Ostracism

Description

Ostracism (Greek: ??????????, *ostrakismos*) was a procedure under the Athenian democracy in which any citizen could be expelled from the city-state of Athens for ten years. While some instances clearly expressed popular anger at the citizen, ostracism was often used preemptively. It was used as a way of neutralizing someone thought to be a threat to the state or potential tyrant. It has been called an “honourable exile” by scholar P. J. Rhodes.[1] The word “ostracism” continues to be used for various cases of social shunning.

Whitehead, D.. (2003). Ostracism. The Classical Review

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1093/cr/53.2.400
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“In this review, i examine the social psychological research on os- tracism, social exclusion, and rejection. being ignored, excluded, and/or rejected signals a threat for which reflexive detection in the form of pain and distress is adaptive for survival. brief ostracism episodes result in sadness and anger and threaten fundamental needs. individuals then act to fortify or replenish their thwarted need or needs. behavioral consequences appear to be split into two gen- eral categories: attempts to fortify relational needs (belonging, self- esteem, shared understanding, and trust), which lead generally to prosocial thoughts and behaviors, or attempts to fortify efficacy/ existence needs of control and recognition that may be dealt with most efficiently through antisocial thoughts and behaviors. avail- able research on chronic exposure to ostracism appears to deplete coping resources, resulting in depression and helplessness.”
Williams, K. D., & Nida, S. A.. (2011). Ostracism: Consequences and coping. Current Directions in Psychological Science

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“Ostracism means being ignored and excluded by one or more others. despite the absence of verbal derogation and physical assault, ostracism is painful: it threatens psychological needs (belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence); and it unleashes a variety of physiological, affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses. here we review the empirical literature on ostracism within the framework of the temporal need-threat model.”
Robinson, S. L., O’Reilly, J., & Wang, W.. (2013). Invisible at Work: An Integrated Model of Workplace Ostracism. Journal of Management

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“This article offers a review, integration, and extension of the literature relevant to ostracism in organizations. we first seek to add conceptual clarity to ostracism, by reviewing existing definitions and developing a cohesive one, identifying the key features of workplace ostracism, and distinguishing it from existing organizational constructs. next, we develop a broad model of ostracism in organizations. this model serves to integrate the relevant findings related to ostracism in organizations and to extend our theorizing about it. we take a decidedly organizational focus, proposing organizationally relevant factors that may cause different types of ostracism, moderate the experience of ostracism at work, and moderate the reactions of targets. we hope this article will provide a good foundation for organizational scholars interested in studying ostracism by providing a framework of prior literature and directions for future study.”
Zadro, L., Williams, K. D., & Richardson, R.. (2004). How low can you go? Ostracism by a computer is sufficient to lower self-reported levels of belonging, control, self-esteem, and meaningful existence. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.jesp.2003.11.006
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“Previous research has demonstrated self-reports of lower levels of four fundamental needs as a result of short periods of face-to-face ostracism, as well as short periods of internet ostracism (cyberball), even when the ostracizing others are unseen, unknown, and not-to-be met. in an attempt to reduce the ostracism experience to a level that would no longer be aversive, we (in study 1) convinced participants that they were playing cyberball against a computer, yet still found comparable negative

impact compared to when the participants thought they were being ostracized by real others. in study 2, we took this a step further, and additionally manipulated whether the participants were told the computer or humans were scripted (or told) what to do in the game. once again, even after removing all remnants of sinister attributions, ostracism was similarly aversive. we interpret these results as strong evidence for a very primitive and automatic adaptive sensitivity to even the slightest hint of social exclusion. © 2004 elsevier inc.all rights reserved."
Williams, K. D.. (2009). Chapter 6 Ostracism. A Temporal Need-Threat Model. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/S0065-2601(08)00406-1
DOI URL
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"The phenomenon of ostracism has received considerable empirical attention in the last 15 years, in part because of a revitalized interest in the importance of belonging for human social behavior. i present a temporal model that describes and predicts processes and responses at three stages of reactions to ostracism: (a) reflexive, (b) reflective, and (c) resignation. the reflexive pain response triggers threats to four fundamental needs and directs the individual's attention to reflect on the meaning and importance of the ostracism episode, leading to coping responses that serve to fortify the threatened need(s). persistent exposure to ostracism over time depletes the resources necessary to motivate the individual to fortify threatened needs, thus leading eventually to resignation, alienation, helplessness, and depression. i conclude with a call for more research, especially on the effects of ostracism on groups, and on possible buffering mechanisms that reduce the long-term negative consequences of ostracism. © 2009 elsevier inc. all rights reserved."
Sebastian, C., Viding, E., Williams, K. D., & Blakemore, S. J.. (2010). Social brain development and the affective consequences of ostracism in adolescence. Brain and Cognition

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.bandc.2009.06.008
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"Recent structural and functional imaging studies have provided evidence for continued development of brain regions involved in social cognition during adolescence. in this paper, we review this rapidly expanding area of neuroscience and describe models of neurocognitive development that have emerged recently. one implication of these models is that neural development underlies commonly observed adolescent phenomena such as susceptibility to peer influence and sensitivity to peer rejection. experimental behavioural evidence of rejection sensitivity in adolescence is currently sparse. here, we describe a study that directly compared the affective consequences of an experimental ostracism manipulation (cyberball) in female adolescents and adults. the ostracism condition led to significantly greater affective consequences in the adolescents compared with adults. this suggests that the ability to regulate distress resulting from ostracism continues to develop between adolescence and adulthood. the results are discussed in the context of models of neurocognitive development. ©

2009 elsevier inc. all rights reserved."
Ferris, D. L., Brown, D. J., Berry, J. W., & Lian, H.. (2008). The Development and Validation of the Workplace Ostracism Scale. Journal of Applied Psychology

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"This article outlines the development of a 10-item measure of workplace ostracism. using 6 samples (including multisource and multiwave data), the authors developed a reliable scale with a unidimensional factor structure that replicated across 4 separate samples. the scale possessed both convergent and discriminant validity, and criterion-related validity was demonstrated through the scale's relation with basic needs, well-being, job attitudes, job performance, and withdrawal. overall, the present study suggests that the workplace ostracism scale is a reliable and valid measure and that the workplace ostracism construct has important implications for both individuals and organizations."
Williams, K. D., Cheung, C. K. T., & Choi, W.. (2000). Cyberostracism: Effects of being ignored over the internet. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1037/0022-3514.79.5.748
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"Ostracism is such a widely used and powerful tactic that the authors tested whether people would be affected by it even under remote and artificial circumstances. in study 1, 1,486 participants from 62 countries accessed the authors' on-line experiment on the internet. they were asked to use mental visualization while playing a virtual tossing game with two others (who were actually computer generated and controlled). despite the minimal nature of their experience, the more participants were ostracized, the more they reported feeling bad, having less control, and losing a sense of belonging. in study 2, ostracized participants were more likely to conform on a subsequent task. the results are discussed in terms of supporting k. d. williams's (1997) need threat theory of ostracism."
Zadro, L., Boland, C., & Richardson, R.. (2006). How long does it last? The persistence of the effects of ostracism in the socially anxious. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.jesp.2005.10.007
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"Previous research has demonstrated that ostracism (to be excluded and ignored) leads to detrimental effects on four human needs (belonging, control, self-esteem, and meaningful existence; williams, 2001). these detrimental effects, however, may be more pronounced, or more prolonged, in particular

individuals (see williams & zadro, 2001). in the present study, we examined the persistence of the detrimental effects of ostracism in high and low socially anxious participants. the results show that being ostracized affected both groups at the immediate test, and that the high socially anxious participants recovered their primary needs more slowly. the results also show that being ostracized affects personality/attractiveness ratings of sources of ostracism, and increases the likelihood of interpreting ambiguous situations in a threatening manner. overall, the study illustrates that a comprehensive understanding of ostracism, and the effects of moderating factors such as social anxiety, requires assessing the effects across time rather than only focusing on immediate reactions. © 2005 elsevier inc. all rights reserved."
Hartgerink, C. H. J., Van Beest, I., Wicherts, J. M., & Williams, K. D.. (2015). The ordinal effects of ostracism: A meta-analysis of 120 cyberball studies. PLoS ONE

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"We examined 120 cyberball studies (n = 11,869) to determine the effect size of ostracism and conditions under which the effect may be reversed, eliminated, or small. our analyses showed that (1) the average ostracism effect is large (d > |1.4|) and (2) generalizes across structural aspects (number of players, ostracism duration, number of tosses, type of needs scale), sampling aspects (gender, age, country), and types of dependent measure (interpersonal, intrapersonal, fundamental needs). further, we test williams's (2009) proposition that the immediate impact of ostracism is resistant to moderation, but that moderation is more likely to be observed in delayed measures. our findings suggest that (3) both first and last measures are susceptible to moderation and (4) time passed since being ostracized does not predict effect sizes of the last measure. thus, support for this proposition is tenuous and we suggest modifications to the temporal need-threat model of ostracism."
Wesselmann, E. D., Bagg, D., & Williams, K. D.. (2009). "I Feel Your Pain": The effects of observing ostracism on the ostracism detection system. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.jesp.2009.08.003
DOI URL
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"Ostracism-being ignored and excluded-is a painful experience with negative psychological consequences. social psychologists (kerr & levine, 2008; spoor & williams, 2007) argue humans have an evolved system for automatically detecting cues of ostracism and exclusion. detection elicits pain and threats to fundamental needs. we hypothesize simply observing ostracism will cause negative affect and need threat in the observer. participants observed a three-player cyberball game; a target player was included or ostracized, and participants were either instructed to take the perspective of this player or given no such instructions. participants observing ostracism reported negative affect and need threat. our results indicate that ostracism detection is even more powerful than previously suggested, because vicariously, we feel the pain of others' ostracism as our own. © 2009 elsevier inc.

all rights reserved."
Warburton, W. A., Williams, K. D., & Cairns, D. R.. (2006). When ostracism leads to aggression: The moderating effects of control deprivation. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.jesp.2005.03.005
DOI URL
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"We hypothesized that increasing or decreasing levels of control in an ostracized individual could moderate aggressive responding to ostracism. participants were either ostracized or included in a spontaneous game of toss, and then exposed to a series of blasts of aversive noise, the onsets over which they had either control or no control. aggression was defined as the amount of hot sauce participants allocated to a stranger, knowing the stranger did not like hot foods, but would have to consume the entire sample. ostracized participants without control allocated more than four times as much sauce as any other group; ostracized participants who experienced restored control were no more aggressive than either of the groups who were included. aggressive responding to ostracism may depend on the degree to which control needs are threatened in the target, and is discussed in terms of williams's (2001) needs threat model of ostracism. © 2005 elsevier inc. all rights reserved."
Wolf, W., Levordashka, A., Ruff, J. R., Kraaijeveld, S., Lueckmann, J. M., & Williams, K. D.. (2015). Ostracism Online: A social media ostracism paradigm. Behavior Research Methods

Plain numerical DOI: 10.3758/s13428-014-0475-x
DOI URL
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"We describe ostracism online, a novel, social media-based ostracism paradigm designed to (1) keep social interaction experimentally controlled, (2) provide researchers with the flexibility to manipulate the properties of the social situation to fit their research purposes, (3) be suitable for online data collection, (4) be convenient for studying subsequent within-group behavior, and (5) be ecologically valid. after collecting data online, we compared the ostracism online paradigm with the cyberball paradigm (williams & jarvis behavior research methods, 38, 174-180, 2006) on need-threat and mood questionnaire scores (van beest & williams journal of personality and social psychology 91, 918-928, 2006). we also examined whether ostracized targets of either paradigm would be more likely to conform to their group members than if they had been included. using a bayesian analysis of variance to examine the individual effects of the different paradigms and to compare these effects across paradigms, we found analogous effects on need-threat and mood. perhaps because we examined conformity to the ostracizers (rather than neutral sources), neither paradigm showed effects of ostracism on conformity. we conclude that ostracism online is a cost-effective, easy to use, and ecologically valid research tool for studying the psychological and behavioral effects of ostracism."
Hawkley, L. C., Williams, K. D., & Cacioppo, J. T.. (2011). Responses to ostracism across adulthood. Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience

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“Ostracism is ubiquitous across the lifespan. from social exclusion on the playground, to romantic rejection, to workplace expulsion, to social disregard for the aged, ostracism threatens a fundamental human need to belong that reflexively elicits social pain and sadness. older adults may be particularly vulnerable to ostracism because of loss of network members and meaningful societal roles. on the other hand, socioemotional selectivity theory suggests that older adults may be less impacted by ostracism because of an age-related positivity bias. we examined these hypotheses in two independent studies, and tested mechanisms that may account for age differences in the affective experience of ostracism. a study of 18- to 86-year-old participants in the time-sharing experiments for the social sciences program showed an age-related decrease in the impact of ostracism on needs satisfaction and negative affectivity. a study of 53- to 71-year-old participants in the chicago health, aging, and social relations study (chasrs) showed that ostracism diminished positive affectivity in younger (
Carter-Sowell, A. R., Chen, Z., & Williams, K. D.. (2008). Ostracism increases social susceptibility. Social Influence

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“Ostracism, the act of ignoring and excluding, is a universally applied tactic of social control. individuals who detect ostracism often change their behaviors to be readmitted into the group, even if it means becoming excessively socially susceptible to influence. we tested whether ostracized individuals are more socially susceptible to a subsequent influence attempt. in this study, 65 undergraduates were randomly assigned to a 2 (inclusion or ostracism)?3 (compliance tactic: foot?in?the door, target request only, door?in?the?face) between?participants design. the participants played cyberball and were either included or ostracized, and then they were approached with a request to donate money. despite no differences between the three tactics, ostracism increased compliance across all request types. our discussion focuses on the implications for ostracism?induced social susceptibility. this material is based on work supported by the national science foundation under grant no. 0519209 awarded to the third author. we would like to thank janice kelly for her comments, and jessica bartman, katherine lang, patrick o’brien, vista ritchie, and kirsten zeiser for their excellent acting skills as confederates. ostracism, the act of ignoring and excluding, is a universally applied tactic of social control. individuals who detect ostracism often change their behaviors to be readmitted into the group, even if it means becoming excessively socially susceptible to influence. we tested whether ostracized individuals are more socially susceptible to a subsequent influence attempt. in this study, 65 undergraduates were randomly assigned to a 2 (inclusion or ostracism)?3 (compliance tactic: foot?in?the door, target request only, door?in?the?face) between?participants design. the participants played cyberball and were either included or ostracized, and then they were approached with a request to donate money. despite no differences between the three tactics, ostracism increased compliance

across all request types. our discussion focuses on the implications for ostracism?induced social susceptibility. this material is based on work supported by the national science foundation under grant no.0519209 awarded to the third author. we would like to thank janice kelly for her comments, and jessica bartman, katherine lang, patrick o'brien, vista ritchie, and kirsten zeiser for their excellent acting skills as confederates."
Nezlek, J. B., Wesselmann, E. D., Wheeler, L., & Williams, K. D.. (2012). Ostracism in everyday life. Group Dynamics

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"Ostracism is a negative interpersonal experience that has been studied primarily in laboratory settings in which people have been ostracized by strangers and the motives for being ostracized have been ambiguous. this study extended this research by investigating ostracism as it occurs in daily life, focusing on people's reflective reactions to being ostracized in their daily lives and on the nature of the ostracism they experience. for 2 weeks, 40 participants (adults residing in the community) described what happened each time they felt ostracized using a diary method modeled after the rochester interaction record (rir; wheeler & nezlek, 1977). the questions in the diary were based on williams's (2007) need-threat model of ostracism. most ostracism episodes were from persons of equal status, and participants reported lower levels of belonging, control, self-esteem, and meaningful existence after being ostracized. participants' needs were threatened more when friends or close others had ostracized them than when they had been ostracized by acquaintance and strangers, and they reacted more negatively to punitive, defensive, and oblivious ostracism as opposed to role based or ambiguous ostracism. this research suggests that the reflective effects of ostracism can vary as a function of who ostracizes someone and why people feel they have been ostracized."
Balliet, D., & Ferris, D. L.. (2013). Ostracism and prosocial behavior: A social dilemma perspective. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.obhdp.2012.04.004
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"Prior research has yielded mixed findings regarding the relation of ostracism to prosocial behavior, with studies indicating ostracism leads people to become less prosocial, more prosocial, or that prosocial behavior is unaffected by workplace ostracism. by conceptualizing prosocial behavior at work as a social dilemma, we hypothesized that whether or not individuals reduce prosocial behaviors following ostracism can be understood by how individuals manage the conflict between the immediate temptation to treat others poorly and the long-term benefits of not giving into such temptations. across three studies – a scenario (study 1), experimental (study 2), and field study on employed adults (study 3) – we find support for the hypothesis that individuals who are less (versus more) oriented towards future outcomes engage in less prosocial behaviors with others who have ostracized them during prior interactions. we discuss both the practical and theoretical implications of these findings. © 2012

elsevier inc."
Goodwin, S. A., Williams, K. D., & Carter-Sowell, A. R.. (2010). The psychological sting of stigma: The costs of attributing ostracism to racism. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1016/j.jesp.2010.02.002
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"Laboratory-based research with university students demonstrates that ostracism is reflexively painful, depletes fundamental needs, and is highly resistant to variations in situational context or individual differences. employing a representative sample of 614 us white and african american adults, we sought to (1) demonstrate the utility of using cyberball on a broader non-college sample, and examine (2) whether attributing ostracism to racial prejudice mediates recovery. participants in an internet version of cyberball were either included or ostracized by two other players (both white or both black), and reported their level of distress before and after making attributions for treatment during the game. overall, reflexive needs were threatened by ostracism, but more so for blacks. whites attributed ostracism to racism when the other players were black. blacks attributed ostracism to racism when the other players were white or black. within a few minutes, participants reported feeling less distress, but attributing ostracism to racial prejudice impeded their recovery. © 2010 elsevier inc."
Williams, K. D., & Sommer, K. L.. (1997). Social ostracism by coworkers: Does rejection lead to loafing or compensation?. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin

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"A new theoretical model and research paradigm are introduced to investigate the phenomenon of social ostracism-being ignored by others who are in one's presence. the authors examined the effects of social ostracism on individuals' subsequent contributions to a group task. social loafing optically occurs on collective tasks. however; to regain their sense of belonging to the group, the authors expected ostracized individuals to socially compensate-to work harder collectively than coactively. participants were asked to generate as many uses as they could for an object, either coactively or collectively with two others who had either ostracized or included them in an earlier ball-tossing exchange. ostracized females socially compensated, whereas nonostracized females neither loafed nor compensated. ostracized and nonostracized males socially loafed. based on these data and the accompanying attributional and nonverbal analyses, the authors surmised that males and females interpret and respond to social ostracism differently."
Category

1. General
2. General psychology
3. Psychopolitics

4. Social psychology
5. Sociology

Tags

1. social conformity
2. social death
3. social exclusion
4. social punishment
5. the silent treatment

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