

Re: Converting Fundy Repug Preachers

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Some Very Basic Political Science for Dummies

<http://groups.google.com/groups?selm=v7s88rpjiftb6%40corp.supernews.com>

"Welsh Neanderthal" <urg@ugh.org> wrote in message
news:FaudnQtgG6zw0uDcRVn-jw@comcast.com...

- > *One way is to take away their Google. Another good method*
- > *is to catch them spending prayer cloth and Love offering money*
- > *for hookers. A third is to send them on Missions with plenty*
- > *of Tabasco sauce and mayonnaise and provide meals for hungry*
- > *cannibals.*
- >

Social Pressure, Perception and Conformity

In some cases when other people unanimously choose wrongly and you believe they where wrong there is about a one third chance that you will also choose wrongly out of group conformity. There is a marked tendency for individuals to yield reality to consensus pressures, which is actually what happens in an almost incredible 37 percent of answers to rigged items in experimental situations.

Imagine yourself in the following situation: You sign up for a psychology experiment, and on a specified date you and seven others whom you think are also subjects arrive and are seated at a table in a small room. You don't know it at the time, but the others are actually associates of the experimenter, and their behavior has been carefully scripted. You're the only real subject.

The experimenter arrives and tells you that the study in which you are about to participate concerns people's visual judgments. She places two cards before you. The card on the left contains one vertical line. The card on the right displays three lines of varying length.

The experimenter asks all of you, one at a time, to choose which of the three lines on the right card matches the length of the line on the left card. The task is repeated several times with different cards. On some occasions the other "subjects" unanimously choose the wrong line. It is clear to you that they are wrong, but they have all given the same answer.

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What would you do? Would you go along with the majority opinion, or would you "stick to your guns" and trust your own eyes?

In 1951 social psychologist Solomon Asch devised this experiment to examine the extent to which pressure from other people could affect one's perceptions.¹ In total, about one third of the subjects who were placed in this situation went along with the clearly erroneous majority.

After the experiment a small percentage of the conformists claimed to actually have seen the wrong line as a correct match. If these participants were telling the truth, we must conclude that private acceptance was at work. These participants privately accepted the belief of the majority opinion. They were not simply complying with the group. About half of the rest of the conformists claimed that they had seen the lines correctly but that when they heard the majority choice, they decided that they must have been wrong. They then went along with the group. Whether this is compliance or private acceptance is debatable. However, the remaining conformists clearly complied. They said that they thought their choice was correct but that they had gone along with the group anyway.

Asch concluded that it is difficult to maintain that you see something when no one else does. Pressure from other people can make you see almost anything.

>From these and other studies, it becomes clear that our attitudes, perceptions, indeed our whole pattern of thought, are more effected by and dependent upon communications, conformity and consensus pressures, and propaganda than we like to admit. Furthermore, rationality and truth are no guarantee of protection against these irrational forces any more than the people in Asch's experiment felt any less pressure because their temporary inability to make a satisfactory personal adjustment to their situation was based in rationality. More often, the function of intellectual process seems to be the fabrication of some excuse enabling the individual to bring his thought and behavior in line with outside pressures. To mean anything, rationality must be disciplined and a prevalent element of the environment.

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> > <http://groups.google.com/groups?selm=vt49og3usfsbda%40corp.supernews.com>

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> > *The Social Animal – Elliot Aronson – 8th Edition 1999*

> > <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0716733129/>

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