

Bystander intervention

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just standing by. When do people help and when do they not? Posted on March 13, 2011 by ezaiser| 1 Comment By Erica Zaiser Understanding when and why people intervene to help others, or when they don't, is at the heart of social psychology. All students of psychology study the famous case of Kitty Genovese, whose screams while being attacked failed to elicit help from the nearly 40 bystanders. Most research on bystander intervention has found that the size of the group greatly impacts the likelihood of intervention.

Too big of a group and everybody shiftsresponsibilityassuming that someone else will help but the more people the less likely that any individual will help. It seems hard to imagine that people would not help when someone is in trouble, wounded, or in danger, yet it happens all the time. Recently I myself stumbled upon a scene of bystander non-intervention which I have since struggled to understand. The other day while walking home I came upon a man running up and down the street with no shoes or coat holding a phone out shouting at the people on the street and stopping cars banging on the windows.

I took a second to survey the scene and it was clear this man was trying to get something from those around him. However nobody was answering him and none of the cars even rolled down their windows to listen. I heard his questions loud and clear, albeit in broken English, " How to call an ambulance? " Still nobody was saying anything. I shouted to him that he needed to call 999 and he came over profusely grateful for my help and I

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helped him make his emergency call and assisted him and his family until paramedics could arrive. His mother had fallen unconscious in their flat and he had run into the street desperate to know how to call emergency services in this country. I learned that he and all his family was from eastern Europe and they knew very little English. He also told me that he had been trying to get the number for quite some time but nobody had been willing to help. Having read work on bystander behaviour I shouldn't have been that surprised that nobody helped but the situation just didn't fit the common notion that with greater numbers people are less likely to help. Most of the famous incidents involving non-helping behaviour has been within large crowds.

There were maybe 7 or 10 people on the street when I arrived. Most were just standing and watching. I don't have a great answer for why people didn't help, maybe they couldn't understand his question... but it seemed quite clear to me. Maybe they feared that it was some type of scam.. but certainly it can't hurt to tell someone a phone number. Even more frustrating than not understanding the lack of help was the sneaking suspicion that had he been British, white, or at least a native English speaker, maybe someone would have helped. Research by Levine and colleagues suggests that there might be an element of truth to that.

In a study of non-intervention, their research suggests that bystanders are much more likely to help people when they feel that the person seeking assistance is part of their ingroup. This effect holds true even when controlling for the severity of the situation and the emotional arousal felt by

bystanders. In other words, no matter how bad the situation or how badly the bystanders felt, they were still less likely to help when the victim was an outgroup member. ----- This all makes sense from a social psychological perspective and lines up with other research.

People tend to behave better to people in their own group in general. But seeing it play out... was still a little depressing. 2-Masculinity inhibits helping in emergencies: Personality does predict the bystander effect. By Tice, Dianne M. ; Baumeister, Roy F. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol 49(2), Aug 1985, 420-428. Abstract Tested 4 competing hypotheses (masculinity as enhancer, femininity as enhancer, interactive, masculinity as inhibitor) regarding the potential effects of dispositional sex-role orientation on bystander intervention in emergencies. 0 undergraduates, classified on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, participated in a simulated group discussion via headphones. One member of the group apparently had a choking fit and called for help. Highly masculine Ss were less likely to take action to help the victim than were other Ss. Femininity and actual gender had no effect on likelihood of helping. Results are interpreted according to past research evidence that highly masculine Ss fear potential embarrassment and loss of poise, so they may be reluctant to intervene in emergencies. (27 ref) (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

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How to HELP What is ...? Substance Use and Sexual Assault Parents Faculty - Staff Community Commitment Education Opportunities F A Qs Police Services and Legal Issues Bystanders Can Help A bystander is someone in a crowd

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who sees a potentially dangerous situation and makes a choice to assist or not to assist. A bystander can protect the values of safety, trust, and honor that are central to our community. The Good Samaritan - Less common than you might think.

In 1968 researchers Darley & Latane conducted an experiment in which a student pretended to have a seizure and the experimenters recorded how often others stopped to help. When only one bystander was watching the scene, the student was helped 85% of the time. However, if there were five bystanders, the student was only helped 31% of the time. Does this make sense? Shouldn't having more people present increase the chances that someone will get help? Amazingly, this is not the case. We all take cues from those around us about how to act in different situations.

In emergency situations, many things prohibit bystanders from intervening:

- !If no one else is acting, it is hard to go against the crowd.
- !People may feel that they are risking embarrassment. (What if I'm wrong and they don't need help?)
- !They may think there is someone else in the group who is more qualified to help.
- !They may think that the situation does not call for help since no one else is doing anything.

With each person taking cues from people around them, a common result is that no action is taken. What can we do about this problem?

As members of the WSU community we all have a responsibility to help each other. Avoid being a bystander! Intervene regardless of what others are doing and don't be worried about being wrong; it is better to be wrong than to have done nothing at all. 1. I am a bystander. What can I do? Be on the

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look-out for potentially dangerous situations. – Learn how to recognize indications of potentially dangerous situations. Here are some examples of “red flag” behaviors related to sexual assault: !Inappropriate touching !Suggestive remarks !Testing boundaries !Disregarding set boundaries Inappropriate intimacy !Attempts to isolate someone !Pressuring someone to drink !Violent behaviors !Targeting someone who is visibly impaired 2. If I were in this situation, would I want someone to help me? !If a situation makes us uncomfortable, we may try to dismiss it as not being a problem. You may tell yourself that the other person will be fine, that he or she is not as intoxicated as you think, or that the person is able to defend him/herself. This is not a solution! The person may need your help more than you think! !When in doubt, TRUST YOUR GUT. Instincts are there for a reason.

When a situation makes us feel uncomfortable, it is a generally a good indicator that something is not right. !It is better to be wrong about the situation than do nothing. Many people feel reluctant to intervene in a situation because they are afraid of making a scene or feel as though a person would ask for help if it were needed. 3. You have the responsibility to intervene. You may be thinking: !No one else is helping; it must not be a problem !People who are sober don't think this is a problem, maybe I'm wrong? !Jim's really responsible and he's not intervening... why should I?

Many people do not intervene in a potentially dangerous situation because they are looking to others for cues on how to act or they believe someone else will intervene. But IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to act – as a Cougar, as a friend to all other students, and as a member of WSU’s community of trust

and safety. 4. You have the skills to act! ;Learn effective intervention techniques! ;Watch out for other members of the WSU community! ;Come up with a plan beforehand! ;Talk to your friends about how they would want you to intervene if they are in an uncomfortable situation. Choose the intervention strategy that is best for the situation. ;Take a breath and make your move! References Berkowitz, A. Understanding the role of bystander behavior. US Department of Education's 20th Annual National Meeting on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention in Higher Education, Arlington, VA Darley, J. M. , ; Latane, B. (1968). Bystander intervention in emergencies: Diffusion of responsibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 8, 377-383. Cialdini, R. B. (2001) *Influence: Science and Practice*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn ; Bacon -----

Counseling Services, PO Box 641065, Washington State University, Pullman WA 99164- 4-New York News ; Views Interactive Reporting from CUNY Graduate School of Journalism site Skip to content Home About What Would You Do? NYC Robbery Bystanders Fail to Help Posted on October 8, 2010 by Brendaliss Gonzalez Courtesy NYPD CompStat Unit You think you're the only one, and then you remember, you live in New York- you're never the only one. According to New York City Police Department reports, by September this year, 66, 691 people had been victims of robbery, including assault, burglary and grand larceny.

It's amazing how many people can tell you their story of being mugged in the city, even more surprising are the stories that occurred in broad daylight, with witnesses who seemed to have pulled a disappearing act during the

occurrence. Two weeks ago, a pair of robberies at ATM's in Columbus Circle and West 23rd occurred in broad daylight, shocking each of the victims who believed they were playing it safe by going out at early hours. The report fails to mention anyone around them stopping to help. A pregnant woman was also robbed and attacked in Gramercy Park when coming home from a doctor's appointment- any witnesses?

Who knows? And let's not forget the story in April when a homeless man lay dead for hours after being knifed to death in a heroic attempt to save a woman being robbed- witnesses and passerby's caught on camera walking past the dead body without even calling for help. The excuse? Most assumed another already called the police. You would think that with so many people having experienced being mugged, most would readily lend a hand or just dial 911 when seeing someone else be mugged. Yet most of the time, no one even flinches.

In a busy, dog-eat-dog city like New York, the attitude seems to be more of "each man for himself." ----- So, this poses a question that will require you to look deep down and really be honest. Would you stop to help someone being robbed or assaulted? Or would you leave them to fight their own fight? Besides, you don't want to have to relive that kind of experience, putting yourself in danger – that would just be stupid, right? 5-The Bystander Effect Carol Hensell Program Manager ADHS SVPEP Phoenix, AZ October 2009

If you work in the field of violence prevention, you are probably familiar with the story of Kitty Genovese. In New York, 1964 Kitty Genovese was murdered

on the street while 38 witnesses watched from their apartments and failed to intervene. Her story has become influential to the field of social psychology and has promoted the development of ideas around the psychology of helping or “bystander effect” (Latane ; Darley, 1970). The bystander effect is described as the idea that individuals are more likely to help when alone than when in the company of others (Latane ; Darley, 1970).

There is a large amount of literature examining helping behaviors and trying to understand under what conditions do people decide to help others and models of the bystander effect have developed over time. The literature includes studies that examine individual and situational factors that promote or hinder pro-social bystander intervention (Banyard, Moynihan, ; Plante, 2007). Factors that have been found to affect helping behavior are group size, which accounts for the diffusion of responsibility or the idea that someone else will intervene. Perceptions and reactions to situations are negatively affected by the presence of other people.

These perceptions can be either real or imagined. Other studies have found that if a group is cohesive and communication occurs, a consensus to help develops and they are more likely to intervene (Banyard, Moynihan, ; Plante, 2007). Living in a rural environment may increase the likelihood of someone intervening (Banyard, Moynihan, ; Plante, 2007). Interpersonal factors that affect if a person intervenes includes: mood, individual perceptions of the event, mood, nature of relationship to the person in need of help, and perceptions that will be able to actually help the person (Banyard, Moynihan, ; Plante, 2007).

There appears to be ambiguity around intervening in several situations, especially those that are violent. Norms about what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior in particular social contexts are found in most aspects of individual's daily lives and they also exist in the area of helping behaviors (Hart ; Miethe, 2008). Understanding these norms can facilitate a greater understanding of bystander behaviors and contribute to creation effective programs for increasing bystander awareness and behaviors in the area of sexual violence prevention.

Exploring the bystander effect is important because bystander actions and reactions may affect both the risks of violence and consequences of violence for a victim. A witness or bystander may deter a crime from occurring or their intervention may help a victim if a violent attack is in progress (Hart ; Miethe, 2008). Many people believe that violent crimes occur in secluded places out of the site of others. However, many crimes are committed in the presence of a social audience (Hart ; Miethe, 2008).

According to a National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) completed in the 1990's, bystanders were present in approximately 70% of assaults, 52% of robberies, and 29% of rapes and sexual assault (Planty, 2002 as cited in Hart ; Miethe, 2008). ----- When faced with a potentially dangerous situation, bystanders have choices. They can choose to do nothing, provide indirect support (calling police or others to help), or directly intervene. 6 ----- RemNot So Innocent Bystanders ----- By Sara on March 11, 2010 3: 38 PM | 1 Comment | 0 TrackBacks Should bystanders of crime be convicted?

There is almost always something that a bystander can do to help stop crime against another human. If the criminal is waving a weapon around, it is understandable that not many bystanders would step up to the plate.

However, there have been many cases lately that have shown how little bystanders do to help a person in need, when they are fully able to. Some of these bystanders actually JOIN the perpetrator.

The links I have posted here show video of a woman being beaten in a subway, with subway officers there. The officers say that it is not their job to step in, and they called for reinforcement. Whoever said that stepping in is not permitting was obviously not there, and did not see how important it is that they DO step in. The second video is a news report of a high school girl who was gang raped outside of her homecoming dance. People watched and jeered, and some who had just been walking by joined in to rape her. Some even recorded the event on their cell-phone cameras.

But no one helped these victims. Last semester I took Social Psychology and learned about the Kitty Genovese case. This woman was killed outside of her apartment complex as her neighbors watched and listened. They were given ample time to go out and help her or call for police after the killer had left.

No one did anything. This is known as the bystander effect, which is sometimes caused by diffusion of responsibility. Bystanders think, "Someone else will surely help, someone else has probably already done something, yea, I don't have to do anything." But often no one helps!

This cannot be used as an excuse. These people are almost as guilty as the perpetrator and should be convicted too. Tags: Bystander, bystander effect,

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diffusion of responsibility, Kitty Genovese, Social Psychology No
TrackBacks
ember, when people intervene for the good of others, it creates a
safer community. 7- Don't Just Stand There - Do Something A community
where people intervene for the good of others is a safer community. " The
Bystander Effect" Forty years ago, Kitty Genovese was attacked and
murdered outside her New York City apartment building. Thirty-eight people
heard her calls for help s they watched from behind their apartment
windows. The attack lasted more than half an hour. After it was over,
someone called the police, who arrived within two minutes. That 1964
incident became a textbook case. Why did so many witnesses fail to act?
Phoning the police would involve no risk, and likely would have saved Ms.
Genovese's life. Social psychologists Latane and Darley¹ suggested reasons
such as diffusion of responsibility or failure to recognize the true significance
of the incident. They concluded that the more people witness an event, the
less likely each individual is to intervene.

This became known as the Bystander Effect. When a violent incident or
emergency occurs, the Bystander Effect is not a mere academic concept. In
an unpublicized case last summer, seven young men robbed and knifed the
16-year old nephew of a Canada Safety Council staff member, who happened
to be walking through a downtown park in a major Canadian city. No one
helped the victim or called the police. If the attackers had been caught, they
could have faced criminal charges instead of likely going on to commit more
crimes. Someone in the crowd must have had a cell phone.

Why didn't anyone at least call the police? Numerous incidents like this happen in communities across Canada. Police estimate that only one out of every 10 swarmings is reported. The victims, often teenagers, are left scarred and traumatized for life. Such attacks lead many Canadians to fear their communities are unsafe. This fear only makes matters worse by creating abandoned, dangerous streets. It's not that Canadians don't act when they see an urgent situation. There are countless examples of successful intervention, including people who have risked their life to save a stranger.

Nonetheless, police and community safety leaders would like to see more bystander involvement. Simply by reporting an urgent situation, a witness can prevent it from becoming more serious. Everyone Can Help How can the power of bystanders be harnessed in the interest of public safety? Several factors can encourage people to help strangers in distress. When a victim makes it very clear help is needed, people are more likely to intervene. Don't expect bystanders to figure out you're in trouble. Make sure they know. For example, look directly at someone in the crowd and ask for help.

Perceived ability to help and perceived risk also determine whether or not a bystander will help. For example, the ubiquitous cell phone empowers users to call for help from almost anywhere, immediately and with little or no risk. Close to six million emergency calls are placed from mobile phones in Canada each year - about half of all calls to emergency numbers. Every day, thousands of Canadians use mobile phones to call for help when they see a crash, a crime in progress or a life-threatening medical emergency. Police

urge witnesses of crimes to be observant and to call 9-1-1 as quickly as possible.

Give a good description of the perpetrators, where they came from and where they go after the incident. In 1993, two-year-old James Bulger was murdered in the UK by two older children. Ironically, 38 witnesses saw the toddler being led away against his will by two older boys. UK researchers looked at the role of bystanders in the tragedy. Dr. Mark Levine² found that they did not intervene because they thought the three boys were brothers and considered "family" a private space. After examining other instances of bystander intervention and non-intervention, Dr.

Levine concluded that members of a group take responsibility for the safety of others they see as belonging to the same group — and that the sense of group membership can be broadened. All Canadians must do their part to ensure we continue to live in a safe and civilized society. When you see someone in trouble just think — if you were that person, what would you want passers-by to do? 9-1-1 Tips for Mobile Phone Users Calls to 9-1-1 are free of charge. Do not preprogram 9-1-1 into your phone's speed-dial function. Dial 9-1-1 only when the safety of people or property is at risk (e. . a fire, crime in progress or medical emergency). Provide your 10-digit phone number so the operator can call you back. Give your precise location or the location of the emergency. Describe the emergency clearly. Stay on the line until the operator tells you to hang up. Then, leave your phone turned on in case the operator calls back. 1 Latane, Bibb ; Darley, John M. (1968). Group

inhibition of bystander intervention in emergencies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 10(3), 215-221. 2Levine, Mark (2002). Walk On By?

Relational Justice Bulletin (Issue 16, Nov 2002) Safety Canada January 2004

Safety Canada January 2004 ----- Canada's

Silent Tragedy 8- AP PSYCHOLOGY NILAND Chapter 13 - Social Psychology

Page 1 of 5 When Will People Help in a Crisis? John M. Darley and Bibb

Latane Most of America lives in cities, and it is one of the major tragedies of these times that our cities are in deep trouble. In small towns throughout the country, people still leave their houses unlocked and the keys in their cars when they park.

No one living in a rural community would dream of stealing from someone else, because everyone knows everyone. Who wants to steal from people he knows? And if you stole a friend's car, where could you drive it in a small community that it wouldn't instantly be recognized? When everyone knows everyone, complex social systems are not needed to help alleviate those disasters that strike-the fire and police departments are staffed chiefly by volunteers (who never go on strike), and the welfare department consists of charitable neighbors rather than squads of social workers.

Cities are supposed to be collections of small towns, but in at least one important sense, they are not: in a rural community, everyone sees the (often rather crude) machinery of government and feels that it is available to him. In large cities, this machinery is mostly invisible, hidden away in inaccessible Kafkaesque corners. Involvement in local affairs is almost forced on the small-town citizen; the apartment dweller in New York withdraws into

his own little world not so much because he wants to as because he has no ready means of participating actively in the life of his city even if he wants to.

And, as John M. Darley and Bibb Latane point out, withdrawal from and lack of concern about one's fellow citizens can become a terrible habit. Kitty Genovese is set upon by a maniac as she returns home from work at 3 A. m. Thirty-eight of her neighbors in Kew Gardens come to their windows when she cries out in terror; none comes to her assistance even though her stalker takes over half an hour to murder her. No one even so much as calls the police. She dies. Andrew Mormille is stabbed in the stomach as he rides the A train home to Manhattan.

Eleven other riders watch the seventeen-year-old boy as he bleeds to death; none comes to his assistance even though his attackers have left the car. He dies. An eighteen-year-old switchboard operator, alone in her office in the Bronx, is raped and beaten. Escaping momentarily, she runs naked and bleeding to the street, screaming for help. A crowd of forty passerby gathers and watches as, in broad daylight, the rapist tries to drag her back upstairs; no one interferes. Finally two policemen happen by and arrest her assailant. Eleanor Bradley trips and breaks her leg while shopping on Fifth Avenue.

Dazed and in shock, she calls for help, but the hurrying stream of executives and shoppers simply parts and flows past. After forty minutes a taxi driver helps her to a doctor. The shocking thing about these cases is that so many people failed to respond. If only one or two had ignored the victim, we might be able to understand their inaction. But when thirty-eight people, or eleven

people, or hundreds of people fail to help, we become disturbed. Actually, this fact that shocks us so much is itself the clue to understanding these cases.

Although it seems obvious that the more people who watch a victim in distress, the more likely someone will help, what really happens is exactly the opposite. If each member of a group of bystanders is aware that other people are also present, he will be less likely to notice the emergency, less likely to decide that it is an emergency, and less likely to act even if he thinks there is an emergency. This is a surprising assertion-what we are saying is that the victim may actually be less likely to get help, the more people who watch his distress and are available to help.

We shall discuss in detail the process through which an individual bystander must go in order to intervene, and we shall present the results of some experiments designed to show the effects of the number of onlookers on the likelihood of intervention. Since we started research on bystander responses to emergencies, we have heard many explanations for the lack of intervention. " I would assign this to the effect of the megapolis in which we live, which makes closeness very difficult and leads to the alienation of the individual from the group," contributed a psychoanalyst. A disaster syndrome," explained a sociologist, " that shook the sense of safety and sureness of the individuals involved and caused psychological withdrawal from the event by ignoring it. " " Apathy," claimed others. " Indifference. " " The gratification of unconscious sadistic impulses. " " Lack of concern for our fellow men. " " The Cold Society. " All of these analyses of the person who

fails to help share one characteristic; they set the indifferent witness apart from the rest of us as a different kind of person.

Certainly not one of us who reads about these incidents in horror is apathetic, alienated, or depersonalized. Certainly not AP PSYCHOLOGY NILAND Chapter 13 - Social Psychology Page 2 of 5 one of us enjoys gratifying his sadistic impulses by watching others suffer. These terrifying cases in which people fail to help others certainly have no personal implications for us. That is, we might decide not to ride subways anymore, or that New York isn't even " a nice place to visit," or " there ought to be a law" against apathy, but we need not feel guilty, or reexamine ourselves.

Looking more closely at published descriptions of the behavior of witnesses to these incidents, the people involved begin to look a little less inhuman and a lot more like the rest of us. Although it is unquestionably true that the witnesses in the incidents above did nothing to save the victims, apathy, indifference, and unconcern are not entirely accurate descriptions of their reactions. The thirty-eight witnesses of Kitty Genovese's murder did not merely look at the scene once and then ignore it. They continued to stare out of their windows at what was going on.

Caught, fascinated, distressed, unwilling to act but unable to turn away, their behavior was neither helpful nor heroic; but it was not indifferent or apathetic. Actually, it was like crowd behavior in many other emergency situations. Car accidents, drownings, fires, and attempted suicides all attract substantial numbers of people who watch the drama in helpless fascination

without getting directly involved in the action. Are these people alienated and indifferent? Are the rest of us? Obviously not. Why, then, don't we act?

The bystander to an emergency has to make a series of decisions about what is happening and what he will do about it. The consequences of these decisions will determine his actions. There are three things he must do if he is to intervene: notice that something is happening, interpret that event as an emergency, and decide that he has personal responsibility for intervention. If he fails to notice the event, if he decides that it is not an emergency, or if he concludes that he is not personally responsible for acting, he will leave the victim unhelped. This state of affairs is shown graphically as a " decision tree. Only one path through this decision tree leads to intervention; all others lead to a failure to help. As we shall show, at each fork of the path in the decision tree, the presence of other bystanders may lead a person down the branch of not helping.

Noticing: The First Step

Suppose that an emergency is actually taking place; a middle-aged man has a heart attack. He stops short, clutches his chest, and staggers to the nearest building wall, where he slowly slumps to the sidewalk in a sitting position. What is the likelihood that a passerby will come to his assistance?

First, the bystander has to notice that something is happening. The external event has to break into his thinking and intrude itself on his conscious mind. He must tear himself away from his private thoughts and pay attention to this unusual event. But Americans consider it bad manners to look too closely at other people in public. We are taught to respect the privacy of others, and when among strangers, we do this by closing our ears and

avoiding staring at others-we are embarrassed if caught doing otherwise. In a crowd, then, each person is less likely to notice the first sign of a potential emergency than when alone.

Experimental evidence corroborates this everyday observation. Darley and Latane asked college students to an interview about their reactions to urban living. As the students waited to see the interviewer, either by themselves or with two other students, they filled out a preliminary questionnaire. Solitary students often glanced idly about the room while filling out their questionnaires; those in groups, to avoid seeming rudely inquisitive, kept their eyes on their own papers. As part of the study, we staged an emergency: smoke was released into the waiting room through a vent.

Two thirds of the subjects who were alone when the smoke appeared noticed it immediately, but only a quarter of the subjects waiting in groups saw it as quickly. Even after the room had completely filled with smoke one subject from a group of three finally looked up and exclaimed, " God! I must be smoking too much" Although eventually all the subjects did become aware of the smoke, this study indicates that the more people present, the slower an individual may be to perceive that an emergency does exist and the more likely he is not to see it at all. Once an event is noticed, an onlooker must decide whether or not it is truly an emergency.

Emergencies are not always clearly labeled as such; smoke pouring from a building or into a waiting room may be caused by a fire, or it may merely indicate a leak in a steam pipe. Screams -in the street may signal an assault or a family quarrel. A man lying in a doorway may be having a coronary,

suffering from diabetic coma, or he may simply be sleeping off a drunken night. And in any unusual situation, Candid Camera may be watching. A person trying to decide whether or not a given situation is an emergency often refers to the reactions of those around him; he looks at them to see how he should react himself.

If everyone else is calm and indifferent, he will tend to remain calm and indifferent; if everyone else is reacting strongly, he will become aroused. This tendency is not merely slavish conformity; ordinarily we derive much valuable information about new situations from how others around us behave. It's a rare traveler who, in picking a roadside restaurant, chooses to stop at one with no cars in the parking lot. AP PSYCHOLOGY NILAND Chapter 13 - Social Psychology Page 3 of 5 But occasionally the reactions of others provide false information.

The studied nonchalance of patients in a dentist's waiting room is a poor indication of the pain awaiting them. In general, it is considered embarrassing to look overly concerned, to seem flustered, to "lose your cool" in public. When we are not alone, most of us try to seem less anxious than we really are. In a potentially dangerous situation, then, everyone present will appear more unconcerned than he is in fact. Looking at the apparent impassivity and lack of reaction of the others, each person is led to believe that nothing really is wrong.

Meanwhile the danger may be mounting, to the point where a single person, uninfluenced by the seeming calm of others, would react. A crowd can thus force inaction on its members by implying, through its passivity and

apparent indifference, that an event is not an emergency. Any individual in such a crowd is uncomfortably aware that he'll look like a fool if he behaves as though it were-and in these circumstances, until someone acts, no one acts. In the smoke-filled-room study, the smoke trickling from the wall constituted an ambiguous but potentially dangerous situation.

How did the presence of other people affect a person's response to the situation? Typically, those who were in the waiting room by themselves noticed the smoke at once, gave a slight startle reaction, hesitated, got up and went over to investigate the smoke, hesitated again, and then left the room to find somebody to tell about the smoke. No one showed any signs of panic, but over three-quarters of these people were concerned enough to report the smoke. Others went through an identical experience but in groups of three strangers. Their behavior was radically different.

Typically, once someone noticed the smoke, he would look at the other people, see them doing nothing, shrug his shoulders, and then go back to his questionnaire, casting covert glances first at the smoke and then at the others. From these three-person groups, only three out of twenty-four people reported the smoke. The inhibiting effect of the group was so strong that the other twenty-one were willing to sit in a room filled with smoke rather than make themselves conspicuous by reacting with alarm and concern-this despite the fact that after three or four minutes the atmosphere in the waiting room grew most unpleasant. Even though they coughed, rubbed their eyes, tried to wave the smoke away, and opened the window, they apparently were unable to bring themselves to leave. These dramatic differences

between the behavior of people alone and those in a group indicate that the group imposed a definition of the situation upon its members that inhibited action. "A leak in the air conditioning," said one person when we asked him what he thought caused the smoke. "Must be chemistry labs in the building." "Steam pipes." "Truth gas to make us give true answers on the questionnaire," reported the more imaginative. There were many explanations for the smoke, but they all had one thing in common: they did not mention the word fire. In defining the situation as a non-emergency, people explained to themselves why the other observers did not leave the room; they also removed any reason for action themselves. The other members of the group acted as non-responsive models for each person-and as an audience for any "inappropriate" action he might consider. In such a situation it is all too easy to do nothing.

The results of this study clearly and strongly support the predictions. But are they general? Would the same effect show up with other emergencies, or is it limited to situations like the smoke study involving danger to the self as well as to others-or to situations in which there's no clearly defined "victim"? It may be that our college-age male subjects played "chicken" with one another to see who would lose face by first fleeing the room. It may be that groups were less likely to respond because no particular person was in danger.

To see how generalize these results were, Latane and Judith Rodin set up a second experiment, in which the emergency would cause no danger-for the bystander, and in which a specific person was in trouble. Subjects were paid

\$50 to participate in a survey of game and puzzle preferences conducted at Columbia by the Consumer Testing Bureau (CTB). An attractive young woman, the market-research representative, met them at the door and took them to the testing room. On the way, they passed the CTB office and through its open door they could see filing cabinets and a desk and bookcases piled high with papers. They entered the adjacent testing room, which contained a table and chairs and a variety of games, where they were given a preliminary background information and game preference questionnaire to fill out. The representative told subjects that she would be working next door in her office for about ten minutes while they completed the questionnaires, and left by opening the collapsible curtain that divided the two rooms. She made sure the subjects knew that the Curtain was unlocked, easily opened, and a means of entry to her office.

The representative stayed in her office, shuffling papers, opening drawers, and making enough noise to remind the subjects of her presence. Four minutes after leaving the testing area, she turned on a high-fidelity stereophonic tape recorder. AP PSYCHOLOGY NILAND Chapter 13 – Social Psychology Page 4 of 5 If the subject listened carefully, he heard the representative climb up on a chair to reach for a stack of papers on the bookcase. Even if he were not listening carefully, he heard a loud crash and a scream as the chair collapsed and she fell to the floor. " Oh, my God, my foot . . . I . . . I . . . can't move it. Oh . . . my ankle," the representative moaned. " I . . . can't get this . . . thing . . . off me. " She cried and moaned for about a minute longer, but the cries gradually got more subdued and controlled. Finally she muttered something about getting outside, knocked

over the chair as she pulled herself up, and thumped to the door, closing it behind her as she left. This drama lasted about two minutes. Some people were alone in the waiting room when the "accident" occurred. Some 70 percent of them offered to help the victim before she left the room.

Many came through the curtain to offer their assistance, others simply called out to offer their help. Others faced the emergency in pairs. Only 20 percent of this group eight out of forty offered to help the victim. The other thirty-two remained unresponsive to her cries of distress. Again, the presence of other bystanders inhibited action. And again, the non-interveners seemed to have decided the event was not an emergency. They were unsure what had happened, but whatever it was, it was not too serious. "A mild sprain," some said. "I didn't want to embarrass her." In a "real" emergency, they assured us, they would be among the first to help the victim. Perhaps they would be, but in this situation they did not help, because for them the event was not defined as an emergency. Again, solitary people exposed to a potential emergency reacted more frequently than those exposed in groups. We found that the action-inhibiting effects of other bystanders works in two different situations, one of which involves risking danger to oneself and the other of which involves helping an injured woman.

The result seems sufficiently general so that we may assume it operates to inhibit helping in real-life emergencies. Diffused Responsibility Even if a person has noticed an event and defined it as an emergency, the fact that he knows that other bystanders also witnessed it may still make him less likely to intervene. Others may inhibit intervention because they make a person

feel that his responsibility is diffused and diluted. Each soldier in a firing squad feels less personally responsible for killing a man than he would if he alone pulled the trigger.

Likewise, any person in a crowd of onlookers may feel less responsibility for saving a life than if he alone witnesses the emergency. If your car breaks down on a busy highway, hundreds of drivers whiz by without anyone's stopping to help; if you are stuck on a nearly deserted country road, whoever passes you first is apt to stop. The personal responsibility that a passerby feels makes the difference. A driver on a lonely road knows that if he doesn't stop to help, the person will not get help; the same individual on the crowded highway feels he personally is no more responsible than any of a hundred other drivers.

So even though an event clearly is an emergency, any person in a group who sees an emergency may feel less responsible, simply because any other bystander is equally responsible for helping. This diffusion of responsibility might have occurred in the famous Kitty Genovese case, in which the observers were walled off from each other in separate apartments. From the silhouettes against windows, all that could be told was that others were also watching. . To test this line of thought, Darley and Latane simulated an emergency in a setting designed to resemble Kitty Genovese's murder. People overheard a victim calling for help.

Some knew they were the only one to hear the victim's cries, the rest believed other people were aware of the victim's distress. As with the Genovese witnesses, subjects could not see each other or know what others

were doing. The kind of direct group inhibition found in the smoke and fallen-woman studies could not operate. For the simulation, we recruited male and female students at New York University to participate in a group discussion. Each student was put in an individual room equipped with a set of headphones and a microphone and told to listen for instructions over the headphones.

The instructions informed the participant that the discussion was to consider personal problems of the normal college student in a high-pressure urban university. It was explained that, because participants might feel embarrassed about discussing personal problems publicly, several precautions had been taken to, ensure their anonymity: they would not meet the other people face to face, and the experimenter would not listen to the initial discussion but would only ask for their reactions later.

Each person was to talk in turn. The first to talk reported that he found it difficult to adjust to New York and his studies. Then, very hesitantly and with obvious embarrassment, he mentioned that he was prone to nervous seizures, similar to but not really the same as epilepsy. These occurred particularly when he was under the stresses of studying and being graded. Other people then discussed their own problems in turn. The number of other people in the discussion varied.

But whatever the perceived size of the group two, three, or six people-only the subject was actually present; the others, as well as the instructions and the speeches of the victim-to-be, were present only on a prerecorded tape. When it again was the first person's turn to talk, after a few comments he

launched into the following AP PSYCHOLOGY NILAND Chapter 13 – Social Psychology Page 5 of 5 performance, getting increasingly louder with increasing speech difficulties: I can see a lot of er of er how other people's problems are similar to mine ecause er er I mean er it's er I mean some of the er same er kinds of things that I have and an er I'm sure that every everybody has and er er I mean er they're not er e-easy to handle sometimes and er I er er be upsetting like er er and er I er um I think I I need er if if could er er somebody er er er er er give me give me a little er give me a little help here because er I er I'm er h-h-having a a a a a real problem er right now and I er if somebody could help me out it would it would er er s-s-sure be sure be good be . . because er there er er a cause I er uh I've got a a one of the er seiz-er er things coming on and and and I c-could really er use er some h-help s-so if somebody would er give me a little h-help uh er-er-er-er-er c-could somebody er er help er uh uh uh [choking sounds] . . . I'm gonna die er er I'm . . . gonna . . . die er help er er seizure er er . . . [chokes, then quiet]. While this was going on, the experimenter waited outside the student's door to see how soon he would emerge to cope with the emergency.

Rather to our surprise, some people sat through the entire fit without helping; a disproportionately large percentage of these non-responders were from the largest-size group. Some 85 percent of the people who believed themselves to be alone with the victim came out of their rooms to help, while 62 percent of the people who believed there was one other bystander did so. Of those who believed there were four other bystanders, only 31 percent reported the fit before the tape ended.

The responsibility-diluting effect of other people was so strong that single individuals were more than twice as likely to report the emergency as those who thought other people also knew about it. The Moral Dilemma Felt by Those Who Do Not Respond People who failed to report the emergency showed few signs of apathy and indifference thought to characterize " unresponsive bystanders. " When the experimenter entered the room to end the situation, the subject often asked if the victim was " all right. " Many of these people showed physical signs of nervousness; they often had trembling hands and sweating palms.

If anything, they seemed more emotionally aroused than did those who reported the emergency. Their emotional arousal was in sharp contrast to the behavior of the non-responding subjects in the smoke and fallen-woman studies. Those subjects were calm and unconcerned when their experiments were over. Having interpreted the events as non-emergencies, there was no reason for them to be otherwise. It was only the subjects who did not respond in the face of the clear emergency represented by the fit who felt the moral dilemma. Why, then, didn't they respond? It is our impression that non-intervening subjects had not decided not to respond.

Rather, they were still in a state of indecision and conflict concerning whether to respond or not. The emotional behavior of these non-responding subjects was a sign of their continuing conflict; a conflict that other people resolved by responding. The distinction seems an academic one for the victim, since he gets no help in either case, but it is an extremely important one for understanding why bystanders fail to help. The evidence is clear,

then, that the presence of other bystanders and the various ways these other bystanders affect our decision processes make a difference in how likely we are to give help in an emergency.

The presence of strangers may keep us from noticing an emergency at all; group behavior may lead us to define the situation as one that does not require action; and when other people are there to share the burden of responsibility, we may feel less obligated to do something when action is required. Therefore, it will often be the case that the more people who witness his distress, the less likely it is that the victim of an emergency will get help. Thus, the stereotype of the unconcerned, depersonalized homo urbanis, blandly watching the misfortunes of others, proves inaccurate.

Instead, we find a bystander to an emergency is an anguished individual in genuine doubt, concerned to do the right thing but compelled to make complex decisions under pressure of stress and fear. His reactions are shaped by the actions of others and all too frequently by their inaction. And we are that bystander. Caught up by the apparent indifference of others, we may pass by an emergency without helping or even realizing that help is needed. Aware of the influence of those around us, however, we can resist it. We can choose to see distress and step forward to relieve it.