

Social Relations Lecture 21

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I. INTRODUCTION

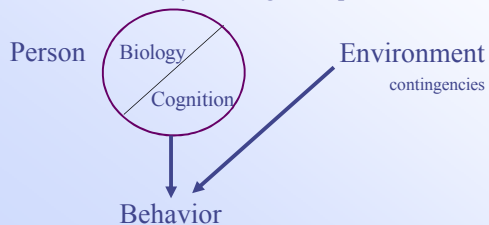
A. Questions

- Answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper:
 - What do you find attractive about members the opposite sex?
 - How do you communicate your interest in a member of the opposite sex?
- When you are finished, fold your paper and label it as male or female.
 - Bring the paper to the front and pile it in “male and female piles.
 - When done, please go to one of the corners and wait for me

I. INTRODUCTION

B. Expanding the Island

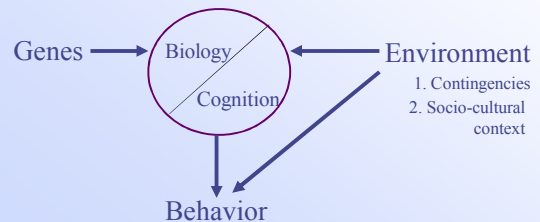
- So far, we have consider the person alone...
 - his or her learned behavior
 - his or her biology
 - His or her memory and cognitive processes.



I. INTRODUCTION

B. Expanding the Island

- But there are two other factors, outside of the individual, which influence his or her behavior
 - Social and Cultural Context
 - Genetic Heritage



I. INTRODUCTION

B. Expanding the Island

- What does that mean?
 - It was easy for me to get you to stand in a corner.
- What would you not do?
 - Intimidate other students?
 - Hurt other students?
- We are first going to examine the role Socio-Cultural context on behavior
 - The power of the socio-cultural context has been shown in 3 classic experiments in Social Psychology
 - Milgram's study of Obedience
 - Ashe's study of Conformity
 - Zimbarzo's study of Social Roles

II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

1. **Milgram's study.** Role of situational pressures on obedience to authority.
 - The study was described as a one examining the role of shock punishment on learning.
 - Then a "**learner**" (was was an experimental confederate) was introduced to a "**teacher**" (who was an experimental participant)
 - Learner appeared to be strapped into a chair in a private room and wired to get shocks.
 - This was a sham!
 - For each learner's mistake (which occurred on every trial), the teacher was to increase the shock from 0–450 volts in 50 volt increments.

II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

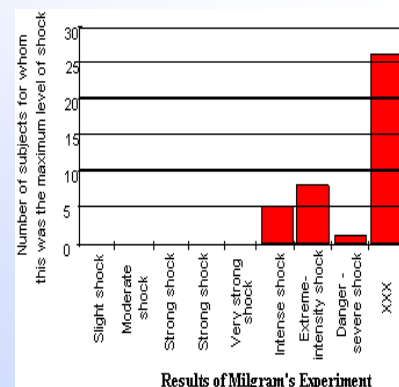
- If there was resistance from the "teacher" (which there was) the experimenter in white coat kept on saying, "Please continue. The experiment requires that you keep going"
 - How many refused to give 450 Volts?



II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

A total of 65% followed instructions to the highest ratings (450 volts) even though the learner was loudly complaining about a heart condition



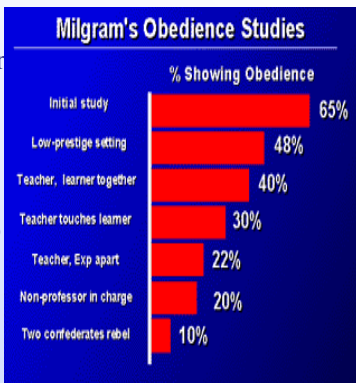
II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

Milgram ran the study in many other conditions.

When....

- low Prestige setting: 48%
- Learner & teacher in same room: 40%
- non-professor in charge: 21%
- two teachers (confederates) quit: 10%

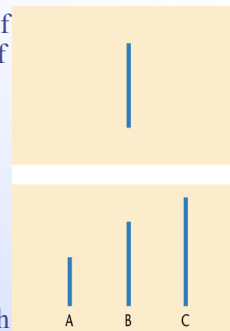


II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

2. Asch's study had groups of 6 students judged which of 3 lines (A, B, C) likes was more like a target one.

- On some trials 5 of the 6 students (confederates) purposely made mistakes.
 - They said A was most like the target.
- How many time would college students make such obvious errors ?



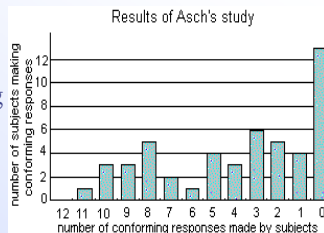
II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

Most (67%) conformed at least once by saying "A", when it was wrong

On average, they conformed on 32% of trials.

Group size matters: The larger the group, the more conformity (but only up to a point).



The chart shows that no one made twelve conforming responses and that thirteen subjects made no conforming responses at all. However, of fifty subjects, the average subject conformed to 32% of the trials. When Asch tested individual subjects alone, none made errors.

[source Dobson et al. (1981)]

II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

3. Zimbardo's prison study ([click here](#))

Students assigned as guards or prisoners in a simulated jail

Prisoners: Became distressed, helpless, and panicky.

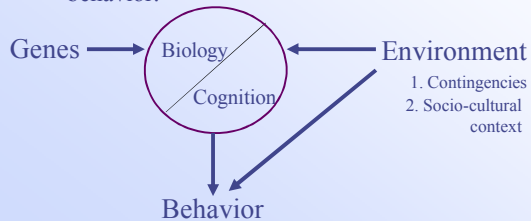
Guards: 1/3 nice and helpful, 1/3 "tough but fair" and 1/3 tyrannical



II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

- These studies are important for 2 reasons:
- 1. They point to the importance of studying the situational context of behavior.
 - Lack of mental state control and rationality of behavior.



II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

- 2. Human behavior is NOT to be understood solely on the basis of the individual. Rather behavior is regulated by the social **norms** of the context and of **roles** people play in that context.
 - Norms: Rules that regulate human life including social convention, explicit laws, and implicit cultural standards.
 - The norms of being in a classroom?
 - The norms of being in a church?

II. Social Relations

A. Social Influence

- Roles: A given social position that is governed by a set of norms for proper behavior.
- Why did people readily played the roles that they were assigned in Milgram and Zimbardo (e.g. “teacher” and “guard”)?
 - Allocating responsibility to authority.
 - Routine roles: Immoral behavior may become routine.
 - Wanting to be polite: Good manners dictate no questions!
 - Becoming entrapped: Escalating their commitment to a course of action to justify investment in it.