

Exclusion and ostracism

Interpersonal behavior

Topic 3

Quiz (exclusion and ostracism)

1. What are three temporal stages of reaction to ostracism (according to K. Williams)?

- Reflexive
- Reflective
- Resignation

2. In Cyberbomb studies Van Beest, Williams & Van Dijk predicted that (check all that apply)

- A. Cyberbomb would reduce reflexive responses to ostracism
- B. Cyberbomb would not reduce reflexive responses to ostracism
- C. Assurance of an afterlife should reduce retaliation only in over-inclusion conditions
- D. Assurance of an afterlife should especially reduce retaliation when death is salient and thus in Cyberbomb
- E. Being over-included in Cyberbomb would be perceived as a negative experience compared to being equally included in Cyberbomb

Class structure

- Ostracism: theoretical basics
- Kipling Williams on Ostracism (video)
- Paradigms and manipulations of ostracism, social exclusion, and rejection
- Cyberbomb: Effects of being ostracized from a death game
- Presentations

Ostracism. Conceptual background

- Ostracism: What does it mean?
- **Kipling Williams**
 - **Ostracism:** ignoring and excluding individuals or groups by individuals or groups
 - **Rejection:** an explicit declaration that an individual or group is not wanted
 - **Social exclusion:** being kept apart from others
- Why is it so important to study ostracism, rejection, and social exclusion?
 - Kipling Williams on Ostracism
<https://vimeo.com/62789770>

Ostracism. Conceptual background

- An evolutionary perspective
 - ostracism has been observed in most social species and across time and cultures
 - group cohesion and power as consequences
 - an immediate painful response to any hint of ostracism
- Paradigms and manipulations of ostracism, social exclusion, and rejection
 - ball tossing
 - cyberball
 - life alone prognosis paradigm
 - get acquainted
 - etc.

Theories of ostracism, social exclusion, and rejection

- A temporal examination of responses to ostracism (K.Williams). Stages:
 - reflexive painful response
 - threats to the need for belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence, and increases in sadness and anger
 - a reflective stage that is responsive to cognitive appraisals of the situation
 - resignation
- The Social Monitoring System (W.Gardner) and Sociometer Theory (M.Leary)
 - When belonging is threatened, the individual is motivated to attend more carefully to social cues, presumably to achieve success in subsequent social interactions.
 - Self-esteem is a gauge of relational valuation that, when low, signals the individual that changes must be made to improve inclusionary status.

Empirical findings

- Reflexive stage:
 - social pain = physical pain (fMRI, blood pressure)
 - self-reported distress levels (self-esteem, sense of belonging, control, and meaningful existence)
 - ostracism-induced distress is resilient to situational variation
- Reflective stage: prosocial and aggressive responses.
Moderators:
 - individual differences (rejection sensitivity, jealousy, self-esteem, social avoidance, gender, etc.)
 - situational Influences (who is ostracizing (ingroup members or outgroup members) and why, and whether there are options for (or perceived control over) future inclusion, etc.

Cyberbomb. Study 1: Fundamental needs and mood in Cyberbomb

- Hypothesis:
 - people would be less satisfied in term of fundamental needs and mood when ostracized from Cyberball than when ostracized from Cyberbomb
- Design:
 - 2 (Game type: Cyberball, Cyberbomb) x 2 (Game experience: Ostracized, Included) between-S
- Results:
 - prediction was supported by the data of both need satisfaction and mood

Cyberbomb. Study 2: Aggressive behavior in Cyberbomb

- Hypothesis:
 - being over-included in Cyberbomb would be perceived as a negative experience compared to being equally included in Cyberbomb
 - assurance of an afterlife should especially reduce retaliation when death is salient and thus in Cyberbomb (reflective responses)
- Design:
 - 2 (Game type: Cyberball, Cyberbomb) x 3 (Game experience: Ostracized, Included, Over-included) x 2 (Afterlife: yes, no) between-S
- Procedure: 3 phases (manipulation of afterlife, game type manipulations, measure of aggression)
- Results:
 - being over-included in Cyberbomb is also a painful experience but less than being ostracized in Cyberbomb
 - being ostracized from a negative situation and being over-included in a negative situation may cause people to retaliate
 - people may retaliate when ostracized and when over-included in Cyberbomb, but the assurance of an afterlife reduces such aggression only in the ostracism condition

Task for mini-groups work

Propose an idea and design beyond the Van Beest et al. (2011) study

Options:

- experimental study
- any part of initial study could be taken as a starting point, e.g.:
 - your reasonable doubts in measures operationalization
 - ... in paradigm (Cyberball/Cyberbomb)
 - ... in stages (reflexive...) sequence
 - etc.

Next time

- Quiz (interdependence)
- Topic 4. Interdependence
- Who will present?

References

- Williams, K. D. (2007). Ostracism. *Annual Review of Psychology, 58*, 425-452.
- Williams, K. D. (2009). Ostracism: A temporal need-threat model. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 41* (pp. 279-314). NY: Academic Press.
- Van Beest, I., Van Dijk, E., & Williams, K. D. (2011). Cyberbomb: Effects of being ostracized from a death game. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 14*, 581-596.

Summary points (Williams, 2007)

1. Ostracism is adaptive for groups because it eliminates burdensome members and maintains their cohesiveness and strength.
2. Ostracism is painful and distressing to those who are ostracized. Detecting ostracism is adaptive for the individual so that corrections can be made in order to increase inclusionary status.
3. Cognitive factors (such as who is ostracizing and why) and personality factors of the ostracized individuals appear to have little influence in determining the detection of ostracism or the pain that it initially brings.
4. With time to reflect on the ostracism experience, cognitive, personality, and situational factors appear to moderate the speed of recovery and the type of coping response chosen (e.g., aggressive or prosocial).
5. Ostracism can lead to a variety of responses, including (a) behaviors that reflect the desire to be liked and get re-included, (b) antisocial and aggressive behaviors, (c) a stunned and affectless state, and (d) attempts to flee the situation. Understanding which response path is chosen is the current challenge for researchers.
6. There is the potential for ostracized individuals to be more receptive to extreme groups that show an interest in the individual, and at the same time, if these groups are also ostracized by the dominant society, they may be predisposed to act in such a way to attract recognition and attention, possibly through violence.