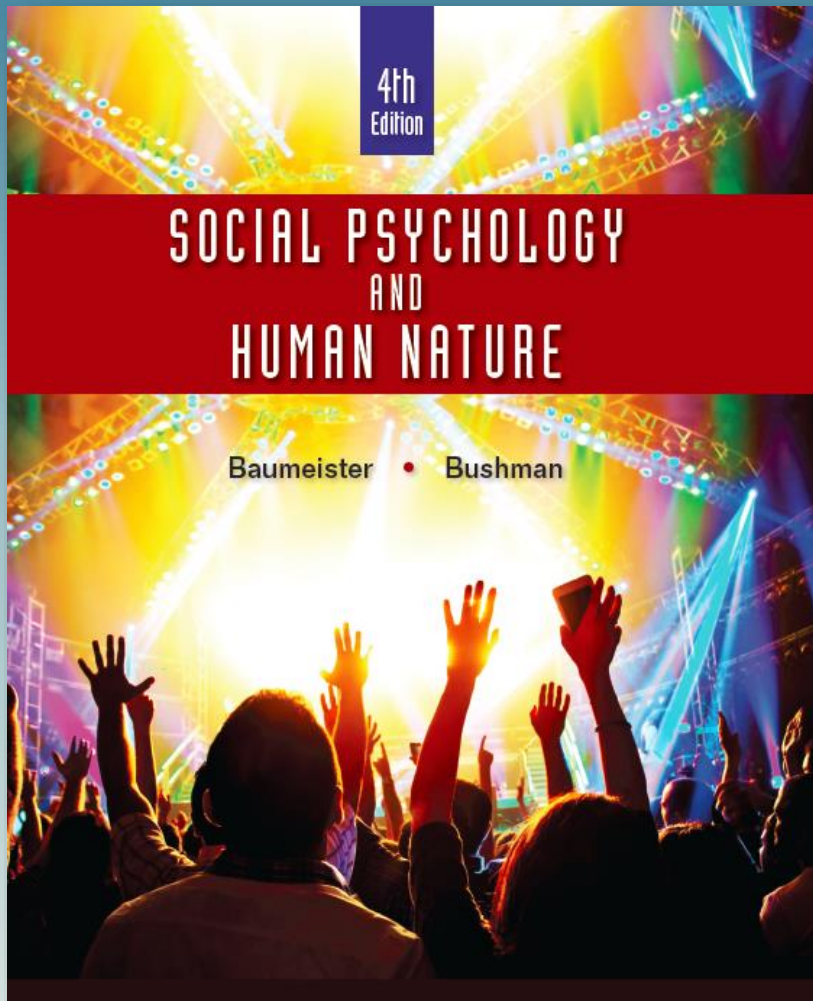




Groups



Social Psychology: Global Perspectives

Learning Objectives

- Explain how humans, as cultural animals, form groups that differ from the groups of other social animals, emphasising how selves and roles alter the nature of human groups
- Discuss how roles and the inner processes of the self affect group behaviour
- Describe group outcomes that result from being individually identified in the group versus feeling submerged in the group
- Describe how individuals within a group share information, including brainstorming and groupthink
- Describe the traits of successful leadership and the five crucial effects that power has on people

Introduction

- Henry Ford
 - Discovered Ford Motor Company could cut production time and costs down by using an assembly line
 - Took division of labour to a new level; the group was far more than the sum of its members
 - Interactive, complementary roles can make up a powerful system
 - Can groups outperform individuals?

What Groups Are and Do

- What is a group?
 - A collection of at least two people who are doing or being something together
 - Common goals and loyalties
- Social animals tend to live in groups; several clear benefits
 - Promote safety, find and share food, and can do tasks that no one individual can do alone

Trade Offs

- Diversity in groups involves tradeoffs
 - Can be more creative and flexible
 - May bring in different information
 - Can make better decisions
 - Can be harder to cooperate and work together
 - Different backgrounds can result in poor communication and misunderstandings
 - Diverse groups perform less well

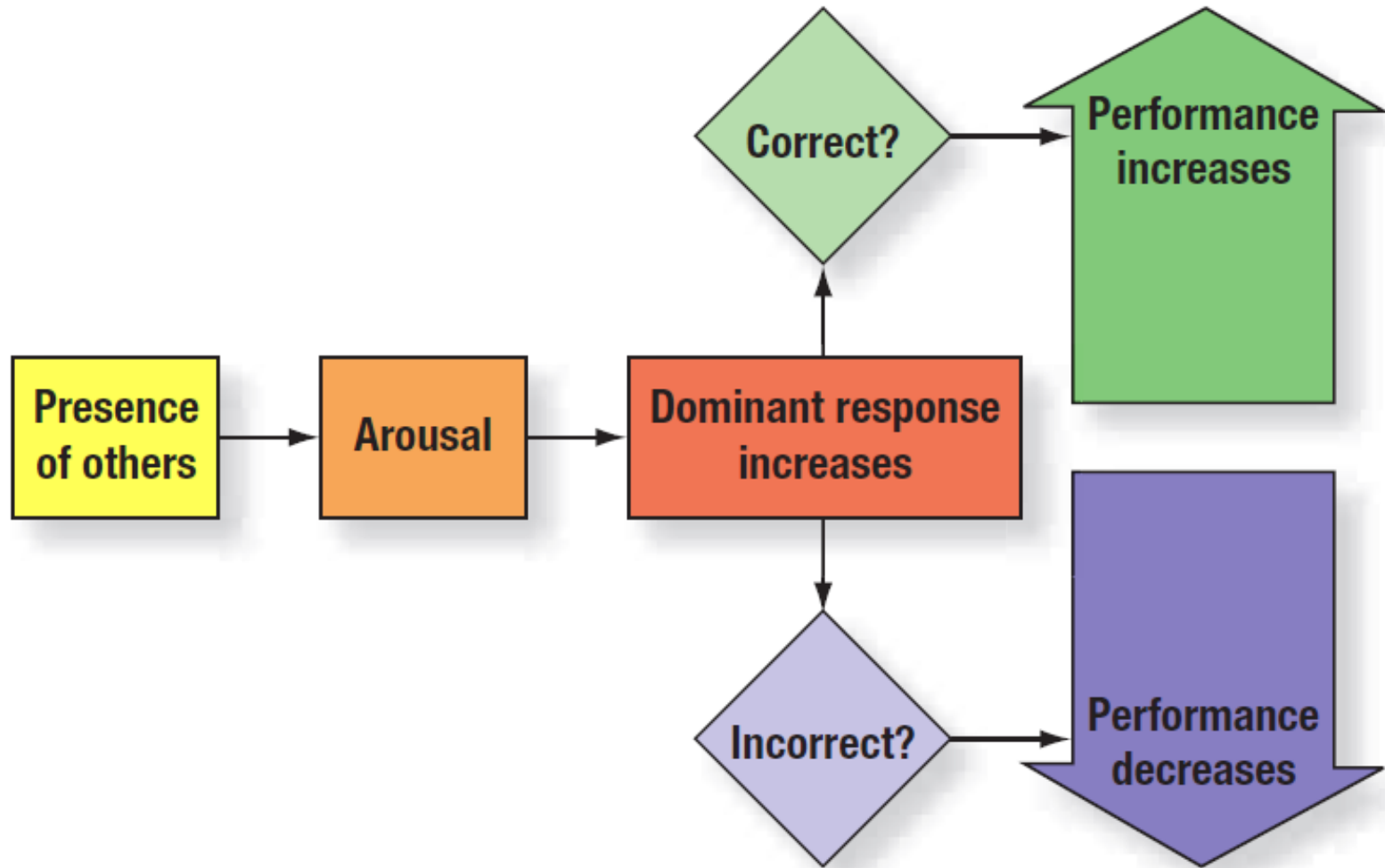
Groups, Roles, and Selves

- Each person has a different job
 - Each person can specialise and become an expert
 - Different jobs complement each other; joint effort improves total performance
- Deindividuation can lead to problems
 - Loss of self-awareness and of individual accountability in a group

Group Action

- Effect of working in a group is variable
 - Improvement or disaster
- Social facilitation
 - Evaluation apprehension: concern about how others are judging your performance
 - Dominant response: most common reaction to a given situation
 - Social facilitation theory: presence of others increases dominant response tendency
 - <http://www.typingtest.com/>

Theory of Social Facilitation



The Cockroach Study

Observed maze and runway performance of cockroaches under solitary and social conditions.
adult female cockroaches

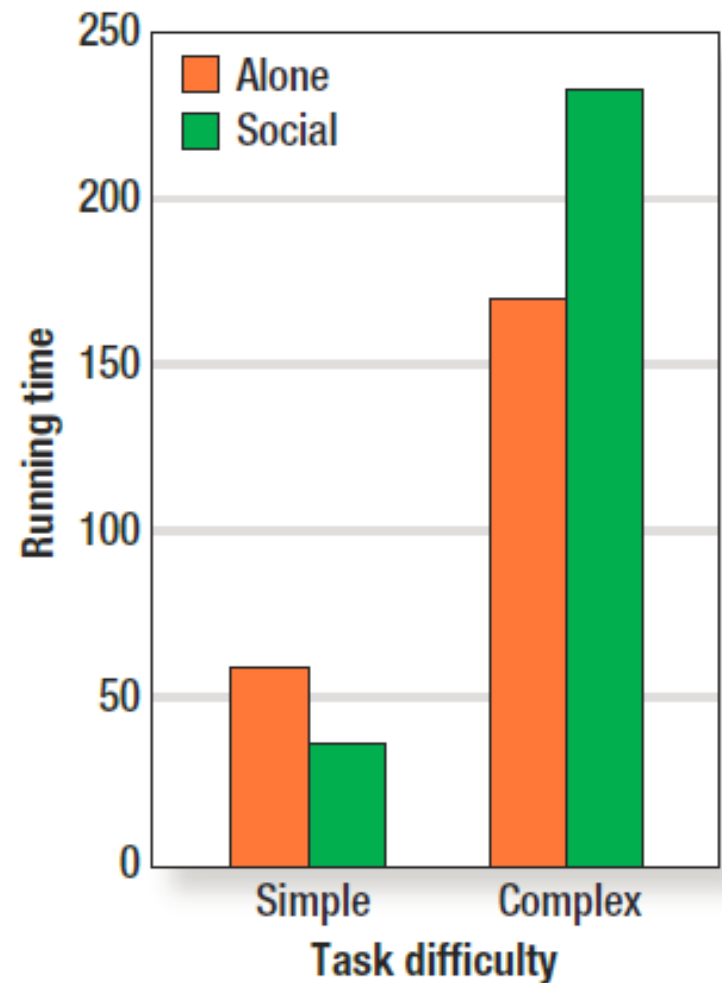
Exp. 1: 2 types of social treatments, coaction and audience.

Both treatments: maze performance impaired but runway performance facilitated compared to solitary conditions.

Exp. 2: effects of reduced presence on conspecifics (member of same species) on 180 female cockroaches were investigated.

Exp. I generated results that were in support of the hypothesis that the mere presence of conspecifics is a source of general arousal that enhances the emission of dominant responses.

The results of Exp. II suggest that partial presence of conspecifics may have distracting effects.



Group Action (cont'd.)

- Social loafing
 - People reduce effort when working in a group, compared to when working alone
 - Also called the free rider problem
- Bad apple effect
 - One social loafer can cause other people to loaf as well

Food for Thought

- Binge eating: socially contagious
 - Binge eating has grown rapidly since the 1960s; particularly in college sororities
 - The most popular girls in sororities are often binge eaters
 - Extreme binge eaters and non-binge eaters suffer from lower popularity
 - By the end of the year, levels of binge eating become quite similar to friends

Group Action (cont'd.)

- Punishing cheaters and free riders
 - Altruistic punishment: people will sacrifice their own gain to punish cheaters
- Deindividuation and mob violence
 - Being anonymous makes people more willing to violate norms
 - <http://destee.com/index.php?threads/more-women-girls-tell-of-attacks-by-mob-of-men-in-new-york.46945/>
- Shared resources and commons dilemma
 - Tendency for shared resources to be squandered and not used optimally

How Groups Think

- Brainstorming
 - A form of creative thinking in groups
 - All members are encouraged to generate as many ideas as possible while interacting and stimulating each other
 - <https://facultystaff.richmond.edu/~dforsyth/gd/groups.pdf>
- Teams offer enjoyment and psychological benefits

Does Brainstorming Work?



"O.K., we've set up the manufacturing facilities, organized the distribution network, hired the marketing expertise, and allocated the advertising budget. Any ideas for a product?"

How Groups Think (cont'd.)

- Transactive memory: here, you remember this
 - Members of a small group remember different kinds of information
- Groupthink
 - Tendency of group members to think alike, especially when doing so leads to bad decisions

How Groups Think (cont'd.)

- Factors that encourage groupthink
 - Fairly similar and cohesive group to start
 - Strong, directive leader
 - Group is isolated in some sense from others
 - Group regards itself as superior

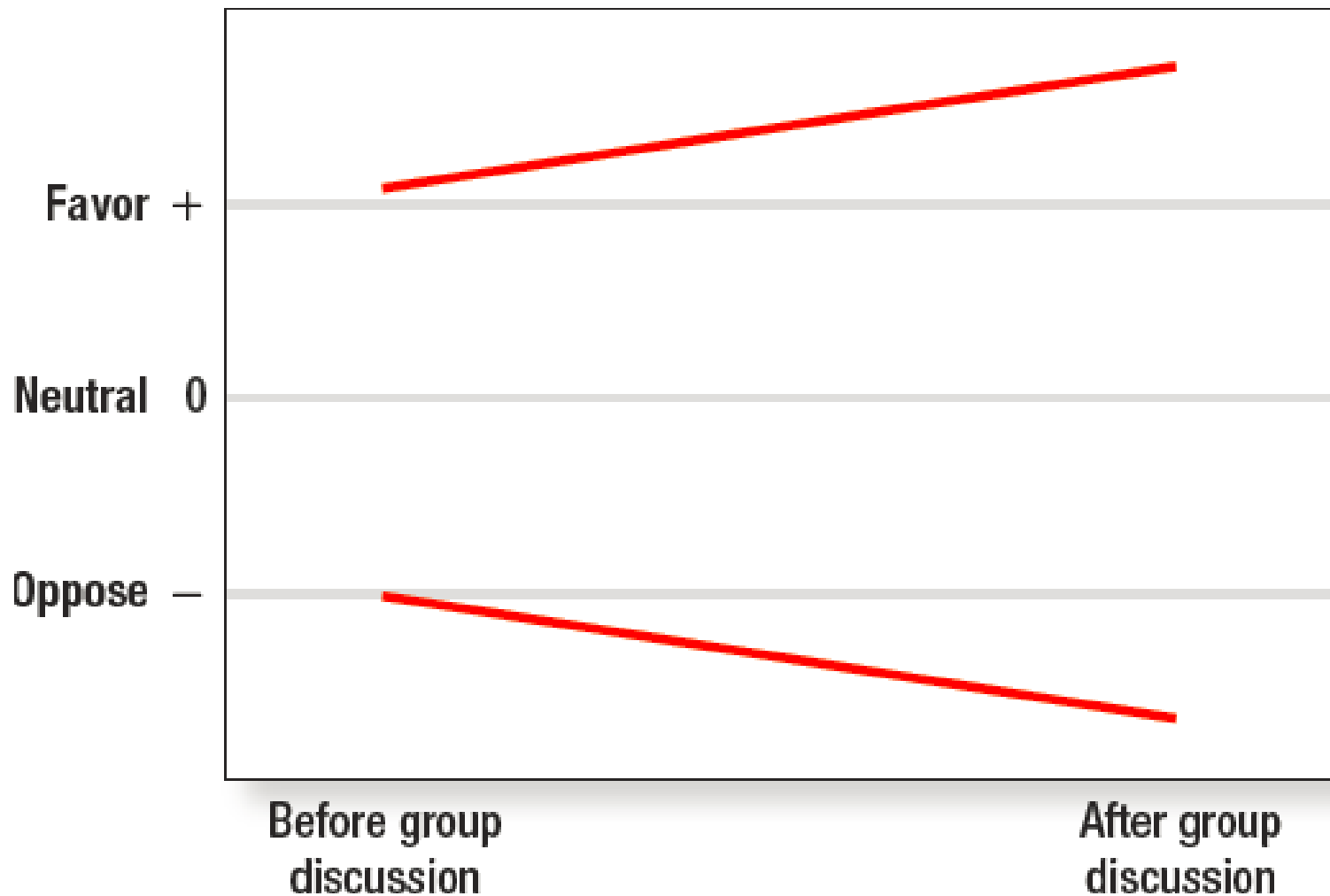
How Groups Think (cont'd.)

- Signs of groupthink
 - Pressure toward conformity
 - Appearance of unanimous agreement
 - Self-censorship: choosing not to express doubts or other information that goes against a group's plans and views
 - Illusion of invulnerability
 - Sense of moral superiority
 - Tendency to underestimate opponents
 - <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3077543>

How Groups Think (cont'd.)

- Foolish committees
 - Committee can end up being less than the sum of its parts
 - Pressures toward group harmony
- Risky shift
 - Groups take greater risks than the same individuals would have taken individually
- Group polarization effect
 - Shift toward a more extreme position resulting from group discussion
 - http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/group_polarization.htm
 - http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/risky_shift.htm

Group Polarization



Power and Leadership

- Characteristics of good leaders
 - Decisive, competent, honest, good moral character , and possess a vision
- Characteristics of toxic/dangerous leaders
 - Indifference towards those suffering, intolerance of criticism, and grandiose sense of entitlement

Questioning the Leader



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Power and Leadership (cont'd.)

- What is power?
 - One person's control over another person
- Effects of power on leaders
 - Feels good
 - Alters attention to rewards and punishment
 - Allows people to adapt plans and actions
 - Makes people rely more on automatic processing
 - Removes inhibitions against taking action
 - <http://www.beyondintractability.org/>

Power and Leadership (cont'd.)

- Preserving power
 - The more the perceived threat of losing power, the more it will be conserved
- Effects of power on followers
 - Subordinates pay extra attention to a powerful person and try to understand them
- Legitimate leadership
 - Legitimising myths: explanations used to justify why people in power deserve to be

Summary

- Groups are often formed to create or accomplish something together
- The way groups operate inform whether they are successful or not
- Leaders can exert positive influence, but many do not