

Social Psychology Quarterly

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"Retail Homeyness"

Photograph by John F. Sherry, Jr.



Cooley-Mead Address

Two on Networks

The Journal of Microsociologies

A Journal of the American Sociological Association

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The Journal of Microsociologies

A JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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(Revised December 2008)

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———. 1947b. “Exploratory Latent Structure Analysis Using Both Identifiable and Unidentifiable Models.” *Biometrika* 61:215–31.
Szelényi, Szonja and Jacqueline Olvera. Forthcoming. “The Declining Significance of Class: Does Gender Complicate the Story?” *Theory and Society*.
- **Collections:** Clausen, John A. 1972. “The Life Course of Individuals.” Pp. 457–514 in *Aging and Society*, vol. 3, *A Sociology of Age Stratification*, edited by M. W. Riley, M. Johnson, and A. Foner. New York: Russell Sage.
Sampson, Robert J. 1992. “Family Management and Child Development: Insights from Social Disorganization Theory.” Pp. 63–93 in *Advances in Criminology Theory*, vol. 3, *Facts, Frameworks, and Forecasts*, edited by J. McCord. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- **Dissertations:** Charles, Maria. 1990. “Occupational Sex Segregation: A Log-Linear Analysis of Patterns in 25 Industrial Countries.” PhD dissertation, Department of Sociology, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.
- **Machine-readable files:** American Institute of Public Opinion. 1976. *Gallup Public Opinion Poll #965* [MRDF]. Princeton, NJ: American Institute of Public Opinion [producer]. New Haven, CT: Roper Public Opinion Research Center, Yale University [distributor].

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Social Psychology Quarterly

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Introduction to the Introduction

GARY ALAN FINE

Northwestern University

Were it not for Jane Piliavin, this esteemed editorial office would not be mine. She is my role model, my inspiration, my first mentor. It is a special delight that she should have received the Cooley-Mead Award for lifetime achievement in social psychology while I control these pages. While the committee had many easy justifications for their choice, mentoring transforms a brilliant mind into a disciplinary champion.

I enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania as a freshman in the autumn of 1968. It was a yeasty year. Ideas rose and collapsed. Penn, in those days was considered the doormat of the Ivies. Hoping to differentiate themselves from their (imagined) betters, Penn constituted itself as a “Multiversity,” erasing boundaries among departments and professional schools. Undergraduates were encouraged to enroll in courses throughout the university and to construct their own majors,

just so long as some faculty member would agree to guide. My sly plan was to register for only those classes that I wished, becoming an autodidact while being institutionally credentialed. I chose a mix of social psychology, sociology, political science, philosophy, anthropology, history, and folklore. This potage I labeled “Human and Social Relations.”

But where could I find a tenure-track collaborator? And then I discovered young Jane Piliavin and, depending on how you look at it, my problems ended or were just beginning: the latter no fault of hers. Eventually she left *me* for the lakes and cheese of the Midwest, but her inspiration remained. Do what you will, but do it well. This is the message that I learned from Jane, and it is the message that generations of her students have learned. And don’t let the bastards grind you down. She made me, me. Thank you, Jane.

Now for the legitimate introduction of Professor Jane Piliavin.

Introduction of Jane Allyn Piliavin: Recipient of the 2008 Cooley-Mead Award

PETER L. CALLERO

Western Oregon University

The Social Psychology Section of the American Sociological Association established the Cooley-Mead Award in 1976 to honor extraordinary career contributions to the intellectual and scientific advancement of sociological social psychology. This year it is my honor to introduce Jane Allyn Piliavin, Conway-Bascom Professor of Sociology and Women’s Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, as the 2008 recipient of this eminent award. Jane is internationally recognized for her extensive and highly influential analyses of altruism and

prosocial behavior, but the body of her work, published in five books and over sixty articles and chapters, also includes analyses of cognitive dissonance, juvenile delinquency, values, racial prejudice, stigma, gender relations, and the sociology of biology. Jane’s scholarship is impressive in both its substantive range and intellectual breadth, covering two academic disciplines and published under three different surnames—Allyn, Hardyck, and Piliavin.

Jane was first introduced to social psychology as an undergraduate student at the University of Rochester, where Professor

Vince Nowlis recognized her talent and encouraged her to attend graduate school. This was not a well-worn career path for women in 1958, but Jane graduated from the University of Rochester with high honors and was admitted to the social psychology program at Stanford University. She arrived at Stanford during the period in which Leon Festinger was actively engaged in the development of his theory of cognitive dissonance. Festinger's emphasis on theory development, the experimental method, and field investigations had a significant influence on Jane's professional development in graduate school. The two worked closely together and their collaboration resulted in Jane's first publication - an influential research article on the effectiveness of unanticipated persuasive communication (Allyn and Festinger 1961).

After earning her PhD in social psychology in 1962, Jane took a position at the University of California-Berkeley where she served as a lecturer in psychology and as a researcher in the Survey Research Center. While at Berkeley, Jane designed an extensive study of racial prejudice and anti-Semitism among teenagers. The findings from this project culminated in her first book, "Adolescent Prejudice", with Charles Glock, Robert Wuthnow, and Metta Spencer (Glock et al. 1975). It was also the first of many interdisciplinary, collaborative, and synthetic research projects that have come to characterize Jane's influential scholarship.

In 1967 Jane accepted a position as an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Her time at Penn was limited to only three years, but it was, nevertheless, a very productive stage in her career. It was during this period that her professional collaboration with Irv Piliavin flourished. Although their work together includes publications focusing on both juvenile delinquency and cognitive dissonance, they are best known for their research on helping behavior in emergency situations. Through a series of ingenious field experiments Jane and her colleagues developed and elaborated the Arousal: Cost-Reward Model of emergency intervention (Piliavin et al. 1981). The basic framework of the model explains how

individual motivation to assist in an emergency is a function of both an emotional arousal and a rational process of cognitive decision-making. It proved to be a highly influential approach and it stimulated a body of related research by social psychologists across the globe. In the words of Jack Dovidio, professor of psychology at Yale University, "The Arousal: Cost-Reward Framework not only represented a blueprint for Jane's own original, methodologically clever, and systematic work, but it transformed the field, stimulated researchers to integrate physiological measures into their work, and inspired a generation of scholars." Indeed, it would be difficult to overstate the impact of Jane's work on emergency intervention, as this program of research is on its own worthy of an award, but her contribution to the field of altruism and prosocial behavior extends well beyond this initial focus.

In 1970 Piliavin moved to the University of Wisconsin-Madison as an associate professor in the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, and in 1976 she joined the sociology department at UW-Madison. The department of sociology would become Jane's academic home for the next 32 years and her time there would include service as department chair - the first woman in the history of this distinguished department to serve in such a capacity. The fact that a scholar with a PhD in psychology would be selected chair of sociology at Wisconsin speaks to the respect and confidence she established among her colleagues. It is also an indicator of Jane's professional engagement with sociology. There is no doubt that sociological theory influenced her research and shaped her thinking during this time. This was evident in a program of research initiated in the early 1980s that focused on patterns of long-term helping behavior. Her shift of attention away from single episodes of helping to reoccurring and predictable acts of altruism was a major change of direction for the field and it raised new questions. Is it possible for an individual to develop a regular commitment to prosocial behavior, and if so, how does such a pattern emerge and how is it sustained? In characteristic fashion, Jane approached the topic with

theoretical eclecticism and a focus on public issues. In her new program of research Jane drew upon concepts from symbolic interactionism, role theory, models of rational choice, and theories of socialization, among others, in a comprehensive examination of regular voluntary blood donors. In her book on the topic (Piliavin and Callero 1991), she showed how the development of an altruistic identity is characterized by a complex transformation of the self that involves an intricate interplay of factors at multiple levels of analysis.

I was fortunate to be one of Jane's' students at the time, and during our collaboration I was continually impressed by the range of her expertise, her penetrating research questions, and her thoughtful appreciation for the complexity of human behavior. But I must also confess that as a young graduate student I was at times seriously intimidated by her relentless approach to social research and wondered if I would be able to keep pace. Jane's style is aggressive, comprehensive, and persistent. In our work together we identified person variables, situational factors, interaction patterns, family background variables, organizational structures, meaning systems, and even physiological forces that facilitate the development of an altruistic identity. We employed mailed questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, on site questionnaires and naturalistic observations. We studied more than 5,000 individuals before they donated blood, while they donated blood, and after they donated blood. We examined institutional records, interaction networks, and community characteristics. We considered emotional changes, cognitive changes, social changes, and historical changes. For Jane there is no ideological commitment to a single theoretical framework or particular method of data collection; she is motivated by intellectual curiosity, guided by an honest scientific commitment to advance the discipline, and moved by a deep seated desire to promote the common good.

Jane is fond of quoting Kurt Lewin's dictum that "there is nothing so practical as a good theory", and her contributions to social psychology reflect this intellectual pragmatism. Her integrative and synthetic style of

research has involved collaborators from psychology, sociology, social work, business, health, and government, and has had enormous influence both inside and outside of academic social psychology. While it is obvious that her contributions to basic research have shaped the study of altruism, the same conceptual models and empirical findings have also contributed to public policy, especially in the arena of blood collection and healthcare. This is evidenced by her many years of expert service to national advisory panels and policy committees, including the Blood Safety and Availability Committee of the Department of Health and Human Services, the AIDS and Blood Donation Working Group for the National Institutes of Health, the Panel on AIDS Intervention and Research of the National Research Council, the Blood Products Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration, and the Donor/Patient Safety Committee of the Department of Health and Human Services, among others. Although Jane officially retired in 2006, her emerita status has not deterred either her scholarship or her community service. The same praxis orientation and innovative eclecticism continues to characterize Jane's most recent work on whistle blowing in organizations and the health benefits of volunteer behavior.

If I may, I would like to conclude my introduction on a more personal note. Although we recognize Jane's outstanding record of scholarship and honor her career contributions to social psychology, Jane also deserves acknowledgment for her sincere devotion to the craft of teaching and learning. Jane can dazzle students in the classroom with her impressive range of expertise, but in my experience, her more significant impact is found in a genuine concern for her student's welfare. She delivers organized and insightful academic lectures, but she also carefully listens to her students; she is concerned with individual academic achievement, but she also knows that family and personal relationships matter; and as a mentor, colleague and friend, Jane is honest, fair, and generous.

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Altruism and Helping: The Evolution of a Field: The 2008 Cooley-Mead Presentation¹

Jane Allyn Piliavin

I present a selective history of the evolution of the study of altruism and helping behavior, using a series of questions and answers. Some of the topics covered include the motives for helping, the origins of helping and altruism in evolution and child development, the relationship of organizations to helping, and the psychological and health consequences for the helper. A framework within which to view the current structure of the field is presented, and a challenge is issued for scholars in the areas of social movements and helping behavior to come together to synthesize the two fields.

The 2008 American Sociological Association meetings marked the 50th anniversary of the social psychology section. The year 2008 also marked the 100th anniversary of the publication of the first two American books with the words "social psychology" in the title. One, "An Introduction to Social Psychology", was written by a psychologist, William McDougall of Harvard and later Duke. The other, "Social Psychology, An Outline and Source Book" was penned by a sociologist, Edward A. Ross, from the University of Wisconsin. This set the stage for

what Camic (2008:324) calls "the Janus-faced enterprise" that is social psychology. Both men wrote, broadly viewed, on the topic of this paper.

McDougall was an instinct theorist who in those early days of behaviorism was swimming against the behaviorist stream; Camic (2008:324) refers to his "hollow treatment of 'the social'." He spoke of the maternal instinct and the "tender emotion", which he thought were the bases of our concern for the needs of others: "for from this emotion and its impulse to cherish and protect spring generosity, gratitude, love, pity, true benevolence, and altruistic conduct of every kind; in it they have their main and absolutely essential root, without which they would not be"(McDougall 1908:74).

Ross focused much of his book on the nature of crowds, fads, and riots, and Camic (2008:324) rightly claims that in it "'the psychological' is a cipher"; Ross was by all accounts a socialist. He was fired from Stanford for saying radical things—which was how he ended up at that hotbed of freedom of expression, Wisconsin. He once wrote an essay on the evils of irresponsible financial greed, and late in his life was quoted as saying,

¹ Since this paper reflects a lifetime of research, this footnote will include a lifetime of thanks, in roughly chronological order. First to my teachers, the late Vincent Nowlis and the late Leon Festinger; to my husband, Irving Piliavin for over 40 years of intellectual collaboration, criticism and emotional support; to the late Erving Goffman, for encouragement when I most needed it; to Elaine Hatfield, who will know why; to my coauthors on several books: Russell Clark, Jack Dovidio, Sam Gaertner, Lou Penner, and Dave Schroeder, to my students, particularly Dorcas Evans, Diane Knott, Peter Callero, Judy Howard, and Erica Siegl; to Bob and Tess Hauser, John Delamater, and all my other colleagues in the Wisconsin Sociology Department, which has to be the best place in the social science world to pursue an academic career. Direct correspondence to 5105 Sealane Way, Oxnard, CA, 93035-1970; jpiliavi@ssc.wisc.edu.

“There may come a time in the career of every sociologist when it is his solemn duty to raise hell” (American Sociological Association (<http://www2.asanet.org/governance/ross.html>). His social psychology book did not specifically discuss altruism or helping behavior, although with his emphasis on crowds we can perhaps see him as initiating the study of social movements and activism. McDougall is focused (like a good psychologist) on individual actions and Ross (as a committed sociologist) on the social and institutional means for helping others—including occasionally raising hell.

The year 2008 is also the fortieth anniversary of the publication of the first empirical article on diffusion of responsibility in emergencies, which became perhaps in many people’s minds the main topic in the social psychology of altruism and helping behavior: Darley and Latané’s article “Bystander Behavior in Emergencies: Diffusion of Responsibility”. This was their first report of a series of laboratory studies that were designed to simulate some aspects of the famous Kitty Genovese incident. Two years later, Latané and Darley published their book, *The Nonresponsive Bystander: Why Doesn’t He Help?* For roughly the next 20 years, theirs was the paradigm for the study of helping behavior.

What were sociologists doing at this time? The late 1960s through the 1970s saw considerable research on social movements (see, e.g., Demerath, Marwell, and Aiken 1971; Draper 1965; Zald and McCarthy 1979). During the 1960s and 1970s *Sociological Abstracts* has 1881 citations to that term, compared to 303 for altruism, prosocial behavior, and helping behavior combined. The best known such book, *Freedom Summer*, by Doug McAdam, a study of the students (mainly white) who went to the South to facilitate the civil rights movement, was published somewhat later (1988). So again, here at the inception of the empirical study of helping behavior and altruism, we see psychologists focused on *individuals* and their motivation. In the case of Darley and Latané, it was the motivation not to help. Sociologists were studying collective action in the service of the betterment of soci-

ety as a whole, and trying to understand the causal factors in this involvement. Have these two threads ever come together? Actually, no, and one of my conclusions will be that they need to.

In addition to this goal of pointing out some ways in which sociologists and psychologists can and should work together, I provide a history of the development of the field of altruism and helping behavior by asking and answering a number of questions that mainly psychological social psychologists have addressed, and will present an organization of the field as I believe it now is and should continue to be into the future. In this history, I borrow heavily from a recent book, *The Social Psychology of Prosocial Behavior*,² which I coauthored with Jack Dovidio, David Schroeder, and Lou Penner (2006) and an Annual Review chapter that preceded it (Penner et al. 2005).

First, I will define some terms: prosocial behavior, helping behavior, altruism, cooperation, and positive psychology. Of these, prosocial behavior is the most general, altruism the most controversial. *Prosocial behavior* is a broad category of actions that are “defined by society as generally beneficial to other people and to the ongoing political system” (Piliavin et al. 1981:4). *Helping behavior* is defined as “an action that has the consequence of providing some benefit to or improving the well-being of another person” (Dovidio et al 2006:22).

Altruism can be seen as either a particular type of helping or a particular kind of motivation. We define altruism in the former sense, following Macaulay and Berkowitz (1970:3) as “behavior carried out to benefit another without anticipation of rewards from external sources.” Batson (1991, 1998) focuses more on the motivation than on the act. He claims the important contrast is between helping that is motivated by *egoistic* concerns (e.g., “If I help that person, it will make me feel good and look good to others”) and helping that is motivated by *altruistic* concerns (e.g., “I want

² The figures in this article, though from several original sources, have also all been reprinted in my work with Dovidio et al.

to help this victim avoid further suffering”). The sociologist/philosopher Auguste Comte ([1851]1975) first coined the term “altruism” as a contrast to “egoism”. Many people believe that there is no such thing as altruism, and the question of whether one can prove its existence has been central in the study of helping behavior.

With all of the previous terms, the direction of action is one way. Person A is doing something *for* person (or group, or organization) B. Cooperation is another matter. Michael Argyle (1991) defines *cooperation* as “acting together, in a coordinated way at work, leisure, or in social relationships, in the pursuit of shared goals, the enjoyment of the joint activity, or simply furthering the relationship” (4). In cooperation, everyone can expect to benefit—this is of course why we do it. In cooperating, we can attain goals that one person cannot easily accomplish alone. I will not talk more about cooperation, since it is somewhat less problematic as a process.

What of the term positive psychology? This is a relatively recent conceptual area. Seligman, quoted on a humanistic studies website cited below, defines *positive psychology* as “the scientific study of positive experiences and positive individual traits, and the institutions that facilitate their development.” (P)ositive psychology has three central concerns: positive emotions, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. Positive emotions are cultivated to achieve contentment with the past, happiness in the present, and hope for the future. Positive individual traits (strengths and virtues), such as compassion, resilience, creativity, curiosity, and integrity, are cultivated to help us weather the storms and stresses of life. Positive institutions are cultivated to foster better communities and ensure justice, responsibility, tolerance, and a sense of meaning within the larger society, (Institute for Humanistic Studies website (<http://humaniststudies.org/enews/?id=298&article=1>). The relevance for this paper lies in its connection to the results for the helper in emotional, psychological, even physical aspects. As I will show, there has been considerable research that indicates strong mental

and physical health effects as the result of engaging in community service.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON ALTRUISM AND HELPING BEHAVIOR

With this as background, I would like to discuss some of the big questions that have been addressed in the area of altruism and where we have gotten in terms of actually answering them. The first question is, of course, the one Darley and Latané asked in the late 1960s: *Why don't people help in an emergency?* Their answer was that the decision to intervene involves having to give an affirmative answer to a series of questions involving uncertainty, of which the critical two are:

1) Is it an emergency? If the actions of others who are present suggest “no”, there will be no response. This is the *social influence* effect; and 2) Do I have a personal responsibility to help? If others are present who could act, or who could be assumed already to have acted, there will be no response. This is the *diffusion of responsibility* effect. In 1981, Latané and Nida wrote an article entitled, “Ten Years of Research on Group Size and Helping,” in which they claimed that the question was essentially closed: the more people there were available to help, the less likely it would be that any individual would intervene, based on these two processes.

However, there are many exceptions to this supposed “rule.” A number of studies have looked at the clarity of emergencies, and have found that the clearer the cues that help is needed, the more likely it is that someone will intervene. Figure 1 shows the results from three studies, done in three separate laboratories, which demonstrate this fact. More to the point of the generality of the “rule,” Clark and Word (1972) found that when the cues are clear, diffusion of responsibility does not take place

I think we can safely say at this point that there is no clear rule. It is in fact not the case that people always diffuse responsibility and thus fail to help in an emergency when others are believed to be available to do so. *Some people help under some circumstances in some emergencies.* A combination of the

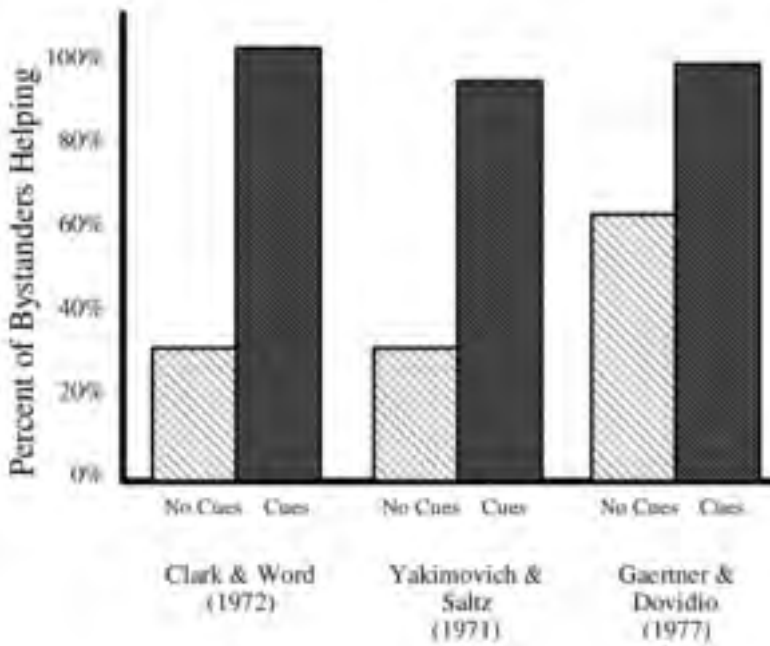


Figure 1. Clear cues of distress, such as screams, increase the likelihood that the situation will be interpreted as requiring assistance and thereby facilitate helping. Taken from Dovidio et al. 2006.

absence of others who might help with clarity and severity of the emergency, certain victim characteristics, and the presence of certain personal characteristics (emergency training,

impulsiveness, self-confidence) are all predictors of intervention. And often when the emergency has these other characteristics, we find no diffusion of responsibility.

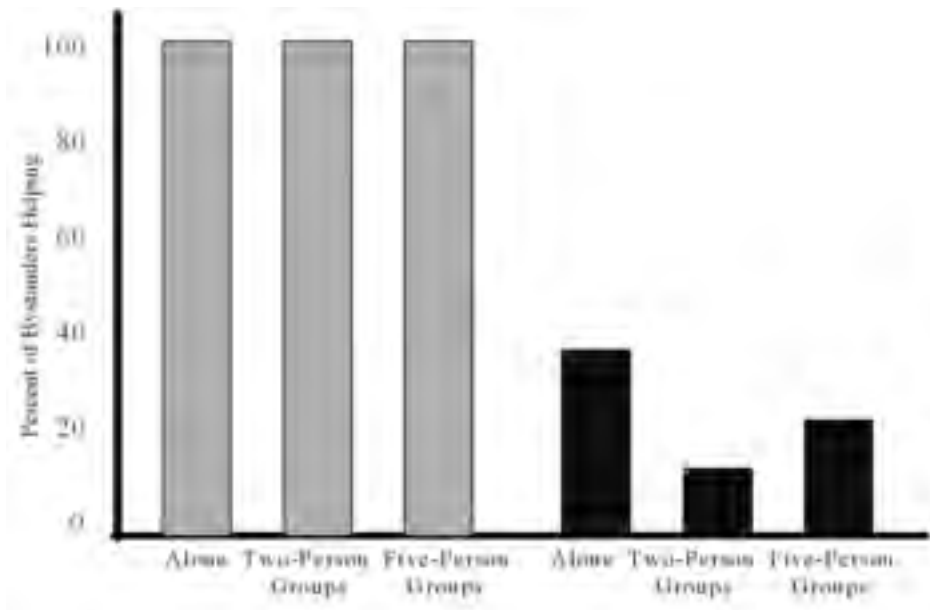


Figure 2: The impact of informational social influence is *greater* in ambiguous than in unambiguous situations. (Taken from Dovidio et al. 2006. Adapted from Clark and Word 1972.)

Why Do People Help?

Once we had become convinced that some people helped some of the time, the next question was—rather than why people do not help—why they do. What is the source and nature of the motivation to help? In the late 1960s, Irving Piliavin and I developed a theoretical model that assumed that the emotional and physiological arousal that we experience when seeing another person in difficulty was the motivating force. We then assumed that the bystander went through a process of cost-benefit analysis in attempting to decide what to do. Diffusion of responsibility was one possible outcome, which was more likely under high perceived costs for intervention. Some support for this process was generated over time. In my 1981 book with Gaertner, Dovidio, and Clark, we modified the model to include a sense of “we-ness” as an intervening factor, which brought our model closer to the work of Batson, who uses empathy as an intervening mechanism.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Robert Cialdini and Daniel Batson had a running battle in which Batson, using his empathy-altruism model, was trying to show that *some* helping *some* of the time was truly altruistic. On the other hand, Cialdini, employing his negative state relief model, was attempting to demonstrate the classic economist’s (or behaviorist’s) position that all actions are based on self-interest; that is, all helping is egoistic. This contest was carried out mainly in the pages of the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, using ingeniously designed laboratory experiments.

The coup de grace to Cialdini’s position came, I believe, in 1990, when Jack Dovidio and colleagues, who *agreed* with Cialdini, carried out an experiment expecting to find support for Cialdini’s position. However, they eventually subtitled their article “evidence for altruism,” because that was what they found (Dovidio, Allen, and Schroeder 1990). This was a very ingenious study that showed that empathically aroused participants helped a person in need more when the helping act relieved the person’s main problem than when it solved an unrelated problem. That is, any

old helping wouldn’t do—which Cialdini’s negative state relief model predicts. It had to be helping a specific person with the particular problem that had aroused the empathy in the first place. So, again, in my mind this is also a question that has been answered. Some people, some of the time, do help other people out of altruism. The intervening process, as Batson, Dovidio, Schroeder, and others have shown, appears to be empathy. When we empathize with the victim, our helping will be altruistic—unaffected by rewards and punishments to us.

What Are the Origins of Helping and Altruism?

Along the way, others have been asking not what is the nature of altruism, helping behavior, and prosocial actions, but rather what are their sources? One of these questions is whether the tendency to help is innate in the human species. No sophisticated social psychologist of course would hold out for a pure sociobiological or psychogenetic position. However, once one has decided that at least some people help altruistically some of the time, the nature-nurture question arises. For me, the most convincing writing on this topic comes from the book, *Unto Others* (1998) by Sober and Wilson, neither of whom is a social psychologist—Sober is a philosopher and Wilson is a biologist.

Their first question was, “How could altruism possibly have evolved, given that it reduces an individual’s overall fitness?” Their answer includes not only the usual ideas about kin selection and reciprocal altruism, but also group selection, an idea raised by Darwin and others that had been rejected by biologists in the 1960s. That is, groups that have more altruistic members will out-compete groups with fewer. A simulation study by Morgan (1985) supports this idea. It is much too complex to report in detail, but regardless of the proportion of altruists in the population to begin with, 5 percent or 29 percent, over the course of 100 generations or less all groups consisted of only altruists. Certain assumptions were built into the models, but they appear to be realistic assumptions. The data

also come out with the reasonable finding that altruists, as individuals, are at a disadvantage in clans that are mixed. Sober and Wilson present a multi-level selection model that includes all three kinds of selection: kin, reciprocity, and group. The last sentence of the biological section of their book reads, "At the behavioral level, it is likely that much of what people have evolved to do is *for the benefit of the group*" (1998:194, italics in original). It should be emphasized that while Sober and Wilson have convinced *me* regarding group selection, only a minority of people in this area agree with us.

In the "psychological altruism" half of the book, similarly, a strong argument is made for the likelihood that human beings are pluralistically motivated. That is, using the example of parental care (which is closely linked to reproductive success and to altruistic tendencies), they argue that children will get better care if their parents both want them to do well (altruism) and feel bad (hedonistic motivation) when they do not. So the most successful parents in terms of the survival of their offspring are those who *can* be motivated either by altruism or by self-interest or by some combination of the two. Their arguments rely heavily on the empirical work of Daniel Batson.

So what evidence is there for the innate basis and/or heritability of altruistic tendencies? There is research that indicates that infants have a primitive form of empathy immediately after birth. Long ago, Arlitt (1930) and Humphrey (1923) observed that four-month old babies cry when they hear others crying. More recent experimental work has used one-day-old infants (Martin and Clark 1982), who were systematically exposed to the cry of another child, of a baby chimp, and their own cry. They cried the most to the sound of the other newborn infant, not to their own. Two other studies (Sagi and Hoffman 1976; Simner 1971) found similar results. It is hard to argue that learning is involved in these findings.

What of heritability? Using twin methodology, Matthews et al. (1981) found that 71 percent of the variability in empathy in response to others' distress was due to genetic

influences. Rushton and colleagues (1986) estimated the heritability of altruism as measured by a self-report instrument to be about 50 percent. More recent work with children (Davis, Luce, and Krauss 1994) found somewhat smaller estimates of the heritability of affective empathic tendencies (.28 for empathic concern and .32 for personal distress). There was no apparent genetic contribution to cognitive empathy or perspective-taking. Zahn-Waxler et al. (2001) also found heritability of positive and negative empathy, but discovered that the heritability went *down* from age 14 months to 20 months. This finding makes an important point: biology is not destiny. The fact that a behavior has a genetic component does not necessarily diminish the importance of environmental and social influences. Here we see that effect before the age of two in partially overriding a genetic component.

If there is a genetic basis for empathy, there must also be a physiological one. Very recently, studies of brain function addressed this question. This work is so recent that it does not even appear in our 2006 book. Lamm, Batson, and Decety (2007) have shown that different areas of the brain "light up" in an fMRI (functional MRI) depending on whether respondents watching someone experiencing pain have been given an instruction to imagine themselves in the situation (self-focus) or to concentrate on how the other feels (empathy set). Tankersley, Stowe, and Huettel (2007) have reported on evoked potentials research that shows that when high altruism people are watching the actions of others, they respond more strongly in a brain area related to empathy than do low altruism people. Moll et al. (2006) conducted an fMRI study of mesolimbic areas of the brain associated with reward and in prefrontal areas implicated in moral judgments. They found that both donating and receiving money stimulate one reward area; this indicates that giving can be rewarding. Only donating, however, stimulated an area that is also associated with social attachment and affiliative rewards in both humans and animals. Costly donation or opposition—essentially taking a moral stand of some kind—stimulated prefrontal areas asso-

ciated with altruistic punishment and moral appraisals. Finally, the strength of the activation of these prefrontal areas was associated with self-reports of real-life volunteering. The authors conclude: "Taken together, these lines of evidence indicate that human altruism draws on general mammalian neural systems of reward, social attachment, and aversion . . . however, altruism tied to abstract moral beliefs relies on the uniquely developed human anterior prefrontal cortex" (Moll et al. 2006:15626).

Finally, Zak and colleagues (2007) have been studying the relationship of oxytocin to generosity. Oxytocin is a chemical that is involved in labor and delivery and in the "let down" response during lactation. In animals, it facilitates attachment to offspring (Remember what McDougall said in 1908 regarding the parental instinct leading to altruism?) and in cohabiting monogamous partners. In this study, generosity increased 80 percent over placebo in a dictator game played between strangers. The authors of the previously discussed fMRI study were at pains to point out that the mesolimbic area that was, in their study, stimulated *only* by donation plays a key role in controlling the release of oxytocin. My conclusion from this emerging research is that the brain is wired for empathy and other-oriented action and the hormone system contributes to this disposition.

Can Altruism be Trained?

The next question is the extent to which altruism can be trained. Most sociologists believe that the most important contribution to why other-oriented individuals grow up to be altruistic lies in early training and experience. What do we know about how to raise an altruistic child? It is clear from a number of studies, such as Zahn-Waxler et al. (1992), that empathy and helping behavior both increase with age in very young children.

There is also good evidence that as children grow up, their level of prosocial moral reasoning changes. Eisenberg (1982) shows that children initially help in order to avoid punishment and obtain rewards. Later empathy comes in, and then internalized values,

norms, duties, and responsibilities. Older children will say, "I would feel bad if I didn't help because I would know that I did not live up to my values." These stages appear to be widespread across cultures and are related to empathy and prosocial behavior. Piaget, of course, long ago proposed that there are actually changes in the nature of children's thinking processes that underlie these changes in behavior. Probably reasoning and behavior are mutually reinforcing rather than one causing the other.

How does this happen? How do you raise a prosocial child? First, social rewards such as praise are more effective than monetary or other tangible rewards. Reward in general works far better than punishment. Among forms of punishment, love withdrawal is most effective and power assertion least. But induction—which is neither reward nor punishment—is most effective of all (Hoffman 1994). Induction involves sitting the child down and reasoning with him or her regarding the consequences of a course of action. It probably works because it leads to empathizing and also provides information regarding normative expectations.

We all "know" that deeds speak louder than words. What are the effects of modeling versus preaching generosity? Rushton (1975) did a study in which a model either acted in a prosocial way or selfishly, and either preached selfishness (greed is good!) or generosity. Both factors had effects, but actions spoke much louder than words in terms of how generous the children were when given a chance to share.

Is it more effective to praise a child or to tell the child that he or she is "the kind of person who enjoys helping"? The latter would be called "labeling" or "altercasting" by sociologists and "attribution" by psychologists. Grusec and Redler (1980) did a study in which children were induced to do a nice thing and then were either praised or told they must really be a helpful person. They were then given opportunities to be generous immediately, after one week, and again after two weeks. The results, as shown in the following figure, were striking. The differential impact favoring attribution grows over time.

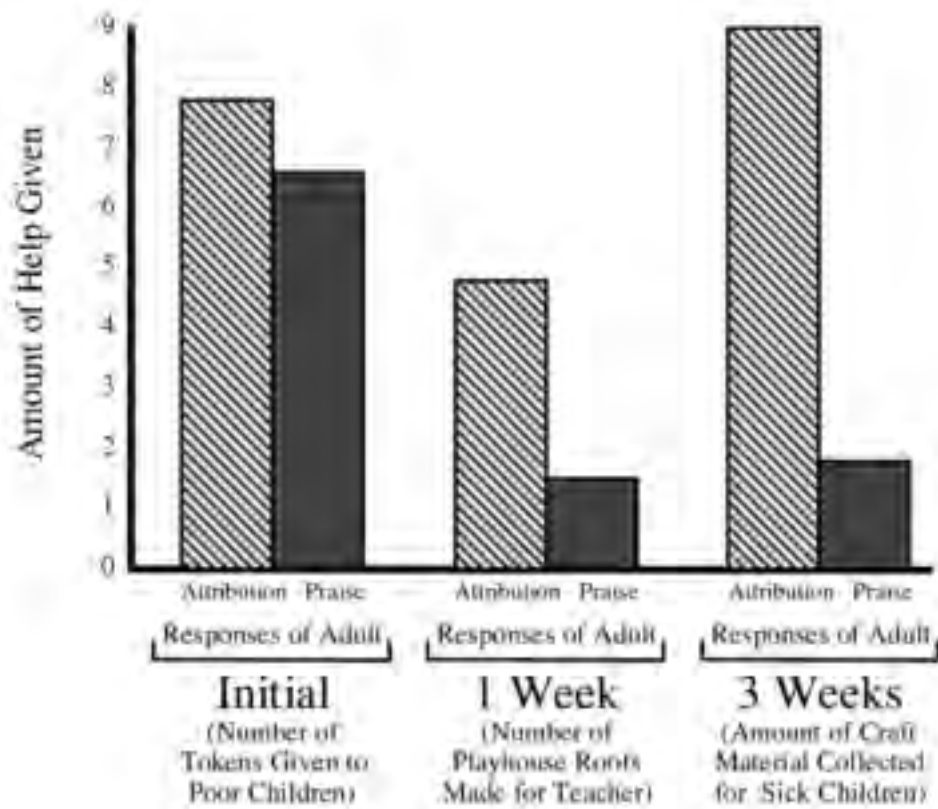


Figure 3: Attributions of helpfulness can have more enduring effects on prosocial behavior than social reinforcers such as praise. (Taken from Dovidio et al. 2006. Adapted from Grusec and Redler 1980.)

Socialization does not stop at the end of childhood. How do adults learn to be more prosocial? The answer given by many sociologists is through identity development that leads to long-term commitment to altruistic action. In identity theory (e.g., Stryker 1980), the more an individual *voluntarily* performs a role, the more likely it is that he or she will develop an identity tied to those actions. Furthermore, the more people who *know* the individual engages in that activity, the more the person will be “altercast” in that role, a process much like the attribution process discussed in the just cited study. Modeling by others and other variables also contribute. The following figure (taken from Lee, Piliavin, and Call 1999), presents results testing a model in which expectations of others, modeling, and two other variables predict role identity and past blood donation, past behavior predicts role identity, and all factors together predict intentions to continue

giving blood. The model has also been shown to predict volunteering and charitable donation.

Marta, Manzi, and Vignoles (2005) replicated this model in Italy. Their three-year study of volunteering explicitly tested our role-identity model, as well as the theory of reasoned action. They found that all of the antecedent variables influenced the outcome variables of intention and volunteering through the intervening variable of identity. Thus, throughout life one can come to develop new role identities, some of which can be altruistic in nature, through a process of identity development aided by the expectations held by others.

How Are Organizations Related to Prosocial Behavior?

Since the empirical study of altruism and helping behavior came initially out of experi-

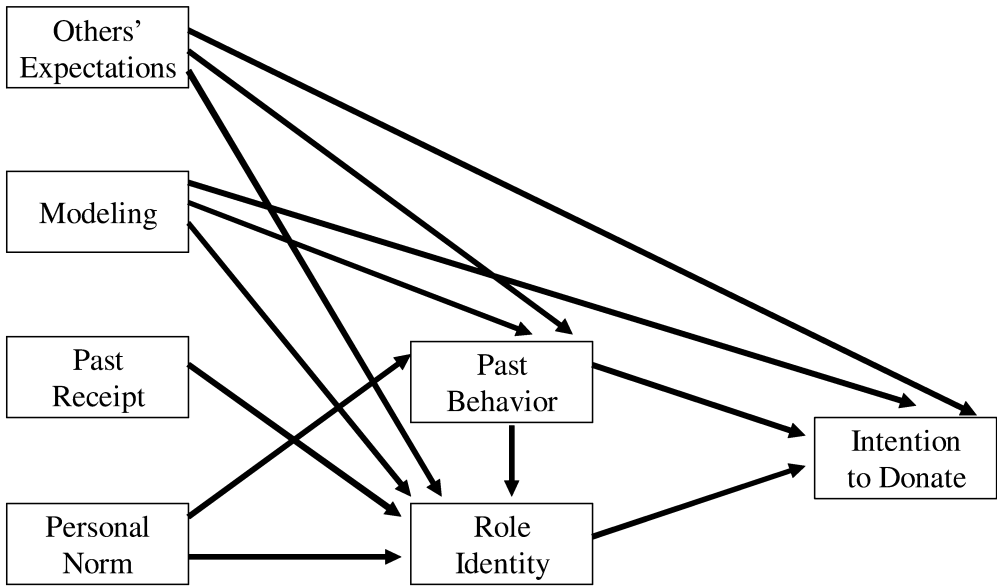


Figure 4. Factors leading to blood donation. (Taken from Dovidio et al. 2006. Adapted from Lee et al. 1999.)

mental social psychology, little attention in the past was paid to structural factors as they relate to these actions. However, most of us spend a large of part of our lives in formal organizations. How is helping/altruism related to participation in organizations? First, organi-

zational factors can contribute to recruitment and maintenance of institutionalized helping, such as volunteering and giving blood. Grube and Piliavin (2000) studied organizational factors predicting strength of role identity as an American Cancer Society volunteer and sub-

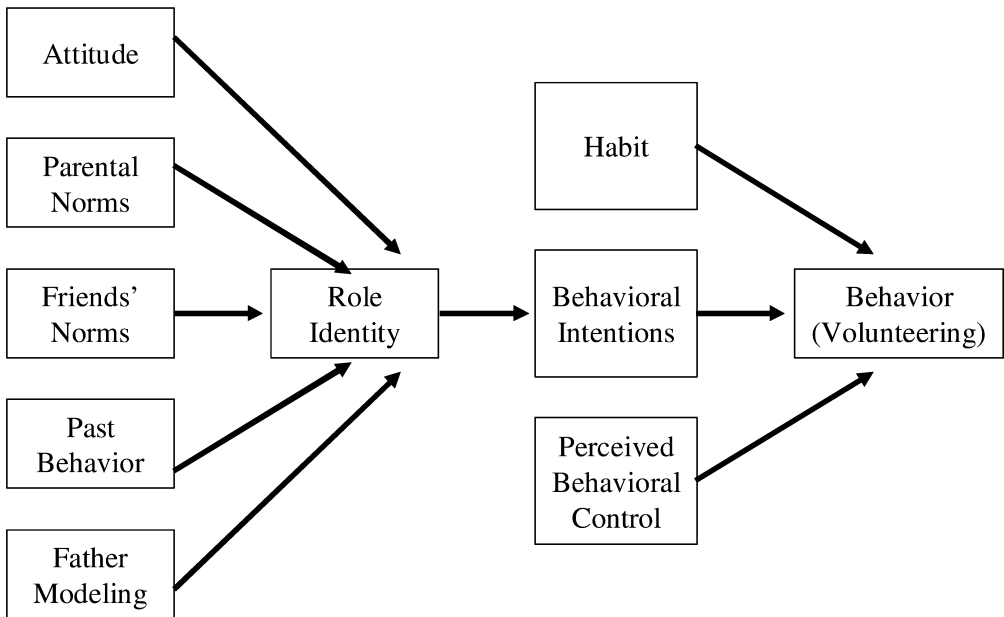


Figure 5. A three-year longitudinal study of factors predicting volunteering. (Taken from Dovidio et al. 2006. From Marta et al. 2005.)

sequent maintenance of their volunteer participation. They found that two organizational characteristics as perceived by the volunteers—prestige of the organization and use of funds, essentially a measure of perceived integrity of the organization—predicted the development of a specific role identity as a cancer volunteer. A stronger role identity, in turn, predicted more hours spent volunteering for ACS and a decreased intention to quit.

The most sociological work in this area has been that of Kieran Healy (2006), who has studied blood and organ donation in relationship to the *type* of blood collection system that is present in a given country. There are three fundamental forms of organization. First, the government can run the blood collection system, as is the case in Great Britain. Second, the Red Cross (or Red Crescent, in Muslim countries) can be responsible for blood collection. Third, non-profit, free-standing blood banks, whose only business is collection and distribution of blood, can do the job. Healy's research on blood donation in the European Union focused on how these various systems of blood collection affect both the amount of blood collected and the kinds of people who give blood.

Healy found that state-run systems garner the most involvement from a large number of people at least once (although the blood banks in Greece and Denmark are also very good on this variable). This is probably the result of the philosophy of national systems: giving blood is an aspect of citizenship, and thus should be as widely spread across the population as possible. Healy also looked at the relationship of type of system to two donor characteristics: level of education and ties to donation recipients. Although education increases the likelihood of donation regardless of the system of collection, the relationship of education to blood donation is stronger in the state-run systems; this is consistent with the higher participation of the better educated in voting and other citizenship activities. Since the Red Cross goes after relatives and friends of blood recipients more successfully than do state systems and blood banks, the number of ties to blood recipients is more closely related in Red Cross systems. Since all individuals who give

blood and most who volunteer do so through organizations, it behooves more of us to attempt to study how those organizations go about obtaining their participation.

People also study helping behavior *within* organizations. Organizational citizenship behavior can be defined as doing more than is required by your job to help other workers (altruism) or the company itself (conscientiousness). What leads workers to do this? Organ and Ryan (1995) found in a meta-analysis that job satisfaction was the single best predictor of both kinds of organizational citizenship. Other important factors are organizational commitment and the perception that one is being treated fairly by the organization (organizational justice). Finally, Finkelstein and Penner (2004) and Krueger (2004) measured an organizational citizen role identity and correlated this factor with independent ratings of employees' levels of organizational citizenship. In both studies, there were significant correlations. Krueger found connections between organizational justice, role identity, and organizational citizenship. Thus, feeling well-treated leads to an organizational citizen role identity, which leads to altruistic actions, just as in the research on volunteering.

Principled organizational dissent, otherwise known as whistle-blowing, can be defined as "the effort by individuals in the workplace to protest and/or to change the organizational status quo because of their conscientious objection to current policy or practice . . . which violates [a] standard of justice, honesty, or economy" (Graham 1986:1). Both organizational and personal factors influence the performance of organizational dissent. It seems most likely when an individual perceives that his/her values or identity are inconsistent with behaviors perceived to be occurring in the organization. Turner, Grube, and Piliavin (in press) found that a strong role identity as a nurse, combined with a high level of perceived medical errors, led to reporting of those errors. The perception that there was a congruence of values between the nurse and her supervisor also contributed to the willingness to report. Again, then, characteristics of the organization as well as individual traits influence this behavior.

The Impact of Critical Events on Helping Behavior

How is helping/altruism related to critical historical events? We have talked about volunteering as a long-term commitment to helping others in the community and the community itself based on role identity. As such, it is usually the result of a considered decision, based on values and cost-reward calculations. Volunteering is unlike emergency intervention, in that emotions are not very heavily involved. However, major events such as catastrophes can prompt many more people to volunteer (as well as informally help).

A study done by Penner and his colleagues (2005) tracked volunteering on a website called Volunteermatch, which has existed since 1998 (<http://www.volunteermatch.org>). These authors used data from 2000 and 2001 to investigate the impact of the attacks of 9/11/2001 on volunteering. The graph below presents their striking results. The spike on the 2001 graph shows the number of new volunteers in the partial week in which the attacks occurred on a Tuesday, the following week,

and the week after that. These people were not just volunteering for disaster work in the affected communities. They were volunteering all over the country for work of all kinds. I propose that the empathic arousal felt by the entire world at that time drives these numbers. Unfortunately, a month later the volunteer rate had returned to normal. This is also what happens with blood donation following disasters.

What Are the Consequences of Helping Behavior for the Helper?

My final question concerns the consequences of helping behavior not for the person aided but for the helper. Sociologists, beginning in the early 1990s, have inquired about the health and well-being consequences of community involvement, such as participating in clubs and organizations and doing formal volunteering. A great deal has been written on this topic, which I will attempt to summarize very briefly. The concurrent effects on adolescents and young adults seem to involve keeping them “on the straight and narrow”: keeping them in school and out of delinquency and

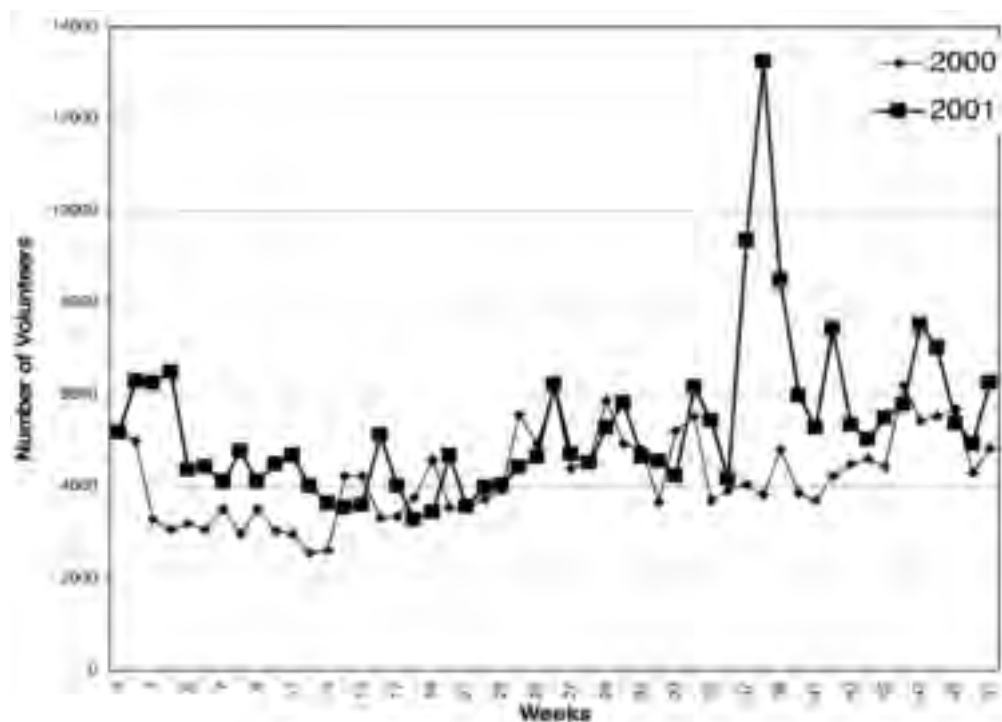


Figure 6. Rates of volunteering before and after 9-11, 2002. (Taken from Dovidio et al. 2006. From Penner et al. 2005.)

away from other problem behavior. Community participation also has some long-term effects. First, there are educational and occupational status effects. For example, Piliavin and Siegl (unpublished) have found that students who were more involved in extracurricular activities in high school are more likely to go to college, controlling for the other important predictors of college attendance. Also, volunteering in college in the 1970s led to higher-level occupations for women in 1991 in a study done by Wilson and Musick (2003).

Finally, many researchers have found that adolescent volunteering leads to a greater likelihood of community involvement later in life. Students who went to the south in the 1960s have continued their activism and volunteering at least into the 1980s (McAdam 1988; Marwell, Aiken, and Demerath 1987). Members of the Wisconsin high school class of 1957 (the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study core sample³) who engaged in more extracurricular activities in high school have volunteered more in their communities during the 1970s, 1990s, and in the twenty-first century.

Effects of community participation on adults and the elderly in general are positive, and are similar for adults and the elderly, but stronger for the elderly. Some dimensions on which effects have been found are mood, life satisfaction, depression, psychological well-being, self-reported health, and mortality. In general, there is a “dose-response curve,” such that more volunteering leads to better outcomes up to some inflection point, after which more is either ineffective or negative (see, e.g., Luoh and Herzog 2002; Musick and Wilson 2003; Thoits and Hewitt 2001.) Almost all of this research has been correlative, and although some of it is well-controlled longitudinal research, the question of causality remains.

³ This research has followed a random one third of the graduating class of 1957 in the state of Wisconsin from that year through the most recent wave of interviews in 2004. The participants were at that time 64 years old. Retention has been excellent. The research on the health consequences of volunteering using these data, reported here, was supported by grant 1 R03 AG21526-01 from the National Institute on Aging.

In 1994 Midlarsky and Kahana came up with a model of factors affecting healthy aging, in which helping behavior took a central role, mediating between personal and situational factors and psychosocial well-being. In testing this model, they randomly assigned seniors to an experimental and a control group to see if they could actually test the causal impact of volunteering on well-being. By manipulating the situational factor of perceived opportunities to help, they were able to increase volunteering in their “experimental” group, and found that it indeed led to greater well-being.

Assuming that this is indeed a causal effect, how does it work? What are the mechanisms by which community participation, specifically volunteering, increases health and well-being in the elderly? The old Durkheim notion of integration in the community, leading to decreased anomie, is a candidate. The psychological reflection of this, I contend, is the concept of “mattering,” introduced by Rosenberg and McCulloch (1981) and operationalized by Elliott, Kao, and Grant (2004). The concept of mattering has three aspects: feeling noticed by others, thinking that one is important to others, and believing that others rely on one for help. Erica Siegl and I recently (2007) published a study on the impact of volunteering on psychological well-being using the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study. We found results that are consistent with both the Durkheim notion and Rosenberg’s idea of mattering.

The table on the following page presents the results. There is, as expected, an effect of past volunteering on psychological well-being. An index of social participation—a measure of more self-oriented activities (not shown)—had no significant effect. Thus it is something about *other-oriented* activity that is mainly responsible. Furthermore, the interaction term shows that this effect is significantly stronger for those who are otherwise less well integrated into their communities, supporting Durkheim. The measure of more recent volunteering, as reported in 2004, also has a positive effect. Importantly, when the measure of well-being taken in 1992 is introduced into the equation, the effects of past

Table 1. Regression of Psychological Well-being in 2004 on Control Variables, Diversity/consistency of Volunteering, Integration, Their Interaction, Volunteer Identity, 2004 Volunteering, Mattering, and 1992 Well-being.^a

| Variables | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Diversity/consistency of volunteering 1975–1992 (VOL) | 3.087** | 2.935** | 1.312 | .874 |
| Integration 1992 | 2.261*** | 2.225*** | .864*** | .587** |
| Integration × VOL | –.384** | –.368** | –.205 | –.158 |
| Volunteering 2004 | .504*** | .417*** | .335*** | .204* |
| Volunteer identity 2004 | | .103* | .040 | .017 |
| Psychological well-being 1992 | | | .440*** | .376*** |
| Mattering 2004 | | | | 1.315*** |
| R ² ; df | .123*** 21/3673 | .124* 22/3672 | .411*** 23/3671 | .475*** 24/3672 |

^a Control variables not shown. Entries are unstandardized coefficients. Indicators of significance: *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$. Significance of R² shown is for change in R².

volunteering and the interaction term disappear, but the impact of 2004 volunteering on current well-being remains. This indicates that there is a truly *causal* relationship between volunteering and well-being. Finally, when mattering is brought into the equation (see last column), the effect of 2004 volunteering is greatly decreased and the impact of past volunteering decreases further. This is a classic interpretation effect: volunteering is related to well-being *because* volunteering makes individuals feel that they matter to other people in the world.

This recent area of study—the positive consequences of altruism and helping—ties in to positive psychology. A positive psychology website (<http://humaniststudies.org/enews/?id=298&article=1>) stated the following, “The challenge is for humanists to develop their signature strengths to contribute to the community and promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number.” It now appears that contributing to the community is actually one of the steps towards promoting the greatest happiness for the greatest number. In so doing, as the old Tom Lehrer song says, one is “doing well by doing good.”

The Future of Research on Altruism and Helping

The field of altruism and helping is not the field it once was. Initially, researchers focused on helping within helper-recipient

dyads in the context of a specific situation. This has been called the *meso* level of analysis (Penner et al. 2005). From this work we have learned a great deal about altruistic motivation and the interplay of personal and situational factors in the determination of responses. My colleagues and I believe, however, that more work now is needed at what we have called the *micro-* and *macro-*levels of analysis; we need a multi-level approach to the study of prosocial action.

At the *micro-*level, research is concerned with the origins of prosocial tendencies. It addresses questions of the evolutionary origins, the physiological bases, and the developmental forces involved in prosocial behavior. For many years, *meso-*level researchers argued that there was no such thing as the prosocial personality. More recent research has demonstrated, however, that there are measurable individual differences in empathy and helping tendencies. These have been shown to be in part hereditary, and their electronic signatures can be read in an fMRI. Researchers are even on the track of hormones that can influence generosity.

At the *macro-*level, research is being done on prosocial actions that occur within the context of groups and large organizations. I have discussed the role of organizations in the recruitment and maintenance of volunteers and blood donors. I also discussed organizational citizenship behavior and whistleblow-

ing. One can also conceive of citizen response to catastrophes as belonging in this category of study.

Where do we go from here? I think we need to begin to synthesize research on altruism and helping—largely done in psychology—with research on social movements, activism, and political participation—largely done in sociology. Certainly, political activism belongs in the *macro* category, and I contend that it is indeed prosocial behavior. Fifteen years ago, Pamela Oliver and I taught a graduate seminar in which we tried to confront the two literatures simultaneously. Here I quote from the beginning of the syllabus Pam Oliver and I drew up in 1993:

These literatures are almost wholly disjoint at present, but our conversations have led us to believe that they address many common problems, and that each “side” to the dialogue will be enriched by an understanding of the insights of the other. We find that there is substantial theoretical and empirical reason to confront these two literatures with each other. At a theoretical level, many of the social psychological processes involved in deciding to move away from self-preoccupation and toward action are similar.

- In both cases, individuals orient themselves to something outside themselves.
- In both cases, this larger orientation often becomes a central component of the person’s identity.
- In both cases, the research literature indicates substantial components of inter-generational socialization toward action, and
- Substantial influences of social structure on action choices.
- Empirically, both movement activists and charitable altruists seek to deal with poverty, injustice, and important social issues such as health care, education, crime, and peace.
- The two groups construct different understandings about the meanings of their actions, and are often critical of or even antagonistic toward each other. But in practice, helpers and political activists are often allies, and fairly often overlap when the same person engages

in both kinds of activities, either simultaneously or sequentially.

Unfortunately, I believe that nobody has taken the steps that we suggested would be fruitful here. Traditionally, social movements have been studied by political sociologists who are also social psychologists. Such individuals tend to be left in their politics, and thus support changes in the status quo, even though it may involve “raising a little hell” a la Ross’s suggestion. Psychological social psychologists have mainly studied helping behavior, altruism, and most recently volunteering. With their focus mainly on the individual, their approach has not involved trying to change social structures, but rather looking at what there is about the person and the situation as it exists that is responsible for helping or the lack thereof. Any changes would then mainly involve “tweaking” rather than radical change. This is an essentially conservative approach that accepts the status quo.⁴ I challenge both social psychology communities to rise above what may be considered political differences to synthesize theory and data in these two fields that have so much in common.

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⁴ I am not suggesting that such social psychologists are *personally* conservative in their ideologies.

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