SOME EFFECTS OF GUILT ON COMPLIANCE

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Two experiments studied conditions under which compliance will be increased. Experiment I showed that guilt (induced by having subjects deliver painful electric shocks to a confederate) will sharply increase compliance. Status of the confederate and presence of a witness had no effect. Experiment II differentiated among possible explanations for this effect, and suggested that guilt, rather than sympathy or a desire to make restitution, was the critical variable. Subjects who had observed but not delivered the shocks did not comply. Compliance was highest when the request was made by someone who had observed the subject deliver the shocks, but was not himself the victim.

Most research concerned with how to get a person to comply has been carried out in situations where there is a great deal of external pressure for compliance. In many studies, the extent of the pressures is obvious (e.g., Asch, 1951; Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). Other studies have used the immense pressure of the experimenter-subject relationship. For example, Milgram's (1964) remarkable demonstrations of obedience are all carried out in the context of an experimenter ordering a subject to comply. In these, and in most other studies of compliance, the focus has been on variables affecting compliance within this framework of strong external pressure.

The research described here studies how one can get compliance without these external pressures. This is of interest for several reasons. First of all, it is often necessary, for financial, ethical, practical, or other reasons, to apply only minimal external pressure when attempting to obtain compliance. Second, it has become clear from much of the research stemming from dissonance theory (e.g., Brehm & Cohen, 1962; Carlsmith, Collins, & Helmreich, 1966; Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959) that in order to get maximal attitude change following compliance, it is important to have as little pressure for compliance as is consistent with obtaining that compliance. All of this work has ignored the question of how to get compliance with minimal pressure. In all cases the compliance was obtained within the experimenter-subject relationship, with an experimenter requesting that the subject comply. As Orne (1962) pointed out, compliance is virtually guaranteed under these circumstances. In the dissonance studies, variations in pressure for compliance are obtained by adding a number of additional external pressures (e.g., money) for some of the subjects.

More recently, there has been some interest in the question of obtaining compliance with minimal pressure. Wallace and Sadalla (1966) attempted to persuade subjects to volunteer for an experiment involving painful shocks. Some of their subjects were induced to break an expensive machine before the request was made; for other subjects the machine was broken but the subject was not responsible. Subjects who had broken the machine were significantly more likely to volunteer for the unpleasant experiment than subjects who had not. Unfortunately, 30% of the subjects never broke the machine, so that such a comparison is confounded by self-selection.

A similar finding is reported incidentally by Brock and Becker (1966). Again, student subjects were induced to press a button which either destroyed the experimenter's apparatus or emitted a slight puff of smoke. Following this, the experimenter asked them to sign a petition advocating doubling tuition at the University. No subjects in the low-damage condition were willing to sign the petition. About 50% of the subjects in the high-damage condition were willing to sign it.

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Both of these experiments suggest that guilt may cause a sharp increase in compliance. Unfortunately, in both experiments the request was made by the experimenter who was fully aware of the subject's condition. We may expect compliance to be strongly affected by the persuasiveness or perseverance of an experimenter's request, as well as by more subtle variations in his behavior. Accordingly, the possibility of some experimenter bias creeping in is disquieting. Nevertheless, the experiments do strongly suggest that guilt may play an important role in inducing compliance.

In the first experiment reported here, the authors tried to assess the effects of three different variables which might be thought to produce compliance. In all cases, the request for compliance was made by someone who was not an experimenter, and the request was not made as part of an experiment.

One variable of some interest in the compliance paradigm is the status of the person making the request for compliance. Accordingly, some of the subjects in the present study were asked to comply by someone of higher status than themselves; others were asked to comply by someone of lower status. A second variable, which might be expected to interact with status, is the presence or absence of a witness to the request. Finally, the authors wished to study the effects of guilt, and thus induced some of the subjects to deliver painful electric shocks to the person making the request.

To summarize, the first experiment employed a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial design to test the effects of three variables on the likelihood that a subject will comply to a request. The requester had either been shocked or not shocked (by the subject) prior to the request; he was introduced as either a high- or low-status person; and the request was made either privately or witnessed by an experimenter.

**Experiment I: Method**

*Overview of Design*

The dependent measure was the extent to which the subject was willing to comply to a request by a confederate who had just served as learner in a bogus experiment. Subjects were assigned the role of "teacher" in a learning situation, and were instructed to throw a large knife switch whenever the learner made a mistake. The switch merely sounded a buzzer, but half of the subjects had been told that closing the switch also caused the learner to receive painful electric shocks. After the experiment was completed, the learner, who had been described as being drawn from either a high- or low-status pool of subjects, presented a request to the subject either privately or in the presence of the experimenter.

**Subjects**

Male students of Foothill College were offered $2 to participate in a 45-minute learning experiment to be conducted at the Stanford University Psychology Department. Forty-eight students were recruited, and data from 40 subjects, 5 randomly assigned to each of eight conditions of the $2 \times 2 \times 2$ design, were used. Data from 8 subjects were eliminated from the analysis, 7 because they suspected that the confederate or his request were part of the experimental design, and 1 because he did not believe that the confederate was actually being shocked. None of the results reported below is altered if these subjects are included in the analysis.

**Apparatus**

The experimental room contained three tables and an impressive array of wiring and electrical equipment. Two booths, one for the learner-confederate, and one for the teacher-subject, faced each other on the center table. The learner's booth was equipped with response switches which turned on corresponding lights in the teacher's booth, a panel of feedback lights which were activated by switches on the teacher's side, and a book containing 15 patterns, described as a standard concept-formation task.

In addition, a respirometer tube which was connected to a pen recorder, and palm electrodes with leads running to a Fels dermohmmeter, were present at the learner's side. In shock conditions the palm contacts were described to the subject as electrodes hooked up to a shock generator; in nonshock conditions they were called palm recorders connected to a skin-resistance measuring device. The purpose of this equipment was simply to make it credible to the subject that the confederate's responses were the main focus of the experiment.

Aside from the complementary switches and panels necessary for viewing the learner's responses and feeding him back "correct answers," the subject's booth contained controls labeled "correct" and "error." The subject was instructed to use these switches to reinforce the learner positively when he was correct, and to give him negative feedback after trials which included at least one error. Pushing the positive button turned on a large green light in both booths, and closing the negative knife switch sounded a loud buzzer which operated for 1 second at 1-second intervals. The third table, which was empty except for pencils and a letter basket, was used for making the request after the learning trials.
Procedure

When subjects arrived they were informed that they would be working with another man who would arrive in a few minutes. Meanwhile the experimenter explained the rationale for assigning the subject to the role of teacher:

What we're trying to find out is what kinds of things affect the way people solve problems which require them to learn fairly difficult concepts. One thing we already know for sure is that certain kinds of feedback information can improve a subject's performances. But, we think who gives the feedback information also makes a big difference; that is, we think learners may respond in different ways to different teachers. As you probably know, the teacher or trainer who gives the feedback in these kinds of studies is almost always an experimental psychologist or at least an advanced graduate student, but in this series that we're running now we want to find out how our subjects react and learn when they know that a freshman or sophomore junior college student like yourself is acting as the instructor—the one who gives the feedback.

At this point the experimenter remarked that the experiment would be particularly interesting because a special group of men had been recruited to act as learners. The experimenter then manipulated the status of the requester by identifying the group as (a) "young executives from Lockheed who have been selected for a special management development program" or (b) "unemployed men who were high school dropouts and are now being processed for eligibility in the Federal Job Training Program." The experimenter then explained exactly what the subject was to do during the learning trials:

He [the learner] is going to work on this standard concept-formation task. Your job will be to feed back the correct answer on each of the 15 trials like this [experimenter demonstrates switches]. You record his answers here [subject is handed a form which includes a list of correct responses and columns for recording the learner's responses. The learner's source group—"federal unemployment" or "management development"—and the learning method—"shock" or "negative feedback"—were prominently written in at the top of the page], and then feed back the correct configuration by using these switches which activate his lights. If he is completely correct you give him about 2 seconds of positive feedback like this [experimenter glances at some dials], OK, let's see if the switch is working, [to teacher] Remember, just give three bursts of positive feedback.

In the shock conditions the experimenter continued: and activates that shock apparatus [points at dermohmometer] which will administer shocks to Mr. Rawlins' hands. I'll show you how it works when we look at his side of the apparatus. We regulate these shocks so that they are pretty painful and unpleasant—otherwise we can't really see how they affect the learning process—but there is absolutely no permanent tissue damage resulting from these shocks, so don't worry about that. [Experimenter and subject walk around to learner's booth] . . . We also attach one of these electrodes to each of the subject's palms. As you can see, these are hooked to the generator in order to apply the shock voltage at a level which is as painful as we can get commensurate with the subject's safety. He's already had a dose of the shock last week, so he knows what it feels like.

In nonshock conditions, the experimenter explained that a buzzer signal given after wrong responses sometimes has a facilitating effect on learning, and when the subject was shown the electrodes on the learner's side of the table, he was told "they will be attached to each of the subject's palms . . . It measures skin resistance much in the same way as they do with lie detectors."

After the subject was seated at his booth, questions about the procedure were answered, after which the experimenter opened a door leading to a room where the confederate was waiting, greeted him, and introduced him to the subject.

The two booths were arranged so that no visual contact could be made between learner and teacher while they were seated. The experimenter then briefly recapitulated the procedure. In both shock and nonshock treatments the buzzer was ambiguously referred to as negative feedback in the presence of the confederate—for example, Just like last time, when the answers don't match—when you're wrong—the teacher throws his negative feedback switch. Just a second, let me check this [the experimenter glances at some dials]. OK, let's see if the switch is working. [to teacher] Remember, just give three bursts of negative feedback.

After the buzzer sounded three times, the experimenter said humorously to the learner, "Well, I guess that's working all right."

The confederate's responses were programmed so that he appeared to be learning the concept toward the end of the series. Nevertheless, he was completely correct only six times during the 15 trials, so that all subjects were required to throw the negative feedback switch nine times. Four of the nine times that he made an error, the confederate kicked the table in response to the buzzer. This lent realism to the shock conditions; subjects in nonshock conditions could attribute the slight movement to a change in position, if they noticed it at all.

Request

After the fifteenth trial the experimenter removed the confederate's palm contacts, and asked him to sit at another table to fill out a "concept-formation questionnaire." As soon as the confederate began writing, the experimenter seated the subject at the same table, paid him, and asked him to complete a receipt which called for address, telephone number,
and other personal information. The receipt form was designed to occupy the subject for 1 or 2 minutes. Both the confederate and the subject were told that the experiment was over, and that they were free to leave when they finished filling out the forms which they were to put in a letter basket on the table.

In witness conditions, the experimenter began adjusting the apparatus while hovering near the table and obviously attending to the request. Near the beginning of the request, the confederate turned to the experimenter and asked, "Am I bothering you?" to which the experimenter replied, "No, I was just interested in what you were saying." In no-witness conditions, the experimenter excused himself and left the room, closing the door after him. A concealed microphone allowed him to listen to the request from another nearby room.

A few seconds after the experimenter either left the room or began adjusting equipment, the confederate completed his questionnaire, put it in the letter basket, and haltingly began his rehearsed request. After engaging the subject's attention, the confederate identified himself as a member of a committee that was attempting to prevent a freeway from being built through the redwood trees in Northern California. He explained that people were needed to telephone potential signers of a petition to save the trees. After displaying several stacks, each made up of 50 index cards containing names and phone numbers, he requested that the subject help with this task:

What's involved is just to phone the people and say there is this petition and would they be interested in signing it. So, what I was wondering was if you'd be willing to call some of these people, but you wouldn't have to call up 50 of them if you didn't have time. As I say, it takes a minute or two for each one. Would you be willing to call some of these people for us?

If the subject refused to help, the confederate put the cards in his pocket and left the room. If the subject agreed to make some phone calls, he was asked, "How many of them do you think you could do? As I say, we've got 50 of them, but any number you could do would be a help."

Shortly after the subject refused, or complied and specified the number of calls, the experimenter (who then reentered the room in nonwitness conditions) interrupted, and asked the confederate to wait in another room because he had "forgotten to ask the subject some questions." After the experimenter determined whether or not it was suspected that the request had been part of the design, he explained the actual purpose of the experiment to the subject, and invited him to return at a later date to pick up a copy of the results.

This procedure effectively prevented the confederate from knowing whether the subject was in the shock or nonshock condition. He was also ignorant as to whether he (the confederate) was of high or low status. It was, of course, impossible for him to be ignorant as to whether or not there was a witness present. The fact that the person making the request was blind (on at least two of the three variables) seems to us a critically necessary feature for studying compliance. As pointed out by Aronson and Carlsmith (1968), bias cannot affect interactions if the experimenter is blind on one of the interacting variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results can be summarized simply. Neither the status of the person making the request nor the presence of a witness had any effect on compliance. Both of these variables also failed to interact with each other or with the presence or absence of shock. When the subject had shocked the confederate prior to the request for compliance, however, there was a striking increase in the amount of compliance elicited. Whereas 25% of the subjects agreed to make some phone calls in the control conditions, 75% of the subjects who had just administered a shock to the confederate agreed to make some calls. A Fisher exact test on this difference yields a probability of .004. Table 1 shows the mean number of phone calls accepted in each of the eight conditions. Table 2 shows an analysis of variance of the data. Again, we see that the effect of delivering a shock to the person who makes the request for compliance is highly significant; no other effects even approach significance.

Not only was the probability of compliance higher in the shock conditions, there was also

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3 In view of recent publicity and concern about redwoods in California, it seems worthwhile to mention that the first experiment was carried out in March, 1965; the second experiment was carried out in August, 1965. At that time, there was relatively little concern about redwoods; none of the subjects had heard anything more than vague talk about conservation groups.
TABLE 2
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shock (A)</td>
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<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status (B)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness (C)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(\times)B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(\times)C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B(\times)C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(\times)B(\times)C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within cell error</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>279.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a tendency for the level of compliance to be higher. Among those subjects who did comply, the mean number of phone calls agreed to was 32 in the shock conditions, and 16 in the non-shock conditions \(t = 1.93, p < .10\). Of the 20 compliant subjects, 7 agreed to take the whole stack of 50 cards; all of these were in the shock conditions.

Although this experiment provides convincing evidence that delivering a shock to another person will markedly increase the likelihood of subsequent compliance to that person, the interpretation is somewhat ambiguous. At least three alternative explanations come immediately to mind. First, it may be that people will in general comply with a request from a person whom they see as unfortunate. Since the confederate has just been subjected to a series of painful shocks, it may be that the subjects feel sorry for him, sympathetic towards him, and comply with his request in order to make his life a little more pleasant.

Alternatively, it may be that the subjects feel very guilty about having administered a series of painful shocks to another person, and will engage in compliant behavior for anyone who asks them to help in a good cause. This explanation suggests that the person feels guilty, or that his self-image has been tarnished, and that compliance with another may be a good way to alleviate the guilt or to gild the image. A third possible interpretation, related to the last, is that the subject wants to make restitution. Having injured the confederate by delivering painful shocks to him, he wishes to compensate for this by doing a favor for him. For convenience these three interpretations will be referred to as the sympathy, the generalized guilt, and the restitution explanations.

Since each of these is perfectly plausible in the original study, a second experiment was carried out designed to differentiate among them and to provide a sharper theoretical picture of the forces involved. The second experiment used a procedure quite similar to the first, but added a third person to the interaction—a witness. Several of the possible permutations of one person asking another to comply allow one to distinguish among the three possible interpretations offered.

EXPERIMENT II: METHOD

Overview

The setting for this experiment was essentially the same as for the first. There were, however, three people in the experimental room (two of whom were confederates). Just as before, one person was the teacher for a simple concept-learning experiment, and this teacher either did or did not deliver shocks to a learner. A third person, the witness, served as an observer and his ostensible task was to record all of the responses and feedback. After the learning phase of the experiment was completed, one person was excused, and the subject and one confederate were left alone for a moment to fill out some forms. After a moment, the confederate described the campaign to save the redwoods and asked the subject to make some phone calls to help him.

There were four experimental conditions. Two were an exact replication of the previous experiment. In the control condition, the learner made the compliance request of the teacher, and no mention was made of electric shock. In the restitution condition, the learner made the request of the teacher, and the teacher had just delivered nine electric shocks. In the generalized guilt condition, the witness made the request of the teacher, after the teacher had delivered shocks to the learner. Finally, in the sympathy condition, the learner, who had just received the shocks, made the request of the witness, who had observed, but not delivered, the shocks. Since the true subject was always the person of whom the request was made, he was sometimes in the role of teacher and sometimes of witness. The confederates took the other two roles.

Various comparisons among the conditions make it possible to distinguish among the three possible explanations listed above. Thus, if the generalized guilt condition is significantly higher than the control condition, we can rule out the restitution explanation. Comparing the sympathy condition with the restitution condition enables us to find out whether or not sympathy is a possible explanation.

Again, we felt that it was crucial that the person making the request be blind as to the condition the subject was in. This presents some difficulties, since it also implies that he did not even know what role
he was playing. However, the confederate was effectively blinded so that in no case did he know what condition the subject was in.

Subjects

Forty-seven male Foothill College students were paid $2 to participate in the study which was disguised as a learning experiment. Data for 7 subjects were discarded; 3 did not believe that the learner was shocked, 2 could not correctly identify the role of the requester, 1 suspected that the request was part of the experiment, and 1 would not respond to the request without first consulting his parents. The remaining 40 subjects were divided equally among four experimental conditions.

The experimental setting was the same as in the first experiment, except that the table was partitioned into three parts, one for each of the participants. The participants could not see each other when seated. The subject and one confederate arrived for the experiment first. This confederate was always the one who made the request and will be referred to as the "requesting confederate." He and the subject were introduced and spent a minute or two together so that this confederate would be salient for the subject. Then the subject was taken upstairs to the experimental room and the confederate was asked to wait outside "since you were in the experiment last week and know how it works." The experiment was explained to the subject, and his role was made clear. Special efforts were made to also make clear what the role of the first confederate would be. After the experiment had been explained to the subject, both confederates were brought in. The "requesting confederate" always sat at the same place and actually played the same role, although the subject was told that the confederate played whatever role the experimental condition called for. Before the "requesting confederate" was brought into the room, the apparatus was moved (without knowledge of the subject) so that it appeared the same to the "requesting confederate" in all conditions. Thus the "requesting confederate" was blind as to the experimental condition, but in the prior briefing of the subject a great deal of stress was placed on who played what role so that the subject would know who was making the request at the end of the experiment.

After all participants were seated the instructions were briefly reviewed. The experimenter pointed to each spot as he reviewed the instructions so that again the subject was reminded of which confederate was playing the role. The "requesting confederate" could not see the experimenter during this period. The learning phase of the experiment was identical to the previous experiment, except that the witness recorded everything which took place. After this was completed, the experimenter announced that the experiment was over, excused one confederate, and asked the subject and the "requesting confederate" to fill out some receipt forms. He then left the room. While the subject and the confederate were filling out the forms, the confederate made his request for compliance, just as in the first study.

Following this, the experimenter returned, asked the subject for any suspicions he might have had, and ascertained that the subject knew what role the "requesting confederate" had played. He then explained the true purpose of the experiment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the experiment are shown in Table 3, which lists the average number of phone calls the subjects agreed to make in each of the four conditions. A one-way analysis of variance shows highly significant treatment effects \(F = 7.03, df = 3/36, p < .001\). It may be seen that the result of the first experiment replicates nicely. Restitution subjects accept an average of 23.5 phone calls; controls accept only 13 \((t = 1.39, df = 36, ns)\). The smaller number of subjects in these two cells prevented the difference from being significant, although the difference is of roughly the same order of magnitude as in the first experiment. Much of the difference in the absolute values of the two control groups is accounted for by one aberrant subject in the control condition in the second experiment who agreed to make 30 calls.

The results are even clearer when we consider the other conditions, and ask whether guilt, restitution, or sympathy is playing the predominant role. Subjects in the generalized guilt condition, where a witness, who has observed the whole interaction, makes the request, agree to make an average of 39 calls. This group is significantly higher than any of the other three conditions \((t \geq 2.05, p \leq .05)\).

The sympathy condition, on the other hand, produces less compliance than any other condition. In this case, the subject is present when a confederate ostensibly receives the painful electric shocks, but has nothing to do
with delivering them. When this confederate later asks the subject to comply, the average number of phone calls accepted is only 6.5, a value which is significantly less than either of the conditions in which the subject actually delivers the shock. Thus a person who has just received a series of painful shocks can elicit compliance only from the person who has administered the shocks, not from a witness to the experience.

Experiment II was designed to distinguish between guilt, restitution, and sympathy interpretations of the large amount of compliance produced by shocking another person. The answer seems clear. Sympathy in itself elicits surprisingly little compliance. In fact, those nonguilty subjects who witnessed a victim receiving shocks were slightly less willing to accede to the victim's request than were control subjects. It appears that guilt arising from personal implication is a necessary precondition for obtaining compliance in this situation. Subjects who were personally responsible for the shocks (restitution and generalized guilt conditions) agreed on the average to phone 31.25 people, whereas subjects who did not administer shocks (sympathy and control conditions) agreed to only 9.75 phone calls ($t = 3.97, p < .001$).

Although Experiment I demonstrated that people will attempt to alleviate guilt by complying with the person they feel guilty about, the strong compliance obtained in the generalized guilt condition makes it clear that guilt can lead to compliance even when there is no opportunity to make amends to the injured party. Restitution does not appear to be a necessary component of the guilt-compliance relationship. At first it appears that the witness' knowledge that the subject had hurt the confederate might be critical in explaining these results—that the subject wants to show the witness that he really is a kind and helpful person in order to repair his social image. However, a recent series of experiments by Freedman, Wallington, and Bless (1967) demonstrates compliance effects in similar situations when the request was made by someone who had no knowledge of the subject's transgression.

It is surprising that the generalized guilt condition produces more compliance than the restitution condition. Although the comparison between these two conditions is slightly confounded (the witness had not received shock the week before whereas the learner had), the results strongly suggest that there is some other factor which is reducing the tendency to comply in the restitution condition. This unexpected increase in compliance to the witness may reflect a tendency to avoid the victim. Continued contact with the victim could result in uncomfortable feelings of obligation or serve as an unpleasant reminder to the subject that he had voluntarily pushed the shock button. Freedman et al. (1967) provide some evidence to support the avoidance interpretation. The experimenters contrived to induce the subject to knock over a stack of supposedly carefully indexed note cards. Later, when subjects were asked to assist in a public opinion survey, subjects who did not have to associate with the graduate student who owned the cards complied more than nonguilty controls. There were no differences between experimental and control subjects when the request involved working closely with the graduate student victims. A related interpretation is that voiced by several of the present subjects—that the confederate was taking advantage of a situation which had given him some power. As one subject said, "I didn't like that guy. He knew he had me in a situation where I owed him something and he took advantage of it by asking me to make all those phone calls for him." This is also consistent with Lerner's (1965) finding that if a person has inflicted suffering on someone, he is likely to devalue the victim.

Taken together with other recent work (e.g., Freedman et al., 1967), these two experiments provide convincing evidence that a very powerful technique for obtaining compliance is to first induce a person to do something which harms another person. The second experiment reported here suggests that guilt about the action is the mediating factor in producing this compliance, and that the compliance need not be to the person who was hurt. The wide variety of methods of hurting another person which have been used in experiments reporting this relationship, including destroying a machine (Brock & Becker,
1966; Wallace & Sadalla, 1966), costing another person green stamps (Berscheid & Walster, 1967), upsetting the order of a graduate student's index cards (Freedman et al., 1967), and lying (Freedman et al., 1967), give the result substantial empirical generality.

It is not clear, however, why compliance to the types of requests that are typically made in these experiments is so effective in alleviating the guilt. The fact that the compliance need not be to the person who is responsible for the guilt suggests that an interpretation based on bolstering the subject's self-image may be the most productive. All of the subjects in these experiments had been asked to comply by engaging in some behavior which was of fairly high social desirability, that is, helping another person gather names for a petition. Because of this, compliance is likely to give a subject positive information about himself. It would be of interest in clarifying the processes involved in this guilt-compliance relationship to see if the same effect holds when the subject is asked to engage in some negative behavior. For example, are subjects who are made guilty likely to comply with another person who asks them to cheat?

REFERENCES


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