Groups
&
group decision making
Let's try a group decision

Read the following and write down your answer
You have 30 sec!
A woman buys a $78 necklace at a jewelry store. She gives the jeweler a check for $100. Because he does not have the $22 change on hand, he goes to next merchant and exchanges the check for $100 in cash. He gives the woman her change and her necklace. She leaves and never returns. The check bounces (for which the bank charges $15), and he must make it good to the other merchant. He originally paid $39 for the necklace. What is his net loss?
30 sec later ...

If you think the answer is ABOVE 100 go to the front RIGHT corner of the room

If you think the answer is BELOW 100 go to the front LEFT corner of the room

Talk to each other
Next

- If you finished go to your seat or go talk to the people in the other group on the way to your seat
(39 + 22 + 15 + 100 − 78) = 98

How many people started with the right answer?

How many people ended with the right answer?

What was the process?
Groups

- What are the advantages of groups?
- Are groups always going to be good mechanisms?
- What could be some of the disadvantages?
Negatives of groups

- Mob behavior & deindividuation
- Pluralistic ignorance
- Conformity
- Compliance
- Obedience
Mob behavior & Deindividuation
Mob behavior

- We see it after sports games
- Riots
- Others?
Zimbardo, (1969):

**Antecedent conditions:**
1. Anonymity
2. Diffusion of responsibility
3. Attention directed away from self

**Internal States: (Deindividuation)**
1. No Evaluation Apprehension
2. Weakened social controls

**Behavioral Consequences:**
Increased conformity to group norms
Impulsive, irrational, destructive, or antisocial behavior
Gergen et al., (1973): Deviance in the dark

- Students (age 17-22) in mixed sex groups of 6 in a dark room
- Anonymous entry and exit, asked not to identify themselves
- What happened?:
  - First, explored space and “chatted.”
  - Soon discussion turned to “extremely important” matters.
  - After 40 minutes, started to engage in physical “interaction.”
  - 90% indicated touching each other on purpose.
  - Only 20% attempted to keep others from touching them.
  - 50% hugged.
  - 80% reported being sexually aroused.
Experimental: Zimbardo (1969)

Task: Deliver electric shocks to a girl in a learning study.

Anonymity manipulated:
— Half were individuated.
— Half were anonymous.
Zimbardo’s prison study

- Zimbardo got Stanford students to act as prisoners and guard for a few days.
- He did not expect the extent to which they will take their position seriously, identify with it and act against the other group.
- There was abuse of the prisoners...
http://www.prisonexperiment.org
http://www.zimbardo.com
http://www.stanleymilgram.com/milgram.html
Mob & deindividuation

- There are conditions where groups can cause very undesirable behaviors.
- No leader, no personal responsibility, no sensitivity to previous social norms and following the emerging norms of behavior.