SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS OF AGGRESSION:

FRUSTRATION—AGGRESSION HYPOTHESIS

A01
Dollard et al (1939) - formulated frustration-aggression hypothesis. Frustration always leads to aggression, aggression always result of frustration. Based on psychodynamic concept - catharsis, view aggression as psychological drive. Attempt to achieve goal is blocked by external factor, experience frustration, creates aggressive drive, leads to aggressive behaviour. Cathartic because aggression from frustration = satisfied, reduces drive, further aggression less likely. Feel better for getting off our chest. Recognises aggression not always expressed directly against source of frustration: 1. cause is abstract - e.g. economic situation, 2. cause too powerful, e.g. teacher. 3. cause unavailable at the time, e.g. teacher left before realised your grade. Aggression is now displaced onto alternative - opposite of the above things.

Research into frustration-aggression
Geen (1968) - male uni students task complete jigsaw, frustration experimentally manipulated one of 3 ways: 1. Impossible to solve. 2. ran out of time due to confederate interfering. 3. confederate insulted participants. Next, pps electric shock confederate when mistake made in task. Insulted pps strongest shocks, then interfered, then impossible. All 3 more than control.

The role of environmental cues
Berkowitz (1989) - creates readiness for aggression, presence of aggressive cues in environment. Cues additional element of frustration-aggression hypothesis. Berkowitz and LePage: procedure: student participants give electric shocks lab, anger and frustration, individual gave shock was confederate. Pps had opportunity to turn tables give electric shock to the confederate. Findings: number of shocks depends on weapons in lab. Two guns next to shock machine = 6.07. no guns = 4.67. "weapon effect".

A03
RESEARCH SUPPORT
Marcus-Newhall et al 2000—meta-analysis 49 studies displaced aggression. Investigated situations directed aggression against target other than the one that caused frustration. Concluded displaced aggression reliable phenomenon, pps were provoked but unable to retaliate directly against source of frustration significantly more likely be aggressive against innocent party than non provoked. Exactly outcome predicted by frustration-aggression.

IS AGGRESSION CATHARTIC?
Bushman (2002) found pps vented anger repeatedly hitting punchbag more angry aggressive rather than less. Doing nothing more effective at reducing aggression, argues that using venting to reduce anger like using petrol put out fire. Advice many counsellors and therapists give to clients. Outcome different from prediction hypothesis. Casts doubt on validity of central assumption of hypothesis.

BERKOWITZ’S REFORMULATION: NEGATIVE EFFECT THEORY
Frustration doesn’t always lead to aggression, aggression can occur without frustration. Reformulated by Berkowitz in 1989 argues frustration one of adverse stimuli create negative feelings, include jealousy, pain, loneliness. Aggression triggered by negative feelings. Frustration range of responses, one of which=aggression. Arose because original hypothesis was inadequate, could only explain how aggression arises in some situations—its reductionist.
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS OF AGGRESSION:

DE-INDIVIDUATION

A01
CROWD BEHAVIOUR
Le Bon (1895) - de-individuation first, explain behaviour of people in crowds. Usually because easily identified by others, behaviour constrained by social norms. Society most forms of aggressive behaviour discouraged. Part of crowd, lose that, freedom to do what want. Lose senses of individual self, identity, responsibility, greater disregard for norms, even laws. Responsibility shared, less personal guilt at harmful aggression directed at others.

HOW DOES DE-INDIVIDUATION LEAD TO AGGRESSION?
Zimbardo (1969) - distinguished between de-individuated and individuated behaviour. Individuated - rational and normative (conforms to social norms), de-individuated - emotional, impulsive, irrational, anti-normative, disinhibited. Lose self-awareness, stop monitoring regulating own behaviour, ignore social norms, fail to form long term plans. Conditions of de-individuation which promote - darkness, drugs, alcohol, uniform, masks, disguises. Major=anonymity, Dixon and Mahendran (2012) - ‘anonymity shapes crowd behaviour’ less fear of retribution - small and unidentifiable, fewer opportunities for others to judge negatively.

THE ROLE OF SELF-AWARENESS
Prentice-Dunn and Rogers (1982) - not due to anonymity directly, consequences of anonymity. Explained by 2 types of self-awareness: 1. Private self-awareness: pay attention to own feelings, reduced when part of crowd. Attention focused outwards to events around, pay less attention to own beliefs, less self-critical/thoughtful/evaluative. 2. Public self-awareness: care about what people think of our behaviour, reduced in crowds. Realise just one individual in big crowd, anonymous, behaviour less likely to be judged by others, no longer can how seen, don’t care about aggressive actions and less accountable for them.

RESEARCH INTO DE-INDIVIDUATION
Dodd (1985) - classroom exercise. Procedure: 229 undergraduate psychology students in 13 classes, question “if you could do anything humanly possible with complete assurance that you would not be detected or held responsible, what would you do?” Students aware response anonymous, independent raters didn’t know hypothesis decided categories of antisocial behaviour responses belonged to. Findings: 36% responses involved some form of antisocial behaviour, 26% actual crimes - most common ‘rob a bank’. Few murder, rape, assassination of politician. 9% prosocial (help). How people think behave - study demonstrates link between anonymity, de-individuation and aggression.

A03
RESEARCH SUPPORT
Douglas and McGarty (2001) - online aggressive behaviour in chatrooms, instant messaging. Strong correlation between anonymity and sending/posting threats, hostile messages. Most aggressive sent by hidden identities. Suggests existence of link between anonymity, de-individuation, and aggressive behaviour in greater relevance context today. Due to explosion in media use, activities of online ‘trolls’ and media celebrities.

LACK OF SUPPORT
Show de-individuation does not always lead to aggression - ‘deviance in dark’ - Gergen et al 1973 8 pps, strangers to each other. In darkened room for 1 hour, do whatever wanted, no rules. Impossible to indentify one another, given guarantee never see each other again. Started touching intimately and kissing. Study repeated, told come face-to-face each other after ‘hour of darkness’ amount of touching/kissing declined, of all behaviours de-individuation could have brought, aggression wasn’t one.

DE-INDIVIDUATION AND ROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
Johnson and Downing (1979) - female participants fake electric shocks to confederate, one condition -pps dressed in Kl Kl Klan-type outfit, masks hiding faces. Pps in 2nd dressed as nurses, 3rd own clothes. Compared with control group, KKK-dressed pps more shocks and higher intensity, nurses gave fewest. Researchers noted nurses more compassionate towards victim, in prosocial role with nurse’s uniform. Seems both aggression and prosocial behaviour potential outcomes of de-individuation, normative cues in situation determine which most likely occur.