TOPIC: PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

HELPING BEHAVIOUR (ALTRUISM)

Issues to learn about:

1. Theories of helping behaviour
2. Past research about helping behaviour
3. Concepts:
   - 'pluralistic ignorance'
   - 'diffusion of responsibility'
WHY DO WE HELP OR NOT HELP OTHERS?

The case of Kitty Genovese; stabbed to death over a 35 minute period, 35 witnesses but no help given, and no reports to police.
The cost of helping:

*Social Exchange Theory* - Thibaut & Kelley (1959)

We help if there is a ‘profit’; calculated by looking at rewards minus cost of helping.

- Rewards =

- Costs =

Research - Darley & Batson (1973) assisting collapsed person.
The Nature of the victim
Who would/wouldn’t you help?

Research by **Wiener (1992)** - rating conditions in people (e.g.; Alzheimer's, blindness, cancer, heart disease, AIDS, drug addiction, obesity, child-abusers)

If thought responsible for condition - less likeable, less help given.

Key study - **Piliavin et al (1969)**

Nature of helper??
SOME EXPLANATIONS TO CONSIDER:

The nature of the situation

**Latane and Darley (1968):**
Male college students in waiting rooms, completing questionnaires. Smoke pumped through grill. Action??

Results; - alone 50% (2mins), 75% (6mins)

- Groups of 3 - 12%, & 38%

*Pluralistic ignorance* = redefining situation according to others’ interpretations, even if this contradicts own thoughts.
**Darley & Latane (1968):**

More people present, the more likely helping behaviour will decrease. Research with students; personal problem discussions.

*Diffusion of responsibility* = when responsibility is shared amongst all observers.