

Week 3 Assignment

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Part 1:

1. Sleep is divided generally into two phases, REM and non-REM (NREM) sleep. During REM sleep, sleep is characterized by “darting movements of the eyes”(Spielman et al) under closed eyelids, hence the acronym representing rapid eye movement. Brain waves during this phase of sleep are very “similar to brain waves during wakefulness”(Spielman et al), suggesting that this during this stage of sleep we are not unconscious. The latter represents the first four stages of sleep “distinguished from each other and from wakefulness”(Spielman et al) by distinct patterns of brain waves, and not characterized by eye movement.

2. One theory views hypnosis as “effectively a dissociated state of consciousness” where one is “only minimally aware”(Spielman et al) during the hypnosis. In therapy, hypnosis may be used to “alter the thoughts and perceptions” of a patient as well as to draw out information “buried deeply”(Spielman et al) in the memory of a subject. During hypnosis, the participant is “guided to focus on one thing”, “made comfortable” and expected to “trust the hypnotist”, with encouragement to “use his or her imagination”(Spielman et al) in order to make the best use of the therapy. Hypnosis combined with other techniques is used for therapeutic purposes including “pain management”, the treatment of “depression and anxiety”, as well as “smoking cessation” and “weight loss”(Spielman et al). Evidence has shown that these therapies have been “at least somewhat effective”(Spielman et al) in treatment of these conditions.

3. Benzodiazepines are a class of drugs that work on the brain and are used to treat a variety of medical conditions. These drugs “act on specific receptors in the brain” which makes the brain “less sensitive to stimulation”, producing a “calming effect”(Spielman et al) which is favored for many conditions. In addition to their calming effects, these drugs may cause “drowsiness, sleepiness, or dizziness” along with “amnesia”, “confusion”(Spielman et al) among similar side effects on behavior and consciousness.

Opiates are a class of drug which has analgesic properties, meaning they decrease pain. Naturally occurring “in the poppy plant”, opiates include “heroin, morphine, methadone and codeine”(Spielman et al). Opiates work by binding to an “endogenous opined neurotransmitter system”, opiate compounds produced by the body naturally reduce pain and produce euphoria, while opiate drugs can mimic this system with a “high potential for abuse”(Spielman et al) by drug users. While these drugs are helpful for decreasing pain, they “will continue to present challenges”(Aquina et al) to medical professionals due to their addictive properties.

4. One sleep disorder is called insomnia. Insomnia is considered a “consistent difficulty in falling or staying asleep” and is the “most common”(Spielman et al) of sleep disorders. Individuals may also find they have “difficulty getting back to sleep”, and criteria for diagnosing insomnia require that the symptoms persist for “at least three times per week” for “at least one month”(Spielman et al) . Treatment of insomnia has “several different approaches”, including limiting the use of “stimulant drugs” or an increase in “physical exercise during the day”(Spielman et al) in order to improve sleep. Medications are also viable treatments for insomnia, as over-the-counter and prescription medicine may “help them sleep”, though this should be done sparingly because it may “alter the nature of the sleep cycle”(Spielman et al), potentially making the insomnia worse if left untreated.

Similarly, parasomnia is a sleep disorder many people suffer from as well. This disorder is characterized by “unwanted, disruptive motor activity and/or experiences”(Spielman et al) which occur during REM or NREM, all stages of sleep. Examples of this condition include “sleepwalking, restless leg syndrome, and night terrors”(Spielman et al). This condition has been treated historically with medications ranging “from Benzodiazepines to antidepressants”, though the success of these treatments “is questionable”(Spielman et al) as later studies found these drugs to be ineffective. However, patients suffering from “sleep-related breathing problems” showed improvements when they were “effectively treated”(Spielman et al), indicating that there are possible treatments for parasomnia.

Part 2:

1. During an arrest, procedure must be followed by police personnel for the arrest to be valid. The police “must inform” the suspect of their “constitutional rights” and must give them “the opportunity to contact”(Lane) someone a lawyer or other connection. After an arrest, suspect will “be booked” in order to document the arrest by taking fingerprints, pictures and a description of the arrest and “belongings will be taken”(Lane) while the suspect is in custody. These procedures lead people to feel confused, fearful and dehumanized by depriving them of the privilege of personally speaking to connections, and the privilege of items the suspect is in possession of. Being fingerprinted and having pictures taken may also feel like an invasion of privacy, which is dehumanizing to many suspects.

2. Identity is a concept which psychologists use to understand interactions between individuals. While identity is unique and independent of how others define it, “few people choose their identities”(Heshmat) and instead internalize the identity of their parents and dominant cultures. This indicates that identity is mostly something that people learn and internalize from the society around them, rather than something they are born with. It is difficult to remake a given person into someone with a new identity, but there are methods “designed to create total anonymity”(Bonsor) in situations where witnesses need to provide information under threat. When given a “fresh start in a new community”(Bonsor), witnesses can assume a new identity with help of the federal government.

3. The Stanford prison study has various ethical issues. While the study was designed not to be directly abusive, with rules against hurting the participants, they signed informed consent paperwork which was later reviewed by the APA finding that no guidelines had been violated. While the experimenters did not violate laws or APA guidelines directly, I think there are several sides to the ethics of this experiment.

The experiment did cause harm and trauma to the participants, which the participants were informed of before the experiment, but was nonetheless a sacrifice made by both the guards and prisoners participating in the experiment. The guards found themselves traumatized by the experiment because they were forced to treat the prisoners cruelly as part of the experiment, as it was intended to simulate the cruelty which prisoners are exposed to in real life prisons. The prisoners also suffered trauma as they were given little living space and humiliating conditions.

On the other hand, the trauma suffered by the participants was realistic and made this study more influential in efforts to reform the prison system in the United States. The conditions in the prison were intended to simulate real life conditions which prisoners are exposed to, and therefore these conditions were necessary in order to protect the integrity of the experiment. Without conditions like this the experiment would have been unrealistic, and it would have been a less worthwhile and noteworthy study.

Works Cited:

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