The Ethics of Human-Subject Research

An evaluation of the Bystander Effect

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Author note

This Paper was prepared for English 101, Section 1269, taught by Professor Fulton.

“Are the potential benefits of human studies worth the potential risk to the participants?”

Abstract

In 1968, John M. Darley and Bibb Latane were the first to demonstrate the bystander effect after the horrendous murder case of Kitty Genovese in 1964 caught their attention. Darley and Latane conducted numerous experiments in an attempt to explain the psychology behind the bystander effect, and were able for the first time to reveal the fusion of responsibility theory. This social occurrence tends to usually takes place in emergency situations, where a group is less likely to respond compared to individuals due to a share of responsibility with the other people present in an emergency. The experiment was conducted at the University of New York in an office setting where students were chosen to participate for course credit, and led to believe they were there discussing their personal college problems. The experimenter staged a seizure and then timed the participants for response time. Subjects were positioned either alone in the room or with other participants, and the test helped reveal their answer of diffusion of responsibility between groups.

Human Studies

The interest in human behavior has interested numerous phycologist and prompted many human subject experiments. The interest in human obedience led to some of the earliest human subject psychological studies. The most notable of these examples is the “Behavioral study of Obedience” by Harvard Ph.D. graduate Stanley Milgram, and “A study of Guards in a Simulated Prison” also known as the “Stanford Prison Experiment” led by Yale Ph.D. graduate Phillip Zimbardo. These two experiments have brought up many controversial debates about experiment ethics, but these human subject experiments have helped phycologist further understand some of their biggest concerns about human actions, and their ability to be manipulated mentally by others actions. Experiments like the “Bystander Apathy Effect” conducted by John M. Darley and Bibb Latane have helped phycologist understand human actions in more realistic day to day scenarios. The results of these experiments far outweigh the consequences that some of the subjects might face, and although controversial, human subject experiments can help us further explain and understand our mental tendencies.

The “Bystander Effect” was conducted by John M. Darley a psychology professor at Princeton at the time, and Bibb Latane a psychology professor with a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. Just like other experiments, their motivation was inspired by past events. The Milgram experiment was inspired by the horrendous actions of the Nazis, and the prison experiment was inspired by the Navy to further understand authority power. The inspiration for the “Bystander Effect” was the horrific murder of Kitty Genovese in a New York suburb in 1964. The murder made headlines when the details were released where she was stabbed to death

outside her Queens, New York apartment complex where nearly forty people witnessed her murder, but did nothing to intervene or offer help. Her murderer stabbed her then drove off and no one came out to check on her, then minutes later her attacker returned and stabbed her multiple time again. This horrific attack and lack of human empathy helped fuel the study to further understand why a human would not offer help to another human in danger.

John Darley and Bibb Latane were the first to demonstrate the bystander effect in a human subject experiment that was conducted in 1968. This experiment involved regular individuals that were students at New York University. For their participation they were to received course credit, and it consisted of thirteen male students and fifty-nine female students. The students chosen for the experiment were told they were going to be interview to talk about any type of difficulties they are facing as a college student. They were also informed that in order to not feel any type of humiliation the interviews would take place over intercom rather than in person (Darley and Latane). They were led to believe the intercom system was for identity protection, but really this was done because the other students were tape recordings played by the experimenter. The students after arriving were led to their private rooms and given paperwork to fill out, and earphones and microphone to be able to communicate with the experimenter. The aim was to measure how long it would take to the participants to respond to the emergency situation when the subjects were alone or in a group, or whether they would intervene and help at all.

The original 1968 experiment test was a staged seizure where the victim called out for help over the intercom system stuttering claiming he was having a problem then made a choking sound and went silent. They wanted to observe how long it would take for the

participants to respond to the emergency situation individually and in groups. The results were an average of about eighty-five percent of the participants who were under the impression of being alone intervened and reported it compared to the thirty-one percent who did not because they thought four others were present as well. All groups of two reported the emergency, while only thirty-one percent of those in groups of six reported it (Darley and Latane). Darley and Latane were able to demonstrate for the first time the bystander effect, and get a deeper understanding of why people are less likely to help others when they are in a group rather than alone from their results.

The experiments revealed the bystander effect to be a social psychological occurrence that helps explain why individuals do not intervene in emergency situations. Darley and Latane use the diffusion of responsibility theory to define the bystander effect, which states that "when a task is placed before a group of people, there's a strong tendency for each individual to assume someone else will take responsibility for it" (Lickerman). This theory would make an individual believe that other witnesses present will offer assistance, and that the individual in an emergency situation would not be able to recognize that he or she has the responsibility to intervene. The diffusion of responsibility first explained by Darley and Latane, has been confirmed in numerous studies and well detailed out to be better communicate. There have been dozens of experiments that mimic the bystander effect in different situations that have produced similar if not identical results.

The importance of human subject studies is invaluable to help further understand human tendencies and find ways to improve our negative ways. Ethics are a major concern when conducting these type of experiments, and the different laws and codes have to be

followed in order to do so. The human subject experiments that Milgram and Zimbardo conducted were highly criticized for causing severe trauma to their subjects and then being negligent to the post experiment trauma they could have suffered. These experiments caused psychological trauma cause of the situations they tried to recreate, but Darley and Latane show us a great example of an ethically responsible way to respond to their participants. Darley and Latane would cut their experiment short at a certain time once the participant didn't respond to the emergency, unlike Milgram who urged and tried to persuade his subjects to continue past their comfort levels. All the experiment had the probability of causing mild trauma to the participants that felt guilt and depression, but the Bystander experiment made a bigger effort to help deal with trauma by quickly questioning and offering help if needed as soon as the experiment would end.

The differences that can be pointed out from the experiments is variable of an authority power present during the process. The original bystander experiment had the subjects alone in rooms and were not pressured to act so their actions were more instinctual instead. The Milgram and Zimbardo experiments aimed to push the limits of their human subjects whether it be by delivering punishment, or pushing their emotions to the limit by being subjected to the feeling of hopelessness. The biggest difference which can be easily observed is the effort they take to protect their subjects from any distress that can be cause. Although the Milgram and Zimbardo experiments were extreme in nature, they did not have any laws or codes to follow and their experiments were a considered to be excessive and harmful. The examples that Darley and Latane had to follow were vital to help them carry out their own experiment and lay a foundation to dozens of future human subject studies around the country and word.

The one fact that correlates all these experiments together is realistic possibility of all these experiments. The Milgram experiment tried to replicate, on a much smaller scale, the Nazi's actions of cruel abuse and punishment. Although the chances of that level of genocide is slim, these type of cruel punishments still go on over the world. These actions are seen with terrorist as well as cartel members that are forced to carry out cruel inhumane punishment to innocent children and adults. The "Stanford Prison Experiment" wanted to measure the behavior of those who were under authority control and those who had authority power. This experiment might be the most relevant because of millions of people who incarcerated, and the result can give us insight on how to manage certain situations when there is distress caused to the prisoners. The results also give us an insight of the abuse of power someone with authority can have. One great example is the abuse of power that some police officers exhibit. The spread of social media has brought greater attention to this problem and can be better understood with more human studies relating to authority power. The most relevant of these experiments would be the bystander effect due to daily occurrence of this social tendency. The dozens of experiments following the original have helped confirm that this happens more often than not.

Ultimately the need for more human subject studies is needed to better understand real human tendencies. The bystander effect is a great example of an ethical and relevant experiment that can benefit human society. The experiments conducted by Darley and Latane provided accurate explanations for the bystander effect, a social psychological tendency that refers to situations where people do not provide help during emergency scenarios. These experiments have illustrated that the bystander effect takes place through social influence and

diffusion of responsibility, with the murder case of Genovese Kitty serving as a classical example of the bystander effect. The results that were produced may not be able to stop the bystander affect from occurring, but there can be a greater understanding of why and how people can not intervene to help others in need.

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The Ethics of Human-Subject Research

The Fine Line Between Genius and Insanity

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Author note

This paper was prepared for English 101, Section 1269, taught by Professor Fulton.

"Are the potential benefits of human studies worth the potential risks to the participants?"

Abstract

This paper will analyze and compare the risks and benefits of human subject experimentation through the study of feral children. The main focus will be on the case of Genie Wiley with support drawn from Victor, a feral child discovered in France in the eighteenth century. The procedures and results from Genie's experimentation will be analyzed. The Milgram Experiment, conducted by Stanley Milgram, and the Stanford Prison experiment, conducted by Philip Zimbardo, has been used as background research for this paper. Although these two experiments prompted the follow up research, they will not be the main focus, but will occasionally be used as material supporting the subsequent research. Heavy emphasis will be placed upon the emotional well being of the subject as well as the laws created to protect said subject from harm throughout human subject experiments.

Oscar Levant is famously quoted saying, “There is a fine line between genius and insanity. I have erased this line.” Before the US Health and Human Services Department set guidelines for human subject experiments the trauma subjects endured was life altering. Too often the phrase “in the name of science” is used to justify actions that would seem unethical and cause moral controversy. Throughout history there have been several cases of feral children. These occurrences are so rare that scientists jump at the opportunity to uncover more about the human brain. Cases of feral children have been reported since as early as the fourteenth century yet no new evidence has been uncovered, only a trail of abused children remains. Trauma left on the subjects caused many to wonder if the potential benefits of human subject experimentation were worth the potential risks.

Genie Wiley, feral child found in Temple City, California, lived a torturous life. Natalie Angier science writer for the New York Times vividly describes Genie’s living situation. Angier paints the picture of a “hellish bedroom” with “walls painted dirty salmon, the two windows kept shaded, the only light coming from a dim overhead bulb, no visual stimulation beyond the occasional addition of a couple of plastic raincoats”; a real life nightmare. Genie was tortured, lived in fear, and was cut off from society. Her mental state would take years to recover. Susan Curtiss, linguistic professor at UCLA and author of “The Linguistic Development of Genie”, was one of the lead scientists experimenting on the young girl. Curtiss reports that Genie had significant difficulty when it came to controlling the air flow and volume when speaking (532). Aside from the trouble with airflow her progress in other areas was remarkable. Curtiss claimed it was a, “tribute to the human capacity for intellectual achievement” (544). It appeared as though Genie was going to answer questions scientists have been trying to uncover for hundreds of years.

Experts immediately went to work. Genie's case was unique to any other feral child that had been ever been reported; which excited the scientific community. Once Genie was taken into protective custody, this thirteen year old girl was studied at a variety of angles with a list of experiments awaiting her. Curtiss was encouraged to see that upon Genie's admittance to "the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles…she showed remarkable development" (529). Being removed from the abusive environment was enough to spark growth. Her improvement was astounding. Scientists began their experiments "from the time she emerged from isolation" observing her large improvement in her cognitive growth, linguistic plural, and her ability to quickly learn new words (Curtiss 529-540). Their technique of using visual and written word was working. From abuse to prosperity no one could predicted the downwards spiral Genie was about to partake in.

Wayne Dennis, earning his doctorate in psychology at Clark University and author of several scientific works, including "A Further Analysis of Reports of Wild Children", suggests that feral children were mentally handicap previously to their abandonment or neglect, and that would not change no matter the environment they were placed in (153). Seeing as there is no detailed record of their lives before coming into civilization there is no way to know this. Much more is known about Genie than any other case of a feral child; nonetheless, Genie's mental state prior to being tortured is unknown. With limited knowledge on Genie's background Curtiss was eager to work with Genie. Without a moment to breathe or to recover from her past Genie went immediately into testing. Curtiss recognized that Genie had problem areas, questioning the oddity of Genie learning so much so quickly yet gaining inconsistent results due to how Genie struggled with "Wh-questions" (531). Torture that was inflicted upon Genie day and night

handicapped her causing language skills to not come naturally. Coming from any traumatic situation requires proper time to heal.

Philip Zimbardo while conducting his Stanford Prison Experiment did not wish the boys harm. He had proper psychological evaluation directly after the experiment ended and checked up on the young men after several weeks, then several months, then annually for several years (Zimbardo). Zimbardo showed concern for the welfare of his subjects; however, had there been a board to determine what the true psychological trauma of this experiment would be trauma to the participants could have been avoided completely. Zimbardo provided the scientific community with further insight into the true nature of man, yet the results did not save lives.

The first two decades of Genie's life caused her immense stress. She went from years of torture to home after home filled with a new set of tests, a new set of rules, and new tools to pick apart her brain. Progress ceased when Genie's mental state ceased to improve. No longer seen as a person, she was a possible scientific breakthrough. Had Genie been able to talk she would have been treated like any other child rescued from an unfit home. Instead, she was forced to endure years of linguistic training.

Due to extreme trauma inflicted upon the participants of various experiments, for instance Zimbardo's participants and Genie, The United States Department of Health and Human Services has formed regulations on human subject experimentation. These regulations require that consent of the subject is needed for the experimentation to take place. Health and Human Services states that:

> Current Federal regulations provide additional protections and special requirements for research involving children and prisoners and instruct IRBs to be cognizant of the special problems of research involving vulnerable populations…..Researchers must fully explain

the risks associated with their study to all research participants. Participants must indicate their informed consent.

Although these regulations were not around when Genie was discovered, had Genie been found today she would not meet the requirements to be experimented on. Any scientists who went forth with experimentation could have faced severe reciprocations. Genie's traumatic past, of which much is still unknown, should have caused her to go immediately into physical therapy, and a loving, positive environment that would enable her to live out the rest of her life happily. Instead she went from one traumatic experience to the next. The linguistic improvement of Genie was only short term.

A scientific breakthrough did not emerge from the years spent with Genie. Natalie Angier, concludes that not only were there no immediate scientific benefits, but those who rescued Genie "sued and countersued one another, they publicly excoriated one another, they wrote scathing accusations of malfeasance, neglect and exploitation". They all became so enraptured with the idea of making a ground breaking scientific discovery that they tried to tear each other down giving no thought to the human being they were all dragging down with them. Rebecca Saxe, professor of cognitive neuroscience and write for the Boston Review, emphasizes the pain a thirteen year old girl had to endure. In 1975 Genie's life was on another downward spiral when the "federal grant that funded her care was not renewed" (Saxe). Without funding, the scientists who all fought so ardently over Genie left her to the foster care system. Having to endure more physical abuse, the progress she made linguistically vanished forcing her to stop speaking entirely (Saxe). She was not a lab rat; she was a young girl and should have been treated as such.

Along with the mistreatment Genie endured, Rebecca Saxe notes how Genie is not the first time researchers have failed to properly treat feral children. Victor, the feral child discovered in France, was both rewarded with food and was physically punished for his lack of understanding (Saxe). Rather than the team of philosophers committing their lives to ensure that Victor led a happy healthy life and gained not only language skills but cultural skills, Victor was abused. Victor made little progress which ultimately led to Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard, a physician who took over care for Victor after the initial team of philosopher-observers made no progress, giving up on Victor as well (Saxe). When any and all progress Victor made came to a halt the lead scientist did not explore other avenues and provide the boy with a loving home, instead the scientist gave up on the wild boy and let him live out the remained of his life alone. He was not seen as a person, but as a failed experiment that no new knowledge could be gained from.

Too often, brilliant minds seeking advanced discoveries overlook the damage that could be caused to their participants. Stanley Milgram's obedience experiment at Yale sparked much controversy. Scientists and psychologist, such as Ian Nicholson, had much to say in their articles included in the anthology *Science and Society: An Anthology for Readers and Writers*. Nicholson states that Milgram traumatized not only his participants (symptoms included seizures nervous laugher excessive sweating during the experiments, with symptoms of severe guilt, disturbed sleep, loss of one's self image after the experimented ended) but disturbed social psychologists (152-160). Milgram's participant's altered mental state affected their personal lives. Milgram gave no apology to the victims of his experiments and his research made has not saved any lives.

The main debate is whether the ends justify the means. Is the trauma that the subjects of human experiments endure worth the scientific value gained? The world was in awe of the true nature of man that Milgram's and Zimbardo's experiments revealed; however, no new

knowledge has been gained from the suffering of those sixty four individuals. They put their fellow man through horrendous situations as they comfortably watched them suffer from afar, all in the name of science.

Genie was abused for the first thirteen years of her life, and just when sanctuary was present she was put through a different kind of abuse. She was not valued as an individual, she did not give her consent, and she ended up in a home for mentally challenged adults, even though Curtiss did not believe this girl was handicapped. Saxe draws attention to how Genie and other feral children, once the center of the scientific community, all became anonymous, had been abandoned and neglected, yet again, while having to endure further abuse. Had they focused on Genie's well being positive life changing discoveries could have been made while keeping Genie's dignity intact. Saxe observes that even with multiple feral children cases, "The grand questions about human nature remain unanswered". Six hundred years of scarce cases of feral children have been revealed to scientist. They have had six hundred years to study the human brain. Six hundred years to gain life saving knowledge. Only forty years ago they were given another opportunity and still no advanced knowledge has been obtained.

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. It would appear that researchers who study feral children have erased the line separating genius and insanity along with Oscar Levant. Are the potential benefits of human studies worth the potential risks to the participants? When the potential risks could possibly land the subject in a worse mental state than when they arrived, no. No scientific discovery should be built on the blood of the innocent.

C.R.A.A.P. Resource Evaluation

"'Stopit!' She Said. 'Nomore!'" by Natalie Angier

Currency: Natalie Angier wrote the article was in 1993. The article was written after the discovery and experimentation on Genie the feral child. Genie is the last known case of a modern feral child making this one of the more accurate articles written within the last two decades. The research done and the knowledge used to compose this essay are more accurate than those conducted in previous years on other cases of feral children.

Relevancy: Studying the potential risks experiments can pose to their participants Natalie Angier's article is valid as further investigation into the effects human subject experimentation can have on the participants. Angier investigates the life of Genie in further detail.

Authority: Angier studied science and English at Barnard College. Her studies in science make her well informed on the scientific process, famous experiments that were conducted and their procedures. She won a Pulitzer Prize. She has written four books on various scientific topics and has won several scientific based awards.

Accuracy: Natalie Angier uses specific dates in her article. These dates can be checked and have been proved to be accurate. She gives her personal emotions heavily throughout the article, but not before providing the fact. Her emotion is her point of view on the fact and does not change the scientific basis of the article.

Purpose: The purpose of the article is to explore the many layers of the life led by Genie. The personal side of Genie's story as well as the scientific exploitation that a little girl was forced to endure is the main reason for the research done on the article.

"The Linguistic Development of Genie" by Susan Curtiss

Currency: The paper was written in 1974 which leaves a wide gap in scientific advancements; however, no new in-depth research has been conducted directly on Genie and the findings of Curtiss have not been discredited. Susan Curtiss had first hand interactions with Genie and studied her up close not from a far or simply reviewed data from others.

Relevancy: This paper discusses the language development of Genie. The paper goes into detail in regards to the progress and procedures made by Genie throughout all of the testing conducted on her as a young girl. Susan Curtiss and colleagues describe the eagerness at which they tested Genie and the plethora of techniques and the variety of experiments they conducted upon Genie. This was all done in an attempt to further the scientific understanding on linguistic development.

Authority: Susan Curtiss is a professor at University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Curtiss has two main areas of study within the overall category of linguistics. The first area is psycholinguistics and the second is neurolinguistics. She has conducted many linguistic experiments and has written a couple dozen publications on linguistics.

Accuracy: Although there is some disapproval about the method of experimentation Susan Curtiss and colleagues conducted on Genie, the actual findings have not been discredited. Curtiss and her team's research has held its ground through the past forty years. The most accurate method for testing the linguistic development of an isolated thirteen year old has been used. No better research could be completed unless this exact situation presented itself to scientists today.

Purpose: The purpose of this publication is to fully explain and present the information Susan Curtiss and colleagues discovered while experimenting on Genie. Curtiss describes specific methods and all of the words and grammar concepts Genie was able to retain. The purpose is to inform.

"A Further Analysis of Reports of Wild Children" by Wayne Dennis

Currency: The article was written in 1951. This appears to be out of date having sixty years of experiments and research between the time the article was written and now; however his writings have not been disproved and provide a possible theory for the explanation of feral children's inability to learn.

Relevancy: The article analyzes if any scientific value can be gained from the experimentation on feral children's ability to learn modern day social skills and linguistic skills. Dennis raises questions related the children's original intelligence level: whether or not they were mentally handicapped before adapting to their wild living situation.

Authority: Wayne Dennis spent his life studying child development and psychology. Dennis received his doctorate in psychology in 1930 from Clark University. He has written several scientific articles related to child psychology and has worked at Virginia University, Yale University, Clark University, Louisiana State University, the Office of Naval Research, University of Pittsburg, Brooklyn College, and New York University as a professor and as heads of various psychology related departments.

Accuracy: The data presented by Wayne Dennis has not been disproved. Out of the six feral cases he mentions in the article (Dennis notes that there were thirty known cases at the time) only one was successful at adapting to society. The suggestions Dennis poses for the reasoning behind the lack of an ability to learn have not been considered preposterous or disproved.

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to further investigate cases of feral children with a thorough knowledge on child psychology. The purpose is to draw further understanding on child development.

"The Forbidden Experiment" by Rebecca Saxe

Currency: This essay was written in 2006. The best research had been conducted with some of the most modern tools science can provide. Studies on Genie have already been conducted which aids Rebecca Saxe in her research on the feral child cases of Genie and Victor's.

Relevancy: The essay explores the live of several feral children with brief explanations on the procedures many scientists took in efforts to uncover the inner workings of the human brain in regards to its ability to learn. This essay was written only a decade ago so the findings are not out of date.

Authority: Rebecca Saxe is a professor who specializes in cognitive neuroscience at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Saxe is also associated with the McGovern Institute for Brain Research. She has been given the honor of being name a Young Global Leader and was a member of Harvard's Society of Fellows. Saxe has made many scientific contributions, including the naming of the temporoparietal junction region of the brain.

Accuracy: Heavily based upon Saxe's research and understanding of the inner workings of the brain, Saxe's essay is heavily based upon scientific fact and has not been disproved. Her essay that appeared in the Boston review had been peer reviewed. The essay being written only a decade ago has allowed the most accurate scientific tools to be used in the analysis and experimentation of cases of feral children.

Purpose: The purpose of the essay is to revaluate the findings of feral children with modern tools and technology to develop further understanding into the learning capabilities of the brain. The age at which is ideal for learning languages and the base knowledge one must obtain by a certain age is discussed in the essay.

"Information on Protection of Human Subjects in Research Funded or Regulated by U.S. Government" by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Currency: The article is the most up to date government issued publication. The publication has been reviewed by a team of experts and has been developed over hours of thought and debating until the final publication was perfected.

Relevancy: This is relevant to the study of feral children and the experiments conducted on the feral children due to the nature of the procedures. This publication by the government outlines the rules and regulations that have been put into practice as a result of several unethical experiments that have caused immense trauma to the participants. This publication is necessary is determining the difference between each person's individual view on ethics and what human subject experimentation is breaking the law.

Authority: The authority writing this publication is the government of the United States. They have the best experts creating the regulations and a team behind every decision. Every regulation created has to be determined as appropriate for the citizens. Nothing is created on a whim and everything is peer reviewed.

Accuracy: The publication is accurate. This is the most up to date regulation that has been set in motion by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service.

Purpose: The purpose of the publication is to outline the necessary steps and precautions a scientist must take before they conduct an experiment on a human subject. It is intended to inform the public of their rights as well as protect both the experimenter and the experimented.

Citation

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The Ethics of Human-Subject Research

Feral Children

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"Are the potential benefits of human studies worth the potential risks to the participants?"

Abstract

In the early to mid- 1900s, there were a handful of cases with feral children. A feral child is also known as a wild child; one who is abandoned and/or isolated from human contact, or raised by animals. The two most significant cases were of Amala and Kamala (the wolf girls) and Genie. Although both very different situations and cases, both were experiments to get the children to learn how to speak and become parts of society again.

Amala and Kamala were more difficult to teach due to their jungle environment. Genie on the other hand was easier to teach and learned at a faster pace because she had more human contact than Amala and Kamala. Throughout the years, they all learned at their own pace and made outstanding improvements with their cognitive skill levels.

This essay will discuss their story and how they were taught to form to society. It will also discuss the advantages of experimenting on feral children and how it helps science understand the brain and cognitive development.

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Professor Fulton

English 101

8 June 2016

Feral Children and Linguistics

There are benefits and consequences to everything we do. However, many times we ask whether the benefits outweigh the consequences. This is especially true when it comes to science, many experiments are considered unethical, however, there are potential benefits to the findings and the knowledge we gain through these experiments. Anthony Wrigley of Keele University states that research involving human subjects is not intrinsically ethically dubious. For example, feral children, though it is very taboo and unethical, we can learn how humans can truly adapt to their environment based on the experiments we have done on feral children.

The purpose for human experimentation is to understand the minds of humans better; it is to uncover the secrets to how humans think, adapt, and learn. The purpose behind experimenting on feral children (wild children)— a child who has been isolated from human contact and society— according to author John McCrone is to answer the question of whether human consciousness is innate or based on language and socialization. In McCrone's article *Feral Children*, he claims that, "Several kings, including James IV, were said to have locked away children at birth to discover what would happen." As far as researchers know, these experiments on these feral children has been happening for centuries now. There have been many cases involving feral children, the most popular ones being of two young girls, Amala and Kamala, and the Genie experiment. Both are different, however, the development of linguistics and becoming parts of society are similar.

The story of Amala and Kamala takes place in India on October 17, 1920, when Reverend J.A.L. Singh found the "wolf girls" in the jungle and took them into his orphanage. The young girls were raised by wolves and so therefore acted like wolves. "They scampered on all fours. There was no trace of humanness in the way they acted or thought. They tore off clothes and only ate raw meat" (McCrone). These are clear examples of wolf-like or even animal-like behavior. After the finding of these girls, Amala (the youngest one) died shortly after their rescue. But Kamala still lived and the Reverend did his best to teach her the way of humans. The child learned a few words but would still cry and howl like a wolf and would not accompany other children in play time. Five years later in 1926, Kamala had learned to walk upright as a human and had a vocabulary of about forty words or so. "She is of normal size, and there is nothing peculiar about her except that she sits animal-like and does nothing for hours together. Her face has a vacant appearance, but when she says one of the thirty words she has learned… she smiles sweetly and has a pleasing face" (Benzzaquen, Adrianna, *History of Psychology*). Through teaching Kamala and guiding her, the Reverend was able to get her to understand certain words and phrases and taught her how to physically walk like a human. This is again, evidence, to which children and adults learn to adapt to their environment.

The story of Genie is quite outstanding and very different from Amala and Kamala's story. The significant differences are that Genie was not raised by animals, but rather, abandoned and left isolated in a small room for almost thirteen years; Amala and Kamala were small children between the ages of three and six when they were found. According to Susan Curtiss, *UCLA*, in her essay *The linguistic development of Genie*, "when we first encountered her, she was 13 years and 7 months old— a painfully thin child who appeared six or seven years old". Her abuse consisted of her father physically abusing her, being malnourished, and kept in a

dirty infant bed for about thirteen years. This isolation had caused her to be unable to speak, chew, show any form of emotion, or stand upright. When Genie was found, she was taken to the hospital immediately, "during her stay in the hospital she showed remarkable development… she rapidly gained weight and height, and breast development signaled oncoming sexual maturation" (Curtiss). Not only did her physical appearance change after being taken to the hospital, but her cognitive development was improving at a very fast pace. However, according to their tests, Genie has not yet acquired any language before being admitted into the hospital. Curtiss states that Genie often responded to words clearly out of the context of their environment— and, at the other extreme, failed to respond to simple commands. This evidence proves that there was no development of linguistics for Genie.

I believe that a child can learn, although feral, depending on the situation they have been kept in. For example, in Amala and Kamala's case, all they knew were wolves and wolf behavior. However, Genie only knew isolation and some human contact, which made her learn faster, because she still had those human skills, although not instilled in her completely, they were still present and functioning. Another reason that Genie learned to speak and comprehend language more easily than Kamala was because she was working with professional linguists and psychiatrists and Kamala was being taught by a reverend who had no professional education on linguistics.

There are other points that contradict the benefits to the experimentation on feral children. Wayne Dennis, author and professor at the University of Pittsburgh states in his article *A Further Analysis of Reports of Wild Children*, "A detailed examination of the accounts led me to the conclusion they were of little value for any scientific purpose". He believes this to be true because he feels that it is more likely that these children were already mentally defective prior to

their animal life. Although this is possible, how can we know for sure that these children had issues prior? The point of testing these children is to see how development works, even if they have missed the crucial cognitive development stages already. We want to test and see if it is possible to gain that knowledge at a later age, even though the development will be slow, it can be possible.

Children start learning cognitively at an early age, simply by seeing gestures and listening to their parents or caregivers speak. Kendra Cherry, psychosocial rehabilitation specialist, sought to explain in her article *Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development* the four stages of cognitive development. The first stage is called the sensorimotor stage, which occurs from birth to about 24 months. This stage consists of the child learning through their senses, like smelling, touching and hearing things. The second stage is the preoperational stage, which occurs from age 2 to 7. Through this stage, children are learning through play, they are able to analyze certain situation, and have their own emotions and views on other people. The third stage is the concrete operational stage, which occurs between the ages of 7 and 11. By this time, a child is able to use logical thinking but they cannot comprehend abstract concepts. The final stage of cognitive development is the formal operational stage which starts at age 12 and goes on into adulthood. A child, at this point is able to use reasoning, understand abstract ideas, and their logical thinking increases.

Based on this information, if a child is isolated from human contact, they cannot learn or experience the four stages of cognitive development when they are supposed to. They learn through their environment and how to work with it. Amala and Kamala only knew the way of a wolf, they learned how to walk on all fours, how to howl and act like a wolf; this was *their* cognitive development. In Genie's case, she had nothing to offer, she had hardly any form of

human contact and her life consisted of isolation. However, both Genie and Kamala learned how to adapt to society eventually through learning language and gestures.

Conclusion

Based on the research I have done; I have come to the conclusion that experimentation on feral children does have its benefits. It gives us more knowledge into the science of a child's brain and learning skills. I do not believe that there is any harm being done to these children while they are being taught language, I do believe, however, that there is harm being done when they are abandoned and/or being raised by animals. Humans are meant to be with other humans, and although our brains function similar to those of animals, we still belong with our own kind.

I believe that experimenting on feral children is actually a good thing, because it can help them as well. Through these experiments, we can help children, like Genie, who have been abandoned and isolated from the world, and help them be an active part of society. There are cases, like Genie's, when feral children learn to actively speak and gain an abundant vocabulary. The key to helping these children is patience and understanding. Calling this an experiment does not seem suitable or appropriate, because there doesn't seem to be any harm from teaching these children how to speak and how to live in a society with their own kind.

Evaluation Sheet

Benzzaquén, Adriana Silvia. "Kamala of Midnapore and Arnold Gesell's Wolf Child and Human Child: Reconciling the Extraordinary and the Normal." *History of Psychology* 4.1 (2001): 59-78. *ProQuest.* Web. 10 June 2016.

Currency: Benzzaquen's article was published back in 2001, and has not been updated since. There has been no new knowledge on Kamala and the experiments done on her. Her knowledge and research on Kamala was the most recent.

Relevancy: This article provides Kalama's story and how she came to be later on after she was adopted into the orphanage. It gave me evidence that I needed to prove that the experimentation worked and was beneficial for her.

Authority: Benzzaquen is a professor at the Mount Vincent University. She teaches early modern European history, women's history, and cultural history. She received her BA, MA, and PhD and York University.

Accuracy: Benzzaquen references many books and articles throughout her article. Gives valid reasoning and evidence to prove her points.

Purpose: The purpose of her article was to go more depth into Kalama's story and give us the details on how she came to be later on in her life.

Cherry, Kendra. "The 4 Stages of Cognitive Development in Children." *Verywell*. 24 Apr. 2016. Web. 10 June 2016.

Currency: Cherry's article was published a few months ago in April and has not been updated since that date. The knowledge of Cognitive Development goes back many years, but her recent article helps us understand it in more modern language.

Relevancy: This article relates to Cognitive Development and how a child needs to go through these stages in order to develop language skills. It relates to how Genie and Kalama needed to go through this process as older children.

Authority: Kendra Cherry is a psychosocial rehabilitation specialist who helps children who are suffering from emotional trauma. Kendra has a BS in psychology from Idaho State University and an MS in education from Boise State University.

Accuracy: Kendra does not cite any sources throughout her article. However, she gives original examples throughout the article and has great knowledge of the subject she writes about.

Purpose: The purpose of her article was to give her readers a more modern take on cognitive development and set it up in a way people could understand it better.

Curtiss, Susan, eds. "The Linguistic Development of Genie." *Language* 50.3 (1974): 528. Web.

Currency: Curtiss's essay and research was published almost 50 years ago, a little while after they did their experiments on Genie. This article specifically, however has not been updated since 1974, but I am sure there is new knowledge on Genie's case since that time.

Relevancy: This journal is Genie's story and it gave me the information I needed to understand Genie's situation. It was the written evidence on how she learned to speak and walk even after her cognitive developmental stages had already passed.

Authority: Susan Curtiss is a Linguistics professor at UCLA. She has published many new things on language development since Genie's case; her most recent being in 2015.

Accuracy: Curtiss's journal/essay was based on her own experiment done with her own team and she gives her own experience as evidence.

Purpose: The purpose of Curtiss's journal was to keep track of her experimentation of Genie and to be able to share the experience with others.

Dennis, Wayne. "A Further Analysis of Reports of Wild Children." 1951 Web.

Currency: Dennis's article has not been updated since he wrote it over 50 years ago. This article was based on his own, professional opinion so updating it would be difficult.

Relevancy: This article gave me a more contradicting point, allowing me to see both sides on whether or not experimenting on feral children had any scientific purpose. Dennis believed it was pointless and served no purpose for science.

Authority: I could not find much information on Dennis. However, I know that he was a professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

Accuracy: Throughout the article, Dennis cites specific cases on feral children. However, the majority of his essay is his own, professional opinion.

Purpose: The purpose of this essay is to give valid reasoning as to why experimentation on feral children serves no scientific purpose whatsoever.

McCrone, John. "Feral Children." *The Lancet Neurology* 2.2 (2003): 132. *ProQuest.* Web. 10 June 2016.

Currency: McCrone's article was published in 2003 and has not been update since this date. His article is the most modern version of Alama and Kalama's story; it is easy to understand and comprehend.

Relevancy: McCrone's article helped me better understand Amala and Kalama's story in a more modern tone. Although a science writer, he writes to make things more simple.

Authority: McCrone is a science writer whose main focus is on psychology. He studied psychology throughout college, so he has a good deal of knowledge on the subject.

Accuracy: McCrone cites information on Amala and Kamala's story but put the story in his own words to make it easier for people to understand.

Purpose: The purpose of his article was to give a more modern take on Amala and Kamala's story and to raise questions on why or how do people adapt to their environment.

Wrigley, Anthony. "Human experiments- the good, the bad, and the ugly". *The Conversation*. 8 June 2015. Web. 25 May 2016.

Currency: Wrigley's article was published a year ago in 2015 and has not been updated since then. His article takes us back in time to when human experimentation started and takes us back to modern time.

Relevancy: Wrigley's article took me back in time to when human experiments first began and how they have evolved. It gave me a view on how things have changed overtime with human experimentation.

Authority: Wrigley studied Philosophy at the University of Leeds and has almost 20 years of experience in teaching ethics. He is a professor at Keele University.

Accuracy: Wrigley cites many different cases of human experimentation throughout his article in order to make different points.

Purpose: The purpose of his article was to give valid reason as to why human experiments can be good and why they can be harmful.

Work Cited

Benzzaquén, Adriana Silvia. "Kamala of Midnapore and Arnold Gesell's Wolf Child and Human Child: Reconciling the Extraordinary and the Normal." *History of Psychology* 4.1 (2001): 59-78. *ProQuest.* Web. 10 June 2016.

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