are also factors that contribute to aggressive behavior.

Conclusion

Zimbardo’s work before the SPE focused on anxiety, fear and persuasion. He looked at how children respond in anxiety-provoking situations in schools and the resulting poor performance of the children in such situations. After the SPE, he looked at a seemingly darker side of humans, including aggression, factors that make people evil, and disobedience. While a large portion of Zimbardo’s career seems to focus on the negative aspects of people, the results of his studies can be utilized to improve many more aspects of our society. He continues to inform individuals on how the lessons learned from the SPE have relevance in today’s world. Growing issues of societal concern such as school violence, human rights issues and terrorism rely on such research to help make sense of them in an attempt to prevent such heinous events in the future. His influence extends beyond the psychology classroom into the fields of business, politics and prison policy.

References

- American Psychological Association. (2010). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. Retrieved September 10, 2011, from American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>
- Barnard, J.W., Zimbardo, P.G., & Sarason, S.B. (1961). Anxiety and verbal behavior in children. *Child Development*, 32, 379-392.
- Baumrind, D. (1985). Research using intentional deception: Ethical issues revisited. *American Psychologist*, 165-174.
- Brady, N. F., & Logsdon, J. M. (1988). Zimbardo's "Stanford Prison Experiment" and the Relevance of Social Psychology for Teaching Business Ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 703-710.
- Bocchiaro, P. & Zimbardo, P.G. (2010). Defying unjust authority: An exploratory study. *Current Psychology*, 29, 155-170.
- Caprara, G.V., Barbaranelli, C. & Zimbardo, P.G. (1996). Understanding the complexity of human aggression: Affective, cognitive and social dimensions of individual differences in propensity toward aggression. *European Journal of Personality*, 10, 133-135.
- Choi, C. (2011). *Scientific America*. Too hard for science? Philip Zimbardo-creating millions of heroes. Retrieved November 7th 2011 from <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/2011/04/22/too-hard-for-science-philip-zimbardo-creating-millions-of-heroes/>
- Fiske, S. T. (2011). *Envy up, Scorn Down How status divides us*. New York: Russell sage foundation.
- Fromm, E. (1973). *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Haney, C. & Zimbardo, P. (1998). The past and future of U.S. prison policy: Twenty-five years after the Stanford prison experiment. *American Psychologist*, 53(7), 709-727.
- Henderson, L. & Zimbardo, P. (1998). Shame and anger in chronic shyness. Anxiety Association of America 18th National Conference, Session 406R, paper #3.
- Levine, R.V., Fast, N., & Zimbardo, P. (2004). The power of persuasion: a field exercise. *Teaching of Psychology*, 31(2), 136-138.
- Miller, N., & Zimbardo, P.G. (1966). Motives for fear-induced affiliation: Emotional comparison or interpersonal similarity? *Journal of Personality*, 34(4), 481-503.
- Monteiro, K.P., & Zimbardo, P.G. (1987). The path from classroom seating to hypnotizability-a dead end: A brief communication. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 35(2), 83-86.
- Reinmann, M. & Zimbardo, P.G. (2011). The dark side of social encounters: prospects for a neuroscience of human evil. *Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology and Economics*, 4(3), 174-180.
- Santayana, G. (1980). *Reason in common sense*. New York: Dover Publishing.
- Sarnoff, I., Zimbardo, P.G. (1961). Anxiety, fear and social affiliation. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 62(2), 356-363.
- Thornburg, N. (2004). Why did they do it? *Business Source Complete*, 26-29.
- Williams, R. (1998). Philip Zimbardo: A psychologist's experience with deviance. Retrieved November 7th 2011 from <http://criminology.fsu.edu/crimtheory/zimbardo.htm>
- Zimbardo, P.G. (1961). Involvement and communication discrepancy as determinants of opinion conformity. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 60(1), 86-94.
- Zimbardo, P.G. (1973). On the ethics of intervention in human psychological research: With special reference to the Stanford prison experiment. *Cognition*, 2(2), 243-256.
- Zimbardo, P.G. (1977). *Shyness: What it is, what to do about it*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley Publishing Co.
- Zimbardo, P.G. (2005). Optimizing the power and magic of teaching. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 24(1), 11-21.
- Zimbardo, P.G. (2006). On rethinking the psychology of tyranny: The BBC prison study. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 45, 47-53.
- Zimbardo, P. (2007). *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*. New York: Random House.
- Zimbardo, P. (2010). The homepage of Philip Zimbardo. Retrieved October 12, 2011, from The homepage of Philip Zimbardo: <http://www.zimbardo.com/>
- Zimbardo, P. (2011). Stanford Prison Experiment. Retrieved September 10, 2011, from <http://www.prisonexp.org/>.
- Zimbardo, P. (1999). Transforming People into Perpetrators of Evil. Retrieved November 7th 2011 from <http://www.sonoma.edu/users/g/goodman/zimbardo.htm>

- Zimbardo, P. (2010). Heroic Imagination Project. Retrieved November 7th 2011 from <http://www.heroicimagination.org/>
- Zimbardo, P.G., Barnart, J.W., & Berkowitz, L. (1963). The role of anxiety and defensiveness in children's verbal behavior. *Journal of Personality*, 31(1), 79-96.
- Zimbardo, P.G. & Formica, R. (1963). Emotional comparison and self-esteem as determinants of affiliation. *Journal of Personality*, 31(2), 141-162.
- Zimbardo, P.G., LaBerge, S., & Butler, L.D. (1993). Psychophysiological consequences of unexplained arousal: A posthypnotic suggestion paradigm. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 102(3), 466-473.
- Zimbardo, P.G., Mahl, G.F., & Barnard, J.W. (1963). The measurement of speech disturbance in anxious children. *Journal of Speech & Hearing Disorders*, 28(4), 362-370.
- Zimbardo, P.G. & Radl, S.L. (1981). *The shy child*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Zimbardo, P.G. & Radl, S.L. (1999). *The shy child* (reprinted). Los Altos, CA: Malor Press.
- Zimbardo, P.G., Weisenberg, M., Firestone, I., & Burton, L. (1965). Communicator effectiveness in producing public conformity and private attitude change. *Journal of Personality*, 33(2), 233-255.

The Science of Zajonc: The History, Contributions and Legacy of Robert B. Zajonc

Chad Cotner

Katherine Jones

Mariko Sekiguchi

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

Robert Zajonc is remembered in the psychological community as a man who had an extremely significant impact on the ways in which we study how the presence of others affects our own behaviors. While Robert Zajonc is most known for his classic works on social facilitation and the mere exposure effect, Zajonc was a true interdisciplinary psychologist, whose works extended into the other fields as well. This article examines Zajonc's history, influences, major contributions, theoretical expansions from Zajonc's works and the current state of the science following Zajonc.

Keywords: Robert Zajonc, social facilitation, the mere exposure effect

It is voting day. You get up early and go to the school or church that is closest to you. Once you arrive, you show them your identification card and they give you a ballot. You chose the party that you are voting for, then, you select your favorite candidates. It is likely that you do not know the agenda of every person on the ballot but you do not want to hold up the line, so you quickly scribble in the bubbles next to the names of the people you have heard the most about or seen more often on TV. You probably will not give this impulsive decision another thought because to your knowledge, you selected the best candidates possible. Why would we be so willing to vote for someone that we know so little about? It seems absurd to give someone that you are so unfamiliar with such a considerable amount of power. Robert Zajonc attempted to answer questions like this and many others, through empiricism and experimentation. Zajonc identified postulates that broke ground in social psychology. His contributions are undeniable and his legacy is inescapable.

Biography

“Interactions titillate, main effects explain,” Robert Zajonc often exclaimed, little did he know, this so closely defined his own life (Burnstein, 2009). Zajonc fought in the trenches as a young man, he led a tumultuous life and in his time, he discovered answers that explained to him and the world why his early life, like millions of others sought such intense sorrow. Zajonc's research was timeless, and so is the legacy that he left behind.

In 1923, Hitler lead his Nazi party in one of many failed coup d'état attempts, the first ever ballgame was played at Yankee Stadium, the use of insulin for diabetes was put forth, and Robert Zajonc was born, on November 23. Zajonc was born into a humble family, as an only child in Lodz, Poland (Burnstein, 2009). Zajonc and his family fled Lodz in hopes of avoiding German occupation. They went to Warsaw where he endured unabbreviated agony. During an air raid on Warsaw, the building that Zajonc and his parents were hiding in became a direct target and both of his parents died. The hit left Zajonc critically wounded. With little fight left, German soldiers forced him into a farm labor camp in Germany (Burnstein, 2009; Berridge, 2010).

Zajonc attempted once and failed to escape the camp, so he was taken as a political prisoner, but not for long. A second attempt at escape proved fruitful to Zajonc as he was able to escape and join the French resistance, eventually reaching England in 1944. By the time he arrived in England, he had learned several languages, including English. Toward the end of the war, Zajonc became a translator for the U.S. Army. After such quandary in Europe and with the loss of his family, he decided to come to the United States and embark on the road to a higher education, which he began at the University of Michigan (Jackson et al., 2009).

Zajonc was accepted on probation at the University of Michigan. While there, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees. He earned his doctoral degree from an interdepartmental program in social psychology. Zajonc's roots were planted at the University of Michigan; his most famed research was a product of his career at the University of Michigan. In 1994, he went to Stanford, where he remained for the rest of his life. Zajonc fought a long bout with pancreatic cancer and died on December 3, 2008. Over his lifetime, Zajonc acquired countless accolades and chaired numerous boards. He left behind four children and a legacy that crosses transdisciplinary boundaries (Burnstein, 2009; N.A., 1978; Berridge, 2010).

Zajonc's Influences

The influence that Floyd Allport had on the field of social psychology is undeniable. Allport literally wrote the book on social psychology, one of the first books, in 1924 (Katz & Nichols, 1998). He realized the need for individuality in a social environment of conformity. It was important to him that science and experimentation be strongly implemented so that social psychology could be taken seriously as a behavioral science. Allport valued the importance of the reciprocal relationship between a person and their social environment (Allport, 1920). Allport's theories laid the groundwork for some of Zajonc's seminal works, especially social facilitation (Zajonc, Heingartner, & Herman, 1969).

Robert Zajonc and the mere exposure effect are synonymous in terms of social psychology. However, before Zajonc, there was Gustav Fechner and Edward Titchener. Also known as the familiarity principle, the mere exposure effect has origins as far back as 1876. Titchener conducted research on the phenomenon that he described as having a "glow of warmth" associated with familiar objects and people (Titchener, 1910). Unfortunately, Titchener's results were faulty and his hypothesis was incorrect. He could not find that a preference for an item was dependent on the subject's familiarity with the item. Zajonc altered Titchener's experimental design and provided us with what is now a widely accepted theory, the mere exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968; Zajonc & Markus, 1982; Kruger, 1988).

In 1933, when Zajonc was a young teenager in Poland, Gates and Allee were in the midst of designing a groundbreaking experiment. Gates and Allee trained cockroaches in a maze with in one of three conditions, the cockroaches were either isolated or in a set of two or three. They found that the cockroaches that were trained alone learned the most efficiently (Gates & Allee, 1933). Often criticized for his unusual use of fascinating animals and insects, Zajonc used Gates and Allee's findings as a springboard for his social facilitation research, which is some of his most noted work (Rajecki, 2010). He used cockroaches to replicate Gates and Allee's 1933 experiment.

In his social facilitation experiment involving cockroaches, Zajonc assumed that his predictions would coincide with the Spence-Hull drive theory (Zajonc et al., 1969). Hull and Spence developed a theory of reward schedule, which is known as the Spence-Hull behavior theory. Hull and Spence's theory is also known as 'paradoxical' reward effects (Rashotte, 2007; Spence, 1956). Hull and Spence studied behaviors that occur on certain schedules. In these schedules, rats received reinforcers in varying sizes and at random. Hull and Spence's theory was paradoxical because their results revealed that random and varying schedules of reward produced learning at a consistent pace (Rossiter & Foxall, 2008). From Hull and Spence's research on drive reduction, Zajonc predicted that the presence of conspecifics in different contexts would open the subjects up to social facilitation or adversely close them (Zajonc et al., 1969).

We will explore the many contributions that Zajonc has made to psychology and even to science. From social facilitation to the mere exposure effect, his offerings in the field have in effect, made social psychology what it is today. We will also explore the current directions and theoretical expansions on Zajonc's work, which are evidence of the great improvement that Zajonc made on the field during his time.

Social Facilitation

Imagine you are sitting at the opening game of the year for your favorite sports team. You're absorbing everything around you from the thousands of other cheering fans, your team's logo is posted everywhere throughout the stadium, your team's mascot is making its presence known and as far as the eye can see the stadium is filled with the colors of your team. You and your friends are ecstatic to start the season with the first home game. Your team is facing a difficult opponent, but a likeminded fan turns to you and says, "it's ok, we've got a home field advantage." Do the presence of significant others truly make a difference in performance effects for individuals? This concept interested Robert Zajonc, and he set out to provide an objective answer by using the scientific method. With Zajonc's utilization of the scientific method, he made bold claims that often aroused controversy in the scientific community. Despite making gallant claims, Zajonc was notorious for refusing to back down from his theories (Berridge, 2010; Niedenthal, 2010; Moreland & Tropolinski, 2010). At the very least, Zajonc was able to convince his opponents to carefully consider and see from his point of view.

Social facilitation studies have been studied extensively and throughout the course of the psychological field as a whole. Social facilitation is said to occur when the presence of real or imagined others enhances individual

performance on a task (Strauss, 2001). Social facilitation is also more likely to occur when the task at hand is simple, or if the performer of the task feels comfortable and confident with the domain in which they are performing the task. Social inhibition, on the other hand, occurs when the presence of others hinders one's ability to perform a given task. Social inhibition, conversely, is likely to occur when the task is very complex or unfamiliar to the target (Michaels et al., 1982).

The first true experimental study involving the study of social facilitation was a study by Triplett (1898) who found that children who were asked to wind string around a cylinder performed the task faster when they performed the task in the presence of others rather than when they were alone. By simply having others in their vicinity to perform the motor task alongside them appeared to produce enhancement effects. Sadly, this phenomenon was not studied much further until Robert Zajonc significantly furthered the field by extending the knowledge base of social facilitation. Zajonc's studies showed that social facilitation could occur with other domains such as word associations (Matlin & Zajonc, 1968), risk taking (Zajonc et al., 1970) and in other animals such as cockroaches (Zajonc, Heingartner, & Herman, 1969) and chickens (Zajonc, Markus, & Wilson, 1974). By furthering the knowledge base, Zajonc was able to perform one of the most basic and simple tasks in psychology: to replicate and extend the preexisting empirical research.

Mere Exposure and Drive Theory

Throughout the course of our lives, we are exposed to countless stimuli from various sounds, places, people, and so forth. Take, for example, young children who are exposed to a new food. At first, children may have an ambivalent attitude about the new food or may dislike it all together, but after trying the food in question several times, many will develop an acquired taste for the food. By being exposed to this stimulus numerous times, children will usually develop a liking for the food. Robert Zajonc studied this classic concept he termed the mere exposure effect.

The mere exposure phenomenon occurs when repeated exposure to a stimulus is sufficient in and of itself to improve attitudes toward that stimulus (Moreland & Topolinski, 2010). A major criticism of this theory is that it is too simple and parsimonious to explain behavior. A hallmark characteristic of a good scientist is to look for intervening variables; many researchers thought there surely must be some sort of an overriding variable to debunk this theory of mere exposure. In a classic study by Moreland and Zajonc (1976), participants who were subjected to various pictures of shapes and symbols on a frequent basis reported liking these figures to a greater extent than figures that were shown less often, even though they were unaware of the fact that these figures had been shown to them repeatedly. The effects of liking a stimulus greater after being exposed to it several times occur beyond our conscious awareness (Kunst-Wilson & Zajonc, 1980). The theory of Zajonc's mere exposure has continued to hold ground in the scientific community despite many attempts to nullify it.

So, what is the motivating force behind this mere exposure effect? What is the underlying process that causes this behavior to occur? Zajonc developed drive theory to explain how the mere presence of others affects our behavior. In his classic article on social facilitation (Zajonc, 1965), Zajonc classified drive theory as a generalized drive to perform better on a given task when merely being exposed to observers. Due to the fact that drive generalizes responses, the simple fact that an observer was present for a task can facilitate an individual's performance on the task (Shaver & Liebling, 1976). The concept of drive theory tied together all of Zajonc's previous work on motivation, social facilitation and mere exposure to explain the underlying process behind these phenomena.

Other Contributions

While Robert Zajonc is most often remembered for his contributions to social psychology in the areas of drive theory, social facilitation and mere exposure, Zajonc's contributions extend beyond the nuanced realm of social psychology. Zajonc was a true inter-disciplinary psychologist, dealing with several other psychological areas as well as traditional "hard" sciences along side the social sciences. While Zajonc was first, and foremost, a true social psychologist, many of his studies utilized comparative psychology and behavioral responses in animal species in order to provide universal extensions for claims that were previously thought to be exclusively human nature (Berridge, 2010). Zajonc extended the knowledge base of previously discovered phenomena such as familiarity, mere exposure and social facilitation by studying rats, pigeons and cockroaches (Zajonc et al., 1969, Zajonc et al., 1974). By thinking outside of the "Skinner" box so to speak, Zajonc was able to utilize an integrative approach to provide greater credibility to assertions and preceding theories.

In addition to animal studies, Zajonc examined the effect of birth order in determining personality and intelligence (Zajonc, 2001; Herrera et al., 2003). Many of our currently held notions of first-born children being more successful, holding more prestigious occupations and completing more education all stemmed from contributions, at least in part, by Zajonc (Herrera, et al., 2003, Zajonc et al., 1980). Zajonc and colleagues also found that many differences that are seen in the order in which siblings are born, specifically with intelligence, are a

within-family phenomenon (Zajonc & Sulloway, 2007). The intellectual differences that are seen are not entirely universal to all societies, but are systematic within the family system.

Theoretical Expansion After Zajonc

The social facilitation theory proposed by Zajonc (1965) had set the foundation for the different theoretical approaches for subsequent researchers, that is, the introduction of different models that explain how social facilitation occurs. Zajonc (1965) proposed that social facilitation theory based on Hull-Spence drive theory. His proposal was that the drive was elevated with the presence of others, and the increased drive resulted in the performance enhancement of dominant tasks or so called easy tasks or well learned tasks. However, other models from psychological, behavioral, biological, social, and cognitive perspectives seemed to account for the explanation of the social facilitation theory (Aiello & Douthitt, 2001; Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter & Salomon, 1999). The studies followed by Zajonc (1965) had a focus on observing the social facilitation effect in various contexts and to explain its effects on behaviors of both humans and animals. Due to its theoretical implication, the experiments have focused from the simple motor skills to the complex human behavior of engaging in prosocial behaviors to antisocial behaviors.

Guerin (1993) pointed out that many of the subsequent studies that had focused on explaining the social facilitation effect from different perspectives had overlaps in the experimental designs trying to prove the same interaction effect. He proposed that the three broad dimensions could be defined as an approach to the social facilitation effect; drive theory, social conformity theory, and cognitive process theory. Moreover, it seems that the current state of the field adopts the application of integrative model with two or more of these perspectives, and the recent research seems to focus on the practical application of theory and revealing the underlying biological mechanisms.

Social Conformity Theory

The theory of Zajonc for social facilitation proposed that the physical arousal or the activation of drive occur with the mere presence of others, that is, the drive or arousal is unlearned or primitive (Blascovich et al., 1999). Soon after, this notion was refuted by the introduction of a concept called *evaluative apprehension* (Aiello & Douthitt, 2001; Blascovich et al., 1999; Cottrell, Wack, Sekerak, & Rittle, 1968; Forsyth & Burnette, 2010; Guerin, 1993; Strauss, 2002). Cottrell et al. (1968) asserted that the social context contributed to the elevation of drive such as the notion of being evaluated thus the underlying drive or arousal for social facilitation is a learned drive. They examined whether the participants show social facilitation in front of those who are blind folded. They hypothesized that if the drive is unlearned concept, then the participants should still show the increased performance. As Cottrell et al. (1968) expected, the participants did not show the social facilitation effect in the presence of a blindfolded person, thus confirming that the drive was elevated as a response to the apprehension of being evaluated. Moreover, the participants had to associate the presence of others with the evaluations of their performance.

Cognitive Process Theory

The rise of the cognitive revolution in 1970's prompted the researchers to consider the cognitive process of social facilitation effect, which led to the emphasis on attention and distraction in the field. The mainstream idea is based on *distraction-conflict*, which suggests that the simultaneous physical and cognitive attention to the presence of others and the task create the conflict between those attentions resulting in the distraction of each other, and this conflict induces arousal or elevates drive (Baron, 1986; Guerin, 1993). Moreover, Baron (1986) suggested that up to some point the distraction contributes to the increased performance, and once the distraction increases beyond the point, then the performance decreases.

Current Integrative Model

Guerin (1993) noted that no one-dimensional approach accounts for the theoretical explanation of the social facilitation effect. Both social conformity theories and cognitive process theory were the deviation from the drive theory perspective originally proposed by Zajonc (1965). The current integrative model suggests that all three theories interactively explain the mechanisms of social facilitation effect.

In 1999, Blascovich et al. tested the theoretical expansion of social facilitation from the biopsychosocial model. Their purpose was to examine the role of physiological arousal in relation to the cognitive process in social facilitation. They measured the cardiovascular responses when the participants performed well-learned tasks or unlearned tasks with or without the presence of others (Blascovich et al., 1999). The cardiovascular responses had known to be different when one is challenged and threatened; therefore, they matched these patterns with presence and absence of others. The result indicated that the cardiovascular pattern showed the challenge pattern when one was performing well-learned task with the presence of others, and it showed the threat pattern when one was engaging in the unfamiliar task with the presence of others. The participants in both conditions (well-learned and unlearned) without the presence of others did not show any deviation from the baseline cardiovascular activity. The

study provided the compelling evidence of the relevance of physiological arousal in social facilitation and that the difference in cognitive appraisal of participants underlies in social facilitation effect. Furthermore, the study suggested the need for an integrative approach to social facilitation. The subsequent study by Finberg and Aiello (2006) provided the importance of cognitive appraisal in the challenge and threat condition by manipulating those perceptions in both simple and complex tasks.

The current understanding of theoretical explanation for social facilitation seems to support the combined process of physical arousal, evaluation apprehension and distraction-conflict (Forsyth & Burnette, 2010). This approach was introduced in the literature review of Aiello and Douthitt (2001). They reviewed the sufficient amount of previous literatures and suggested that the previous theories had unclear boundaries regarding to what influences the social facilitation effects. For example, they proposed that the previous theories did not account for the influence of the relationship between the performer and the observer, where the observer was located, the duration of the actual effects, and the nature of the performance (Aiello & Douthitt, 2001). Furthermore, they concluded that presence factors (e.g., type of presence, role of others, relationship, salience of presence), situational factors (e.g., visual vs. auditory, proximity of others, feedback from others, organizational climate), and task factors (e.g., simple task vs. complex task, cognitive task vs. motor tasks, time requirements) all influence the perception of situation which leads to the initial reaction such as physical arousal and cognitive conflict (Aiello & Douthitt, 2001). The initial reaction influences performance factors such as speed, accuracy or other perspectives of performance (Aiello & Douthitt, 2001). It seems that the review of Aiello and Douthitt (2001) had influenced the subsequent studies to focus on examining the role of each factor.

Recent Studies

There seems to be no prominent models to explain the mechanisms of social facilitation are proposed after Aiello and Douthitt (2001) or in the past decade. Currently, the trends in the empirical studies of social facilitation seem to have two directions. One is to examine the social facilitation effect on various contexts in purpose of establishing the practical implications and examining the factors presented in Aiello and Douthitt (2001). The other is to examine the underlying neuropsychological mechanism of social facilitation effects such that how distraction conflicts and evaluative apprehensions are processed biologically to induce the social facilitation effect.

One dimension of studying the context of social facilitation effect is to examine the type of presence that induces social facilitation. Thompson, Sebastianelli, and Murray (2009) examined the type of presence to see if the perceived notion of being monitored online could induce the social facilitation effect. They created a situation in which arousal and distraction were salient by asking participants to complete the web-based training program and telling them that their online activity was being monitored. The participants who thought that they were monitored scored lower on the skill tests given after the completion of the program compared to those who received no information about monitoring (Thompson et al., 2009).

One of the practical implications of the recent study is that social facilitation effects and inhibition effects have been observed in various psychological measurements in the mere presence of an evaluator. These findings raise the concerns for behaviors of examiners during the psychological assessment, and it also suggests the need of the standardized behaviors for the examiners (Yantz & McCaffrey, 2007). Yantz and McCaffrey (2007) tested whether the social facilitation effect was present in computer based neuropsychological testing. They used three computer based neuropsychological tests, Word Memory Test (WMT), Test of Memory Malingering (TOMM), and the Wisconsin Card Sorting, and manipulated the context of presence of the evaluator (Yantz & McCaffrey, 2007). In the attentive condition, the evaluator was standing behind the participants gazing at the computer screen as they took the test. In the inattention condition, the evaluator was present in the range of visual reach of the participants but engaging in the different behavior such as typing onto computer. The participants in the unobserved condition made the significant amount of error in TOMM than the participants in the observed condition suggesting the possibility that the behaviors of examiner can account for some variability in the psychological measurements.

Another current trend of study focuses on confirming the theories regarding the social facilitation from neuropsychological basis. In 2008, the cognitive-neuropsychological model of social facilitation was proposed (Wagstaff, Wheatcroft, Cole, Brunas-Wagstaff, Blackmore & Pilkington, 2008). They combined the previous notions from neuropsychological literatures and the notion from the socialpsychological literature (Wagstaff et al., 2008). Since there are two kinds of tasks, which utilize executive function and non-executive function, these two tasks are processed in the different regions of the brain. Tasks that require the executive function is processed in frontal lobe whereas tasks that require the non-executive function is processed in more posterior region of the brain (Wagstaff et al., 2008). Their assumption was that the different processes can be matched with social inhibition and social facilitation, that is, attending to the presence of others depletes the executive function in frontal region of the brain (Wagstaff et al., 2008). Therefore, when one is given the task that requires the executive function with presence of others social inhibition occurs. On the other hand, social facilitation occurs when non-executive tasks

are given. The result of the study supported their hypothesis and the study added evidences for distraction-conflict process.

The mechanisms of social facilitation effects are still rigorously investigated in the field of social psychology, after the first proposal by Zajonc in 1965. The future study seems to carry on investigating the mechanisms of social facilitation effect on interactions of three dimensions, evaluative apprehension, distraction-conflict, and physical arousal.

Conclusion

While Robert Zajonc's most notorious influences in the field are in the areas of social facilitation and mere exposure, it is clear that his contributions extend into other areas of psychology as well. By utilizing a multifaceted approach to studying human behavior and its processes, Zajonc changed the field of psychology through countless studies and theories.

It seems that no one theoretical application has been determined to explain the social facilitation effect in various contexts, and the current integrative model suggests the combined process of physical arousal, evaluative apprehension, and distraction-conflict (Aiello & Douthitt, 2011; Forsyth & Burnette, 2010). The recent focus in the field has two directions. One of which seems to stem from the idea of current integrative model to examine the factors associated with three processes involved in social facilitation. The neuropsychological studies also contribute to reveal the mechanism of these processes as well. Although the field has two directions, however, both directions have same interest of finding the mechanisms of social facilitation and to reveal its mechanism in depth.

References

- Aiello, J. R., & Douthitt, E. A. (2001). Social facilitation from Triplett to electronic performance monitoring. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 5(3), 163-180.
- Allport, F. H. (1920). Social psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 17(3), 85-94.
- Baron, R.S. (1986). Distraction-conflict theory: Progress and problems. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 19, 1-36.
- Berridge, K. C. (2010). Remembering Robert Zajonc: The complete psychologist. *Emotion Review*, 2(4), 348-352.
- Blascovich, J., Mendes, W.B., Hunter, S.B., & Solomon, K. (1999). Social "Facilitation" as challenge and threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(1), 68-77.
- Burnstein, E. (2009). Robert B. Zajonc (1923–2008). *American Psychologist*, 64(6), 558-559.
- Cottrell, N.B., Wack, D.L., Sekerak, G.J., & Rittle, R.H. (1968). Social Facilitation of dominant responses by the presence of an audience and the mere presence of others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 9, 245-250.
- Distinguished Scientific Contribution Awards for 1978: Robert B. Zajonc. (1979). *American Psychologist*, 34(1), 43-47.
- Feinberg, J. M., & Aiello, J. R. (2010). The effect of challenge and threat appraisals under evaluative presence. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 40(8), 2071-2104.
- Forsyth, D.R., & Burnette, J. (2010). Group Processes. In Baumeister, R.F., & Finkel, E.J. (Eds.), *Advanced social psychology the state of the science* (pp.495-534). New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Gates, M. F., & Allee, W. C. (1933). Conditioned behavior of isolated and grouped cockroaches on a simple maze. *Journal of Comparative Psychology*, 15(2), 331-358.
- Guerin, B. (1993). Social facilitation. New York, NY: the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Herrera, N.C., Zajonc, R.B., Wiczorkowska, G., & Cichomski, B. (2003). Beliefs about birth rank and their reflection in reality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(1), 142-150.
- Jackson, J., Burnstein, E., Bargh, J., Moreland, R., Nisbett, R., Fiske, S., Banaji, M., Niedenthal, P., Winkielman, P. (2009). Memories of Robert B. Zajonc, A Man for All Seasons. *Association for Psychological Science; Observer*, 22(4).
- Katz, D., Johnson, B. T., & Nichols, D. R. (1998). Floyd Henry Allport: Founder of social psychology as a behavioral science. In G. A. Kimble, M. Wertheimer, G. A. Kimble, M. Wertheimer (Eds.), *Portraits of pioneers in psychology, Vol. 3* (pp. 121-142). Washington, DC US: American Psychological Association.
- Kruger, D. (1988). In search of a human science psychology. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 18(1), 1-9.
- Kunst-Wilson, W.R., & Zajonc, R.B. (1980). Affective discrimination of stimuli that cannot be recognized. *Science*, 207, 557-558.

- Matlin, L. & Zajonc, R.B. (1968). Social facilitation of word associations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 10(4), 455-460.
- Michaels, J.W., Bloommel, J.M., Brocato, R.M., Linkous, R.A., & Rowe, J.S. (1982). Social facilitation and inhibition in a natural setting. *Replications in Social Psychology*, 2, 21-24.
- Moreland, R.L., & Topolinski, S. (2010). The mere exposure phenomenon: A lingering melody by Robert Zajonc. *Emotion Review*, 2, 329-339.
- Moreland, R.L., & Zajonc, R.B. (1976). A strong test of exposure effects. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 12, 170-179.
- Niedenthal, P. M. (2010). What Bob Zajonc taught us: An introduction to the teacher and the teachings. *Emotion Review*, 2(4), 315-319.
- Rajecki, D. W. (2010). Zajonc, cockroaches, and chickens, c. 1965—1975: A characterization and contextualization. *Emotion Review*, 2(4), 320-328.
- Rashotte, M. (2007). Abram Amsel (1922-2006). *American Psychologist*, 62(7), 694-695.
- Rossiter, J., & Foxall, G. (2008). Hull-Spence Behavior Theory as a paradigm for consumer behavior. *Marketing Theory*, 8(2), 123-141.
- Shaver, P., & Liebling, B.A. (1976). Explorations in the drive theory of social motivation. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 99, 259-271.
- Spence, K. W. (1956). The role of motivation in conditioning. In K. W. Spence (Ed.) , *Behavior theory and conditioning* (pp. 165-198). New Haven, CT US: Yale University Press.
- Strauss, B. (2002). Social facilitation in motor tasks: A review of research and theory. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 3(3), 237-256.
- Titchener, E.B. (1910). *Textbook of psychology*. New York: Macmillan.
- Triplett, N. (1898). The dynamogenic factors in pacemaking and competition. *American Journal of Psychology*, 9, 507-533.
- Wagstaff, G.F., Wheatcroft, J., Cole, J.C., Brunas-wagstaff, J., Blackmore, V., & Pilkington, A. (2008). Some cognitive and neuropsychological aspects of social inhibition and facilitation. *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology*, 20(4), 828-846.
- Yantz, C.L., & McCaffrey, R.J. (2007). Social facilitation effect of examiner attention or inattention to computer-administered neuropsychological tests: First sign that the examiner may affect results. *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, 21, 663-371.
- Zajonc, R.B. (1965) Social facilitation. *Science*, 149, 269-274.
- Zajonc, R. B. (1968). Attitudinal Effects of Mere Exposure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 9(2, Pt.2), 1-27.
- Zajonc, R.B. (2001). The family dynamics of intellectual development. *American Psychologist*. June 2001; 56(7), 490-496.
- Zajonc, R. B., Heingartner, A., & Herman, E. M. (1969). Social enhancement and impairment of performance in the cockroach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 13(2), 83-92.
- Zajonc, R. B., & Markus, H. (1982). Affective and cognitive factors in preferences. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), 123-131.
- Zajonc, R.B., Markus H., & Wilson, W.R. (1974). Exposure, object preference and distress in domestic chicks. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*, 86, 581-585.
- Zajonc, R. B., & Sulloway, F. J. (2007). The confluence model: Birth order as a within-family or between-family dynamic?. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33(9), 1187-1194.
- Zajonc, R. B., Wolosin, R. J., Wolosin, M. A., & Loh, W. D. (1970). Social facilitation and imitation in group risk-taking. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 6(1), 26-46.

Topics in Evolutionary Forensic Psychology

Courtney Rhone

University of Central Oklahoma

Abstract

Evolutionary forensic psychology studies the outcome of human behavior based on the psychological adaptations that have evolved to assist humans in problem solving with the environment. Different fields, such as psychiatry and law, use evolutionary forensic psychology to understand the behavior of individuals that exhibit criminal behavior or step outside the bounds of law and what is considered 'normal' cultural behavior. Evolutionary forensic psychology also helps us to understand what adaptations have evolved for violent behavior and the potential to understand why these violent behaviors perpetuate today. The main topics examined in this paper are the history of psychopathy, adaptations for violence, and the victims of crime.

Keywords: evolutionary forensic psychology, psychopathy, violence, victims of crime

What is Evolutionary Forensic Psychology?

The field of evolutionary forensic psychology is often applied to many fields such as economics, law, psychiatry, and politics. Evolutionary forensic psychology focuses on social and natural sciences that look at psychological traits such as memory, adaptations (the functional products of natural selection or sexual selection). Most evolutionary psychologists believe that much of human behavior is the outcome of psychological adaptations that evolved to solve recurrent problems in human ancestral environments (2010). Evolutionary forensic psychology also uses an adaptationist approach to explore the cognitive foundations of behavior (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). Many evolutionary psychologists believe that collective traits or behaviors in all cultures are good competitors for evolutionary adaptations (Schacter, 2007). Tooby and Cosmides (2005) stated,

Evolutionary psychology is the long-forested scientific attempt to assemble out of the disjointed, fragmentary, and mutually contradictory human disciplines a single, logically integrated research framework for the psychological, social, and behavioral sciences—a framework that not only incorporates the evolutionary sciences on a full and equal basis, but that systematically works out all of the revisions in existing belief and research practice that such synthesis requires (p. 5).

Evolutionary adaptations include the ability to understand others' emotions, recognize kin from non-kin, identify and prefer healthier mates, and cooperate with others. Evolutionary psychologists have also reported successful tests of theoretical predictions related to topics such as infanticide, intelligence, marriage patterns, promiscuity, the perception of beauty, bride price, and parental investment.

Nikolaas Tinbergen's four categories of questions can help to refine the distinctions between several different, but complementary, types of explanations. Evolutionary psychology focuses primarily on the "why" questions, while traditional psychology focuses on the "how" questions (Gaulin & McBurney, 2003). The topics discussed in this paper will be the history of psychopathy, adaptations for violence, and the victims of crime.

History of Psychopathy

Psychopaths represent only a small percentage of the criminal offender population, but they tend to dominate the literature in forensic psychology. One of the main reasons for this is because measures of psychopathy are consistent and robust indicators of future criminal behavior in both forensic and non-forensic populations. Psychopathy usually refers to males who exhibit aggressive behavior beginning in early childhood, impulsivity, resistance to punishment, general lack of emotional attachment or concern for others, dishonesty and selfishness in social interactions, and high levels of promiscuous and uncommitted sexual behavior (Harris et al., 2001). The idea

of psychopathy originated about a hundred and fifty years ago, when it was observed that a small minority of people seemed to engage in antisocial, irresponsible, and extremely selfish behavior without displaying any outward signs of mental derangement (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). Cleckley (1941) used the term *psychopathy* and added clinical descriptions such as superficial charm and good intelligence, absence of nervousness, dishonesty, lack of remorse, incapacity for love, and shallow emotional responses.

There has been recent research to try to explain psychopathy. Recent research has shown that there is a link between psychopaths and language abnormalities. In a study conducted by Kiehl (2004), he looked at the ability of psychopaths and non-psychopaths to process conceptually abstract materials. The study showed that individuals deemed as psychopaths are less accurate at processing abstract words such as justice and morality. The study also showed that these individuals had more difficulty determining what is right and wrong than control subjects did. According to Piaget (1926), being able to think abstractly is important and necessary for reaching what he called formal operations. Formal operations are the ability to reason in terms of verbally stated hypotheses and no longer merely in terms of concrete objects and their manipulation (Piaget, 1926). Many evolutionary psychologists believe that antisocial behavior would not be present if suitable genetic, prenatal, family, socialization, and economic conditions were in place.

Recently, there has been a surge of computer simulations and experimental games that assess cooperation and attempt to understand the evolution of psychopathy. These models are important because they indicate the different types of individuals or strategies that are interacting in a social environment. One of the most commonly used games is The Prisoner's Dilemma, which has been used to model the evolution of cooperative behavior in the face of defection (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). In the Prisoner's Dilemma, two players are in a hypothetical situation where both players are imprisoned and accused of having colluded to commit a crime. If both players cooperate and do not implicate the other (mutual cooperation), they each receive the minimum sentence. It has been noted that there is a greater incentive to implicate the other player (defection), which in turn earns his own complete freedom, rather than a minimum sentence, and the other player receives the maximum sentence. If both players defect and implicate the other (mutual defection), both remain imprisoned with a long sentence. When this game is played only once, the best strategy for each player is to defect, however when the same two players play repeatedly, the optimum strategy would be mutual cooperation (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). Another game that was designed to optimize success in a round-robin tournament was the iterated Prisoner's Dilemma (IPD). The favored strategy for this game was *tit for tat*, where cooperation is the first move of the game; and the opponent's move is copied on all later moves. Cooperation showed that *tit for tat* became the most universal evolutionary stable strategy. It was also noted by Axelrod and Dion (1988) that if there is a likely chance of future interactions, the best strategy is always cooperation. However, psychopathy is equivalent to the strategy of continual defection in social interactions.

These games and simulations investigate how evolution could have given rise to a subpopulation of social cheaters. It is believed that it is likely that psychopathy evolved as a frequency-dependent life history strategy of defection, where psychopathic characteristics such as charm, dishonesty, callousness, aggression, etc. formed a collection of adaptive traits and behaviors that demoralized a social environment mostly distinguished by cooperation (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

The Role of Culture and Society

In Robert Hare's book *Without Conscience* (1999), he details how a psychopath could live in society and be camouflaged in our world. He calls this phenomenon a "blank generation". The blank generation is made up of individuals who are apathetic, emotionally starved, impulsive, and irresponsible. If this were an accurate depiction of society, it would be easy for psychopaths to blend in and to be undetected by others. This culture of lawlessness paints a startling picture.

Feelings and Emotions of Psychopaths

According to Robert Hare (1999), the words of psychopaths are hollow at best. Psychopaths have the ability to know the dictionary meaning of a word, but are unable to understand the emotional significance of words. One of the most profound sentences in Hare's book *Without Conscience: The Disturbing World of Psychopaths Among Us* is "He knows the words but not the music". That sentence highlights the fact that psychopaths merely say things without truly comprehending what they mean. "Language that is two-dimensional, lacking in emotional depth" (Hare, 1999). Psychopaths often say things that are inconsistent with normal behavior. An example of this can be seen in this interview with a psychopath. When asked, "Do you feel bad when you hurt other people?" the psychopath replied "uh-laugh-yeah sometimes. How did you feel the last time you squashed a bug?" (Hare, 1999). Equating the act of hurting someone to that of squashing a bug is a prime example of the inconsistent speech and thought processes of psychopaths. There has been recent research that shows that for healthy people who are non-psychopathic, neutral words express less information than do emotional words (Hare, 1999). For example, the word

phone has a dictionary meaning, however a word like rape has a dictionary and an emotional meaning coupled with unpleasant connotations. On the psychopathic individual, the emotional meanings of words are lost. The study conducted that yielded these findings used psychopathic participants and non-psychopathic participants. Participants were told to push a button as quickly as possible whenever a true word appeared i.e., (Tree is a word but rete is not). Most people respond more quickly to emotional words than they did to neutral words. However, psychopaths responded to emotional words as though they were neutral words (Hare, 1999). According to Hare, these results indicated that words do not have the same “emotional or affective coloring” for psychopaths as they do for other people.

Adaptations for Violence

Early behavior problems can be observed in many psychopaths. They begin to exhibit serious behavioral problems at an early age (Hare, 1999). Hare describes the psychopathic child as “one who comes from an otherwise well-adjusted family and starts to steal, take drugs, cut school, and have sexual experiences by age ten or twelve” (Hare, 1999). Cruelty to animals is another sign of serious emotional or behavioral problems in children. An early appearance of antisocial behavior is a good indicator of adult behavioral problems and criminality (Hare, 1999).

However, psychopaths are not the only individuals who kill other people. A theory proposed by Buss and Duntley, (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008) says that humans possess adaptations designed specifically for killing conspecifics. One of the most baffling questions is “how can humans kill other humans?” The answer to this question has escaped scientific reason. Adaptations for homicide are said to be the outcome of the process of natural selection. These adaptations were superior when they contributed better solutions to persistent ancestral problems (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). Many explanations for violent crimes such as homicide are attributed cultural norms. Many explanations placing influence on culture state that violence is the result of exposure to cultural influences that may promote violence and which are inculcated into the human psyche (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). Cultural theories go on to say that individuals who are exposed to cultural influences that promote violence should be more likely to kill others than those who are not exposed to those cultural influences.

Often, when there is news of a school shooting, or a bombing, or some other kind of act of violence, video games and type of music that the perpetrator listened to is usually blamed. In recent years, there has been a great deal of research on violence and video games. Research has shown that violent video games increase the risk for behaving violently because it blurs the line between fantasy and reality. There are also cultural theories that attribute the cultural variability of homicide rates to cultures of honor in the southern parts of the United States. Individuals who are in the honor culture in the United States tend to be more aggressive and they treat perceived threats with violence because they feel that their honor is being threatened. Honor cultures also valorize violence as a solution to interpersonal disputes. It should also be noted that violence is considered to be socially acceptable in male children but deterred in female children (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Sutherland proposed one of the first social theories of crime. He proposed that criminal behavior, including homicide, is just another kind of behavior that is learned from people with whom an individual interacts. Sutherland also argued that everyone has an equal potential to learn to be a criminal (Sutherland & Cressey, 1974). Bandura (1973) first proposed social learning theory as a general way to understand human behavior, however, social learning theory has been modified to try to explain some of the characteristics of homicide. Both of these theories have their roots in imitating and observing others. Some behaviors are rewarded, while others are punished; this process helps to shape that individual’s range of behavior.

According to Schafer, Caetano, and Clark (1998), intimate partner violence is a serious public health concern. Women are more likely to be the victims of intimate partner violence, and are also more likely to die as a result of intimate partner violence than males. Because of this, male to female partner violence poses a more serious public health concern than does female to male intimate partner violence. Jewkes (2002) attributes the growing trend of intimate partner violence to social norms. It is noted that the sons of women who were beaten by a spouse are more likely to beat their intimate partners, and perhaps they themselves were beaten when they were children. Daughters of women who are beaten are more likely to be beaten as an adult. When children experience violence in the home growing up, they learn that violence is normal in certain situations. This teaches some men to use violence, and it teaches some women to tolerate aggressive behavior. Jewkes (2002) states, “it [intimate partner violence] is much more frequent in societies where violence is usual in conflict situations and political struggles”. This is reminiscent of honor cultures. Violence appears to be the solution to the problem. This article states that there are two factors that contribute to intimate partner violence. The first contributing factor of intimate partner violence is “the unequal position of women” not only in relationships, but also in society. The second contributing factor to intimate partner violence is the normative use of violence in conflict (Jewkes, 2002).

Retaining partners and maintaining relationships has been a persistent problem for ancestral men and women. There are two basic types of jealousy (emotional and sexual), and when looking at the adaptive problems

that ancestral men and women faced, these differences in jealousy correspond to the adaptive problems that ancestral men and women faced. For ancestral women, the recurrent adaptive problem was the ability to secure the paternal investment needed to raise offspring. This exerted a selection pressure for women to be more sensitive to and also more distressed by cues associated with a partner's emotional infidelity (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). Ancestral males had the recurrent adaptive problem of paternal uncertainty, which exerted a selection pressure for ancestral men to be more sensitive to and more distressed by cues associated with a partner's sexual infidelity (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Men use intimate partner violence as a tactic to restrict their partner's sexual behavior. It is believed that men have developed skills dedicated to generating risk assessments of a partner's sexual infidelity. Time spent away from partner, fertility, possible mate poachers, and reproductive value are all part of the skills that males develop that are dedicated to generating risk assessments of a partner's sexual infidelity (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Victims of Crime

Shackelford and Duntley (2008) have defined a victim as someone who represents a more restricted class of individuals—people who have costs defined by legislators as criminal inflicted on them by others. Most of the time, when people become victims of crime, it is because of conflict between individuals for limited resources. There is conflict over status. Males who have attained a higher status in life have access to a larger amount of women than do males with a lower status. Higher status males are also able to marry younger and more desirable women. There is also conflict over material resources such as food, weapons, and tools (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). The harder the resource was to obtain, and the more valuable it was in terms of reproductive success for an individual, the greater the conflict was between individuals for access to the resource (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Victims can evolve adaptations to a competitor's cost inflicting strategies, but only when the strategies have been recurrent in conventional situations over an evolutionary time. Most victim adaptations work by rendering a competitor's cost inflicting behavior ineffective because it is too costly to perform. One victim adaptation is an adaptation for violence, in which the strategy is to inflict costs on the rivals and injure them physically (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008). This strategy would favor the cost-inflicting individual, increasing the possibility that the healthy individual will gain control of the resources. It is also more likely that the healthy individuals will be able to compete more effectively than the injured rivals, and also for the injured rivals to drop out of competitions with individuals who have injured them. Even homicide has become a victim adaptation against things such as rape, exploitation, and injury. Homicide is distinguished from nonlethal solutions by being a conflict of a permanent end between two individuals (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Adaptations for homicide and for defending oneself from being killed are said to be an antagonistic co-evolutionary arms race because the coevolved victim adaptations created selection pressures for the evolution of refined adaptations and new adaptations for cost infliction. Co-evolutionary arms races can be quite powerful. They exert selection pressures on more than one physiological and psychological system at the same time. This leads to rapid evolutionary changes and great complexity of adaptive design (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Conclusion

The articles and books discussed in this paper show just how relevant evolutionary forensic psychology can be. As stated before, evolutionary forensic psychology seeks to identify which human psychological traits are evolved adaptations. Evolutionary forensic psychology is important to help us to better understand our surroundings and ourselves. Many evolutionary psychologists use an adaptationist approach when thinking about physiological mechanisms, and they argue that human behavior is the output of psychological adaptations. As mentioned earlier, evolutionary forensic psychology has the added benefit of being applicable to many fields, which can give a broader understanding of how humans have evolved over time.

The field of evolutionary psychology has made the use of the social theories of Bandura, and even borrowed ideas from Piaget. Bandura's social theories are a large part of evolutionary psychology because humans are social creatures. Evolutionary psychology also shows the impact that culture has on an individual as well as the implications it has for "human nature and criminal behavior" (Shackelford & Duntley, 2008).

Both psychologists and psychiatrists are becoming more common in the courtroom testifying and assessing people. This is an important improvement, especially because not only are there more evolutionary forensic psychologists, but there are also more of them using an adaptationist approach. Using an adaptationist approach might help to solidify some of the information, and make it easier to understand. An adaptationist approach might also lead to better treatments for the convicted criminals if people are able to understand, even if it is just from an evolutionary standpoint what this person might have been thinking. Evolutionary forensic psychology has come a long way to merge psychology and law together in a coherent way that allows for a better understanding of psychology and the legal system.

References

- Axelrod, R., & Dion, D. (1988). The further evolution of cooperation. *Science*, 242, 1385-1390.
- Bandura, A. (1973). *Aggression: A social learning analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Cleckley, H. (1941). *The mask of sanity*. St. Louis: Mosby.
- Gaulin, Steven J. C. and Donald H. McBurney. Evolutionary psychology. Prentice Hall. 2003.
- Hare, R. (1999). *Without Conscience: The disturbing world of psychopaths among us*. The Guilford Press, New York, New York.
- Harris, G. T., Skilling, T. A., & Rice, M. E. (2001). The construct of psychopathy. *Crime and Justice: A Review of Research*, 28, 197-264.
- Jewkes, R., (2002). Intimate Partner Violence: Causes and Prevention. *The Lancet*, 359, 1423-1429
- Kiehl, K. A., Smith, A. M., Mendrek, A., Forster, B. B., Hare, R. D., & Liddle, P. F. (2004). Temporal lobe abnormalities in semantic processing by criminal psychopaths as revealed by functional magnetic resonance imaging. *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*, 130 297-312.
- Piaget, J., 1926. *The Language and Thought of the Child*. Harcourt, Brace, New York.
- Sutherland, E. H., & Cressey, D. (1974). *Principles of criminology* (7th ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott.
- Schacter, Daniel L, Daniel Wegner and Daniel Gilbert. 2007. *Psychology*. Worth Publishers.
- Schaffer, J., Caetano, R., & Clark, C. L. (1998). Rates of intimate partner violence in the united states. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88(11), 1702-1704.
- Shackelford, T. K., & Duntley, J. D., (2008). *Evolutionary Forensic Psychology: Darwinian Foundations of Crime and Law*. Oxford University Press, New York, New York.
- Tooby, J. & Cosmides, L. (2005). Conceptual foundations of evolutionary psychology. In D. M. Buss (Ed.), *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology* (pp. 5–67). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley