The effect of being shunned upon the desire to affiliate*

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While sitting in a waiting room, each of 40 male Ss was exposed to a pair of confederates (Cs) who either did not speak to him (no explicit negative evaluation) or one of whom berated his beliefs on a specific topic (explicit negative evaluation). Midway through a period preceding the ostensible experiment, one of the Cs moved away from half the Ss to sit closer to another C (implicit negative evaluation). For the other half, the C remained seated a short distance from the S throughout the waiting period (no implicit negative evaluation). An implicit negative evaluation severely reduced S's desire to affiliate with the C who moved, the effect actually being stronger when there was no explicit evaluation. Moreover, the implicit negative evaluation alone reduced the desire to affiliate significantly more than did the *explicit* negative evaluation alone.

Imagine that you are sitting in a waiting room and a person rather like yourself comes over and sits near you. A few minutes later the person abruptly gets up and moves to another chair and, ignoring you, engages another person in a conversation, leaving you to ponder over this apparent rejection. A ream of possible defects passes through your mind: bad breath? perspiration odor? a broken zipper? Or you may think through your previous behavior, wondering what movement you made that might have offended this person. As far as you can see, there is nothing inherently more desirable about the seemingly preferred stranger and nothing inherently strange about the person who has rejected you. And you are left with the problem of making sense of this disturbing and inexplicable incident without causing yourself further embarrassment.

The act of being shunned described above illustrates an implicit negative evaluation. What is painfully obvious about this kind of evaluation is the total absence of a valid means of anchoring it to any concrete event in the situation. Something seems to be wrong, but that "something" is unspecified. In contrast, being confronted with an explicit negative evaluation, e.g., "you have stupid ideas," enables one to tie the evaluation to something concrete. For example, one can attribute internally and decide that one's ideas are indeed

stupid or one can attribute externally and decide that the evaluator is a stupid judge of ideas. What seems to characterize the difference between implicit and explicit negative evaluations, then, is a difference in attribution clarity. One who has been explicitly negatively evaluated has several possible explanations available; one who has been implicitly negatively evaluated lacks sufficient information to make a clear attribution (cf. Kelley, 1967).

In the present study, we attempted to determine if the attribution ambiguity associated with an implicit negative evaluation would reduce one's desire to affiliate with the evaluator more than an explicit negative evaluation. That is, it is perhaps understandable that we might not want to associate with a person who has explicitly derogated us. But what if the negative evaluation is unspoken and not concrete? If you are shunned and suspect something is wrong with you, but cannot determine what it is, will this reduce your desire to affiliate even more than direct, open derogation? There is some reason to think that this may be the case. The person may want to cease displaying the cause of his being shunned and may desire isolation in order to figure out and remedy his problem, thereby avoiding further public embarrassment. On the other hand, the opposite result is a distinct possibility. If the person was only interested in finding out what was wrong, then perhaps his affiliation tendencies would increase so that he could inquire directly, "Hey, what's wrong with me?"

These questions were explored in a 2 by 2 design in which a confederate (C) either moved away from (implicit negative evaluation—impl) or remained seated by (no implicit negative

evaluation—no-impl) a S. C then engaged another C in conversation and either openly derogated the S (explicit negative evaluation—expl) or did not speak to S (no explicit negative evaluation—no-expl). Thus, in the no-impl/expl cell formed by this 2 by 2 design, the S received only an explicit negative evaluation, while in the impl/no-expl cell, the S received only an implicit negative evaluation. In the no-impl/no-expl cell, a control condition, the S was unobtrusively excluded from the conversation. The impl-expl cell enabled us to determine if open concrete derogation would, by bringing clarity to an ambiguous situation, mitigate the reduction in affiliative desire predicted for an implicit negative evaluation alone.

METHOD

Forty male Yale undergraduates took part in a study "dealing with group processes"; no Ss were discarded on the basis of suspicion. All manipulations occurred while the S was waiting to participate in the supposed "real experiment." When an S arrived, a confederate (C1) was already seated in the hall adjacent to the experimental room. In response to a sign posted on the door, the S knocked and was greeted by the E. The E explained that two more Ss were scheduled for the session and asked S to wait with the other S outside the room. The S then seated himself in the only available chair, located about 8 ft from C1 and facing in the same direction.

In the no-expl cells, C1 ignored S when he entered the waiting room. If S spoke to him, C1 glanced at him and said nothing. In the expl cells, C1 responded briefly and neutrally if S attempted to initiate a conversation. Approximately 1 min later, C2 arrived and was shown into the waiting area by E, who then went to bring in some extra chairs. In the no-impl cells, he returned with one chair which he placed half way between C1 and S. In the impl cells, he brought in two chairs, placing them at equal intervals between C1 and S. C2 sat down in the chair nearer S and began looking through a magazine which contained an article about student unrest at Harvard. The conversation between C1 and C2 always started with the "Harvard situation" and came around to a discussion of whether the same thing could happen at Yale.

EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS

In the no-impl/no-expl situation, C2 asked C1 if he had read the article on the Harvard situation. When C1 replied that he had not, the two introduced themselves and discussed the issue, with C1 taking a moderate liberal position on student unrest and C2 taking a more radical stance. Both Cs ignored the S. If S tried to speak, C1

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Table 1
Mean Desire to Affiliate With Negative Evaluator (C2)*

Negative Evaluation	Mean
NoImpl-NoExpl	6.4
NoImpl-Expl	6.3
Impl-Expl	4.4
Impl-NoExpl	3.5

*Means indicate desire to affiliate on an 11-point scale (0-10), with 5 as the midpoint.

and C2 would ignore what he had said. In the impl/no-expl situation, C2 asked if C1 had read the Harvard article. When C1 said he hadn't, C2 got up and moved to the chair nearest C1 and handed him the magazine. From then on, the session was identical to the no-impl/no-expl situation. In all cases, the S could hear the conversation.

In the no-impl/expl situation, C2 asked if either of the two had read the Harvard article. If S did not answer, C2 tried to get him to express his opinions on the topic. Once these were established, C2 disagreed with whatever position he adopted. C2 was the primary negative evaluator; C1's role was that of on-looker. Near the end of the discussion, C2 became quite obnoxious, suggesting that the S's arguments were naive, illogical, and stupid. If S did not have any opinions on the topic, C2 would criticize him for not taking a stand on so vital an issue. In the impl-expl situation, C2 asked C1 if he had read the article, and when C1 said he hadn't, C2 got up and moved to the chair nearest C1, handing him the magazine. C2 then asked S if he had read the article. From then on, the session was identical to the no-impl/expl situation.

The conversation in the hallway lasted about 5 min. At this point, a third confederate (C3) arrived, and E directed everyone into the experimental room. He then explained that the Ss would be divided into two pairs and that each pair would discuss a set of predetermined topics. Ss were informed that the discussions would be highly structured and would be limited to a set of specific topics (these topics were named and did not include student unrest or any related issue). The S and Cs were then explicitly identified by name (standard names for Cs) and given name cards.

The E then explained that since the study involved group processes, it was necessary to know all Ss' initial impressions of each other. Each S then (1) rated the other three "Ss" on a 15-point liking scale and (2) indicated the rank order and magnitude of their preference for each of the other three Ss as a partner in the upcoming experiment on a scale from 0 ("would

not like to be paired with") to 10 ("would like very much to be paired with"). This latter measure was supposedly to be used as a basis for actual pairing. In this manner, Ss clearly indicated their preference for a given partner and their strength of preference in that all three Cs' names were placed on the same scale at some point along the continuum (a point-rank scale).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The liking data were essentially random, with all differences being far from significant. The point-rank measure assessed desire to affiliate with each of the three Cs. Table 1 shows the mean desire to affiliate with C2, the perpetrator of the evaluations, in each of the experimental cells. A 2 by 2 analysis of these data revealed a strong main effect for the implicit negative condition (impl < no-impl; $F = 13.11$; $p < .01$); that is, Ss had less desire for contact with C2 when he had changed seats (impl) than when he had not done so (no-impl).

A comparison of the no-impl/expl cell with the impl/no-expl cell showed that an implicit negative evaluation alone reduced the desire to affiliate with C2 more than an explicit negative evaluation alone ($t = 3.39$; $p < .01$). Thus, being obviously shunned for no obvious reason produced an even greater desire to avoid C2 than did explicit derogation. Moreover, being shunned was also much worse than being ignored, as occurred in the no-impl/no-expl cell ($t = 3.71$; $p < .01$). This indicates that not wanting to affiliate with the "shunner" was not due simply to being excluded from the conversation.

It is clear from these findings that Ss wanted to avoid C2 in the case of an implicit negative evaluation alone (3.5 was the lowest point-rank score obtained by any C). Evidently suspecting, but not knowing, something was wrong induced Ss to stay away from the "shunner" rather than associate with him and perhaps find out directly what was wrong. Given the ambiguity of the situation, perhaps Ss were not only concerned about determining what was wrong but were also concerned that their worst fears might be publicly confirmed, causing further consternation. To avoid this, they wanted to avoid association with C2 and sought to discover for themselves what was wrong. In the case of the explicit negative evaluation alone, the S knew where he stood and had already withstood a direct confrontation with C2. In this situation, there was little ambiguity and little chance of further embarrassment and hence no need to avoid associating with C2.

According to the above explanation of the implicit-only result, the S would not want to risk further public embarrassment and would be in the process of trying to figure out for himself the meaning of the implicit negative evaluation. Therefore, he not only should have been reluctant to associate with C2, but with anyone at all. Consistent with this reasoning, desire to affiliate with the other two Cs was also low in the impl/no-expl cell (4.6 and 4.9 for C1 and C3, respectively) and was significantly lower than in the no-impl/no-expl control group for being excluded (4.6 and 4.9 combined vs 6.6 and 7.1 combined; $t = 2.31$; $p < .05$).

Turning to the impl-expl cell, where initial ambiguity over being shunned should have been reduced by the subsequent derogation of S by C2, we find that desire to associate with C2 was slightly higher than in the impl/no-expl cell (4.4 vs 3.5). However, this difference was quite small and suggests that although subsequent derogation may have to some degree clarified the S's position vis-à-vis C2, the situation was still ambiguous in regard to C2's earlier behavior. However, C2's explicit derogation seemed to make it clear to the Ss that whatever had prompted the earlier shunning was confined to C2 since here Ss showed less reluctance to associate with C1 (7.1) and C3 (6.2).

The desire to associate with C2 in the impl-expl condition was decidedly lower than in the no-impl/expl cell (4.4 vs 6.3; $t = 2.05$; $p < .05$). Rather than wanting to avoid the impl-expl evaluator, this difference may in large part be due to the Ss' wanting very much to associate with the explicit-only evaluator in order to redeem themselves in his eyes via a display of intellectual prowess. This line of reasoning seems invalid, however, as it would also predict that the impl-expl group would want to associate with C2. Here a display of intellectual prowess in the discussion would both redeem the S's previous "stupidity" and to some extent compensate for whatever it was that prompted the shunning (e.g., "I may have had breath, but I'm smart"). This, obviously, was not the case.

The results, then, suggest that the recipient of an explicit negative evaluation is able to deal with the source and content of the message fairly specifically, whereas the recipient of an implicit negative evaluation finds it difficult to make sense of or cope satisfactorily with the evaluation. In response, he may "leave the field," preferring not to associate with anyone, especially the evaluator, until he has been able to determine for himself the nature of his problem

(cf. Sarnoff & Zimbardo, 1961).

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Alternation behavior of children in a cross-maze

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Seventy-five children of preschool age were observed in a cross-maze. The frequency of alternation increased with age for the Ss who started both trials from the same start position but did not change across age for the Ss who started the two trials from opposite start stems. Running time decreased with increasing age under both conditions.

Age has been shown to be a factor in spontaneous alternation of hamsters (Kirkby & Lackey, 1968), in exploratory behavior of rats in an exploration box (Hughes, 1968a, b), in exploratory behavior of rats in an open field (Goodrick, 1967), and in exploratory behavior of rats in a Y-maze (Williams, Carr, & Peterson, 1966). In general, the effect is one of increasing exploratory behavior with increasing age, but there is some indication that the relation is nonmonotonic. Additionally, it has been shown that age affects alternation behavior of children in a light guessing situation (Manley & Miller, 1968; Miller, Tu, Moffat, & Manley, 1969). Seven-year-old Ss alternated more than 4-, 6-, 8-, or 10-year-old children.

The present study deals with the

alternation behavior of preschool children in a cross-maze. The cross-maze (Glanzer, 1953) has been used extensively to compare predictions based on stimulus satiation theory with those based on Hull's (1943) concept of reactive inhibition. While stimulus satiation theory seems to explain more adequately the phenomenon of spontaneous alternation in the rat, there have been no studies comparing the two theories at the human level. The most obvious reason for this lack of data is the difficulty of devising a human maze. Children, rather than adults, served as Ss in the present study, thus reducing somewhat the difficulty of constructing a maze and allowing for the evaluation of changes in alternation behavior as a function of age.

SUBJECTS

The Ss were 75 preschool children from two day care centers in upper middle class neighborhoods; their ages ranged from 2 years 2 months to 6 years 11 months. Approximately one-half of the Ss were male, and sex was balanced as nearly as possible across conditions.

APPARATUS

A cross-maze was set up by putting together four identical tunnels through which the Ss could crawl. The tunnels, which are commercially available from toy manufacturers, were made from cloth covering a large metal coil. The tunnels were 8 ft long and 24 in. in diam. Posterboard was used to block the tunnel opposite the starting point so that on each trial S was faced with a standard T-maze choice situation.

PROCEDURE

Ss at each of four age levels, 3, 4, 5, and 6, were assigned randomly to one of two groups. Ss in one group (same) entered the same start stem of the maze on each of two trials, while in the second group (different) Ss entered the maze from one start stem on the first trial and from the opposite stem on the second trial.

The very young Ss, some of whom were hesitant to go with E, were allowed to bring a friend. In these cases, the starting point for the second child was rotated 90 deg, and the opposite experimental condition was assigned to him to make imitative behavior impossible.

The test location in one school was a large empty assembly hall and in the other, an isolated corner of an outdoor play area bounded on three sides by woods and on the fourth by the school building. In each case, the starting points were oriented to minimize the differences between external stimuli at the ends of the arms of the T. Ss from the two schools were divided approximately equally between conditions to control for possible differential effects of the two test situations.

E recorded the choice on each trial. Additionally, running time from S's entrance into the start stem to S's exit from one of the choice arms was measured with a hand-operated stopwatch.

E approached each S individually in his classroom and invited him to play a very short game. When E and S entered the test area, E gave S the following instructions: "See, I have these big tunnels that you can crawl through. You can play *two* times. You start here, and when you come to the end of the first tunnel, you'll see that the road is blocked. You can go whichever way you want to when you get there. Are you ready? Go!" When S emerged, E directed him to the proper entrance for the second trial