Prof Colin Davis Bristol University

> Responding to the Climate Emergency: Psychology and (dis)obedience

- 1. Notice
- 2. Interpret
- 3. Personal responsibility







Spatial disorientation







- 1. Notice
- 2. Interpret
- 3. Personal responsibility



PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE

I'M NOT REALLY SURE WHATS GOING ON SO I'LL JUST MIMIC EVERYONE ELSE





We need to break the silence!

"We have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

Martin Luther King, Letter from Birmingham Jail



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SEE IT. SAY IT. SORTED.

Failures of responsibility



Article in *New York Times* claimed that 38 witnesses saw or heard the attack, but none of them called the police or came to her aid.

Pluralistic ignorance: "No-one's intervening; Maybe it's not an emergency?"

Diffusion of responsibility: "Someone else will do something"





Co-pilots: 20% of all airplane accidents may be preventable by optimising the monitoring and challenging of captain errors by the first officer

Disobedience helps those in authority





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Experimenter protocol

- 1. Please continue.
- 2. The experiment requires that you continue.
- 3. It is absolutely essential that you continue.
- 4. You have no other choice, you *must* go on.

65% of participants administered a 450-volt shock All participants administered a 300-volt shock



The disappearance of a sense of responsibility is the most far-reaching consequence of submission to authority.

- Stanley Milgram –

AZQUOTES

We are in a state of emergency

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10 HOTTEST YEARS ON RECORD GLOBALLY Last 5 = Hottest 5



Solution Set Office Global mean temperature difference from 1850-1900 (°C)











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CO2 during ice ages and warm periods for the past 800,000 years









Fewer Than Half of Americans Say They Hear Global Warming Discussed in the Media Once a Month or More Often



About how often do you hear about global warming in the media (TV, movies, radio, newspapers/news websites, magazines, etc.)?

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,204). March, 2016

Climate Chang Communicatio

CENTER for CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION

Seven in Ten Americans Rarely or Never Discuss Global Warming With Family and Friends



How often do you discuss global warming with your family and friends?



Climate Change Communication

CENTER for CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION
Six in Ten Americans Say the Issue of Global Warming is At Least Somewhat Important to Them Personally



How important is the issue of global warming to you personally?

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,204). March, 2016



Across all waves of research respondents have consistently shown high levels of concern about climate change, with around 9 in 10 saying they are fairly or very concerned. The latest results (March 2019) show levels of concern to have reached the highest level to be recorded (at 91%). Concern amongst students is significantly higher than amongst the general UK population (in the latest national research 71% say they are very or fairly concerned).



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Three steps

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Follow

Parliament is debating climate change for the first time in two years...

...and I count just 10 government MPs in the chamber

goo.gl/jDCH62



"When we are talking about climate we are talking about ourselves. We are conducting a vast experiment on the only system that supports our existence."

Mary Creagh, Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee

6:39 AM - 28 Feb 2019

Accelerating Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Concentration





KEEP CALM THE EXPERIMENT REQUIRES THAT YOU CONTINUE

Disobedience in Milgram's experiments



When a confederate teacher complied fully: 37/40 participants went to 450V

When 2 confederate teachers refused to comply: 4/40 participants continued

Civil disobedience



"Protest beyond the law is not a departure from democracy; it is absolutely essential to it."

— Henry David Thoreau, <u>Civil Disobedience</u>







'There is another, and perhaps even more important reason, for the practice of civil disobedience in this time of utmost peril. There is a very widespread feeling that the individual is impotent against governments, and that, however bad their policies may be, there is nothing effective that private people can do about it. This is a complete mistake. If all those who disapprove of government policy were to join in massive demonstrations of civil disobedience, they could render governmental folly impossible and compel the so-called statesmen to acquiesce in measures that would make human survival possible. Such a vast movement, inspired by outraged public opinion, is possible; perhaps it is imminent. If you join it, you will be doing something important to preserve your family, friends, compatriots, and the world.'



"Make me do it"







1 MAY, 2019



THE UK JUST DECLARED AN ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY

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UK Parliament declares climate change emergency

() 1 May 2019

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MPs have approved a motion to declare an environment and climate emergency.

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Learning Rebellion

HOW TO TEACH YOUR CHILD TO OBEY



HOW TO TEACH YOUR CHILD TO DISOBEY

