

SOCIAL INFLUENCE



Social Facilitation

Early example of social facilitation:

Triplett (1898) - cyclists

Cycled faster when racing together or being paced, than when they were alone cycling against the clock



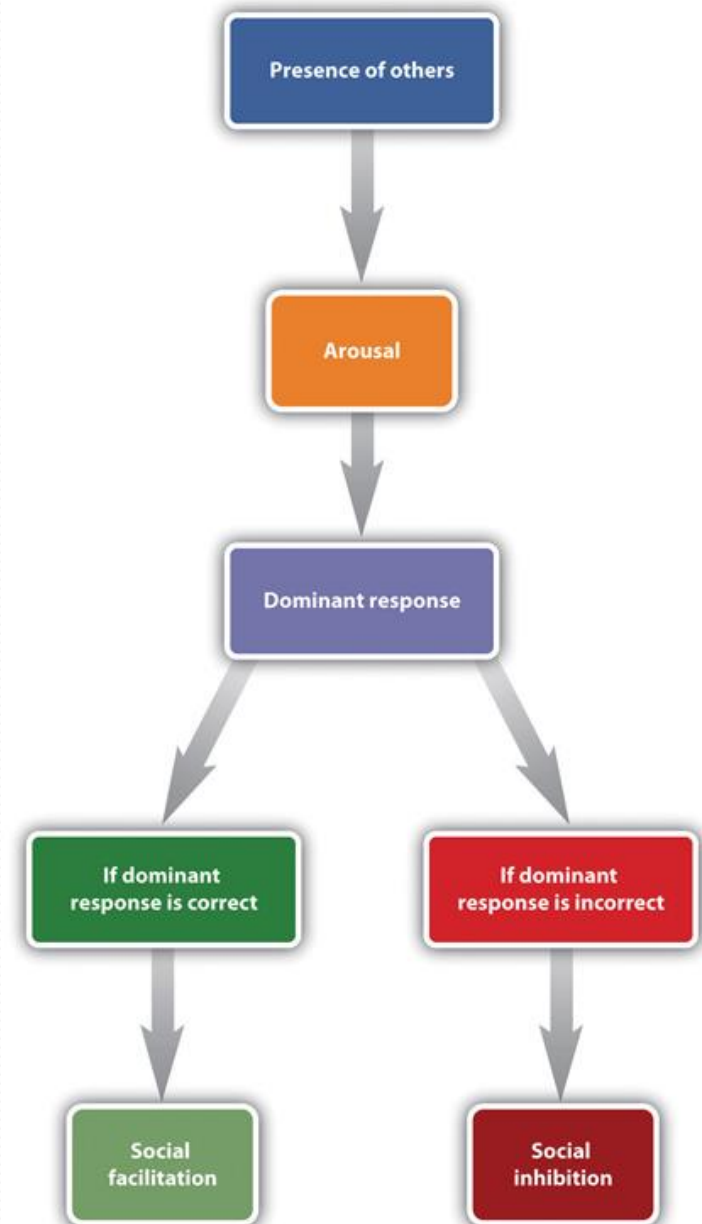
- Allport – 1920s



- 93% of participants could make more word associations in the presence of two other people than when alone
- Could produce more and better arguments against a passage of text they had read when with others
- Mere presence of others improves performance
- **But** - sometimes presence of others facilitates performance - sometimes it undermines it (*Pessin, 1933*)

Drive Theory (Zajonc, 1966)

- Increments in arousal increase the occurrence of **dominant responses**
- The dominant response can be either **correct** or **incorrect** for that particular task
- Whether correct or incorrect - people more likely to do it under pressure of being observed
- Also: *Matlin and Zajonc (1968); Geen and Gange (1977); Geen (1989)*



Evaluation Apprehension

- *Cottrell et al (1968); Bond (1982):*
 - Social facilitation only occurs when people believe their performances are being watched and judged by others
 - Chance of being watched and evaluated increases arousal and improves performance the most



Distraction-Conflict Theory

- *Baron (1986); Sanders (1983); Sanders, Baron and Moore, (1978)*
- Presence of others increases arousal - stems from conflict between two tendencies:
 - Pay attention to the task being performed
 - Direct attention to and audience or co-actors
 - Impair performance of difficult tasks
 - Improve the performance of easy tasks
 - Little reason to pay attention to others – no social facilitation
 - Reason to pay attention – social facilitation occurs

(Sanders, 1983)

Social Norms

Cialdini, Reno and Kallgren (1990):

Manipulated the descriptive norm for littering behaviour by controlling the amount of litter in various settings

- Clean - anti-littering norm
- Littered - pro-littering norm
- Leaflet that could be discarded
e.g. 'Drive carefully' leaflet under car windscreens

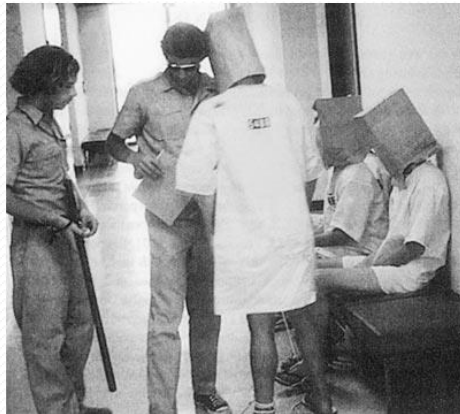
Results - people more willing to drop litter in a littered environment than in a clean one

Responding to social norms



Zimbardo (1973): Stanford Prison Experiment

- Dramatic study of impact of norms on behaviour
 - Social representations of roles
 - Deindividuation (not seen as individual human beings)
 - clothing (gowns, caps)
 - numbers instead of names
 - Strongly demarcated group memberships
 - New group norms



Informational social influence

The need to know what is right

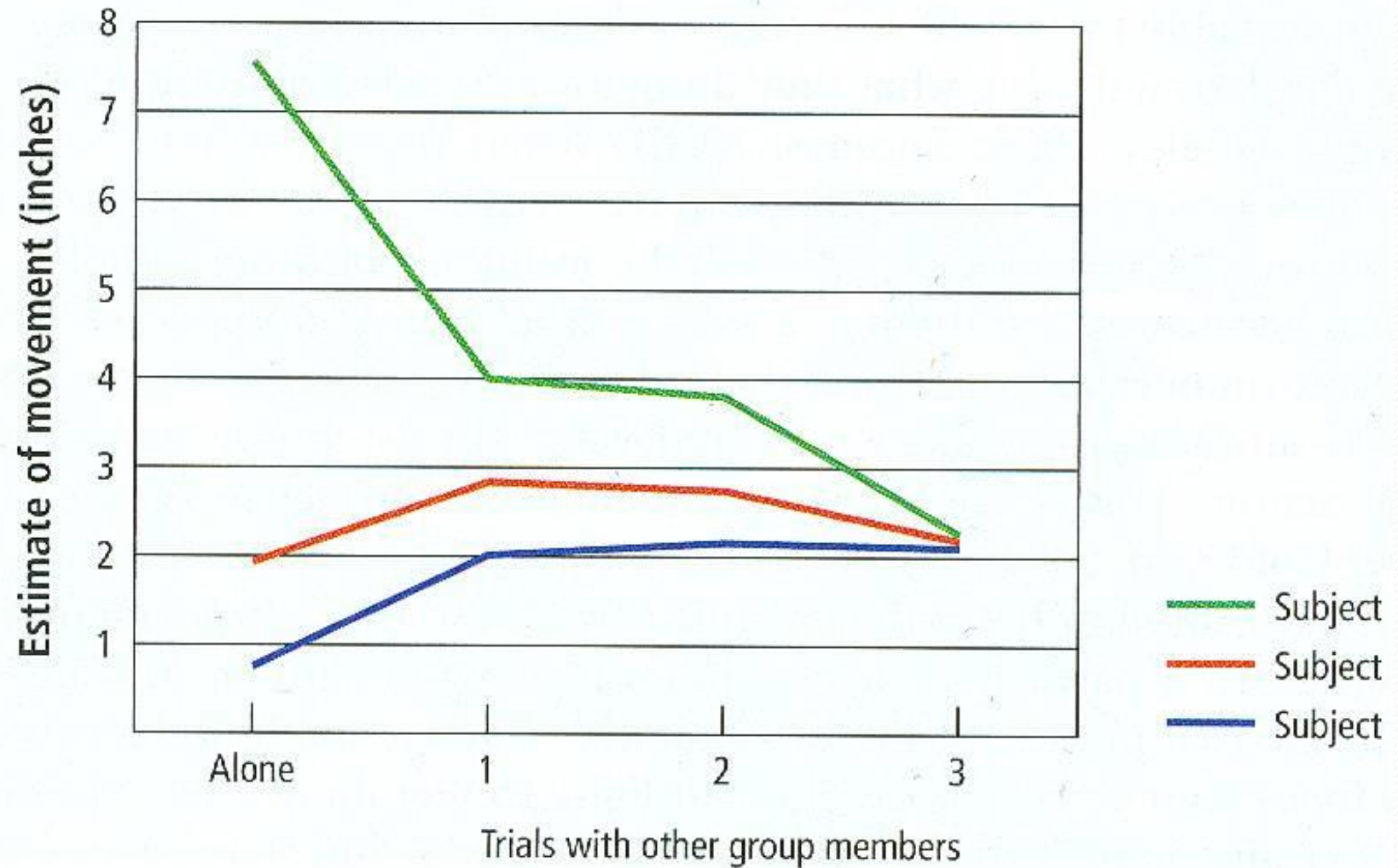
The need for accuracy

- *Cialdini (2000); Cialdini and Goldstein (2004); Deutsch and Gerard (1955)*

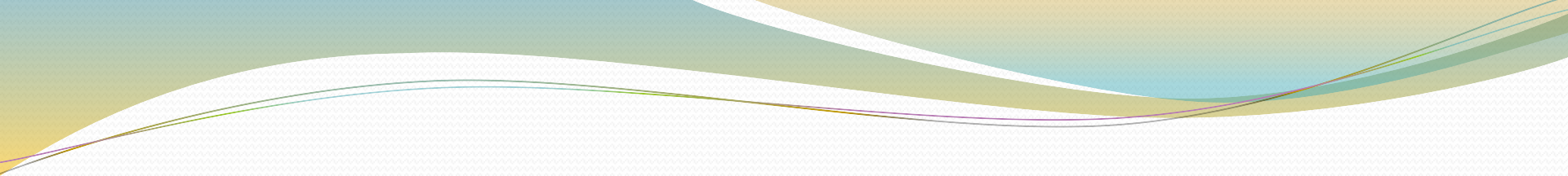
Using others as a source of information – think that others are interpreting the situation more accurately

- *Sherif (1936)* - Autokinetic effect
 - Movement of point of light
 - Ambiguity
 - Saccadic movements of eyes
 - No frame of reference

Individual to group condition



Sherif (1936)

- 
- Both public acceptance and private compliance
 - Sherif's study – after participating in groups, allowed to make a private judgement – generally stayed around the original group assessment
 - Later participation in study one year later – still conformed to group estimate
(Rohrer, Baron, Hoffman and Swander, 1954)
 - Informational social influence – we rely on others to define reality and we come to privately accept this reality

When will we conform to informational social influence?

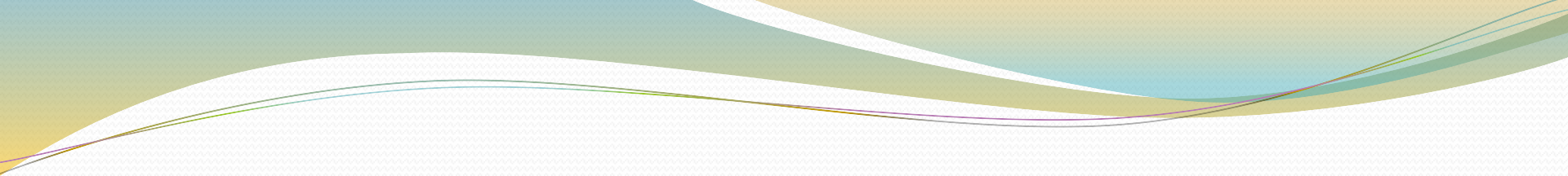
- When the situation is ambiguous - the more uncertain you are, the more you will conform

(Allen, 1965; Walther et al, 2002)

- When the situation is a crisis - promotes the use of others as a source of information –often co-occurs with ambiguity

- When other people are experts

(e.g. Allison 1992)



Break

10 minutes

Normative social influence

- The need to be accepted
- What social groups do you belong to?
- What behaviours are expected of you?
- Why do you conform to these expectations?
- Social norms - implicit and sometimes explicit rules for acceptable behaviours, values and beliefs
(Deutsch and Gerard, 1955; Miller and Prentice, 1996)
- Deviant members can ridiculed, punished or rejected by other group members
(e.g. James and Olsen, 2000)
- Humans – social creatures deprivation of human contact is stressful and traumatic
(Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Schacter, 1959; Williams, 2001)

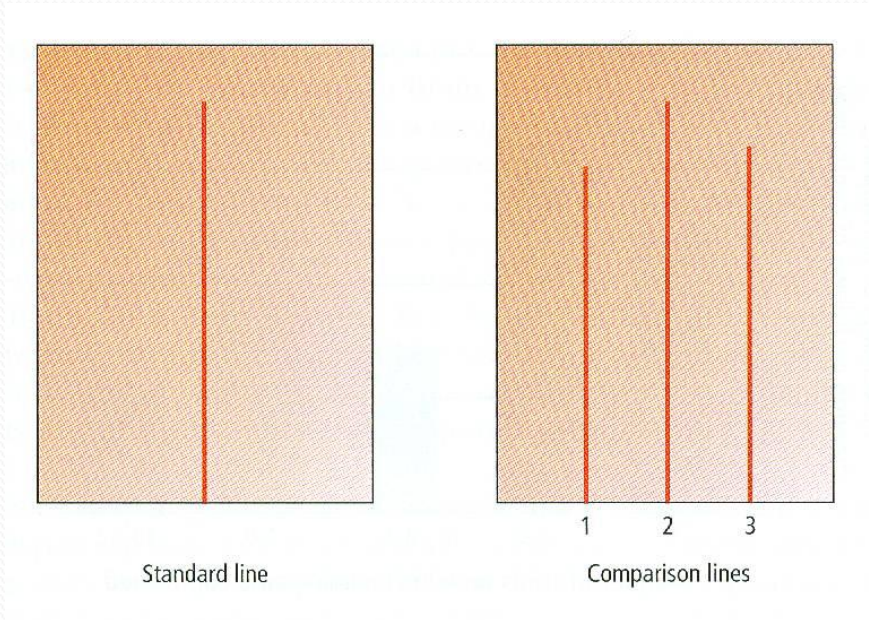
- Behaviour might be public compliance - does not necessarily mean private acceptance

(e.g. Cialdini et al, 1991, Deutsch and Gerard, 1955; Levine, 1999)

- But what if the situation is **unambiguous**?



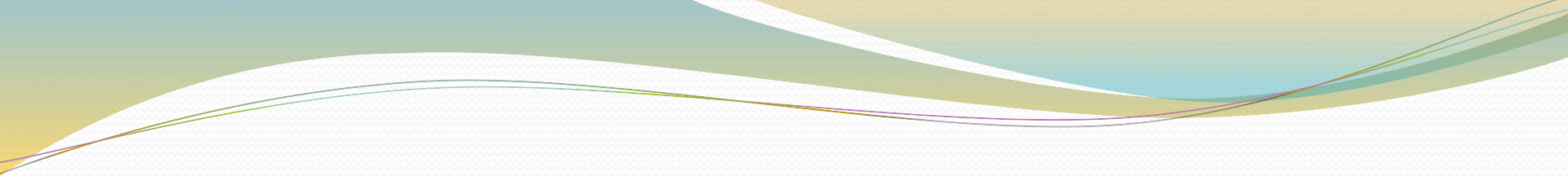
Unambiguity



- 76% of the participants conformed on at least one trial
- On average - conformed on about a 1/3 of 'wrong answer' trials
- Controls accurate more than 98% of the time – conformity 2%

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qA-gbpt7Ts8>



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- “Here was a group; they had a definite idea; my idea disagreed; this might arouse anger.....I was standing out like a sore thumb....I didn’t particularly want to make a fool of myself....I felt I was definitely right....but that they might think I was peculiar”

(Asch, 1959, No.416)

- “...one of the most dramatic illustrations of conformity, of blindly going along with the group, even when the individual realizes that by doing so he turns his back on reality and the truth”

- (Moscovici, 1985, p.349)

Social Impact Theory (Latane, 1981)

Likelihood of conformity depends on three variables:

- **Strength** – how important to you is the group?
- **Immediacy** – how close is the group to you in space and time during the attempt to influence you?
- **Number** – How many people are in the group?

e.g. disordered eating more likely for young women in sororities (Crandall, 1988)



Social Impact Theory suggests:

- **Group size** – once it increases to 4 or 5, conformity does not increase much with further increases in numbers
(e.g. Bond, 2005; Campbell and Faurey, 1989)
- **When the group is important** - conformity increases dramatically
(e.g. Guimond, 1999; Hogg, 1992)
- **No allies** in the group - normative pressures very strong
(e.g. American study - of Supreme Court decisions between 1953 and 2001)
- **When the group is collectivistic**
(e.g. Markus and Kitayama (1991, p.224): 'In America, the squeaky wheel gets the grease. In Japan, the nail that stands out gets pounded down.')
- Also - **Low desire for individuation**
 - Members high in Need for Individuation (Maslach, Stapp, & Santee, 1985) or low in Right Wing Authoritarianism less likely to conform

Minority Influence

Minority influence on direct attitudes can be weak – e.g. may not want to identify with the minority group

Individuals or minority groups **can** effect change



- **Consistency**

- If individual/minority group stays consistent and unwavering, they will be noticed and their views might even become adopted by the majority

(Moscovici and Personnaz, 1980)

- **Informational social influence**

- Individuals/minority groups can rarely employ normative social influence
- Need to **introduce new and unexpected information** to the group

(e.g. De Dreu and De Vries, 2001; Levine, Moreland and Chiles, 2001; Wood, Pool, Leck and Purvis, 1996)

Bases of Social Power

- French and Raven (1959)
 - **Reward** – having the ability to reward someone for doing something for you
 - **Coercion** – having the ability to punish someone for not doing something for you
 - **Expertise** – possessing knowledge or skills that others need or trust
 - **Information** – having information that persuades someone else (do not have to be expert)
 - **Referent power** – being a source that someone else would like to be like
 - **Legitimate authority** – someone in a position of power who has the right to make a request (police, parent)
 - **Helplessness** – someone we have a social responsibility for (child, person with disability)

- **Conformity** - the tendency to change one's beliefs or behaviours to match those of others (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004) - yielding to group pressure

Following the example of peers



- **Compliance** – doing what we are asked to do, even though we might prefer not to (Taylor et al., 2006)

- **Obedience**– complying with orders from a person of higher social status within a hierarchy or chain of command (Miller, 1995).

Following the direction of an authority figure

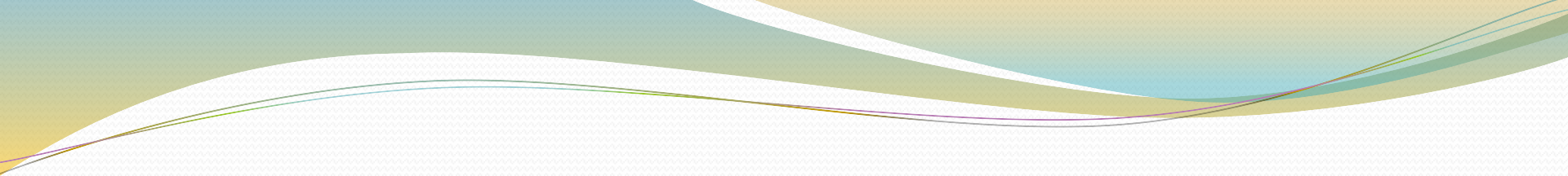


- **The power of legitimate authority** – possibly the most dangerous form of power – open to abuse

- Milgram (1963, 1965, 1974) - The 'Germans are different' hypothesis
- Controversial study
- 65% continued up to the very end: 435-450 - XXX



- Culture
Complete obedience ranged from:
 - Over 90% in Spain and the Netherlands (Meeus and Raaijmakers, 1986)
 - Over 80% in Italy, Germany and Austria (Mantell, 1971)
 - 40% among Australian males /16% Australian females (Kilham and Mann, 1974)



Possible explanations for obedience:

- **Fairly innocuous start** (mild shocks) – once committed, difficult to stop
- **Proximity of victim to participant** - Milgram found that as immediacy decreased, so did obedience
- **Proximity of experimenter to participant** - Obedience reduced to only 20.5% when experimenter was out of the room
- **Legitimacy of experimenter** – When experiment conducted in a shabby inner-city office building - obedience decreased to 48%
- **Group pressure** - Presence of 'disobedient peers' reduced obedience to 10%
Presence of two obedient peers increased obedience to 92.5%.

Major difference between Milgrams and Zimbardo's experiments

- Milgram: Role conflict - the role of teacher not seen as associated with administering electric shocks
- Zimbardo: No role conflict - association between the role of prison guard and brutality was expected
- WWII – roles, orders from authority figures, initial commitment to cause, normative social influence, informational social influence etc.....

- Criticisms of Milgram's study include:
- Ethics
- Generalisability
- Ecological validity?

(Hofling et al, 1966)

- Twenty-two wards of both public and private psychiatric hospitals in the USA
- Nurses instructed by 'Dr Smith' to administer an overdose of medication to a patient
- Male doctor (fictitious name) – gave instruction by phone (doctor not known to nurse, not seen by nurse)
- Administration of drug
 - uncommon drug, dose too large, no authorisation signature
- 22 nurses tested
- 21 stopped as they prepared to administer the drug

Summary

- Social Facilitation
 - Drive Theory (Zajonc, 1966)
 - Evaluation apprehension
 - Distraction-Conflict Theory
- Social norms
 - Zimbardo – Prison experiment
 - roles
 - deindividuation
 - group memberships
 - Informational social influence
 - Normative social influence
- Conformity and Compliance
 - e.g. Sherif, Asch
 - Social impact theory
 - Minority influence
- Bases of social power
- Obedience
 - e.g. Milgram, Hofling
 - Explanations for obedience
 - Critique of Milgram's study

Reading

Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social Influence: Compliance and Conformity. *Annual Review of Psychology* 55:591–621

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Gross, R. (2010). *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour* (6th ed). London: Hodder Education. (Chapters 26 and 27).

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