Reflection 3 Richerson 1

The concept of “groupthink” refers to the desire for conformity within the group that outweighs the common good of the project at hand. Everyone acts like a hivemind regarding the project, and that can lead to disastrous results, which is exactly what happened with the challenger, everyone was rushing to complete it, not worrying about safety and ethics, and people paid with their lives.

When a group is polarized, one group can become divided based on beliefs, In the Challenger explosion, the people working on it were divided in two: the ones who were speeding through it regardless of the ethics behind it and the engineers who constantly brought up issues such as the cold temperature. Unfortunately, the rushing group, backed by then President Ronald Regan and NASA, was far more powerful, and the warnings were ignored.

It mostly worsened issues that were already inflamed by the rushing nature of the challenger, It was already announced at the time, and when people have expectations, they are not easily broken, so the people wanted the challenger to launch at a specific date, regardless of if it was ready.

Social Loafing in this context was when the face of the group (NASA/Ronald Reagan) was presenting the project and got almost all positive publicity towards the project while putting forth the least amount of effort. The engineers were the group members who did like 99 percent of the work and almost no credit until the project failed spectacularly, where they took all the blame.

One way we can learn from this is, that even in a project related to a baking soda volcano, you should still bring your concerns to light. Maybe there might be a common concern in the group, and all will be on the same page