

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY I

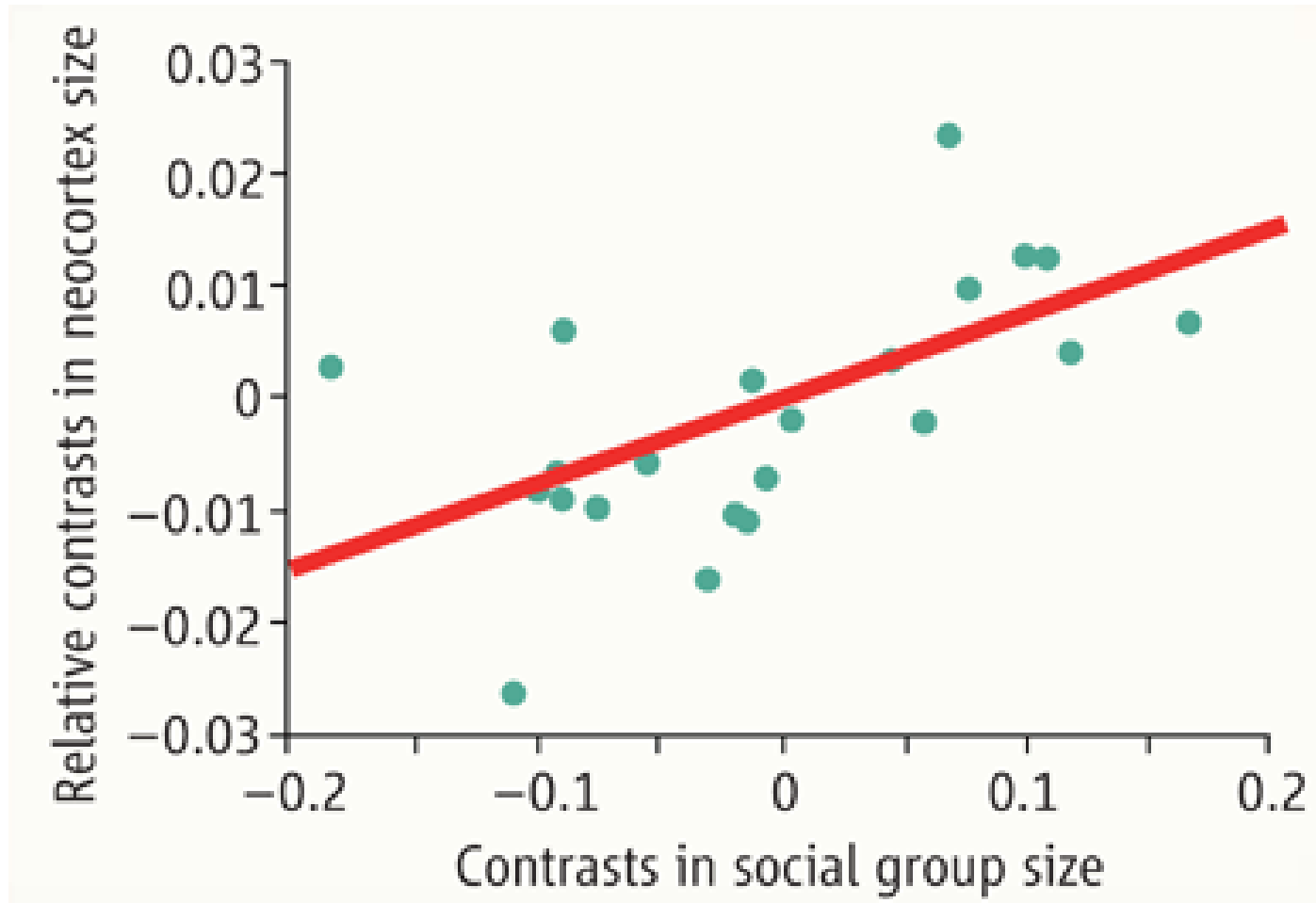
John Gabrieli

9.00

What is social psychology?

The scientific study of the way in which our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the real or imagined presence of other people.

EXISTING PRIMATE SPECIES



SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: ***THE POWER OF THE*** ***SITUATION***

- **Attribution - dispositional/situational**
- **Fundamental Attribution Error**
- **Conformity**
- **Compliance**
- **Obedience**
- **Bystanders and Helping**

Why Did That Person Do That?

Attributions

Why is she smiling at me?



Causal attribution refers to inferring a cause for a person's behavior (one's own or that of another person).

Image courtesy of [Barack Obama](#) on Flickr.

Character or Situation?

Jeremiah helped the elderly man.

Sven had a hard time solving the puzzle.

Tamae gave money to the boy.

Why Did That Person Do That?

- *Who she or he is*
character, personality, traits,
disposition
- *Situation she or he is in*

Character or Situation?

Jeremiah helped the elderly man.

Sven had a hard time solving the puzzle.

Tamae gave money to the boy.

Late for an Appointment

You (other)

Late for an Appointment

You (other) - *Dispositional*

inconsiderate

disorganized

unmotivated

Late for an Appointment

You (other) - *Dispositional*

inconsiderate

disorganized

unmotivated

Me

Late for an Appointment

You (other) - *Dispositional*

inconsiderate

disorganized

unmotivated

Me - *Situational*

busy

traffic

Fundamental attribution error

Lee Ross

A tendency to believe that a behavior is due to a person's disposition rather than the situation in which the person finds him/herself.

“Quiz-Show Study”

Ross, Amabile, & Steinmetz (1977)

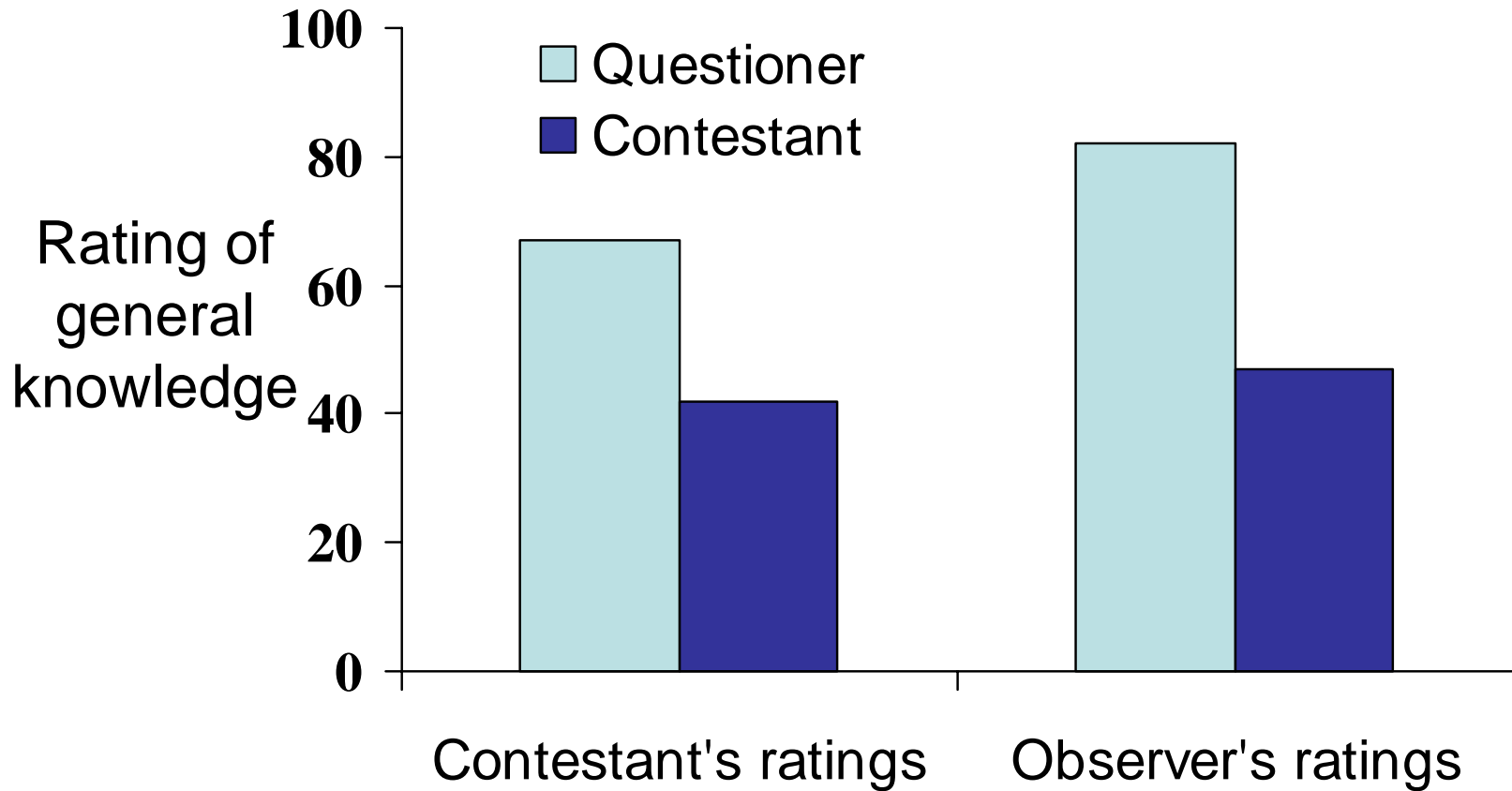
- students run in pairs; drew cards to select “quiz master” or “contestant”
- Quiz master came up with questions which the contestant had to answer.
- For example: Who were the two inventors of calculus? [Answer: Newton and Leibniz]
- This setup gave a huge advantage to the for quiz masters! 40% correct for contestants

Student Audience

How knowledgeable is this person in general compared to the average Stanford population?

- 0: Much less knowledgeable
- 50: About average
- 100: Much more knowledgeable

“Quiz Show Study”

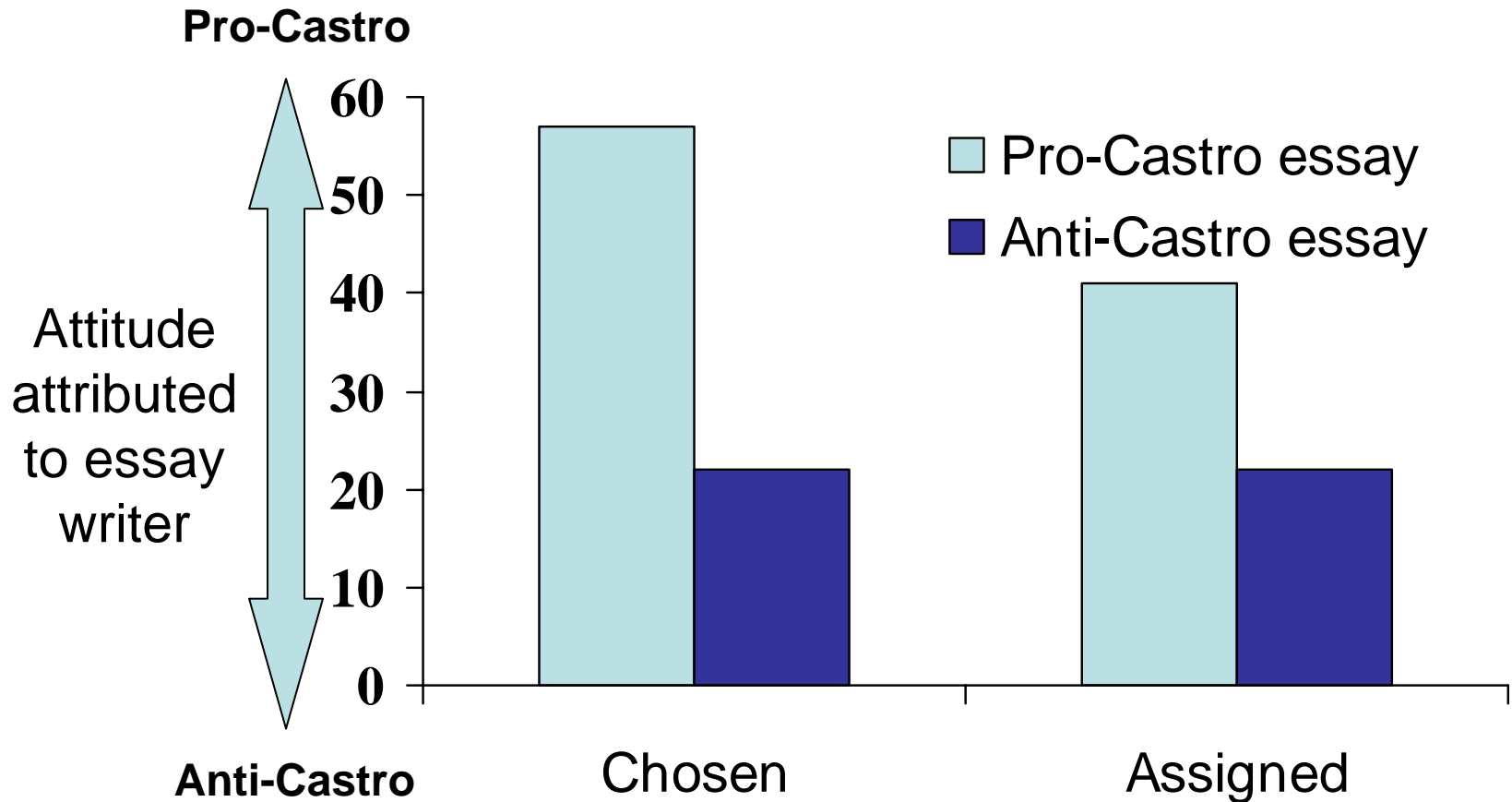


“Castro Study”

Jones & Harris (1967)

- Participants read Pro-Castro or Anti-Castro essays.
- The opinions expressed in the essays were presented as chosen vs. assigned 50/50.
- Participants’ ratings of how pro-Castro they thought the essayist was.

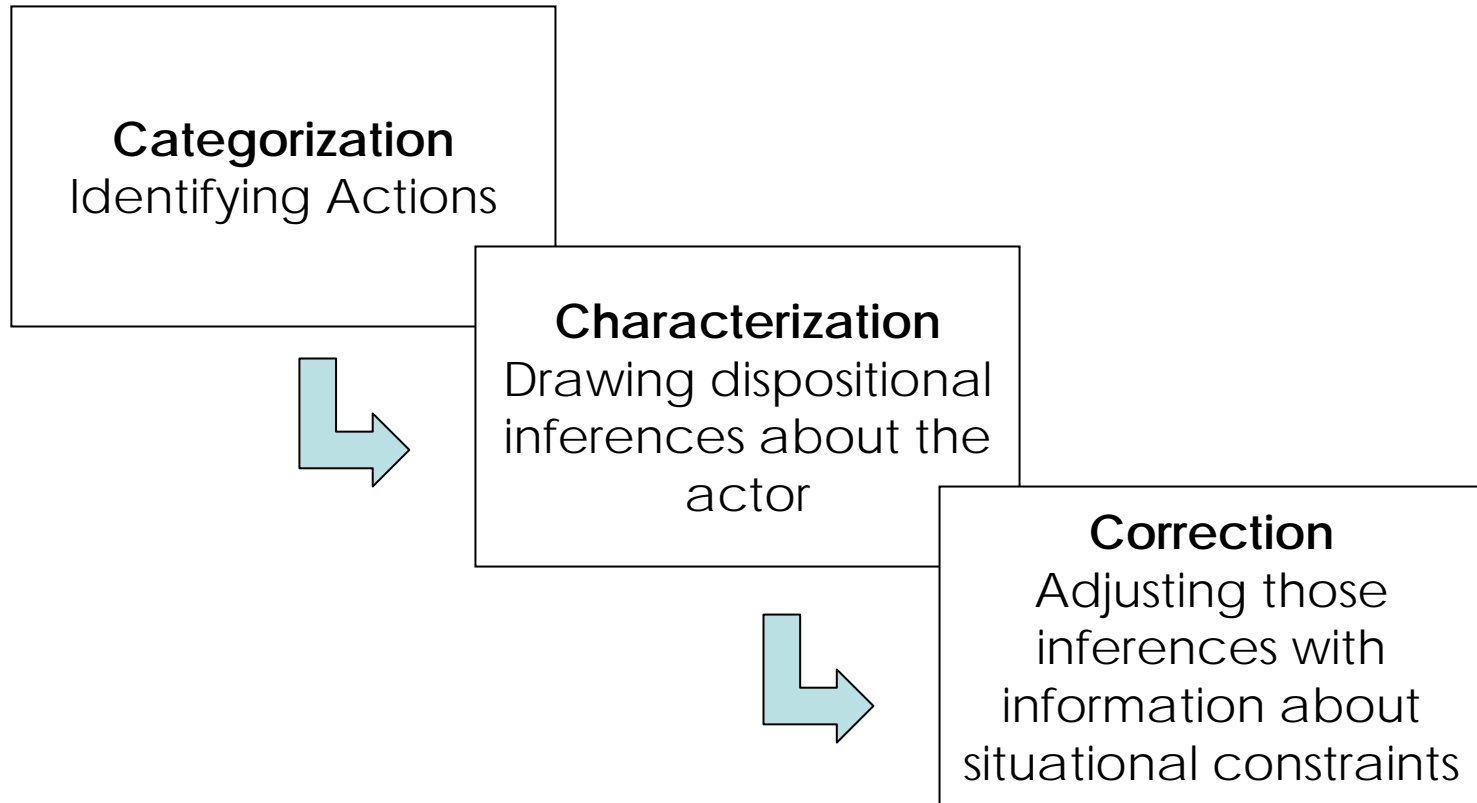
“Castro Study”



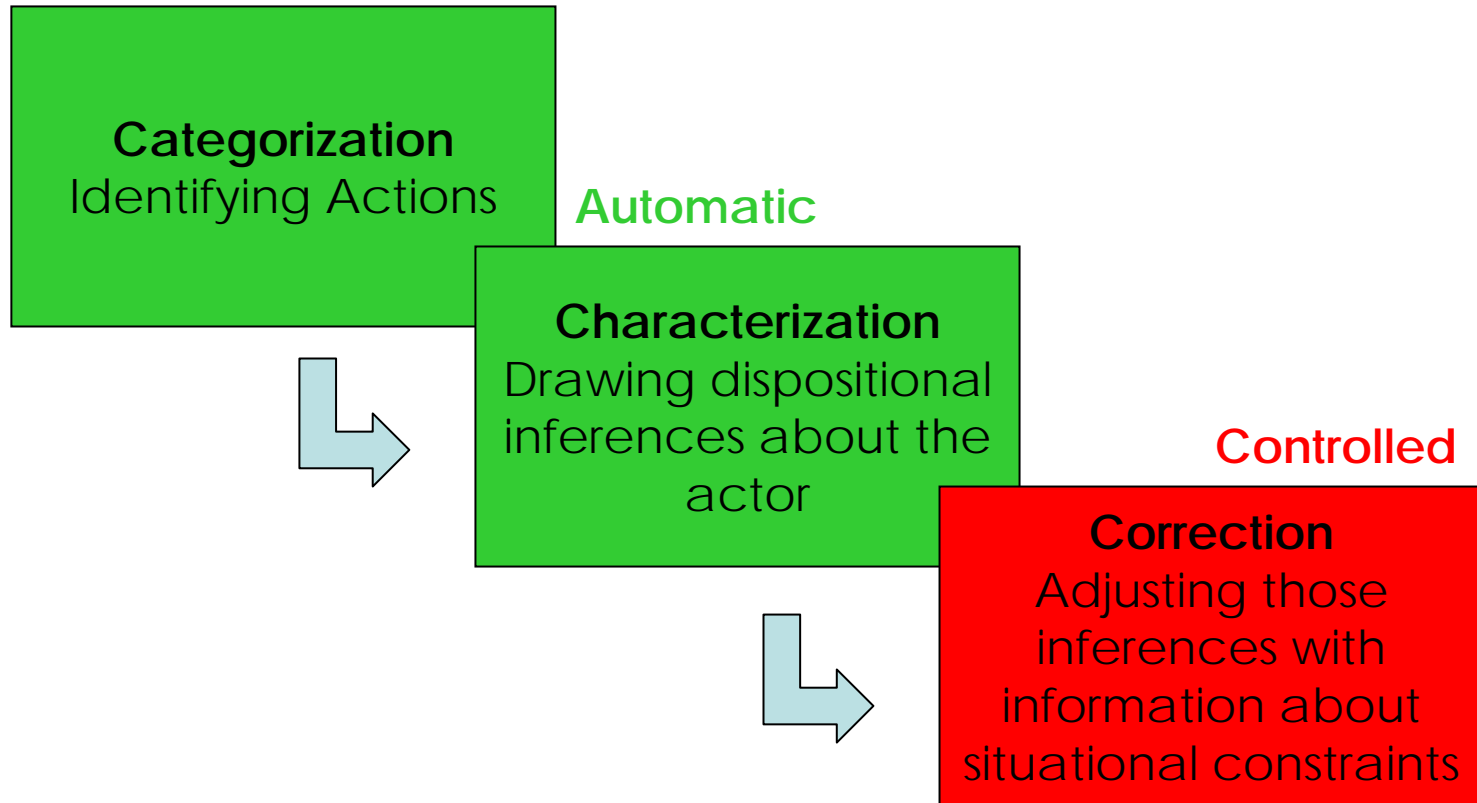
Automatic and controlled processes

- **Dispositional inferences are made automatically.**
- **Situational information is processed in a separate, resource-dependent stage following attribution of behavior to dispositions. This is a controlled process.**
- **It takes energy and effort to “correct” the initial dispositional attribution.**
- **Thus, distraction should interfere with ability to take situational influences into account.**

Automatic and controlled processes



Automatic and controlled processes



Cognitive busyness

Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull (1988)

- Participants watched 7 silent video clips of a woman having a discussion with a stranger, she looks extremely anxious in 5 clips, on experimenter-assigned topics.
- Task: We want you to tell us how anxious this person typically is (dispositional trait anxiety).
- Independent variables: (1) subjects were told the target was discussing anxiety or relaxing inducing topics; (2) subjects were just asked to view the clips (**unregulated**), or were told they would later need to remember the topics (**regulated**).

Cognitive busyness

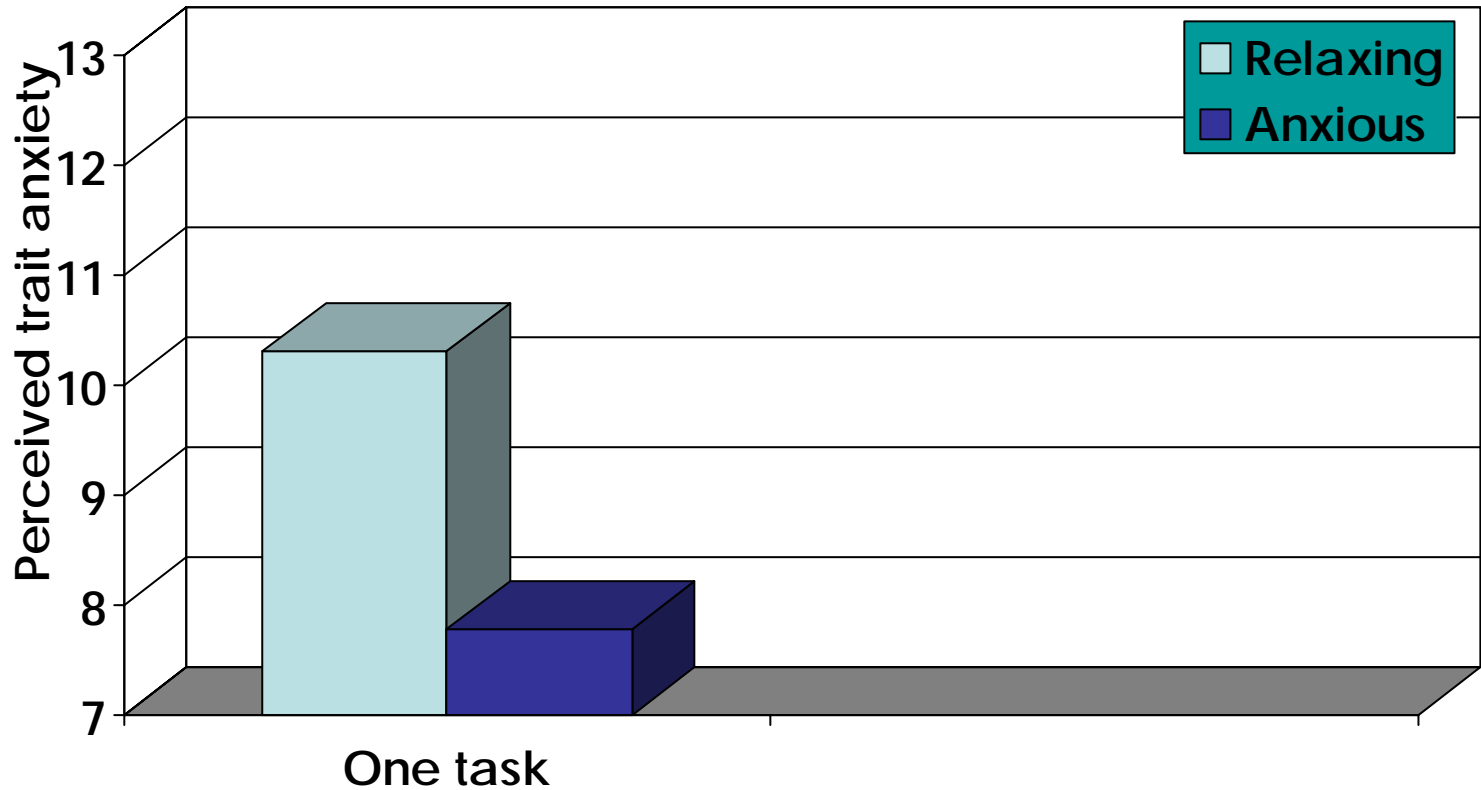
Relaxing topics	Anxious topics	Target's behavior
Fashion trends	Public humiliation	Anxious
World travel	Hidden secrets	Anxious
Great books	Sexual fantasies	Anxious
Favorite hobbies	Favorite hobbies	Relaxed
Foreign films	Embarrassing moments	Anxious
Ideal vacations	Ideal vacations	Relaxed
Best restaurants	Personal failures	Anxious

Cognitive busyness

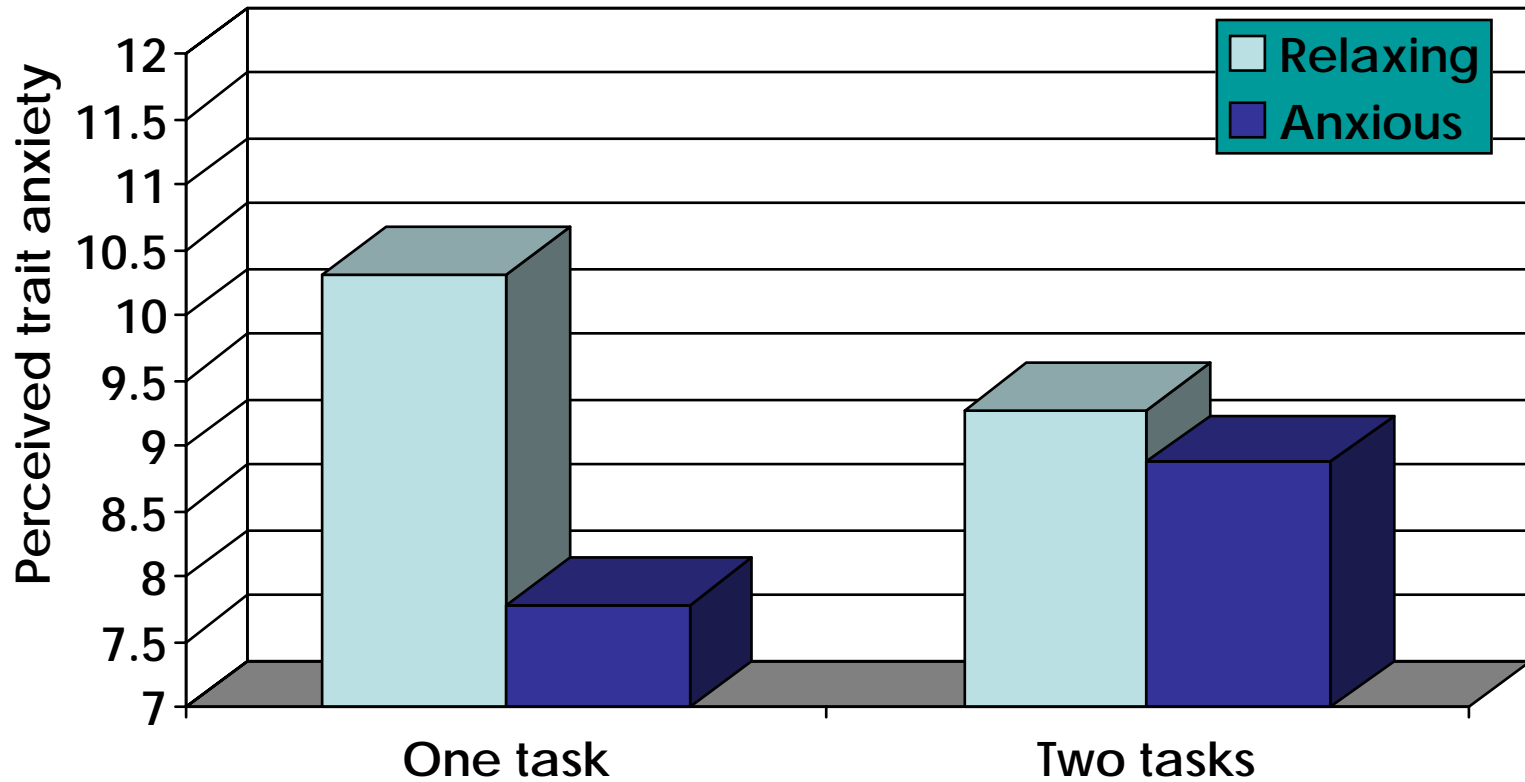
Design = 2 (Topics: Anxious, Relaxing) X
2 (Task: Personality judgments,
Personality judgments + Recall topics)

Hypothesis: Participants in the one-task condition would take situational information into account whereas participants in the two-task condition would not.

Cognitive busyness



Cognitive busyness



Two modes of processing

	Automatic Spontaneous Heuristic	Controlled Deliberative Systematic
Efficiency	Quick	Slow
Intention	Not needed	Needed
Control	Difficult to control	Easy to control
Awareness	Unaware of process	Aware of process

Attributions



Public domain image.

Private Lynndie England, who was said to have participated in maltreating and torturing detainees at the Abu Ghraib prison (2004).



Public domain image.

Satar Jabar standing on a box with wires connected to his body.



Public domain image.

Pfc. England holding a leash attached to a prisoner collapsed on the floor, known to the guards as "Gus".



Public domain image.

Prisoners ordered to form human pyramid.

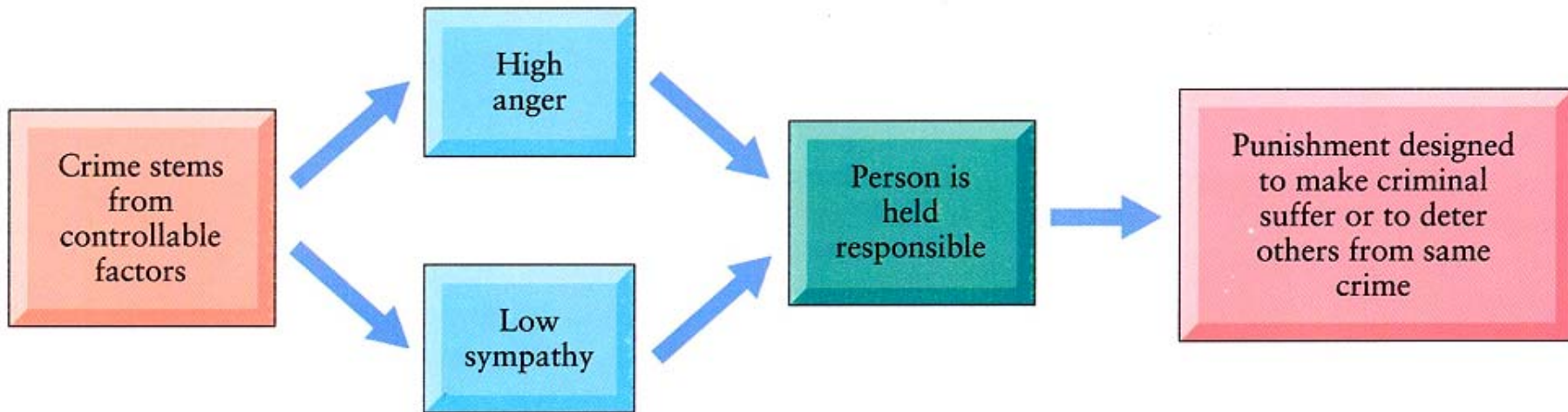


Public domain image.

Lynndie England signals a "thumbs up" sign and points at a hooded, naked Iraqi prisoner's genitals.

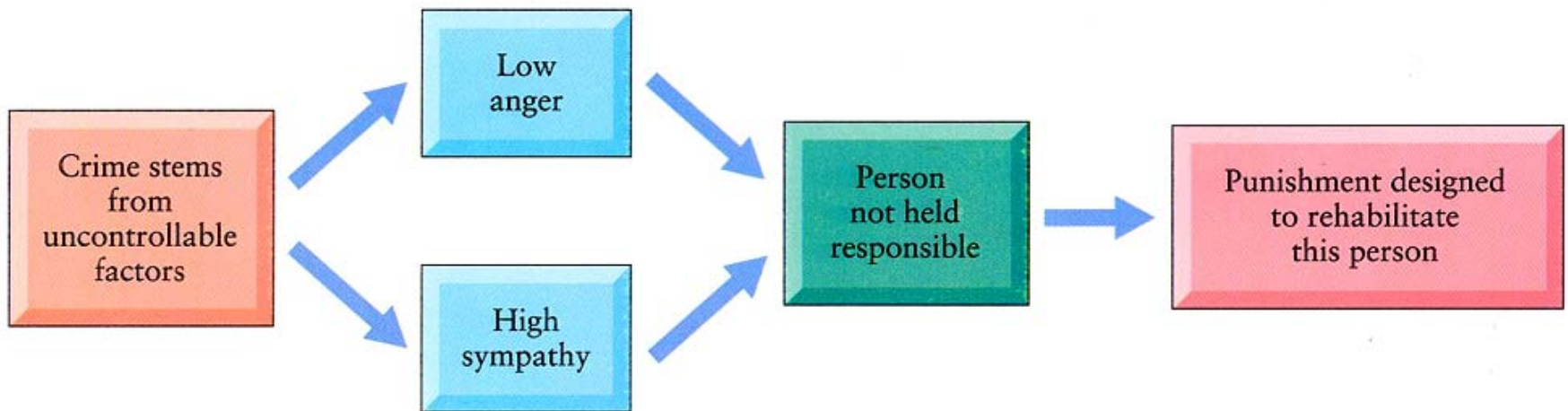
Attributions

Dispositional Attribution (the prosecution): "The accused knew what she was doing. (...) She was laughing and joking. ... She is enjoying, she is participating, all for her own sick humor."



Attributions

Situational Attribution (the defense): England was only trying to please her soldier boyfriend, then-Cpl. Charles Graner Jr., labeled the abuse ringleader by prosecutors. "She was a follower, she was an individual who was smitten with Graner ...she just did whatever he wanted her to do."



Attributions



Public domain image.

England was found guilty of one count of conspiracy, four counts of maltreating detainees and one count of committing an indecent act. She was acquitted on a second conspiracy count.

Social influence

A change in a person's behavior or beliefs in response to the intentional or unintentional influence of others.

Three major kinds of social influence

- **Conformity:** Changing one's behavior or beliefs in response to explicit or implicit pressure from others.
- **Compliance:** Changing one's behavior or beliefs to avoid conflict.
- **Obedience:** Changing one's behavior or beliefs in response to the demands of a more powerful person.

Conformity

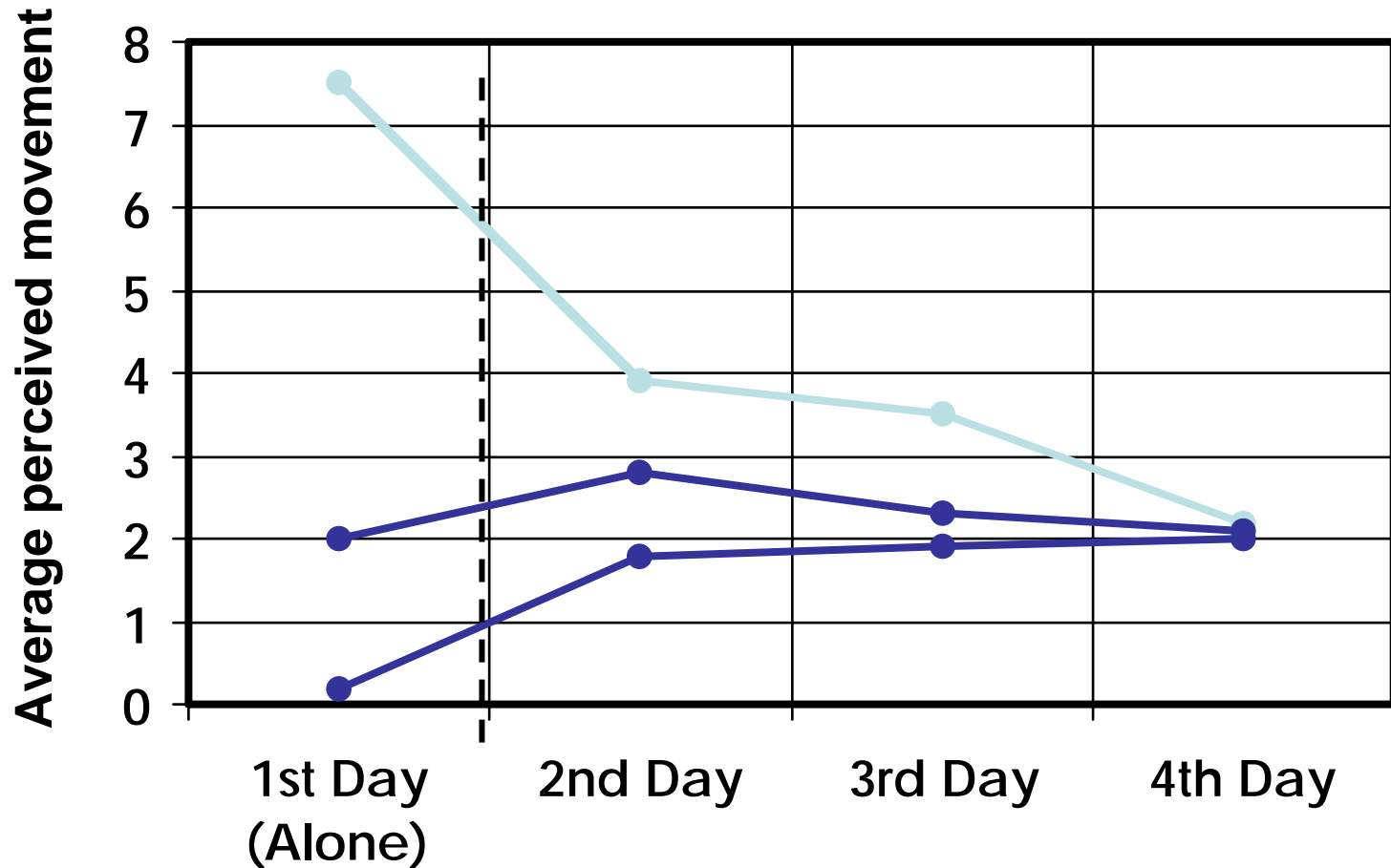
- **We conform to implicit as well as explicit social rules.**
- **Conformity is necessary for social coordination, and thus for civilization.**
- **Conformity can be seen across individuals, across the lifespan, and across cultures.**

Conformity:

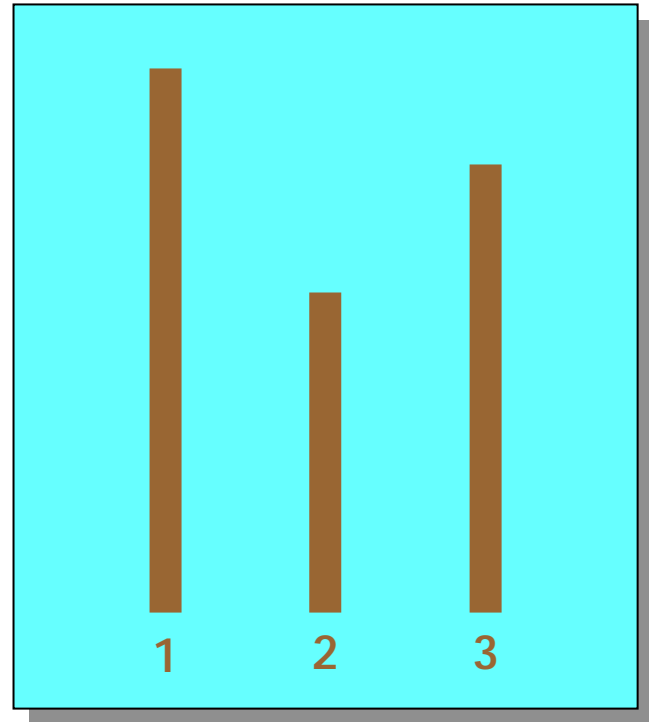
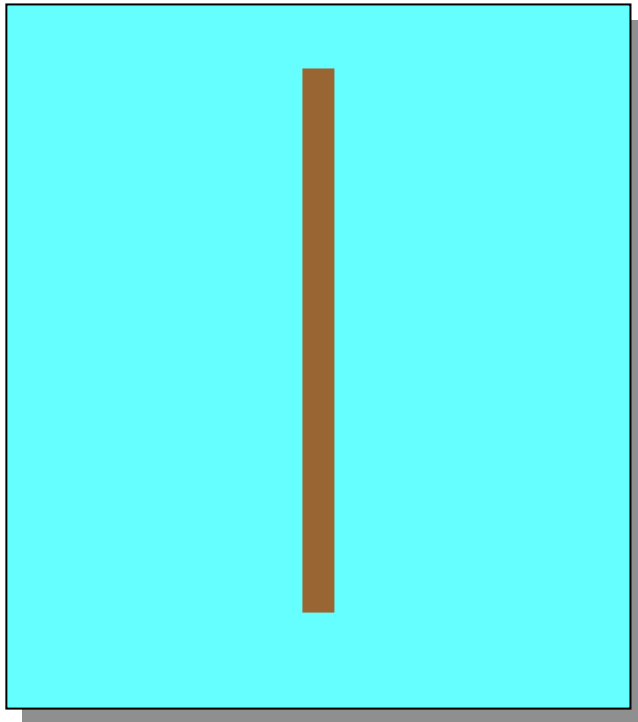
Sherif's autokinetic effect

- Participants reported for a study on visual perception.
- They were seated in a dark room and saw a point of light appear, move, then disappear.
- Participants were asked to judge how far the light moved.
- The light never actually moved – the apparent movement was due to a perceptual illusion known as the “*autokinetic effect*.”

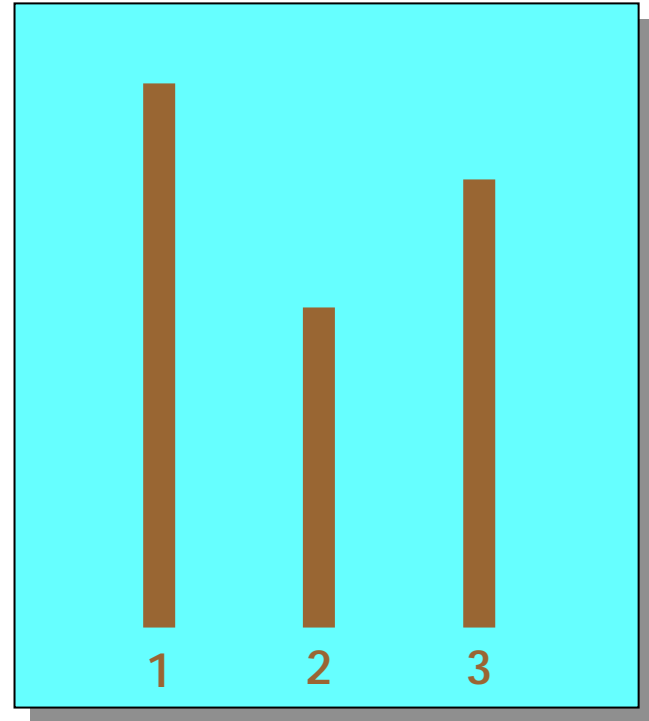
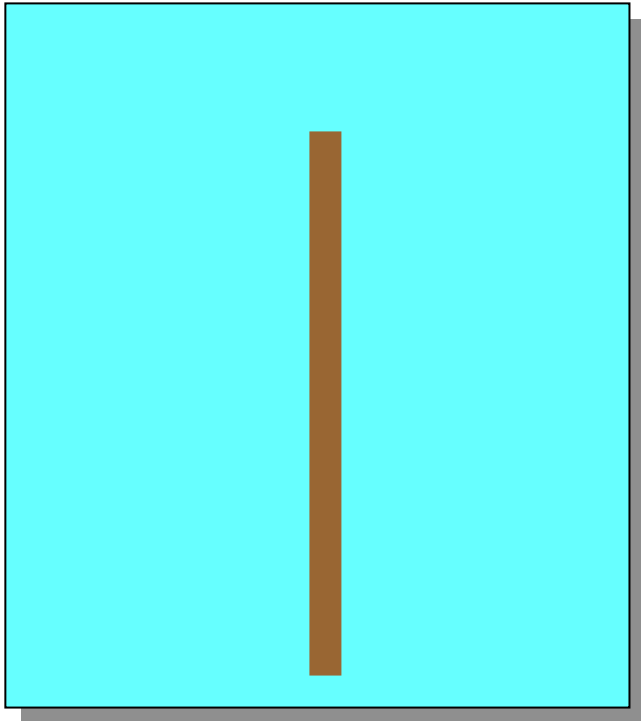
Conformity: Sherif's autokinetic effect



Conformity: The Asch studies



Conformity: The Asch studies



6 confederates go first; then subject; 12/18 trials confederates are wrong;

Conformity: The Asch studies

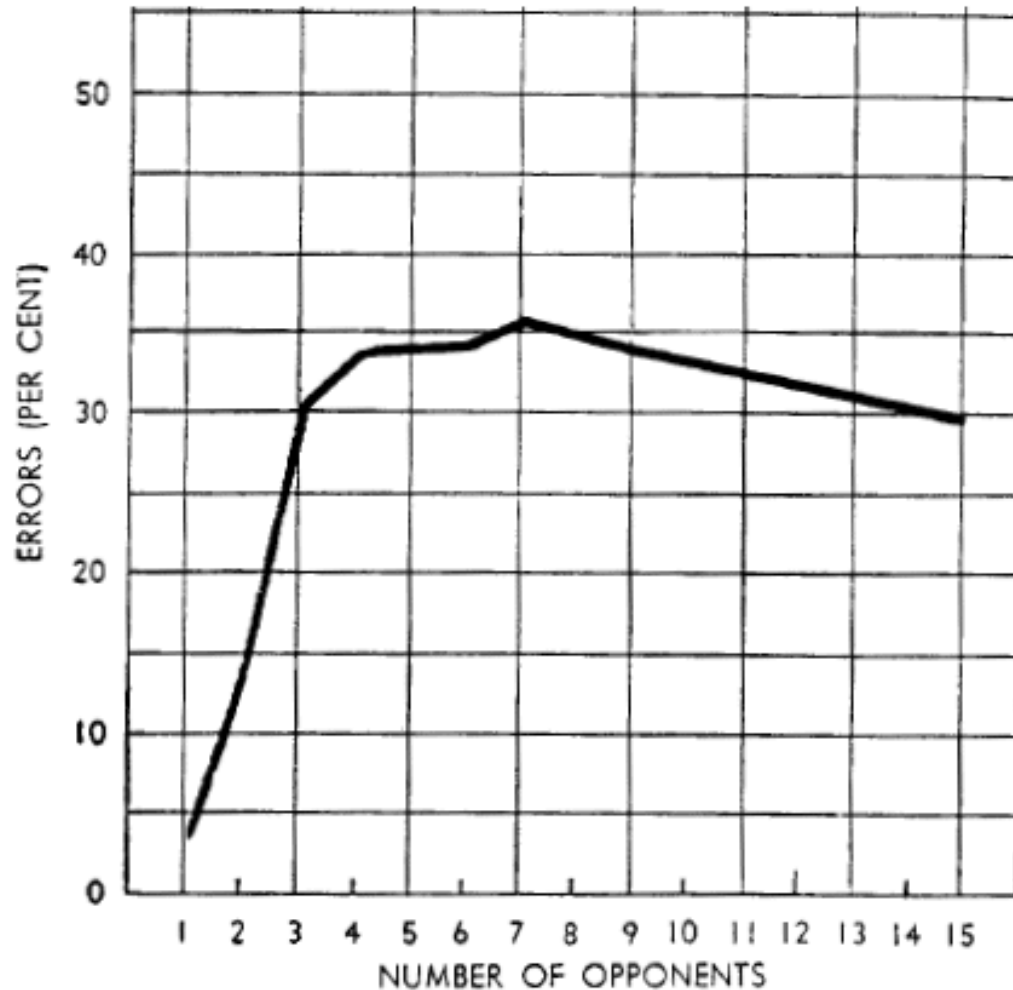
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- Alone, individuals made fewer than 1% errors; with group pressure, 37% of answers were wrong.
- This varied by individual, but only 25% of participants stayed independent throughout.

Moderators of conformity

1. Group size

Group size

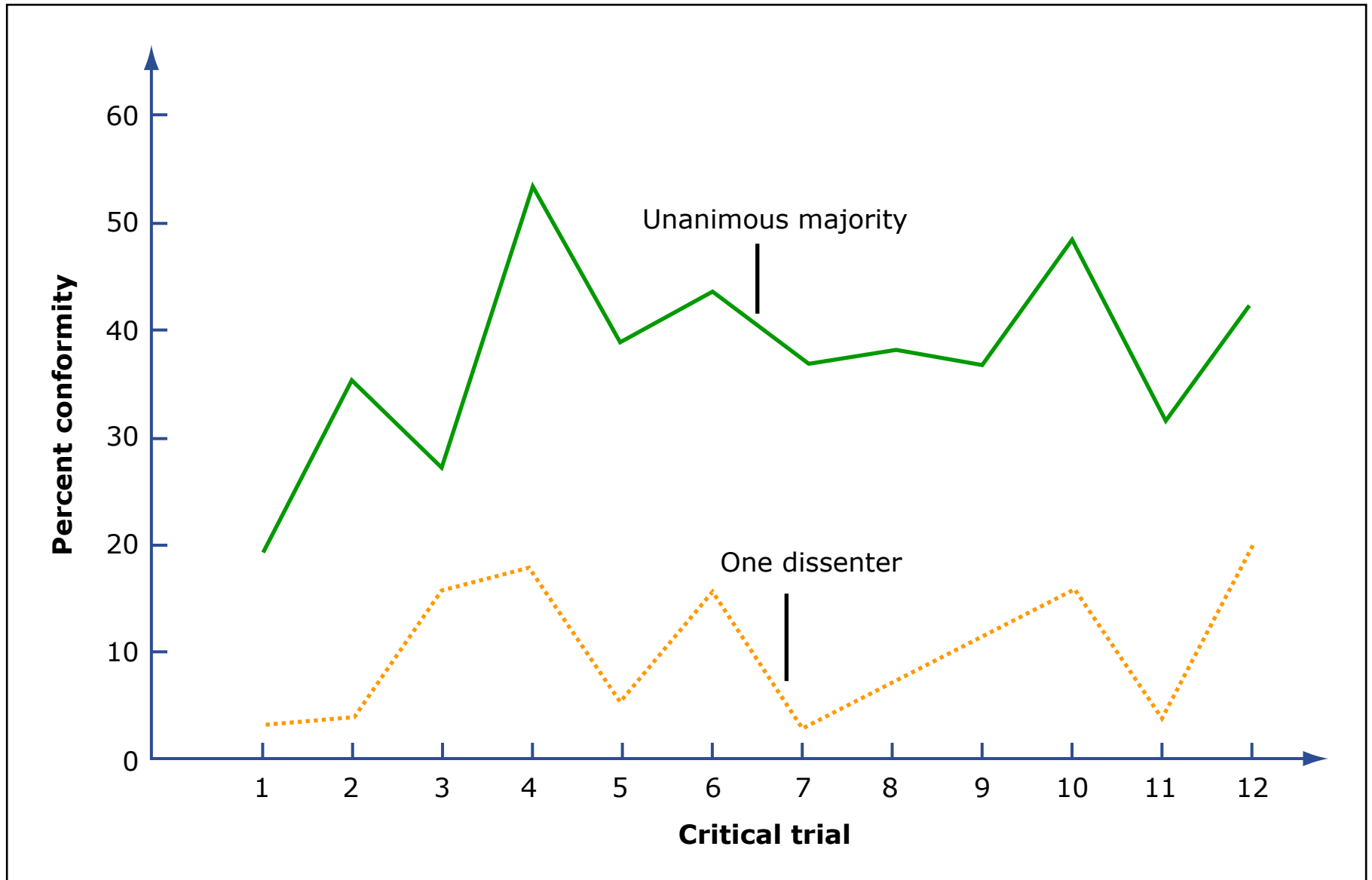


SIZE OF MAJORITY which opposed them had an effect on the subjects. With a single opponent the subject erred only 3.6 per cent of the time; with two opponents he erred 13.6 per cent; three, 31.8 per cent; four, 35.1 per cent; six, 35.2 per cent; seven, 37.1 per cent; nine, 35.1 per cent; 15, 31.2 per cent.

Moderators of conformity

1. Group size
2. Presence of an ally

Presence of an ally



Moderators of conformity

1. Group size
2. Presence of an ally
3. Avoid embarrassment (arrive late, private response, 1/3d less)
4. Demographics
 - Age (peak in 9th grade)
 - Gender (women)
 - Culture (interdependent)

Why do we conform?

- The need to be right
- The need to be liked

Cartoons removed due to copyright restrictions.

Three major kinds of social influence

- **Conformity:** Changing one's behavior or beliefs in response to explicit or implicit pressure from others.
- **Compliance:** Changing one's behavior or beliefs to avoid conflict.
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COMPLIANCE

- *foot-in-the door*

Freedman & Fraser, 1962

- drive to homes, show large unattractive **DRIVE CAREFULLY** sign, will you place on lawn? Less than 20% say yes
- first sign petition to support legislation to reduce traffic accidents - a few weeks later, > 50% say yes
- need for consistency of behavior

Obedience

We obey our parents, the police, our bosses, and fire-fighters.

Obedience is necessary for social order, and thus for civilization.

Obedience (in varying levels) can be seen across individuals, across the lifespan, and across cultures.

Obedience



World War II and the subsequent claims by those who carried out the Holocaust:

They were “just following orders.”

Public domain image.

Stanley Milgram

1933 - 1984

Public Announcement

WE WILL PAY YOU \$4.00 FOR ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME

Persons Needed for a Study of Memory

*We will pay five hundred New Haven men to help us complete a scientific study of memory and learning. The study is being done at Yale University.

*Each person who participates will be paid \$4.00 (plus 50c carfare) for approximately 1 hour's time. We need you for only one hour: there are no further obligations. You may choose the time you would like to come (evenings, weekdays, or weekends).

*No special training, education, or experience is needed. We want:

Factory workers	Businessmen	Construction workers
City employees	Clerks	Salespeople
Laborers	Professional people	White-collar workers
Barbers	Telephone workers	Others

All persons must be between the ages of 20 and 50. High school and college students cannot be used.

*If you meet these qualifications, fill out the coupon below and mail it now to Professor Stanley Milgram, Department of Psychology, Yale University, New Haven. You will be notified later of the specific time and place of the study. We reserve the right to decline any application.

*You will be paid \$4.00 (plus 50c carfare) as soon as you arrive at the laboratory.

TO:

PROF. STANLEY MILGRAM, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY,
YALE UNIVERSITY, NEW HAVEN, CONN. I want to take part in
this study of memory and learning. I am between the ages of 20 and
50. I will be paid \$4.00 (plus 50c carfare) if I participate.

NAME (Please Print)

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE NO. Best time to call you

AGE OCCUPATION SEX

CAN YOU COME:

WEEKDAYS EVENINGS WEEKENDS

CONFORMITY & OBEDIENCE: MILGRAM STUDY

Newspaper ad - study of memory - Yale

Two people

Researcher - here to help science improve learning and memory through punishment

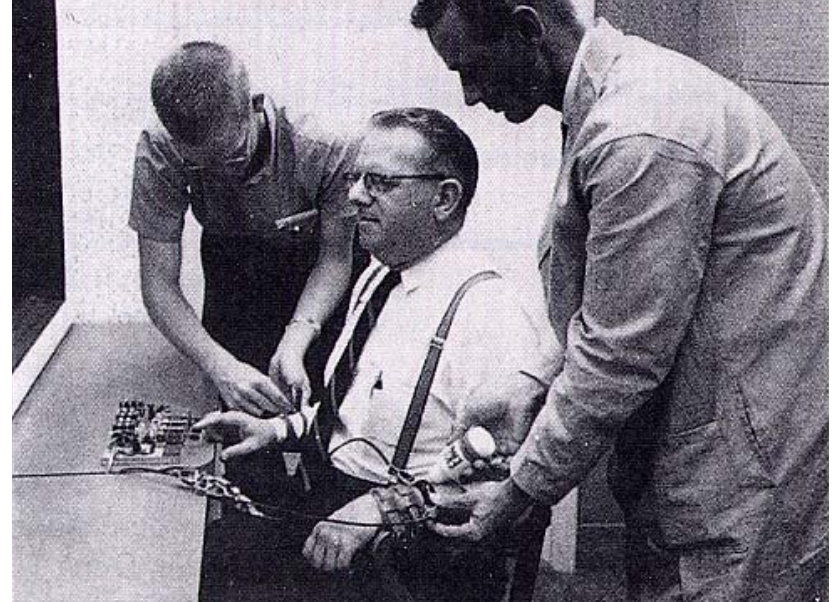
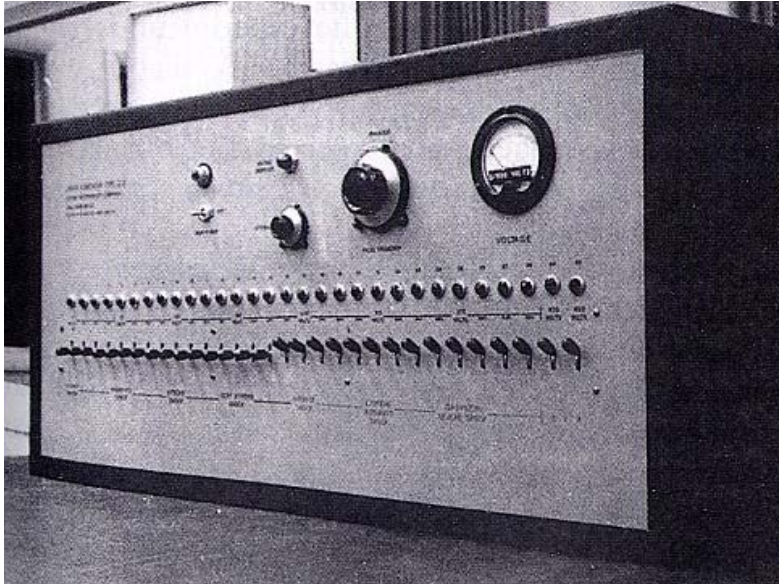
One “teacher” (subject) and one “learner” (confederate) - a set of word pairs to memorize

Teacher gives word, student responds

Correct response - “good” or “that’s right”

Incorrect response - - press button that delivers shock

Milgram's obedience studies



Teacher sampled 45-volt shock

© Stanley Milgram from the film "Obedience" distributed by Pennsylvania State University. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/fairuse>.

Milgram's obedience studies

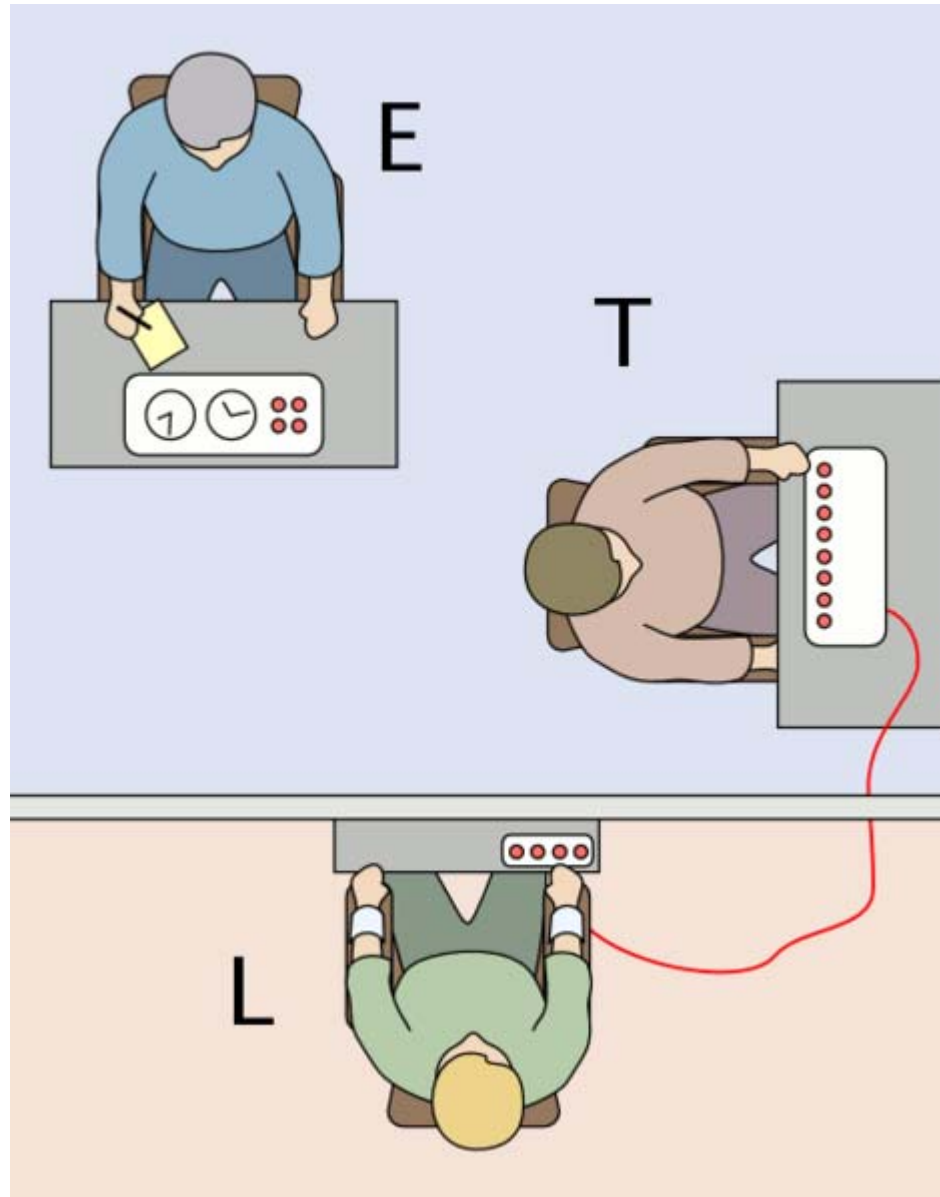


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CONFORMITY & OBEDIENCE: MILGRAM STUDY

Shock Generator

15 volts - 15 volts steps - 30 switches

150 volts - “STRONG SHOCK”

255 volts - “INTENSE SHOCK”

375 volts - “DANGER, SEVERE SHOCK”

435 volts - “XXX”

450 volts - “XXX”

CONFORMITY & OBEDIENCE: MILGRAM STUDY

**Initially, learner does well; Then errors occur
Learner complains that shocks are starting to hurt
Screams**

**Says that he or she does not want to continue
Hesitate, question researcher**

Learner complains about her condition

**More errors - teacher pleads to concentrate
“You have no right to keep me here!”**

**“I refuse to answer any more! You can’t hold me
here! My heart is bothering me!”**

At 300 volts, refused to answer

**Experimenter says that after 5 sec, it is a wrong
answer**

At 350 volts, silence

CONFORMITY & OBEDIENCE: MILGRAM STUDY

Shock Generator

15 volts - 15 volts steps - 30 switches

150 volts - “STRONG SHOCK”

255 volts - “INTENSE SHOCK”

375 volts - “DANGER, SEVERE SHOCK”

435 volts - “XXX”

450 volts - “XXX”

All the way to 450?

CONFORMITY & OBEDIENCE: MILGRAM STUDY

Shock Generator

15 volts - 15 volts steps - 30 switches

150 volts - “STRONG SHOCK”

255 volts - “INTENSE SHOCK”

375 volts - “DANGER, SEVERE SHOCK”

435 volts - “XXX”

450 volts - “XXX”

**All the way to 450? - experts 1-3% (psychopaths)
me? No!**

CONFORMITY & OBEDIENCE: MILGRAM STUDY

Shock Generator

15 volts - 15 volts steps - 30 switches

150 volts - “STRONG SHOCK”

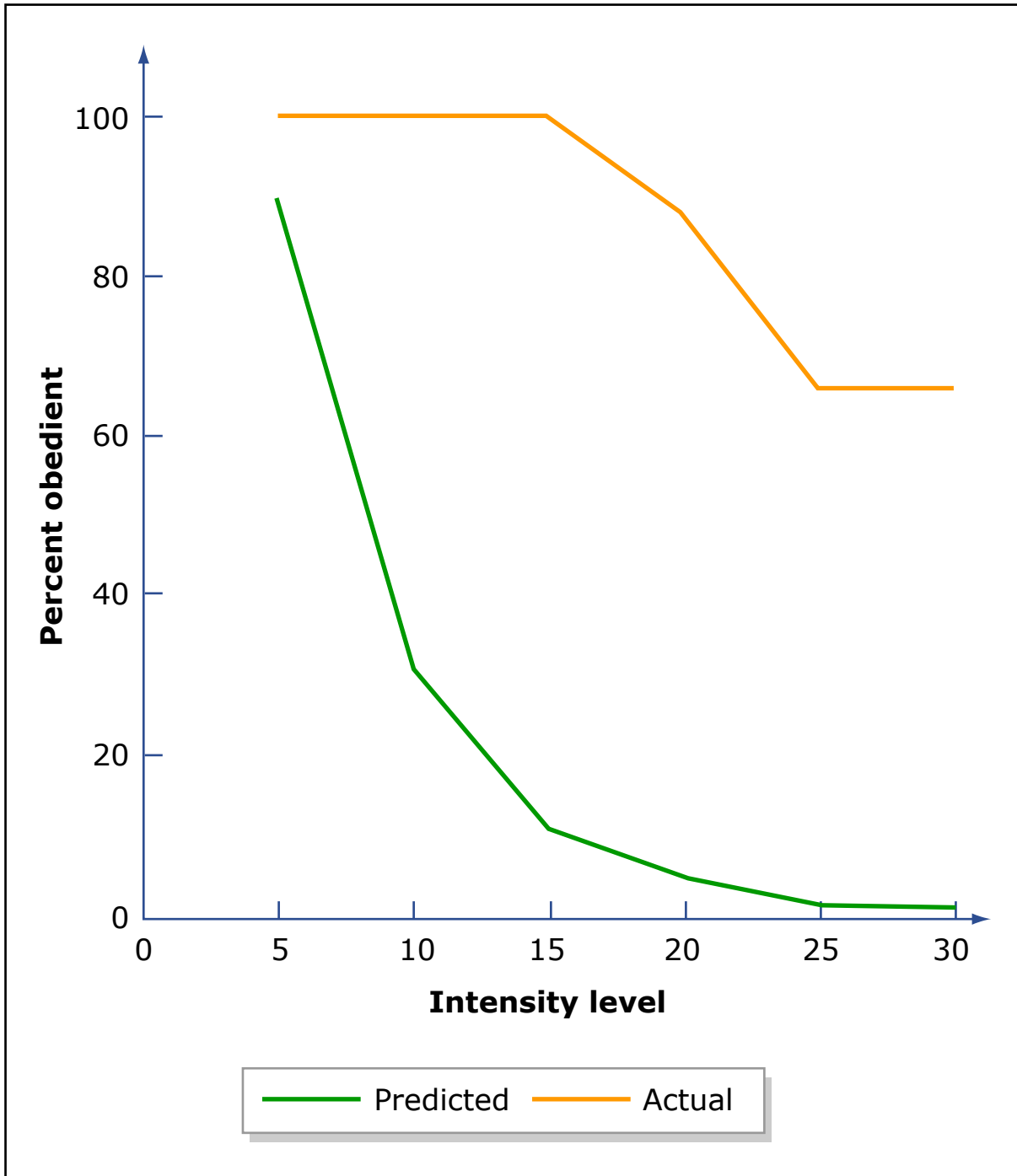
255 volts - “INTENSE SHOCK”

375 volts - “DANGER, SEVERE SHOCK”

435 volts - “XXX”

450 volts - “XXX”

All the way to 450? - 65%



Milgram's obedience studies

- Prior to the study, a panel of experts agreed that only a tiny fraction of participants would give the highest level of shock in this context.**
- The key finding: fully 65% of participants actually gave the highest level of shock.**
- Many participants expressed discomfort, but not a single participant effectively disobeyed (100% to 100 v).**

WOULD THIS HAPPEN TODAY (WOULD YOU DO THIS)?

- **Burger, 2009**
- **screened subjects**
- **told 3 times that they could stop and still get \$50 for participating**
- **instant debriefing**
- **clinical psychologist present - end session if subject seemed distressed**
- **stop at 150 volts as good estimate**

WOULD THIS HAPPEN TODAY (WOULD YOU DO THIS)?

- **Burger, 2009**
- **Milgram - 79% went to 150 volts**
- **now - 70%**
- **no difference between men and women**

Why are we so obedient?

Authority figure has a high status

Subordinates believe that authority figure, not themselves, are responsible for their actions

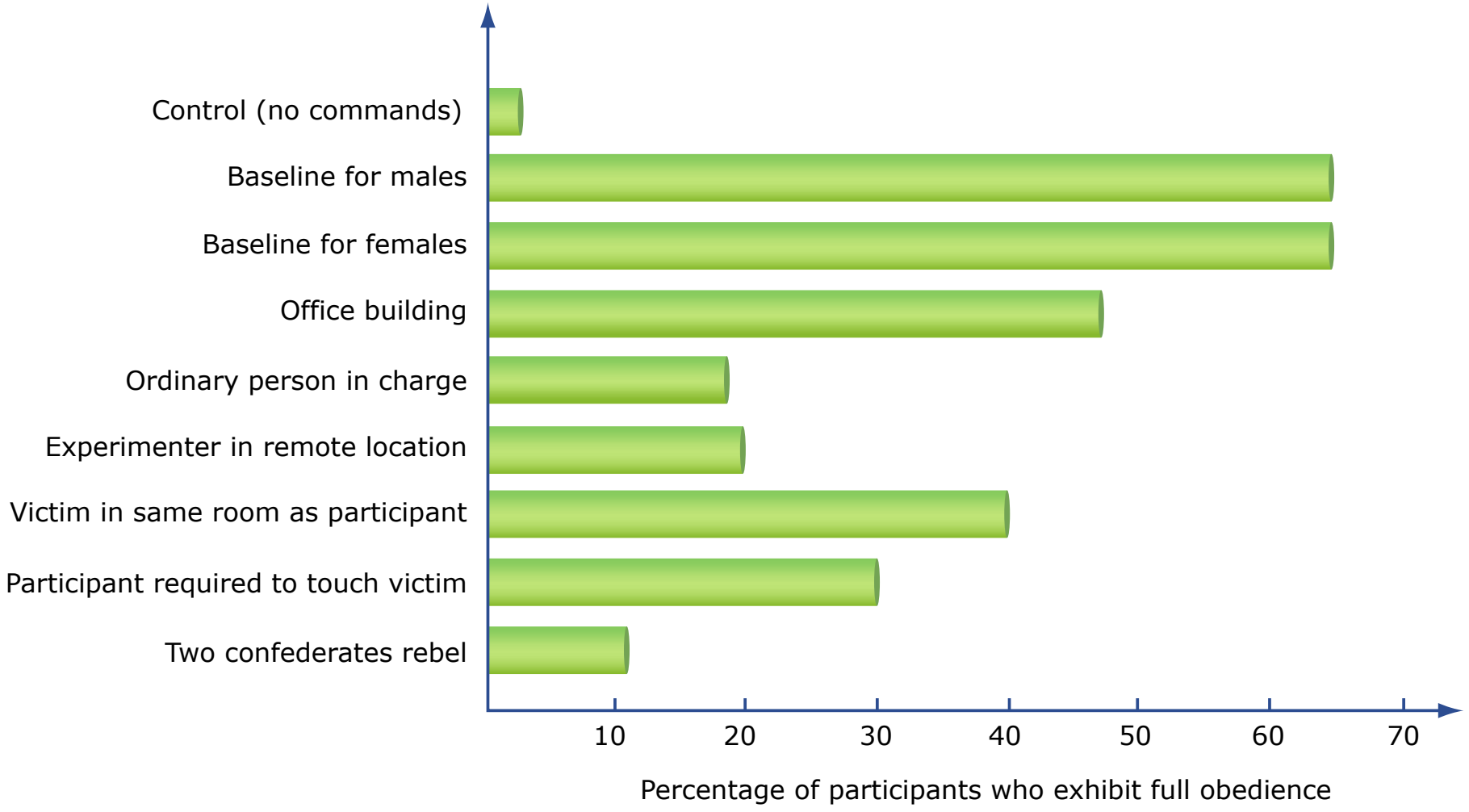
No clear-cut point to switch to disobedience

Many obedience situations have gradual escalation – following orders first has only mild consequences; more harmful effects happen only later

Strong tendency to obey direct commands

```
graph LR; A[Authority figure has a high status] --> D([Strong tendency to obey direct commands]); B[Subordinates believe that authority figure, not themselves, are responsible for their actions] --> D; C[No clear-cut point to switch to disobedience] --> D; E[Many obedience situations have gradual escalation – following orders first has only mild consequences; more harmful effects happen only later] --> D;
```

Moderators in Milgram's studies



Stanford Prison Experiment

- Social situations are governed by implicit and explicit rules (or norms).
- To explore how these rules create social reality, Zimbardo enrolled 24 healthy volunteers in a two-week “study of prison life.”
- Participants were randomly assigned to be either “guards” or “prisoners.”
- Guards became sadistic, and prisoners had such extreme stress responses that the study was terminated after only 6 days.

Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see <http://www.prisonexp.org/>.

Stanford Prison Experiment (1971). Guards marching prisoners on a toilet run, bags over their heads, legs chained together.

Planned as two-week prison simulation. Study ended prematurely after six days. The guards were escalating their abuse of prisoners in the middle of the night when they thought no researchers were watching. Prisoners were showing signs of extreme psychological stress and distress.

Images removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see <http://www.prisonexp.org/>.

Two months after the study, here is the reaction of prisoner #416 who was placed in solitary confinement for several hours by guards:

"I began to feel that I was losing my identity, that the person that I called "Clay," the person who put me in this place, the person who volunteered to go into this prison -- because it was a prison to me; it still is a prison to me. I don't regard it as an experiment or a simulation because it was a prison run by psychologists instead of run by the state. I began to feel that that identity, the person that I was that had decided to go to prison was distant from me -- was remote until finally I wasn't that, I was 416. I was really my number."

Stanford Prison Experiment

<http://bit.ly/sYPFyJ>



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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: ***THE POWER OF THE*** ***SITUATION***

- **Attribution - dispositional/situational**
- **Fundamental Attribution Error**
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- **Bystanders and Helping**

The bystander effect



Kitty Genovese

The bystander effect

- Selfish voyeuristic bystanders?
- Apathy of urban culture?
- Anonymity of modern life?
- Fear of getting hurt?

...or is it something else?

... what would YOU have done?

The bystander effect

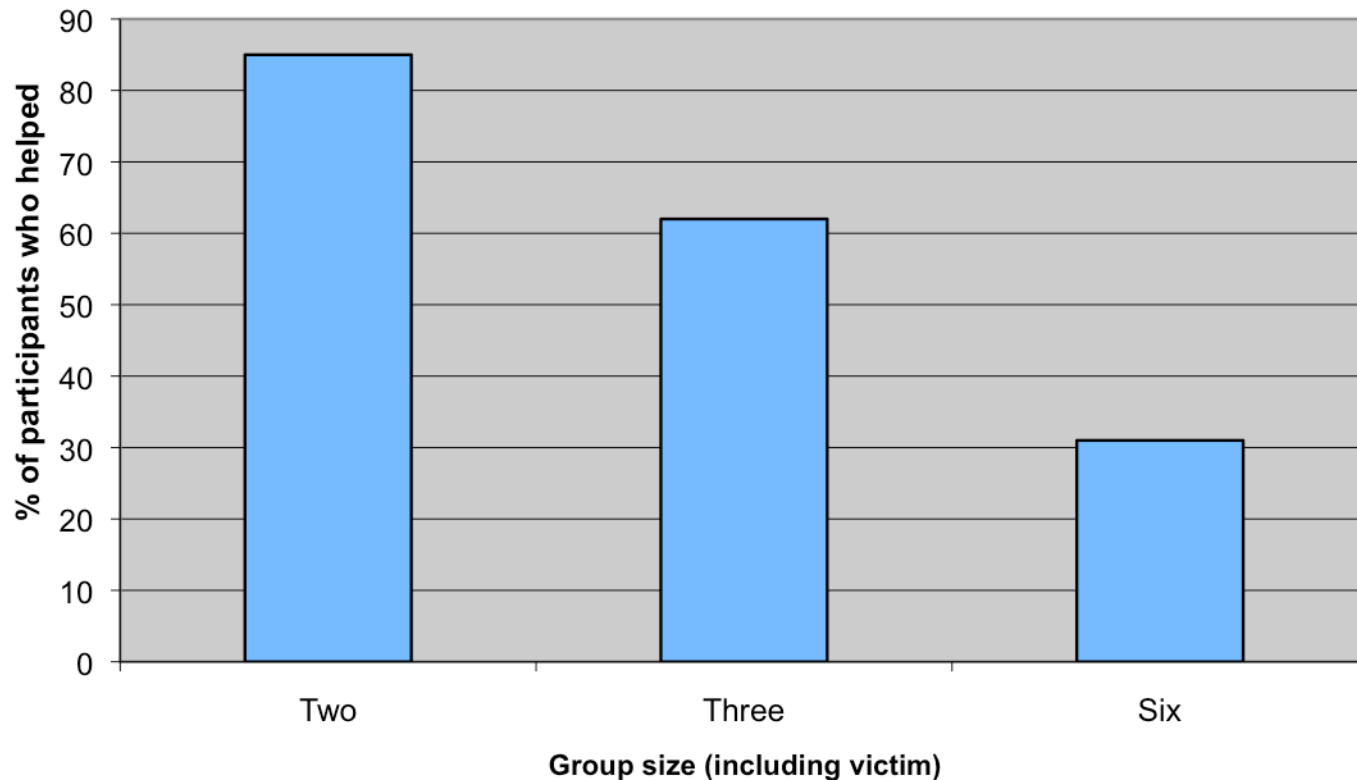
- Latane and Darley conducted a series of experimental studies.
- **Pluralistic ignorance:** Each witness was uncertain whether there was a real emergency, saw the others not reacting, and decided it must not be a real emergency.
- **Diffusion of responsibility:** Each person felt someone else must be getting help, if help is in fact needed.

HELPING SOMEONE HAVING A SEIZURE

- **Darley & Latane, 1968**
- **arrive for an experiment to discuss personal problems - 1-4 people over an intercom - one member (confederate) appears to have a seizure**

HELPING SOMEONE HAVING A SEIZURE

Helping as a function of number of bystanders

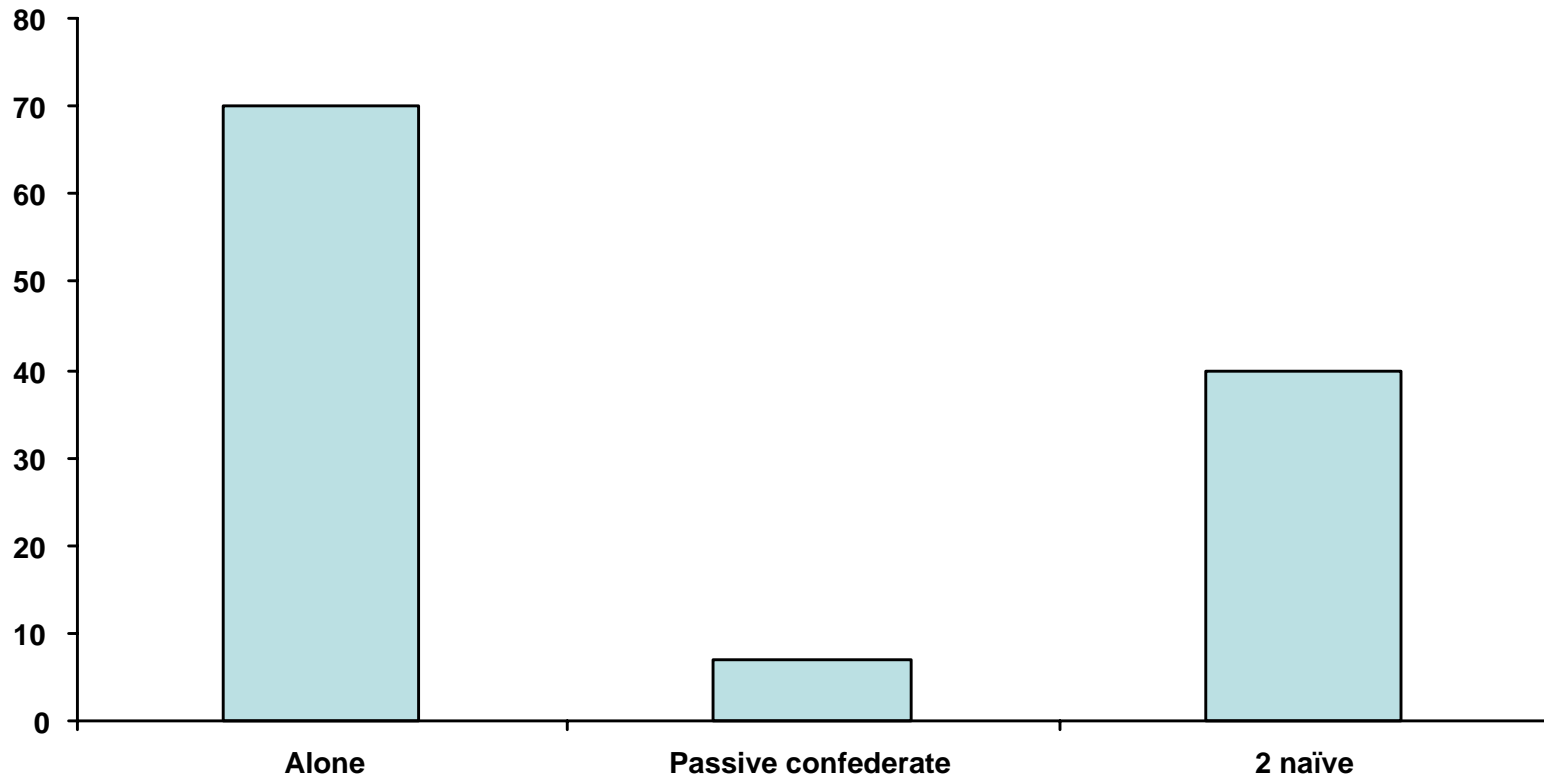


A LADY IN DISTRESS

- **subject waits alone, or with a passive confederate, or with a friend**
- **room separated by a curtain**
- **experimenter goes to the other room,
turns on tape recording of fall,
moaning**
- **who goes to look and help?**

The bystander effect: A lady in distress

% who help



(Latané & Darley, 1970)

WHERE THERE IS SMOKE, IS THERE FIRE?

- subject fills out surveys**
- smoke enters room through vent**
- alone, in a group of three, or with two confederates who noticed but ignored smoke, or a friend**
- who leaves the room to get help within 6 minutes?**

The bystander effect: Where there's smoke, there's a fire

Alone - 75%

With 2 passive confederates - 10%

**With 2 naïve subjects - 12.5% by individuals
(38% by group)**

With friend - 75%

GOOD SAMARITAN

- **Princeton seminary students; surveys about religious values**
- **told to present talk about seminary jobs or a sermon on the “Good Samaritan”**
- **either ahead, on time, or late**
- **see slumped man in doorway**
- **who stops to help?**

Darley & Batson, 1973

GOOD SAMARITAN

- **who stops to help?**
 - personality - little influence**
 - sermon - no influence**
 - ahead - 63% help**
 - on time - 45% help**
 - late - 10% help**

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9.00SC Introduction to Psychology
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