Social Norms Essay, Research Paper

Last week while visiting the Whitney Museum, in Manhattan, I made a point of it to sing as I walked amongst the exhibit. This sort of behavior is usually discouraged in museums because one normally wouldn t care to hear another person singing while they were trying to view the artwork. It just so happened that because it was the middle of the day, on a Thursday afternoon, the museum had very few people in it, and I don t think any one expressed discomfort or dislike to my singing! Two of the guards, whom were on the same floor actually joined in for a second, and laughed and smiled at me as I continued. At first I was a little nervous to break out into song in the museum, because it happens to be one were I go often enough, and I didn t want to be looked at as a person who did not have a clear sense of thought. However, I was fully comfortable with my actions when I was joined in my song!

Social pressures do not play a huge role in my life. Never do I feel obliged to dress a certain way, speak a certain way, or conform to a certain way. Of course, there are certain standards of behavior that are generally regarded as acceptable and not acceptable, but for the majority of the time I d prefer to do things my way. Certain things such as singing in a museum are less commonly done by me because it is a sign of rudeness and disrespect!

2. An example of a person acting differently in a group from how s/he would if alone:

There is a substitute in school, for very young kids. Many of the kids act up and misbehave, so Tommy does so as well. Had he been the only one in class he would have behaved. This may be the case because others feel a sense of protective anonymity when others are doing the same thing as them. Tommy may also have had sensory overload with the loudness and hysteria of the other children, and got caught up in the moment, where running around on tables seemed the thing to do.

3. An attitude is a group or an individual s perspective on matters or certain issues. Attitudes come from view points persuaded onto individuals and groups by society from the past, the present, the government, the culture, the country. Attitudes may also come from friends and teachers. Some develop their own attitude on manners, but usually reason is for this, such as hearing another s view on something.

4. A person is more likely to stop and help when a person has a flat tire on a deserted rural lane than when the person has a flat tire on a busy interstate, maybe because on the interstate people will not feel they should be responsible, when all those other people are driving by as well. On a deserted rural lane, the sense of anonymity is lost. One is less likely to pass someone off in a situation like that; they are together a group when stranded like that.

5. If I have competition, I am better at a task or exercise than if I am alone. This may be motivationally speaking, though it may be competitively speaking. With exercise I probably work harder in a step aerobics class than I do on an exercise video at home, because of motivation, not so much competition.

6. The roots of prejudice is an issue that I can not answer on my own however I believe it to be greatly attributed to fear, to gain self worth for the individual, the a governmentally enforced policy dating back to before Ancient Rome, to general family values, or just plain group values (again, prejudice is a sort of attitude).

7. I would attribute an individual s scholastic aptitude performance, whom I have not met to a matter of working hard. I would rule out intelligence for another person I m not really sure why, though I may attribute my own achievement to intelligence. Luck would not be a factor for another or myself in any case such as this though.

8. At our commons assemblies I am able to observe group behavior. I did not notice much, though sometimes people reply with sarcastic comments to the teacher, in which they may or may not do individually. I did not discern a group dynamic, though possibly amongst different peer groups, the individuals would be more likely to act similarly (for example, quite people may be with other quiet people, obnoxious people together etc.)

9. Group behavior may correlate positively with social responsibility, or it may do just the opposite. Groups may create anonymity, though they also may persuade reason. Society makes people responsible for individual behavior, even when they are acting as a group in that consequences are only placed on individuals never a group as a whole. (For example the guy at the Giants game who was charged for throwing ice because he was singled out on the newspaper, even though many others were partaking in the activity.)