

### **Project Camelot (Horowitz 1965)**

Study sponsored by the CIA, ostensibly to test W. I. Thomas' idea of the "self-fulfilling prophecy". A research team from several prestigious American universities was assembled that gained access to several remote South American villages, but failed to disclose their funding source or true purpose.

They were actually attempting to locate hotbeds of potential revolutionary activity in different villages by identifying groups of peasants who identified certain future political scenarios as very likely and desirable - thus identifying those willing to participate in potential government insurrections. An anthropologist accidentally spilled the beans over dinner with a university official in South America and the project was unmasked and forced to an early end.

### **Pygmalion in the Classroom (Rosenthal and Jacobson 1968)**

In the mid-1960s the researchers approached administrators at a working class elementary school. They explained that they had developed a test (which they called the "Harvard Test of Inflected Acquisition") that would not only measure IQ, but also identify which students were about to experience rapid intellectual development.

The school agreed to have their students tested at the beginning of the academic year and the researchers, in turn, gave administrators and teachers two lists: one of students that would continue performing at their previous levels, and another of students they could expect to make remarkable progress in the coming academic year (no matter what their previous performance). In actuality, there was no such test and the researchers had randomly assigned the students to each condition. They further instructed the teachers not to treat their students differently, since this progress would occur naturally.

At the end of the academic year, the test was re-administered. Students in the control condition evidenced a mean 8-point IQ score gain, while those in the experimental condition averaged a more than 20-point increase.

### **Yanomami: The Fierce People (Chagnon 1968, & others) - critiqued in Darkness in El Dorado (Tierney 2002)**

Beginning in 1964, a South American tribe called the Yanomamo became the subject of intense and prolonged research scrutiny. They were regarded as perhaps the last truly "primitive" people - and the most violent. Chagnon and Neel's research was world famous and considered groundbreaking at the time, but has subsequently raised a host of ethical issues.

Among the charges (still being vigorously disputed) were that much of the evidence was staged, researchers interfered to incite war and other conflicts with the Yanomamo, and that (either through improper procedures or illconceived medical experiments) they introduced a number of often fatal diseases into the population.

This research also opened the door for the US government to use the Yanomamo as test subjects for Project Sunshine (to test the effects of radiation poisoning) and other medical and social experiments conducted by a variety of agencies, companies, and research teams that have subsequently decimated the tribe.

### **Effect of Blood on Reaction to a Victim (Piliavin and Piliavin, 1972)**

In the Spring of 1964, Kitty Genovese was brutally murdered outside her apartment building in Queens, NYC while 38 onlookers did nothing. In the wake of that incident, Darley and Latane (1968) proposed their theory of "diffusion of responsibility" (or the "bystander effect"), which asserts that a crowd of onlookers are less likely to offer aid to a victim because they feel someone else will get involved.

Piliavin and Piliavin thought that there was another factor at work: the perception of risk due to involvement. To test their hypothesis, they conducted a field experiment in the New York subway system. A confederate, dressed as a blind man with dark glasses and a white cane, faked a fainting spell on a moving subway car between stops while researchers recorded bystander reactions.

They conducted the experiment 42 times under two conditions: one where the "victim" simply collapsed, and the other where they also appeared to bleed about the mouth. They repeatedly got