

A Social Psychology of Festival Crowds: Scientific findings on fostering responsible and sustainable behaviour.

6th go-group Workshop, Green Operations Europe, Cologne, Germany.

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Agenda

Part 1: Melting away in the mass: Responsibility, group identity and deindividuation.

- Selling indulgences? Moral behaviour and moral licensing.
- Why me? Diffusion of responsibility.
- Getting lost in the crowd? Deindividuation and building group identities.

Part 2: Norms, role models and effective signposts: Littering and sustainable behavior.

- Should they or do they...? Prescriptive vs. descriptive norms.
- He did it, too! On the role of role models.
- Everybody does it: Field experiments on signs that work.

Starting point



<http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1883855/images/o-GLASTONBURY-facebook.jpg>

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Selling indulgences? Moral behaviour and moral licensing.

- But they are green, aren't they?!



- **Moral licensing:** “Past good deeds can liberate individuals to engage in behaviors that are immoral, unethical, or otherwise problematic, behaviors that they would otherwise avoid for fear of feeling or appearing immoral.” (Merritt, Efron & Monin, 2010, p. 344)
- At odds with all theories claiming a human need for consistency (for a review, see Gawronski & Strack, 2012)
- **Moral cleansing** (indulgences): refers to actions people engage in when their moral self-worth has been threatened (Sachdeva, Iliev & Medin, 2009, p. 523), e.g. donating after a negative self-portrait



Hinter-den-schlagzeilen.de

Moral licensing: Examples

- The moral licensing effect has been reported in many domains, including
 - ambiguous racist attitudes (Efron, Monin, & Miller, 2012),
 - donations to charity (Conway & Peetz, 2012; Sachdeva, Iliev, & Medin, 2009),
 - consumer behavior (Khan & Dhar, 2006),
 - dishonest behavior (Jordan, Mullen, & Murnighan, 2011; Mazar & Zhong, 2010)
- And outside the lab in average people's everyday live (Hofmann, Wineski, Brandt, & Skitka, 2014):
People having committed a moral act had a larger likelihood of committing an immoral act later that day

⇒ **Self-regulation framework:**

- moral behavior has its costs, no matter how convinced you are about it
 - internal balance of moral self-worth and costs associated with being good
- ⇒ **Delay of gratification and The Marshmallow Test (Mischel, 1974)**



Usatoday.com

Potential Transfer

⇒ „I am a very green person...“



- *This is my weekend out,*
- *I have been waiting and looking to it forward for ages,*
- *I paid a lot for coming here,*
- *now this is it, just once:*
- *no limits, no rules, let go, let it all hang out...*
- Maybe they have already been green enough?
- And plan to be green again on Monday...



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Why me? The bystander effect

- In case of an obvious emergency, e.g. in the tube, on the street, in the lab next door...
- ...when is it most likely that you go and offer help?
 - a) When you know you are the only person around?
 - b) When there is one other person present?
 - c) When there are five other persons present?

“I wondered why somebody didn't do something. Then I realized, I am somebody.”

Steveonleadership.com

⇒ Diffusion of responsibility (Darley & Latané , 1968):

- The more people are present in a situation
- the less likely prosocial behavior becomes („bystander effect“)

Deindividuation

- What effects does it have to be in a large group?
 - Gain of orientation, feeling safe about what to do
 - Loss of personal identity („de-individuation“)



Stuttgarter-nachrichten.de (dpa)

- Def.: loosening of behavior restrictions, increase in impulsive/deviant behavior (Lea et al., 2001)
- Being part of a mass reduces probability of being caught and brought to trial (Diener, 1980)

- Enhanced at dark, by being masked or in some way uniformed
- ⇒ when distinguishing individuals is impossible (anonymity)
- Masking increases cruelty or ritual fights in indigene cultures (Watson, 1973)
 - Group acts done by Hells Angels, Ku-Klux-Klan and others



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- The larger the „mob“, the more brutal violence in riots (Mullen, 1986; data from 1899-1946)
 - The larger the „mob“ the more likely people are to follow group norms (Postmes & Spears, 1998)
 - Group norms can be very specific, e.g. being violent, but also dancing wildly or eating more
- ⇒ Deindividuation does not necessarily have aggressive effects

Social Identity Theory - A different WE?

- Being member of (usually several different) groups is part of the self-concept
- Assumptions of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986):
 1. Individuals strive for a positive social identity
 2. As may result from social comparison with relevant outgroups
 3. If this comparison has a negative outcome, people try to leave their group or to add value to it
- Identification, group cohesion and behaviour norms even emerge in „minimal“ groups
 - i.e., people don't have to know each other before
 - They don't even necessarily interact or communicate
 - They even show competitive behaviour towards an outgroup when they are grouped based on superficial common attributes
 - And assigned a „name“
- Providing a common superordinate goal overcomes prior intergroup discrimination (Sherif, 1956)

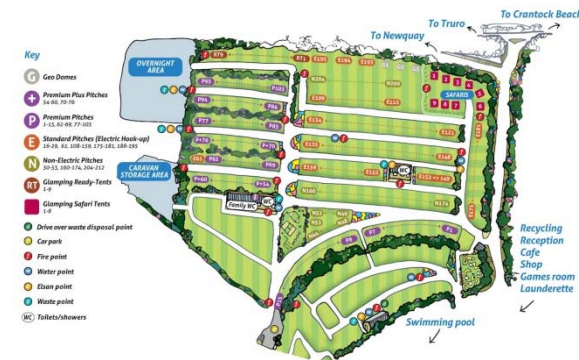
Potential Transfer

=> overcome viewpoints such as „we“ the visitors and „them“ the organizers

- WE – all of us - are the festival (maybe even avoid wordings like „Please help us...“)

=> Divide people's camping sites into explicit „SMALL group areas“, e.g. with designated names / colors / ...

- Set an incentive to keep them tidy or at least leave them tidy
- put small groups into competition...
- Or maybe offer a reduction for people taking responsibility for their area
- Or put yourself in competition with other festivals



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=> Take notes on your ideas for transfer / implementation and exchange briefly

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Social norms: Why and how do they evolve and spread?

- Some important functions of norms for the individual are that they:
 - Provide social orientation
 - Ensure social approval
 - Foster group building by means of homogenisation
 - Allow to predict others' behaviour
- They are spread on via
 - Conditioning: learning by appraisal (and punishment)
 - Parents, teachers and peers tell us what to do
 - Social learning (imitation of role models)
 - Parents, teachers, and peers show us what to do
- And are of course supported and shaped by the media
- (e. g. again showing pic's of littered places...)

Prescriptive vs. descriptive norms

- Prescriptive norms:
 - Explicit rules, orders or guidelines about
 - behaviour that is desired or expected
- Descriptive norms:
 - What people really do, or do on average, „normally“
 - Can be learned by observing other people's behavior
 - Or traces of their behavior
- Implicit norms or „silent language“
 - Only become salient when hurt
 - E.g. norms on handling time and space



The role of role models

- Social learning and descriptive norms build on our natural strive for imitation



Forumjournal.org



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- Automatic, not even intentional (behaviour priming)

Norm priming: Silence in the library

- Aarts und Dijksterhuis (2003):
 - Building on behavioral priming using stereotypes (Bargh & Chartrand, 1996)
 - Non-social stimuli as part of a scheme can also automatically activate behavior
 - Contexts and places are associated with norms of what is typical / appropriate
 - Intentions to conform depend upon subjective norms
 - In how far do I believe that “most people think one should be quiet here”



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Usatoday.com

- ⇒ Exp. 2: pictures of a library make people talk more quietly, provided it is their goal to go there later
- ⇒ Exp. 3: Replication with „expensive restaurant“ and the removal of one’s cookie crumbs

Potential transfer / problem:



- Pictures like this have become so typical of festivals
 - that „leaving a total mess“ might have become part of people’s „festival scheme“, <http://i.huffpost.com>
 - Automatically activating corresponding behaviour
 - It may take a little while to overcome such „traditions“
- ⇒ Induce „most people think it should be clean here“-norms
- ⇒ AND
- ⇒ The more clean festivals people see, the more NORMAL this will become
- ⇒ And as a consequence activate corresponding, greener behaviour



Freesignage.co.uk

Modeling in field experiments

- Reno and colleagues (1993) had an accomplice (model) pick up a piece of garbage
⇒ lowered people's likelihood of throwing a handbill to the ground (from 37% to almost 0%)

- Cialdini and colleagues (1990) replicated this with a descriptive norm (tidy vs. littered environment)
⇒ **Descriptive norms tell us what almost everybody does here**

- Field experiment on proper hand washing (Aronson & O'Leary, 1983)
 - instructions: wet, turn off, use soap, rinse: 6% compliance
 - One model doing this: 49%
 - Two models doing this: 67%



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Effective sign posts: What most people do

- „Join your fellow guests – 75% reuse their towels“ (Goldstein, Cialdini & Griskevicius, 2008)
- Cialdini, Reno and Kallgren (1990): Problem of theft in Arizona’s Petrified Forest National Park
- Signs “Your heritage is being vandalized every day by theft losses of petrified wood of 14 tons a year, mostly a small piece at a time.” ENHANCED theft!

⇒ Sign says this is rather normal behaviour, everybody does it!



Statessymbolsusa.org

⇒ Experiment (Cialdini, 2003):

- We have this severe problem... (showing three persons picking up pieces)
- „Please don’t steal wood“ ... (one person picking up a piece, crossed out)

⇒ It matters most, how frequent and regular critical behaviour appears



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Wrap-up & take-home messages

- Why do they do that - green as they are?!
 - They have already done enough, want to let go just once (moral licensing)
 - They don't think it's up to them, what about all the others (diffusion of responsibility)
 - They de-individuate and become de-inhibited from being in a crowd (social identity theory)

- What can you possibly do about it?!
 - Establish clear norms and goals (prescriptive and descriptive norms)
 - Be patient, changing norms (and mental schemes) takes time!

 - Provide role models showing desirable behaviour (other guests!)
 - E.g. by picking up litter that is not their own, or by taking responsibility for a small area
 - Try to establish littering as a minority problem, also on signposts

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**Thank you for your attention.
Any questions, remarks, or comments?**



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