

CHAPTER 10: HELPING OTHERS

1. HELPING BEHAVIOR

- A. We view helping as driven by a trait (altruism) that some people have and some people don't
- B. People are either helpful or not helpful
- C. What determines helping?
 - i. Personality? The kind of person you are?
 - ii. Situation? The social context or social role that you play?
 - iii. Both? – it depends
- D. The Good Samaritan Study by Darley & Batson (1973)
 - i. Conducted with students at Princeton Seminary
 - ii. Participants were told they needed to give sermons across campus, and on the way to the sermon, they encountered a person in need (confederate)
 - iii. Hypothesis
 - 1. *Thinking about religion and high principles will not influence helping*
 - 2. *People in a rush will be less likely to help*
 - iv. Method
 - 1. *IV: Topic of Speech*
 - a. *Student employment*
 - b. *Good Samaritan parable*
 - 2. *IV2: Time Pressure*
 - a. *Running ahead of schedule*
 - b. *On time*
 - c. *Running late*
 - 3. *DV: do participants stop to help actor slumped in doorway?*
 - v. Results
 - 1. *Fewer than half of participants help (40%)*
 - 2. *Topic of speech had no effect even though half of people were speaking*
 - 3. *Time pressure did have an effect*
 - a. *Of those who were ahead of schedule, 63% helped*
 - b. *Of those who were on time, 45% helped*
 - c. *Of those who were behind schedule, 10% helped*

- vi. Conclusions
 1. *Who helps and when they help is not simply a matter of personality, it is a matter of circumstance*
 2. *The situation can be powerful, but we shouldn't give up on personality*
 3. *To increase helping, we might want to know more about the situations that encourage/discourage it*

2. BUILDING A MODEL OF HELPING – THE BYSTANDER EFFECT

A. Kitty Genovese

- i. Attacked in front of her apartment
- ii. The attack went on for 45 minutes in the presence of 38 people watching through windows
- iii. People did yell out or call 911, but no one engaged in the situation to stop what was happening

B. **The Bystander Effect:** presence of others inhibits helping behavior

- i. Hypothesis: The more witnesses to an emergency, the less likely anyone is to help

C. Five Steps to Helping

- i. Notice what's going on
 1. *Obstacles to noticing what is going on*
 - a. *Self-concern: if you are focused on yourself*
 - b. *Distraction: focused away from environment*
 - i. **Stimulus Overload** by Milgram (1970)
 1. People who live in dense, noisy environments learn to block certain things out because they are so common (car alarms, people lying on sidewalks, sirens)
 2. This prevents them from noticing others in need of help
- ii. Interpret it as an emergency
 1. *Obstacles to interpreting something as an emergency*
 - a. *Ambiguity: focus on event*
 - i. Is this really an emergency?
 1. Is the person lying on the street drunk or sleeping?
 2. Was that scream for help or playful?
 3. Is that a couple fighting or are they strangers?
 - ii. Expectancies guide our interpretations
 1. Guy in rags → homeless, probably sleeping
 2. Guy in suit → strange, probably trouble

