

Project #2

For this project, the goal is for you to pick something that you are passionate about doing, that you can express yourself through, and that fits your interests as a student of Psychology. Below are some choices that might work for you; however, if there is something that you want to do that is not on this sheet, or is a combination of items on this sheet, talk to me – there is a good chance that I will let you do it.

Here are some possibilities:

1. Diffusion of Responsibility Experiment (see description later in document).
2. Follow the same model as the diffusion experiment but do an experiment testing a different concept learned about in this class.

NOTE: If you are doing an experiment, you may do it with a partner, but you must write individual papers. You also need to get it approved by me before you perform it.

3. Photography - Combine psychological experiment with artistic statement, inspired by Renaldi. If you would like to see an example of a student in the past that did this, check out this website: <http://schoolstrangers.tumblr.com/> While this should be inspired by Renaldi, it should not necessarily do the exact same thing; for example, in the example I have provided, one of the people in each picture was the *same* person. Her goal was to see how one person responded to others based on age, race, gender, etc. Remember what your goal is here (most likely) - you are testing unconscious prejudice by seeing how people react to being in a picture together. You are also trying to test the viewer in some way. And of course, you are creating the photograph, so you are selecting people, arranging them, thinking about setting, etc. While I would be open to other ways of reporting your findings, the typical way to do this is to write a paper in which you explain the purpose and meaning behind your photography series, and then analyze the pictures, paying close attention to body language, facial expression, etc. You can insert the photographs right into the paper, or provide them in another way. So, in summary, here is what to do:
 - a. Come up with an idea for a psychology photography series.
 - b. Go take the pictures.
 - c. Write a paper explaining the purpose of your series and analyzing the photos.
4. Watch a documentary on a cult (just not Peoples Temple) and write a paper in which you analyze the cult using a few concepts or studies from social psychology. Feel free to go further and gather more information on this cult through articles, chapters from books, etc. The suggested structure is provided later in this document.
5. Analyze a group that you are a part of, or have been a part of, and show that it is a cult, or how it demonstrates specific principles of social psychology. This could be a sports team, a club, a friend group, this school, etc. Use the same model as the previous choice.

6. Critique this school and create changes in the way this school runs using one or two concepts/experiments/issues that we have explored in class. Or create your own school, inspired by a few concepts/experiments/issues we have explored. Possibilities include but are not limited to:
- The use of reinforcement vs. punishment in controlling student behavior and academic learning.
 - Game Layer
 - The use of intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation to guide learning and behavior.
 - o May specifically want to respond to - Should grades exist? If so, how so?
 - The way this school is organized in terms of ability-grouping.
 - How this school is like the Stanford Prison Experiment.
 - Creating a Comprehensive and realistic plan for decreasing unconscious prejudice at this school, towards African-Americans, or any other group – support using what we know about the causes and effects of unconscious prejudice.

Regardless of what direction you go, make sure that you support all of your ideas with concepts and experiments that you have learned in this class. Note: If you are going to propose changes to the current system, it is best to focus on only a few changes, and then give many reasons and experiences that support these changes, rather than suggesting lots of changes and failing to adequately support any of them.

Note: this can be a paper, but it could also include things like pictures, diagrams, etc.

Note: part of this project can also involve *doing something* to try to make change in this school.

7. Inspired by our discussion of unconscious prejudice, explore the media portrayal of a particular group, based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc. This should be a project that involves gathering various images and perhaps video clips, along with written analysis of these images and clips. Try to focus on a *specific aspect* of how a group is represented in the media, rather than simply a general exploration. For example, do not just focus on blacks, focus on the black male criminal stereotype, or how black women are represented, etc.
8. Artistic Expression - Create a work of Art (painting, scene screen-play, musical work, video, photography, etc.) that accomplishes the following:
- a. Shows an in-depth knowledge of a concept or concepts that you have learned about in this class.
 - b. Says something unique about the concept or concepts.
 - What the concept(s) *means* to you, or your opinion about it or interpretation of it.
 - How you *experience* it, or how it plays out in your life / affects you or someone else.
 - Certain aspects/characteristics of the ideas at hand that you find especially important and want others to recognize.

Note: You can be a great artist/performer/etc., but you do **not** have to be. I will be judging you on the content of your work, rather than artistic technique!

Accompany your artwork with a **2-page paper** explaining what you were hoping to accomplish / communicate through your artwork, how your work is inspired by and is a

demonstration of an idea or ideas learned in this course, and whatever you would like to say about your creative process.

9. Research Webpage – create a webpage where you go further into a topic that you are especially interested in. If you choose to do this, you should, for the most part, NOT be reiterating information already learned in the class, but instead communicating new information that you have learned through research. The webpage should provide both written information and visuals, and consideration should be paid to the layout and overall aesthetic presentation of the page. Make sure that you cite your sources, and that you have a bare minimum of 6 articles that are from reputable sources (leave out Wikipedia) and provide a bibliography. See this as a website that future students could visit if they have the same interest as you!
10. Research Paper – do the same thing as #9, but do it through a paper rather than a webpage.

Parameters

If you are writing a paper, you should write a minimum of 5 pages. There is no maximum.

Any experiment that you want to do **must** be approved by me first.

Due Friday, December 9 (Thursday Dec 8 for A Block) – Project explanation/approval: Make a firm commitment to a project. In a full paragraph, describe, in detail, what you will be doing for your project. Do not just give me a sentence or two; give me a good feel for the direction you are going to go in. If you are performing an experiment, or if you are creating your own project and it does not fit any of the above choices, consider this paragraph a proposal and do not proceed until I give you my approval.

Due Friday, December 19 (Thursday, Dec 18 for A Block) – Rough draft of 1 ½ pages of your paper, or an equivalent amount of work if you are doing something that is not a paper.

The final project is due **Thursday, December 22nd**, unless you would rather turn it in on Friday the 23rd. If for some reason you will not be in school toward the end of the week, you need to give it to me before you leave or find a way to get it to me by the end of the week.

Diffusion of Responsibility Experiment

For this assignment, your job is to stage a situation in which you need help. Make sure that your experiment does NOT cause anyone to call 911. Also, do not set up a situation in which someone may become violent when he or she does help (stealing the radio). There are many ways to need help while at the same time following these parameters. You will be given a partner. While one of you performs the experiment, the other person will be watching from afar, taking data. Then switch.

Step 1 - proposal

Create an experiment. Feel free to be creative and to make an experiment you will enjoy performing! You must get approval from me before moving on to the next step. Your proposal should also clarify exactly when you are going to do it – time and date. The experiment should preferably be done off of school grounds, but if you have an experiment that is better to perform on school grounds, I will consider it.

Note: You don't have to, but you might want to think about how you can vary certain factors to see if they have an affect on the results – for instance, your dress, or the setting. It would be great if we had male-female partners as then you can see if gender played a role in the results.

Step 2 – Perform the Experiment

Each of you should perform the experiment around 5 times. You may do more if you wish. Each time you perform the experiment, do it around a different size group. So the first time, perhaps need help when there is a group of eight present. The next time, perform it when only one person is present, etc. Of course there may be a bit of overlap on this factor over your group's 10 total trials. No worries.

Step 3 – The Paper

Part I - Start with a good story. Get the reader interested! Tell the story of your most interesting, powerful, or humorous trial. Describe your setting and what was going on in a dramatic way, and tell us in detail how the subject(s) reacted. What did they do? Say? Put the reader into the moment.

Part II – Introduce the concept of diffusion of responsibility and explain how you are testing it. Also, justify your experiment. Why is this a good concept to test and explore? Why is this an important concept to understand?

Part III – Your results – Describe how people responded to your experiment. It might be good to create a chart that clarifies whether or not people helped and the size of the group being tested. You may also want to include other factors in your chart which you can discuss in Part IV, such as setting, age, gender (of your subjects and/or the experimenters), etc. In addition to your chart, describe your results in writing. Feel free to share the stories of other interesting trials, and also subtle responses you received that are not in your chart (what people said, or subtle body language, etc.).

Part IV – Analysis – was the diffusion of responsibility idea proven or disproven? What trends are present in the data? What other factors affected the result besides group size? Age? Social Class? Gender? Setting? In general, why do you think you got the results that you did? In general and/or on specific trials? What are your insights here?

Part V – “Conclusion” – Finish your paper with some powerful reflections on your experience. What did you learn from your experiment? What, exactly, do we learn about helping behavior? Perhaps also reflect on what it was like for you to perform the experiment as part of this section and what you learned from putting yourself in a situation like this.

Cult Paper

Use social psychology to analyze a cult. Pick one concept (or two that work together) from social psychology and explain how the concept(s) is demonstrated in the behavior of the cult's leader and followers. Choose from the following:

1. Obedience to Authority – the Milgram Experiment (can combine with Stanford Prison Experiment), including how someone establishes oneself as an authority figure.
2. Cognitive Dissonance – Festinger
3. One or Two Methods from Lifton's Theory of Thought Reform
4. The Diffusion of Responsibility – Darley and Latane Experiments
5. Conformity/social imitation – the Asch Experiment
6. The Stanford Prison Experiment

Structure

1. Grab the reader's attention! Start with a specific story or moment or quote or dialogue from the cult you are analyzing that is dramatic and highlights the concept from social psychology that you are focusing on. Or, if you would rather, start with a personal story from your own life that demonstrates the concept. Approx. One paragraph.
2. Analyze the story or moment or quote or dialogue using the concept you are focusing on, which gets us oriented towards what you are doing the rest of the paper. Approx. One Paragraph
3. Move to other ways in which this concept is demonstrated in the behavior of the cult's leader and followers. **Use lots of specific examples from the documentary and any other sources that you use and explain how these examples connect to the concept in social psychology that you are focusing on (specific events, actions, and quotations.** Delve in deep here! Make the more obvious connections, but also show me some more subtle and interesting connections that I might have missed myself!
4. Conclusion: Summarize the connections you have made and give us something new to ponder.

Note: You can connect to a concept, and also connect to specific experiments; for example, you can connect to obedience to authority and also the Milgram experiment. How, for instance, does the behavior of members of the cult mimic the behavior of the subjects or the experimenter in the Milgram experiment?

Note: If you focus on more than one concept, your analysis should tie them together in some way, showing how both are contributing simultaneously to create the situation and control behavior.

Note: In the end, less is more. It is better to focus on one or a few concepts / experiments and really delve deep with them, showing lots of examples of how they play out in the cult, rather than dealing with lots of concepts and saying only a few things about each.

Critiquing Our School or Create Your Own

Part I

Start right off with a story or a situation for the reader to consider that connects with an important point that you want to make later in the paper. Perhaps this is an experience you or another has had in school, or while doing homework, etc., or it is a future experience when things have changed at this school, or within the school that you have created. Describe this story or moment in an engaging way – dramatic and/or intense and/or humorous and/or entertaining. Get the reader interested! (1 or more paragraphs)

Part II

Use your opening story to introduce what your paper is about. (1 paragraphs)

Part III

In an organized fashion, *one idea at a time*, explain your ideas for how this school should change, or your ideas for the school you would create.. For every idea, support it using ideas, concepts, and experiments we have talked about in this class, as well as further personal experiences. Really try to convince the reader to agree with you. (several to many paragraphs)

Part IV

Conclusion – End your paper in a powerful way, making some final pleas for the types of things you want to change, or for the school you have created. Restate what you have said, but find a way to say it in a way that is different from the way you have said it before.