

"group minds" and solomon asch's experiment essay sample



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Social influences form every person's patterns.

judgements. and beliefs. (Asch 306) In " Opinions and Social Pressure" .

Solomon Asch examines how persons tend to conform to a group or bulk. He does this by explicating the consequences of his experiment that he devised to detect to what extent conformance occurs. In her essay titled " Group Minds" .

Doris Lessing claims that as a society we have adequate cognition about conformance to make something about it. yet we choose non to. Although Doris Lessing and Solomon Asch both suggest that people desire independency yet yield to conformance. Asch's experiment adds specificity to Lessing's claims. Lessing speaks by and large about groups and the consequence they have on conformance.

whereas Asch's experiment examines different types of group scenarios in order to better understand the human mind ; the thought of societal conformance is further complicated by chosen and assigned groups. Lessing and Asch recognize that most people succumb to external force per unit areas to conform despite the claim that they are persons. Lessing claims that an person in the Western universe has the mentality of " I am a citizen of a free society. and that means I am an person. doing single choices" (Lessing 333) .

Lessing doesn't believe that is the instance. She believes that merely a little per centum of people can of all time truly call themselves lone persons ; instead. the bulk of people tend to tie in themselves with assorted groups.

After sing the consequences of his experiment.

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Asch believes that individuality exists, and that some people can lift above the force per unit areas exerted on them. When it comes to conformance, Lessing thinks that we live our lives in groups and many of us can non assist but conform to group sentiments. She claims that we possess the cognition about ourselves to make something about this inclination towards conformance.

but we do nil about it. Through his experiments, Asch discovered that conformance was so prevailing and that it has an huge consequence on society. He believes that society demands agreement, but in order for it to be productive, people must provide independent penetration.

In Asch's experiment, a group of seven to nine male college pupils from three different New England universities were assembled in a schoolroom. The experimenter tells the work forces that they will be comparing the length of lines. Two white cards are displayed ; on the first card there is one line and on the 2nd card there are three lines. The pupils are instructed to take the line on the 2nd card that is the same length as the line on the first card.

As the experiment opens, each topic chooses the same line: the right 1. The group is one time once more consentaneous in their determination on the 2nd unit of ammunition. Then on the 3rd test, a topic near the terminal deviates from the others. The heretical becomes perceptibly flustered and hesitating after a few more unit of ammunicions continue this manner.

What the dissenter does non cognize is that all the other members of the

group were told before the experiment to give wrong replies as a unit
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throughout the experiment. The dissident is left covering with an interior battle. whether to keep his stance and travel against the bulk or to conform. What Asch found was that about tierce of the clip the dissident went against their inherent aptitudes after being indirectly pressured to conform to the bulk. even when the majority's sentiment was perceptibly wrong. Asch subsequently developed different fluctuations on his experiment to farther examine societal conformance.

Harmonizing to Lessing. " It is the hardest thing in the universe to keep an single dissenter sentiment. as a member of a group" (Lessing 334) . In other words. when we belong to groups.

we have a hard clip being an person ; our thoughts become warped to suit the thoughts of the group. Asch provinces. " The premises are that people submit uncritically and painlessly to external use by suggestion or prestigiousness. and that any given thought or value can be ' sold' or ' unsold' without mention to its virtues.

" (Asch 307) . What Asch is stating is that many people disregard their values and virtuousnesss without halting to believe if they truly needed to be disregarded. These two quotation marks by Lessing and Asch tie together to exemplify how powerful a group can be and how significantly a group can impact an individual's mind. We give in to coerce from external forces such as authorization or our equals.

Harmonizing to Lessing there is nil incorrect with belonging to a group. the job arises when we do non grok the societal rules that control groups and

command us. It is evident that groups are an important portion of our society. Does it count how we came to be in a group? In Lessing's article.

she appears to chunk all groups together. whereas Asch conducts his experiments utilizing different variables in order to analyze the consequence of different group state of affairs. Lessing could hold better addressed the different types of groups that exist alternatively of mixing them all together. She spoke by and large of groups and force per unit areas to conform alternatively of traveling more in deepness. She says " The fact is that we all live our lives in groups—the household.

work groups. societal. spiritual. and political groups" (Lessing 333) . She mentions specific groups such as household and political groups.

but she could hold added more specificity to the subjects by analyzing each one and the effects they have the person. Asch examines different group state of affairs by putting up fluctuations on his experiment. For illustration. he added a spouse to the experiment that would side with the dissident. This individual was either non in on the prearranged waies. or else they were told to give correct replies throughout the experiment.

Asch stated. " The presence of a back uping spouse depleted the bulk of much of its power" (Asch 310) . The topic answered falsely merely 25 % of the clip alternatively of the old 36. 8 % .

Why was this the instance? It could be that the dissenting capable felt a bond or intimacy towards the spouse or that the spouse motivated the dissident sufficiency to travel with his inherent aptitudes alternatively of

letting the others to rock his sentiment. The "assigned group" state of affairs likely played a function in the dissidents' behaviour every bit good. There are two types of groups: chosen and assigned. Are people more disposed to conform when they choose the group? Most people feel that they have something invested in a chosen group. Lessing remarks that "When we are in a group we tend to believe as that group does: we may even hold joined the group to happen 'like-minded' people" (Lessing 334). Possibly once we chose a group to be portion of.

we want to belong so much that we don't recognize how much we sacrifice our individualism; we give in to the external forces because we want credence and we want to experience of import. The group in Asch's experiment exemplifies an assigned group. None of the topics got to take whom they wanted to be with and the topics did not cognize one another. How does this assigned group state of affairs affect conformance? Asch said.

"Out of the 123 put to the trial, a considerable per centum yielded to the bulk. Whereas in ordinary fortunes persons fitting the lines will do errors less than 1 per cent of the clip, under group force per unit area the minority subjects swing to credence of the deceptive majority's incorrect judgements in 36.

8 % of the time" (Asch 309). The topic who was not told the true nature of the experiment foremost felt incredulous that the other group members did not reply the same manner as he did. However, as clip went on, the indirect force per unit area on him construct up and he had to either travel with his inherent aptitude and say the right reply.

or side with the bulk even though they were incorrect. Why did 36.8% of the topics feel compelled to abandon their inherent aptitudes? Obviously, the overpowering bulk that opposed the dissidents and the assigned group environment had a consequence on many of the topics. Possibly the lone subjects felt abashed since everyone opposed their reply and they likely did not wish to do a scene.

Lessing provinces " People who have experienced a batch of groups, who possibly have observed their own behaviour, may hold that the hardest thing in the universe is to stand out against one's group" (Lessing 334) .

Presented with the behaviour of the dissident in Asch's experiment, she would likely reason that the topic could not adequately overcome the force of equal force per unit area from the bulk so he caved in and conformed.

How does conformance fluctuate when it comes to assigned groups versus chosen groups? An illustration of a chosen group would be the fold of a church.

It is something we as persons make a witting pick about ; we choose where to idolize and what to idolize one time we reach a certain age. Are we more likely to conform to people we know? Lessing claims. " we tend to believe as that group does" (Lessing 334) . Obviously people would not fall in a church if they were atheist ; by and large talking we associate with groups that portion our ideals.

A individual would likely be more disposed to conform in this type of environment because the people in the group mean more to them. They know the people and the people know them. It is not similar Asch's

experiment where they will likely ne'er see the people once more. When person chooses a group. they normally see the other members of the group on a regular basis. It is so likely executable to state that the rate of conformance is higher in a chosen group than with an assigned group because the bets are higher.

What are the possible motivations that Lessing and Asch had for composing their articles and how does that comparison to the content in their pieces? Both writers are turn toing the inclination for persons to conform. Lessing's article is compendious. yet it about has to be in order to carry through a general overview of the subject like it seems she is seeking to carry through. The chief premiss in " Group Minds" is societal conformance.

bur she besides addresses how in today's society we have the cognition to make something about conformance. but for some ground we choose non to. It is likely that Lessing wanted to bestir involvement in the subject and make an essay than can be read by many people. In his article " Opinions and Social Pressure" .

Asch was integrating his findings on societal conformance with the processs and consequences of his experiment. He had a distinguishable intent for authoring this piece ; he wanted to expose his findings and the decisions he came to after carry oning his experiment. He had a hypothesis and wanted to utilize research to seek and turn out the hypothesis as a theory. Asch spends a important sum of clip traveling in deepness and concocting different fluctuations of his experiment such as presenting a Confederate and drastically changing the lengths of the lines. The chief intent of Lessing's

article is to acquire the message out to people about societal conformance ; she wants something done about it so that people can be steadfast persons. She speaks of the cognition that is known about the human head and societal conformance today and provinces.

“ But suppose this sort of thing were taught in schools? ” (Lessing 335)

Would learning kids these rules of group behavior and individuality have a permanent consequence? If you ask most adolescents or grownups about societal conformance. most will cognize what conformance is and many will likely even acknowledge that they are involved in it themselves. It isn't that society is non educated on the subject ; society does non utilize the cognition it possesses to do a difference. Asch did a fluctuation in his experiment where the difference between the line lengths are altered so that the difference is so conspicuous that the right reply is obvious. Asch provinces.

“ We varied the disagreement between the standard line and the other lines consistently. with the hope of making a point where the mistake of the bulk would be so glowering that every topic would disown it and take independently” (Asch 311) . Despite the noticeable difference. many topics still sided with the bulk.

Can a society that has those types of consequences be reformed? Reforming an full Western society is impossible ; nevertheless. Lessing is likely on to something. With some direction in schools. today's young person may turn up to be more individualistic than the coevals before them. Plants Cited: Asch.

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