



Conformity

Psychology 320
Social Psychology

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Psyc 320 – Social Psychology

Conformity

- Sherif's study of the Autokinetic effect— watch the light study
- Asch's line study—25% stood their ground
- Public (compliance) vs. Private conformity

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Reference Groups

- Intellectual tasks vs. Value-judgments
- Salespersons→look like the customer
- Systematically process in-group messages
- Cohesive: Interpersonal vs. Task
 - Group Think (Janis, 1972)

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Psyc 320 – Social Psychology

Consensus: A good thing?

- Relying on consensus
 - Canned laughter
- Contamination
 - Out-group members are repeating the party line
 - 6 individuals > powerful than 2 grps of 3

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Contamination

- Harkins & Petty (1987)
- Watch tapes of 6 people giving their view on a court case.
- IV: 2 groups of 3 vs. 6 individuals
- DV: Participants more influenced by 6 individuals. The groups are 'repeating the party line' so have less power.

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Psyc 320 – Social Psychology

Consensus: A good thing?

- Relying on consensus
 - Canned laughter
- Contamination
 - Out-group members are repeating the party line
 - 6 individuals > powerful than 2 grps of 3
- Pluralistic Ignorance
 - Classroom examples
 - Overcoming this effect?

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Minority Influence

- Minority members should
 - Agree
 - Be consistent
 - Point out similar goals or characteristics
 - Single different characteristic
 - Agree first
 - Double minorities
 - Have indirect influence

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Minority vs. Majority

- Unanimity → Systematic Processing
- 2/3rd rule
- What decision rules would you prefer?
"Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everyone gets busy on the proof!"—John Kenneth Galbraith

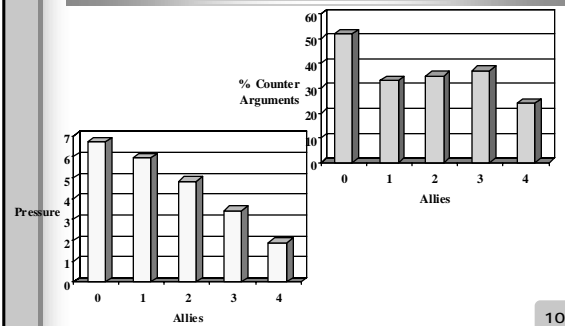
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Preparing to be a Minority

- Zdaniuk & Levine (1996)
- Participants told 0-4 people in a 5 person group would agree with them.
- Then asked how much pressure and asked to take a few minutes to prepare their thoughts before the discussion.

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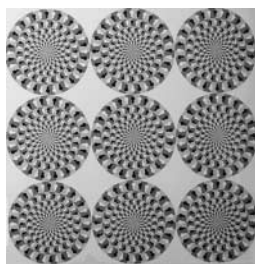
Zdaniuk & Levine (1996)



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When to conform?

- Ambiguous Situation
- Crisis
- Others are Experts
- 3 or more in the 'group'
- Important Group
- No allies in the group



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When to Conform

- Collectivist Culture
- Low Self-Esteem
- Flash Mobs



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