“What we have here is failure to communicate”

Cool Hand Luke

Tejaswi Chalasani, Janiece Irby, Brinshay King, & Benjamin Pharr
Self-Control

“The highest possible state in moral culture is when we recognize that we ought to control our thoughts”

-Charles Darwin

“Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose”

-Janis Joplin, Me and Bobby McGee

“Control, control, you must learn control!”

-Yoda, The Empire Strikes Back
Why Did Luke Run Away?

- Drive (reduction) theory
- Cognitive dissonance
- Intrinsic (or extrinsic) motivators
- Frustration-aggression hypothesis
- Strength model (Baumeister et al.)
Drive Theory

- Clark Hull & Kenneth Spence (1940’s and 1950’s)
  - Based on the principles of homeostasis (body has a desire to stay in a state of equilibrium)
  - When a person feels “out of balance” he/she is “driven” to regain the balance by engaging in a certain act
  - Drive reduction acts as a negative reinforcer
    - Engaging in the action removes an aversive stimulus, increasing the instances of the behavior
Drive Theory

- Doctor Who clip – “The Christmas Invasion”
- The Doctor can’t resist pressing a great big threatening button
  - Despite the radical change in his personality, drive reduction forces the Doctor to hit the button without regard to the consequences
Cognitive Dissonance Theory

- Festinger (1957) developed this theory to explain the association between attitude and behavior that relies upon the idea that both must be in harmony at all times for human happiness and self-satisfaction.  
  - When attitudes and behaviors do not match, either the attitude or the behavior must be changed in order to reduce dissonance.
- In the film, Luke first has a positive attitude toward his incarceration.
- When he was pre-emptively placed “in the box” following the death of his mother, the transformation in his attitude led to the change in his behavior; he began running away.
Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic Motivation

- Extrinsic motivation is a result of external rewards.
  - Common extrinsic motivators include monetary rewards, paper awards, and recognition.
  - Can you come up with some extrinsic motivators depicted in Cool Hand Luke?

- Intrinsic motivation comes from internal compensations.
  - Common intrinsic motivators include task completion, sense of esteem, and responsibility for success.
  - Can you think of the intrinsic motivators seen in Cool Hand Luke?
Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic Motivation

- Sirens in “O, Brother Where Art Thou?”
- The protagonists of this film are on the run and risk capture in order to spend time with the sirens
  - This scene is comparative to the sexy blonde chick washing the car.
Frustration Aggression Hypothesis

- Berkowitz (1952) hypothesized that aggression is a direct result of the frustration that a person experiences.
- The clip, “Falling Down,” is an illustration of this concept.
- What would you say is the source of the frustration that led to Luke’s aggressive tendencies?
The Strength Model of Self-Control

- Self-control is defined as the capacity for altering one’s own responses, especially to bring them into line with standards such as ideals, values, morals, social expectation, and to support the pursuit of long term goals.

- Self-control enables a person to restrain or override one response, thereby making a different response possible.

- Inadequate self-control has been linked to behavioral and impulse control problems, including overeating, alcohol, drug abuse, crime and violence, overspending, sexually impulsive behavior, unwanted pregnancy, and smoking.
Self-Control: Limited Resources

- Observation of self-control suggested that self-control appeared vulnerable to deterioration over time from repeated exertions, resembling a muscle that gets tired.
- Effortful self-regulation depends on limited resources that becomes depleted by any acts of self-control, causing subsequent performance even on other self-control tasks to become worse.
- Ego depletion is the state of diminished resources following exertion of self-control.
- Exerting self-control on one task, may deplete some kind of psychological resource that was less available on the next task.
Self-Control and Muscle Analogy

- Self-control performance deteriorates after initial exertion, just as a muscle gets tired from exertions.

- Just as exercise can make a muscle stronger, there are signs that regular exertions of self-control can improve willpower strength.

- Improvements in willpower strength typically take the form of resistance to depletion.
Athletes conserve their remaining energy when their muscles begin to feel tired.

Self-controllers can do the same thing in terms of self-control when some of their self-regulatory resources have been expended.

When people expect to exert an amount of self-control later, they will limit current performance more severely than if no such demands are anticipated.
Luke

- Luke’s self-control is best exhibited in the third runaway scene. When appearing subservient to the prison guards, he is putting on the façade of self-control.

- His lack of self-control is then manifested in his driving away in the truck, whether planned or unplanned.
At the beginning of the film, Dragline is motivated by his status among the prisoners.
- His strength places him as a "leader".

After meeting Luke and seeing his charisma, Dragline is motivated by Luke’s behavior, and he is satisfied to follow Luke’s example.
- Consider his behavior when Luke suggest they go separate ways after the final runaway.
The Captain/Warden

- The captain is motivated by maintaining order and the status quo in the prison
  - Consider what he tells Luke upon his entry: “I can be a good guy, or I can be one real mean sum-bitch.”
- He is motivated by the desire to have the inmates, bosses, and all under his control obey his orders
- His use of rules leaves no room for ambiguity
  - “What we have here is failure to communicate”
The “Man with no eyes”

- The “man with no eyes” is the strong arm of the captain’s power.
- He is motivated by a Nietzschean “will to power”.
- Ironically, he does not speak, however never has an issue with “failure to communicate”
Dog Boy

- Dog boy shows a complete motivation and dedication to his bloodhounds.
- He follows the orders of the captain and the bosses; however, his zeal for following orders falls behind his compassion for his dogs.
  - Consider how upset he is when Luke “runs Blue to death”
Appears to be motivated by the reaction of the prisoners
She represents an obstacle to the road crew, because she distracts them from engaging in maximum organizational effectiveness (clearing the ditches)
Self-Control Study

- Oscar Wilde: “The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it.”

- Marshmallow study:
Self-Control Discussion Questions

When answering the following questions, consider the following guidelines:

- Think about the event/crime (breaking parking meters) that led to Lucas’ (Luke’s) incarceration—as well as his subsequent behavioral, social cognitive (thoughts and interactions with others), and emotional displays when he joins the chain gang.
Self-Control Discussion Questions

- Can Luke’s behavior (breaking parking meters) be seen as an example of organizational citizenship?
- How do Luke’s actions support and/or refute Baumeister, et al.’s view of self control (self-regulation)?
Do you agree with Baumeister, et al., that willpower and self control are like a muscle that demands rest after use?

In terms of both Luke’s behavior and his selective displays (or lack of) self-control, is Baumeister, et al.’s “muscle” analogy of self-control (self regulation) supported? Why or Why not?
Results for Question 4

- Reinforcement: 8
- Maintain: 2
- Punish: 1
Self-Control Discussion Questions

☐ Given the key assumptions of Baumeister, et al.’s model – imagine yourself as both an I-O Psychologist and the Prison Camp ‘Captain’ – How would you work to motivate Luke toward better performance (beyond solitary confinement [a “night in the box”]; verbal abuse and threats; and beatings) and break through the barrier of “failure to communicate?”
Results for Question 5

- Reinforcement: 8
- Maintain: 2
- Punish: 1
Self-Control Discussion Questions

How are the behaviors of (1) Luke; (2) his prison inmate cohorts (colleagues?); and (3) the camp ‘administrators’ (the ‘captain’ and the ‘bosses’) operationalized as a function of some of the key moderating, mediating, and limited-Resource Effect variables summarized in BOX 1 of the Baumeister et al. article?
Why Did Luke Run Away?

- Drive (reduction) theory
- Cognitive dissonance
- Intrinsic (or extrinsic) motivators
- Frustration-aggression hypothesis
- Strength model (Baumeister et al.)
Does Luke have PTSD?

Checklist

1. Stressor (traumatic event, i.e. war)
2. Intrusive recollection (traumatic event is persistently re-experienced)
3. Avoidant/numbing (markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities, & restricted range of affect)
4. Hyper arousal (outburst of anger, exaggerated startle response)
5. Duration (1+ month)
6. Functional significance (3+ months)
The Concept of Organizational Citizenship

- Lambert (2006) defines organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as:
  - Behavior that goes beyond the basic requirements of the job
  - Behavior that is, to a large extent, discretionary
  - Behavior that is of benefit to the organization.

- Question: How does Luke foster this type of behavior in the movie?
The Concept of Organizational Citizenship

- As the focus of I/O will always, for the most part, be focused upon the performance of an incumbent at his position, we thus require that “performance” be specifically defined.

- Citizenship performance depends upon all employees to support each other in these contexts:
  - Organizational
  - Social
  - Psychological
The Concept of Organizational Citizenship

- Successful performance should be measured by more than simply an incumbent’s proficiency and technical knowledge, but also by other behaviors, such as his dedication and commitment to the organization.
  - This is measured by observable citizenship actions.

- The author found in 1997 that cognitive ability tends to predict an incumbent’s task performance, while personality measures are a better predictor of citizenship performance.
The Concept of Organizational Citizenship

- Conscientiousness is the most consistent in prediction of citizenship performance.
- Research has also found a substantial relationship between citizenship performance and organizational effectiveness.
- An organization that does not have goals of citizenship-inducing behavior is unjustified in expecting organization members to exhibit such behavior.
The Concept of Organizational Citizenship

Reasons to Expect CP

- Enhances productivity
- Coordination of activities
- Increase organizational performance stability
- Can help an organization attract and retain employees

How Can We Encourage CP?

- The organization itself must enhance CP by:
  - Setting group goals
  - Having a high degree of procedural justice
  - Designing intrinsically satisfying jobs
  - Establishing a supportive environment
  - Expecting leaders to model citizenship behavior
Satisficing vs. Maximizing

- In the film, OCB was demonstrated in a few instances:
  - Inmates preventing other inmates from “picking on” the mentally challenged inmate
  - Luke’s inmates eating off of his plate to keep him from going “in the box”
  - Luke demonstrating the benefits of faster ditch digging
  - How does Luke act as a “maximizer?” Can you think of any other examples of “satisficing” in the movie?
OCB Clips

Captain America
Grenade

Robert Paulson
(Fight Club)
Discussion Questions

- How do the key variables and assumptions of Borman’s conceptual model of citizenship performance (summarized in Table 1) apply to and explain Luke’s ideological and behavioral differences?

- How does Luke’s citizenship behavior, cooperation, social support, loyalty, and general social behavior vary with the broad populations within the prison camp (i.e., fellow inmates and the camp’s management and staff)?
Discussion Questions

- To what extent do you feel that organizational citizenship is a function of the effectiveness of the leader?
  - Can you give a concrete example from the film to support your claim?
Religious Symbolism:

Luke as Jesus(?)
Food: Eat this in remembrance of me

- After Luke eats the eggs (which are symbolic of the Easter/fertility rite that is now associated with the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ), he lies on the table, arms outspread and head turned to the left.

- The second time Luke is captured, he screams at the inmates who are pestering him for information to “stop feeding off me,” an allusion to Communion rites.

- Plate of rice fully eaten vs. a night in the box; the inmates sharing a meal with Luke is reminiscent of the Last Supper, where Jesus’ disciples made a pact with Christ.
God: “Can you hear me, Old Man?”

- The serpent thrown to the man with no eyes by Luke is a reverse from Moses having thrown his staff on the ground and it being transformed into an adder as a demonstration of God’s power.
- In the church scene at the end, Luke calls God “old man,” a phrase signifying “father.”
- When Luke is in the ditch begging and praying, the warden ("God" of the prison) tells him to “come out, son.”

- Plastic Jesus
- Picture put back together forms a cross over Luke’s face
Devil

- The man with no eyes is a great representation of Satan (or one of his lesser-known enforcers, such as Mephistopheles).
- He “makes a deal with” Luke: Luke usurps another prisoner’s role of “errand boy” for this “devil;” in return, Luke gets more freedom while the other inmates continue digging ditches.
- Flames in his glasses at one point.
- Sunglasses reflect the darkness.
- When Luke was shot, his glasses were shattered (symbolic breaking of power); the death of Christ was symbolic of the removal of sin from his followers, and the end of the influence Satan held over their lives.
In the rain, Luke was speaking to God, asking for a sign that he is on the right path.

In Luke’s second escape attempt, he went into the river and came out cleaner (spoke with children, freed of shackles).

Luke donning a white shirt before he enters “the box” is symbolic of vestments worn by those being baptized; notice Luke’s behavioral changes following his release from the box.