

Bystander Apathy

Q: Why are we less likely to help someone in an emergency than in a non-emergency?

1. Emergency situations are often ambiguous.
2. Having identified the situation as an emergency, bystanders need to decide before intervening (a) whether they are in a position to give some form of assistance and (b) whether they have a personal responsibility to help.
3. Characteristics of emergencies make it less likely for anyone to be in a position to give help.
4. There are also three social / situational factors that inhibit bystanders' intervention into emergencies:
 - a. Pluralistic ignorance
 - b. Diffusion of responsibility
 - c. Social inhibition: The fear of embarrassment is greater when you are with strangers. Friendship can be defined as "the reduced fear of embarrassment."

Q: Are people living in urban areas more "apathetic" than those living in rural areas?

1. A crowd is more likely to gather in urban emergencies than in non-urban emergencies.
2. The crowd members are less likely to be friends in urban areas than in rural area.