Lecture Outline

Theories of helping:
- Socio-biological theory
- Kin protection
- Perceived similarity
- Norms

Why do People & Animals Help?

1. Socio-Biological Theory

Behavior understood in terms of reproductive success

Why do People & Animals Help Strangers?

Kin Protection

Predisposed to help others who share our genes

Kin Protection

Identical Twins → Fraternal Twins

More helpful to one another

Kin Protection Study

Burnstein et al. (1994)

Predictions:
1. Help family over non-family
2. Help is proportional to relatedness
3. Help young over old

Kin Protection Study

Burnstein et al. (1994)

Life & Death Situations

More likely to help relatives than non-relatives

Kin Protection Study

Burnstein et al. (1994)

Tendency to Help

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Sibling Cousin

Tendency to help

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

1 yr. 10 yrs. 18 yrs. 45 yrs. 75 yrs.

Age of Victim

Tendency to help
Why do People & Animals Help Strangers?

2. Perceived similarity
Help others who appear similar to oneself

Why do People & Animals Help Strangers?

3. Norms
a) Reciprocity Norm
b) Social Responsibility Norm

Reciprocity Norm
People will help those who:
1. Recognize them
2. Live close enough to return the favor
3. Have the resources to return the favor

People are less likely to help another if doing so puts their life in danger

Social Responsibility Norm Study
Barnes et al. (1979)

Social Responsibility Norm
Help those who can't help themselves
children
disabled
poor

Social Responsibility Norm

Help others because they should

Why do People & Animals Help Strangers?

Reciprocity Norm
Give help to receive help