

Lending

William Darity (2008) mentioned “Emotions are central to one’s personal and social life, and they have been an important topic in psychology throughout history.” (p. 571). Emotions can interfere with many people’s actions and ways of thinking. So understanding behavior can be very challenging, because you have to take in account the surroundings and the fact that people watching influence the reaction. Can behavior be completely predicted? Absolutely not. The experiment that I completed was to ask a complete stranger if I could borrow their cell phone to make a phone call. At the beginning of this experiment I thought no one would let me use their cell phone, because honestly I would not, but I was surprised by the outcome.

I went to San Diego City College and started to walk around. I decided to first ask a young woman of around 21 to 25 years old. The woman looked African American and was sitting on a bench with a toddler next to her. She looked as if she was a little frustrated, because the small child kept running away from her and going through her purse. She looked pretty busy, but I still decided to ask her. I approached her and asked her very politely if I could borrow her cell phone, but she did not hear me, so I stood there a little embarrassed because she did not see or hear me. She still looked very distracted because of the child she was with. So I asked her again, but this time she did hear me and she said no. She told me that she did not have one and said there was a pay phone close by. I felt embarrassed as I walked away, because there were a few people around although I do not think they heard. As William Darity mentioned “Psychologists define affect as an individual’s externally displayed mood. Typically people feel some level of positive affect and some level of negative affect in their daily life.” (Darity, 2008)

Maybe her affect that day was negative, because the child that she was with was misbehaving. Later that day as I was leaving I did see her on her cell phone, so she did not want to let me use it.

The second person I asked was a young man, probably around 18 to 23 years old. He was with two other guys and they were standing by some stairs. They all looked Hispanic and they were talking and laughing. I decided to go ask one of the guys, because they were in a group and people tend to act different when they are with a group of friends versus when they are by themselves. I wanted to see what his reaction was. I went up to him and asked him if I could borrow his cell phone to make a phone call and he responded “yeah, but only if you leave your number in it.” He and his friends laughed at this and I felt pretty awkward. I told him that I was married and he just said “oh ok” and gave me his cell phone. I feel that his reaction was predictable, because some guys try to act funny in front of their friends. I felt the same thing that I felt with the first young woman, and it was embarrassment and awkwardness.

The last person I asked was an older Caucasian lady walking by. She looked like a student there but she could have also been a professor. She looked around the age of late forties or early fifties. I stopped her and asked the same question. She was very friendly and said “yes sure” She did not hesitate to let me use it. And I took it and made a quick phone call to my friend asking her to pick me up. Of course this was staged. When I gave it back I said to her “thank you very much” and she responded with “no problem” she had a big smile on her face.

I am a shy person and having to go up to random strangers was difficult. I felt embarrassed, awkward, and nervous. “The experience of emotions has a significant psychological and physiological effect. How people interpret their experience motivates and

guides their actions and specific behaviors.” (Darity, 2008) I agree with William Darity, because I felt how my heart rate increased and my palms got sweaty (even though it was a cold day). This scientist also spoke in his article that peer acceptance (Darity, 2008) is very common in children, although the young man I asked was not a child. I can say that he made the joke about me giving him my number just to impress or get the acceptance of his friends.

There was a study conducted in 2001 by a few scientists, Marco Costa, Wies Dinsbach, Antony S.R. Manstead and Pio Enrico Ricci Bitti. They conducted a study on embarrassment (which was the feeling that I had every time I asked a stranger if I could borrow their cell phone). The scientist recorded some of the people in groups of two and others by themselves as they watched slides of nude men and women and of erotic pictures. It came out to be that embarrassment was higher when certain slides were viewed in the presence of strangers than when they were viewed alone. The behavior that was recorded was of lip movements, gaze shifts, face touches, downward gazes, and downward head movements. (Costa, 2001)

There were probably many emotions that the people went through as I approached them. One of the many emotions that I feel the African American, young female was going through was Chronic Stressors. It is easy to say that she was stressed out because of the child she was with, but there could have been many other things. Like work related, or she was hungry, or the noise level was stressing her out (Huffman, 2007).

My hypothesis ended up being incorrect, because out of the three people I asked if I could use their cell phone, only one said no. The young man and the older lady did let me use theirs. All in all, the outcome came to be that younger guys and older women will sometimes lend you their cell phone, although I feel this was only because I am a young woman. If a man

would have approached the same people I do not think they would have let them use their cell phone.

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A Day in the Life of a Deaf Person

Spending the day pretending to be Deaf can produce various responses from the Hearing community. The majority of the population is not familiar with the Deaf community or the use of sign language. They utilize social norms or “rules and standards that are understood by members of a group that guide and or constrain social behavior” (Gilbert, Fiske, and Lindzey, 1998). By not interacting with the Deaf Community on a daily basis it becomes foreign to them. If someone that was pretending to be Deaf was to go shopping in a predominately hearing community then the most likely responses would be being ignored, walking away, and frustration with trying to communicate. This hypothesis was tested with the participation observation study at Mac, Victoria’s Secret, and the Cheese Cake Factory. Through this study “the researcher is able to observe and experience the meanings and interactions of people from the role of an insider” (Danny L. Jorgenson, 1989).

This hypothesis was first tested at Mac, a cosmetic store located at the Fashion Valley Mall. Two others and myself started using sign language as we walked into the store. Upon seeing the three of us, two of the sales associates quickly turned around and began mumbling to another sales associate. After about five minutes of looking around, no one offered to help us. We were clearly being ignored. We decided to leave Mac and try another store. Coming across someone you don’t know how to communicate with can be very frightening. I have frequented this store many times in the past and someone has always come over to offer some type of help. The fact that they perceived us as being Deaf or hard of hearing, may have deterred them away from offering us any type of help.

Victoria's Secret was the next store we tried. My friends and I are familiar with that store so we walked right in to the back and started browsing for what we wanted. The sales associate asked if we needed any help. I smiled politely and pointed to the box of garments I wanted to try on. As my friends and I were chatting in sign language about sizes and colors, the woman became very flustered and loudly said, "Don't any of you listen?" We were all taken back by the rude statement, but we could not act as if we could hear her. We went about our shopping and as we were finishing up we walked to the register. The sales associate that rang us up was very pleasant and had a great attitude towards helping us. She even went above just ringing us up and explained that there is a buy one get one free offer. I believe that if having to deal with Deaf customers was an issue for her she would have rang us up immediately to get us out of there quickly.

As we were ending our day of constant stares and mumbling behind our backs, we decided to treat ourselves to The Cheesecake Factory. We were upset to find that it is apparently a very popular place and there was a huge line. I walked up to the hostess and held up three fingers, indicating that we needed a table for three. I stepped aside and we waited for less than a minute before a woman came to get us and seated us right away. Maybe being what they feel is special needs they felt we should be seated before everyone else. Communicating our order was not difficult. We were able to just point to the cheesecake we all wanted to split on the menu and the waitress understood what we wanted. We gave the sign for water and mouthed the word as well. The waitress brought us what we had ordered. At the end of our dining experience she verbally thanked us for coming in. She seemed a little hesitant to speak to us, but we were very pleased with her attempt to accommodate us.

Different reactions came from different people. By utilizing the participant observation method we were able to “gain an understanding of the most fundamental processes of social life” (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002). It seems that the majority of people would rather ignore or pretend not to see those that are different. People fear the unknown and things they do not understand. Avoidance is a natural way to overcome that. Over all, the reactions that were presented to us were expected.

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Cultural Dope & One Price Rule

According to author Charles Lemert writing in the introduction for Harold Garfinkle's book *Ethnomethodology's program: Working out Durkheim's aphorism*, when Garfinkle came on the scene in the 1960's, to introduce Ethnomethodology, he was criticized for being far "too preoccupied with the little things of social life" (Warfield, 2002, p. x). Lemert concedes that Ethnomethodology "imposes the obligation to study the utterly practical methods by which notoriously ordinary people compose the rational grounds of their social orderings" (Warfield, 2002, p. xi). In short, Ethnomethodology is concerned with the real world ways common people interact and the manners in which they make sense of their world. However, Lemert highlights its importance and states that Garfinkle is an especially salient theorist who has surpassed his critics in relevance and continues to exert influence on the practice of social psychology to this day (Warfield, 2002, p. ix-xiii).

Given Garfinkle's significance and focus, it is appropriate to imitate one of the experimental scenarios described by Garfinkle (2003) in his seminal work *Studies in ethnomethodology* by undertaking my own "quasi-experiment." While tightly controlled experiments dominate the physical sciences, the unique nature of the science of Psychology requires research in the form of quasi- or pseudo-experiments that cannot be completely controlled and often rely on observational data alone (J.R. Jones, 2011, p.15). Garfinkle enlisted 135 students to perform bargaining trials; likewise, I investigated my emotional reaction and the observable reactions of shop personnel when faced with a customer's request to pay less than sticker price for a garment (p.69). I performed four trials, one each at the I.N.C.

counter and the Women's clothing kiosk at Grossmont Center's Macy, as well as, at Ross and T.J. Max in Santee Trolley Center. I expected that some subjects would be receptive to a price reduction and that others would react with disapproval. I assumed that my own emotions would depend on their reactions.

After selecting three undamaged, low-priced shirts to purchase, my friend and I approached the I.N.C. brand counter at Macy's, where there was no line and two older, highly coiffed, well-dressed saleswomen were standing at the kiosk. I felt intimidated. After presenting the items, I requested that they give me a discount on the merchandise. The woman directly behind the cash register made a slightly surprised and disapproving face and refused to do so. The other employee immediately looked to coworker and literally took a step back away from us. It was uncomfortable, but I replied with an upbeat "ok," picked up the shirts and walked away. I felt their eyes upon my back and got the feeling that our departure and decision to take the clothes with us was not well received. Since, it implied that I believed their reaction would not be replicated elsewhere in the store, my leaving was critical of their refusal to give discount. In turn, I felt like I was being accused of being a strange cheap-skate and rather cheeky.

After boarding the escalator to go upstairs to Women's clothing, located near the pajamas and practical garments, I felt far less intimidated. I have visited this area often, especially at Christmas for gifts, and had always received friendly service. There was a brisk, three-deep line at each end of the double-sided register counter manned by two younger women dressed casually, but still nice. As I set down the shirts and requested a discount, the sales girl reacted efficiently and very affirmatively. She showed no shock or disapproval at the request and

immediately produced from behind the counter a current newspaper/flier coupon offering 15% discount on all purchases. The interaction saved me a few bucks and left me with a positive feeling. Likewise, I got the impression that this was a routine “good deed” and that the sales girl was genuinely glad that she could be of help.

At this point, I examined many assumptions for the discrepancy between Macy’s departments. I thought of the comparative age of the two department’s sales people, which perhaps relates to years of service. Maybe longer-term employees have forged a stronger affiliation with the company’s monetary interests than with the role of shopper. Then there is the relative status of employees working in high/low end departments at Macy’s. What type of clientele are they typically interacting with or trying to attract? The list goes on, but the simplest assumption is that the girls working upstairs are more familiar with and thus, more accepting of people asking for money off. The Women’s department associate demonstrated her familiarity in how she anticipated the opportunity to provide discount and had the newspaper on hand to facilitate the customer’s savings. I decided to further investigate my familiarity assumption by carrying out trials at so-called “discount stores,” like Ross and T.J. Max.

As their category suggests “discount stores” offer bargain goods and faulty merchandise at reduced prices. Ross has a large clearance section where items that have not sold in a timely manner or have sustained damages are further discounted. This demonstrates that pricing is already handled with a degree of fluidity, and the value of “making a sale” is shown to be of greater importance than the item’s set price.

I felt very at ease as I approached Ross's bustling checkout with my two shirts and one pair of shoes to purchase. There were long lines of people waiting to be helped and all but one of the half dozen register stations were manned with sales clerks. One of the shirts I intended to purchase had two watermarks like stains on its back. This added to the anticipation that asking for a discount would be acceptable. When my turn came, I requested that the manager examine the shirt to assess the level of damage and appropriate compensation. The atmosphere was busy and the supervisor was nowhere to be seen. When I offered to wait and let my friend checkout first, the sales lady helping me turned and looked across the aisle to another sales woman for input. Since, I couldn't hear the response, my friend informed me that the other woman had said 10% off, but I had apparently paused long enough that a third cashier piped up to offer 20% off. I felt a little silly for causing a fuss that involved three clerks, but I did not feel that the employees were personally hostile or reproachful of my request. They simply resented that I was wasting time and holding up the line. At this point, I pondered if being busy is an important factor that encourages an employee's receptivity to price reduction.

My experience at T.J. Max invalidated both my assumption about familiarity and level of activity. There was a long snaking line and several registers open at T.J. Max. Coming off my recent success at Ross, I was once again confident of a positive reception. I had selected a pair of jeans whose closure rivet had been completely ripped out. In effect, there was no way to button them and surely, this defect deserved a great discount. When I showed the young man at the register the problem he quickly deferred to a female manager. The manager responded with extreme rigidity stating, "We are already a discount store and will only give \$1.00 off for every \$100.00 in value, no matter what!" It appeared to me, that in this case familiarity with discount

requests had bred inhospitality. I did not feel a negative reflection on myself or take it personally. Yet, I felt bad for the young man, who was so clearly uncomfortable with delivering this stringent “no discount” policy to the customers.

I could relate to his discomfort for I had not been thrilled with the prospect of performing a breaching experiment. This aligns with Garfinkle’s (2003) research, for he found that when his student trials were broken down into a series of steps, it was the “anticipation of the trial” and “approaching the salesperson” for the “*first try*” that produced the most fear (p. 69). Garfinkle (2003) asserts, “the relevant standardized expectancy is the ‘institutionalized one price rule,’ and due to “its ‘internalized’ character the student-customers should have been fearful and shamed by the prospective assignment” and I was (p.69). The thought of breaking a cultural norm caused me far more discomfort than performing the actual trials, regardless of the subject’s reaction.

Garfinkle (2003) describes several “models of man” including a “cultural dope” that is “the man-in-the-sociologist’s-society who produces the stable features of the society by acting in compliance with pre-established and legitimate alternatives of action that the common culture provides” (p. 68). Garfinkle (2003) goes on to describe just how I was “made out” to be a “cultural dope” in that “if upon arousal of troubled feelings persons avoid tinkering with these ‘standardized’ expectations, the standardization could consist of an *attributed* standardization that is supported by the fact that persons avoid the very situations in which they might learn about them” (p.69-70). I learned that by paying full sticker price, I was producing “the stable features of society,” but I was acting in compliance with an “attributed standardization” based on my avoidance of the alternatives, since I associated shame and fear with them. Just like the

participants in Garfinkle's (2003) study, I also felt less discomfort, stress or fear and experienced a sense of enjoyment as the numbers of my trials increased and plan to continue this behavior in the future (p. 69). In short, I learned you don't know if you don't try. One cannot stop being a "cultural dope" and will continue to be unable to recognize or realized the broad scope of legitimate alternatives of action, if they do not stop relying on knowledge that is based on "avoided tests" (Garfinkle, p.70).

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Unit 1 Essay- Happy Birthday?!?

Before I could start my experiment, I did some background research on what is experimental psychology and what is a social norm, and also what other kinds of experiments have people done. According to Kendra Cherry, journalist of “What is the Experimental Method”, experimental psychology involves manipulating one variable to determine if changes in one variable cause changes in another variable. Next, I did research on what is a social norm. I have heard the term “social norm” before but have never actually known what it is. A social norm is “a set of rules that a group uses for appropriate and inappropriate values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. The rules can be explicit or implicit. Failure to stick to the rules can result in severe punishments” (Kelley & Deutsch). An example of a social norm is facing the doors in an elevator. After looking up some terms, I looked up some experiments that other people have done. One experiment that I found was on PubMed. It was called Breeching the Social Norm. It was conducted by F Fodrie and M Kenworthy. Their experiment was to see how people acted when you invaded personal space, so when they would walk through a store or college campus, they would walk really close to that person, like right up on the person. They tested this on strangers and on friends. Their observations came to be that in some of the tests they came across altercations because they were invading space and with their friends they just had a few comments here and there. The experiment that I chose to do was give someone I know a birthday card or a present, even though I know it is nowhere close to their birthday. I chose this because I thought it would be fun to see how people would react to this. My hypothesis was that if I give someone a gift even though it is not their birthday, they will accept it. My

hypothesis was somewhat correct. Two out of three of the subjects took their gifts. So I chose three of my friends/ teammates; Denny, Brad and Alan. Denny is my goofy friend, Brad is my uptight/mean friend, and Alan is my shy friend; with these different personalities I was not quite sure what kind of reactions I was going to get.

First was Denny. I got a birthday card for him and I took it to practice with me. When I gave him the card He was like “What is this for?” and I was like “HAPPY BIRTHDAY!” He was like uh Jerry it is not my birthday. I was like sure it is Denny. Stop acting like its not. I know you’re getting older but you don’t have to lie about your birthday. He just kept saying no it was not his birthday and was laughing. He also kept trying to hand me his card back and I kept refusing to take it. He tried putting it back in my bag and I took it out and put it in his bag. We kept going back and forth for about 10 minutes. When the rest of the team noticed what was going on, they all started asking Denny if it was his birthday and started telling him happy birthday. He kept saying guys it’s not my birthday and I kept telling everyone “oh yes it is He is lying” and I would laugh. Then my coach came up to the field and I told him it was Denny’s birthday and he made the whole team sing to him. He just started laughing and was trying to yell over us that it was not his birthday. It was really funny. As we started practicing, some of my teammates were coming up to me and asking me if it really was his birthday and I was saying yes of course because I wanted everyone to believe me and they did. So people started giving him birthday hits. I felt kind of bad for that, but it was funny to see him start playing along after awhile. Towards the end of practice he just started telling people I want my gifts tomorrow then since “it is my birthday”. Denny was a good sport.

Next was my friend Brad, the uptight one. Because I know he is uptight and mean I wanted to do something more extreme for him. Go beyond just a card because I really wanted to see what kind of reaction I was going to get out of him. Before I experimented on Brad, I waited a few days to let things die down, so that when it was Brad's turn my teammates wouldn't catch on to think I was pulling a prank. So for Brad I made him a birthday cake and bought him balloons and took them to practice. I went early so I could surprise him. When I walked up to the field the rest of the team was there, except for Brad, and they started asking me if it really was his birthday and of course I said yes. So they all ran to my coach's office and made him a poster saying, "Happy Birthday." When he walked up to the field and saw us holding the balloons, cake and poster he turned right around and started walking back in the other direction. It was so funny. So we started to follow him and he took off running. I had no idea Brad was going to do that. I figured he was going to just walk past us and not even acknowledge us, but no instead he runs. When he finally came up to the field, I tried handing him the balloons and he let them go. So they flew away. I just started laughing. You could see on his face he was not messing around, he was very serious. So I just started singing to him the happy birthday song and carried his cake to him. What does he do? He knocks that cake out my hands and it falls to the ground. At this point I am not laughing anymore, I am shocked. I was so surprised that he did that. I even asked him if he was having a bad day because I have never seen him be so mean before. And he just said "No, it's just not my birthday so I don't want that stuff." I just started laughing. I could not help it. He really didn't want the gifts. I thought he would accept them at least, but no. After the team saw what he did to the balloons and cake they didn't even say happy birthday to him or sing like they did to Denny. When I told my

coach this time, he just said “Oh ok”. I was surprised at that. He could probably tell by his face and actions that he was not happy. Everyone on the team knows he is the uptight/mean one. So after practice, I just told Brad I hope you have a wonderful rest of the day on your birthday and he started yelling at me saying I am crazy and that it’s not his birthday so stop saying it is. And if I was a real friend I would know his real birthday is in November. I just walked away and said happy birthday again and laughed of course.

Lastly, was my friend Alan. He is really shy so I thought he would just accept my gifts because he doesn’t like attention on him. So for Alan I gave him a card, flowers, and a gift certificate. When I brought them to him at practice to my surprising he would not take the card or gift certificate, he took the flowers because he thought they smelled good and were beautiful. I just kept pushing the card and gift certificate on him and he would not open his hands up to grab them. He let the stuff fall to the ground. I was like “Alan I have never seen you like this” and he was like “Well it is not my birthday” and we kept going back and forth saying yes it is, no it isn’t for about ten minutes. Then finally I snuck the stuff into his bag and ran. This time when I did the gifts none of my teammates said happy birthday to Alan or my coach. I think after the experience with Brad they did not know what to expect, so they just stayed away. I heard a couple of them during practice ask him if it was really his birthday, but no one did what they did to Denny and Brad.

After doing this experiment, I learned that people are followers. They join in so that they don’t feel left out or feel wrong. For instance, with Brad they made him poster so they didn’t feel left out and so that Brad would think they “knew” it was his birthday. This study that I did was a form of observation and quasi experiment. It is a form of observation because I had to

observe my subjects reactions to me giving them gifts and also observing surrounding factors.

This study is a quasi experiment because I had to test to see if I would get a reaction out of something that was false, but was seen as true.

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