

Peer Review

Review of: "The Psychology of Crowd Behaviour"

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This is an excellent overview of crowd research from one of the foremost experts in this field (I should declare an interest, by the way, as I have known John and Steve Reicher – the other one for – over 4 decades). There is very little I can add or suggest to change. The review reads very well, and although I know this field quite well, I would say I learnt a fair bit of new research and theory along the way.

Perhaps the distinction between normative vs non-normative action referred to on p.23 could be elaborated a bit. I actually don't like this labelling because non-normative/radical action can often be normative for the groups involved (depending on the context). Together with Tausch and others, I was involved in developing the "nothing to lose" explanation of support for radical behaviour, which also falls within the social identity family of subtheories (like ESIM), but I am not advocating paying a lot of attention to that here as it has not been widely applied to crowd behaviour per se (although it might provide some useful insights). Similarly, the SIDE model (social identity model of deindividuation effects), which John will know well, was another development from the social identity tradition that was particularly relevant to the critique of deindividuation theory, analysing influence in online environments (and subsequently social media), theorising the specific parameters of such contexts (isolation, dispersion, anonymity, pervasive communication channels) and their effects, that could be applicable where social media are discussed (see, e.g., Spears 2021, which John gave me great feedback on, by the way). I think, too, the current analysis (e.g., in terms of meta-perception) could enrich the SIDE analysis, and also the 3 transformations which speak to but elaborate "the cognitive side" of SIDE (basically the depersonalization process). SIDE also has a strategic dimension which could be relevant also (relating to power relations in intergroup contexts, group efficacy, etc., relevant here; "strategic" came up on p. 23, but not sure it was relevant to this analysis). These are minor quibbles and literally side

issues, and I would be reluctant to disturb the balance by going off on tangents where less relevant to crowds/collective action. So I have very little to add.

Maybe I can alert you to two minor typos/glitches I spotted that could be addressed?

p.14, 5 lines from the bottom: word missing here? (if?).

p. 18, 7 lines from the top: ...prior TO this

p.19, I had to read the paragraph on the critics of ESIM recommendations a few times to see where the critics were coming from (i.e., which side they were on, so to speak), so that might be clarified a bit more, perhaps?

p. 20, the last sentence of the paragraph on the analysis applied to live music events was a bit cryptic, perhaps?

That's it. Great overview!

Declarations

Potential competing interests: I have published some research way back with Steve Reicher (Johns's PhD supervisor) and although John and I had a joint writing project planned it has lain dormant for decades!