

Helping

Prosocial Behavior: Actions intended to benefit one or more people other than oneself (Batson, 1998).

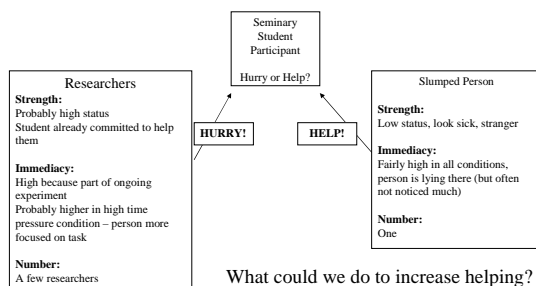
Social Psych Approaches:

- Situational Demands/Norms
 - Darley & Batson Seminarian Study
- Informational Influence
 - Latane and Darley Bystander Research
- Evolutionary Approach
 - Buss, Taylor
- How does sex/gender of victim and helpers fit into this?

Darley & Batson's Helping Study "From Jerusalem to Jericho"

- **Amount of hurry the seminary student was in predicted whether or not they helped a person in need.**
 - Darley & Batson say it's a conflict of situational demands:
 - The seminary student has two pressures on them:
 - The situational demand to help the researchers who will tape the speech
 - The situational demand to help the person who's slumped on the sidewalk

Conformity Pressures on the Student Social Impact Theory



Informational Influence Approach

- **Latane & Darley's Bystander Intervention Model:**
- Bystanders in an emergency seek informational influence from one another to determine social reality
 - *Is this an emergency?*
 - *Should I help?*

1. Bystander must notice the emergency.

- *Why don't we notice emergencies when we're in an urban area?*
- **"Overload"** makes us not notice emergencies.
 - In cities we try to "block out" noises and people and not notice them
- **"Don't Look"** rule:
 - We learn to keep our eyes to ourselves when we're among strangers.

Step 2: Bystander must decide the event is an emergency.

- When other people are around in an emergency we experience:
- **Pluralistic Ignorance: Other people's reactions affect our reactions.**
- **Could sex/gender of the victim influence this step?**

Step 3: Bystander must decide it's their responsibility to help.

- Are similar others (people in my group) helping?
- Diffusion of Responsibility: The **more** people who see an emergency happen, the **less each person feels responsible to help.**
- Sex/gender once again
- Is there an overall norm to help women more?

Social Norms Explanation of Helping (from Batson, 1998)

- **Reciprocity norm:** help others who have helped us, and don't injure those who have helped us.
- For example:
 - Children who have received candy from another child will share **with that child** more.
- Undergrads will do the same thing.

When Do We Want to Obey Cultural Norms?

- **Terror Management Group**
- Greenberg, Pysczynski, et al:
- "Contemplate your own death for five minutes."
- **Mortality salience:** when thoughts of one's own death are primed we feel terror at the thought of oblivion
- We reassure ourselves by affirming permanent cultural norms such as reciprocity
- Fear leads to obedience to cultural norms

Evolutionary Psychology Approach (From Buss, 1999)

- Helping has evolved in humans because genes associated with it survived more than other genes did.
- **Classical fitness:** an individual's own reproductive success. Characteristics that increase classical fitness will increase in the population.

Why Do We Sometimes Help Others?

- **The problem of altruism:** how could we evolve to help others, when that might decrease or own reproductive success?
- **Inclusive fitness:** reproductive success of an individual and those **genetically related** to the individual.

What about Helping Non-Relatives?

- **Reciprocal Altruism:** we've evolved to help those who **might help us in the future**, because that may help our genes reproduce.

Do Women Help More?

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Biobehavioral Responses to Stress in Females: Tend-and-Befriend, Not Fight-or-Flight

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Does Helping Others Make You Sexy?

- Sociobiology theory says that women seek dominant men who will be willing to be altruistic, because that will protect the women's children.
- Jensen-Cambell, Graziano, and West (1995)

Jensen-Cambell, Graziano, and West (1995) and Related Studies

- Male confederates were made up to look good or not good.
- They acted dominant or submissive with an interviewer.
- Then they either were helpful (volunteered) or didn't.
- Real women watched them and rated them on sexual attractiveness.
 - Overall research finding: being dominant **and** helpful made guys seem most attractive.
