

Personality
What makes us who we are?

Psych 305A: Lecture 10

Personality and Social Relationships

Personality and Gender

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Midterm 2

36. All of the following are parts of a discrete emotional experience, EXCEPT:

- a) feeling
- b) physiology
- c) mood
- d) cognition
- e) nonverbal expression

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Midterm 2 Results

- MC Mean: 62% (after changing Item 36)
- Essay Mean: 81%
- With normal grading (75/25), this would make for an overall class mean of 66%

- But... I shifted the weights to 67/33 (two-thirds/one-third) FOR THE PEOPLE THAT BENEFITED, so the overall mean is now 69%

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If you want to see your exams

- Zak's Office Hours this week and next week:
 - Wed. 4-5
 - Thurs. 12-1
 - Room 1002
- Cathy's Office Hours this week and next week:
 - Wed. 11-12
 - Fri. 11-12
 - Room 2029

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Problem MC Items

2. Why might the Big 5 personality traits have evolved?

- a) People high in extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness are more likely to have survived and reproduced
- b) Knowing and thinking about whether others are high or low on those traits tells you who to form social bonds with
- c) Men who are high in extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness are more likely to be successful in finding a mate
- d) There is no evidence that the Big 5 evolved
- e) A and B

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Problem MC Items

12. Based on the research discussed in class, each of the following is a way that a parent might influence his/her child's self-esteem, EXCEPT:

- a) By expressing negative emotions toward the child
- b) Through shared genes
- c) By promoting certain peer and teacher interactions
- d) By living in a wealthy neighborhood
- e) All of the above are ways a parent might influence a child's self-esteem

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Problem MC Items

16. All of the following are differences between the cognitive approach and the behaviorist approach, EXCEPT:

- a) The cognitive approach emphasizes the importance of mental processes
- b) Behaviorists emphasize incentives and deterrents
- c) The cognitive approach emphasizes observational learning
- d) Behaviorists emphasize conditioning
- e) All of the above are differences between the two approaches.

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Problem MC Items

21. All of the following might be examples of social learning, EXCEPT:

- a) A child hitting “Bobo” in Bandura’s bobo doll study.
- b) A toddler helping an adult open a cabinet after watching his parents help each other.
- c) A student beating up someone younger after playing a violent video game.
- d) A convicted burglar deciding not to steal again because of the shame he suffered from his punishment.
- e) All of the above are examples of social learning.

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Problem MC Items

27. The genetic approach addresses:

- a) whether personality is due to nature or nurture
- b) the proportion of variance in a trait that is due to genes
- c) the genetic basis of group differences
- d) all of the above
- e) A and B only

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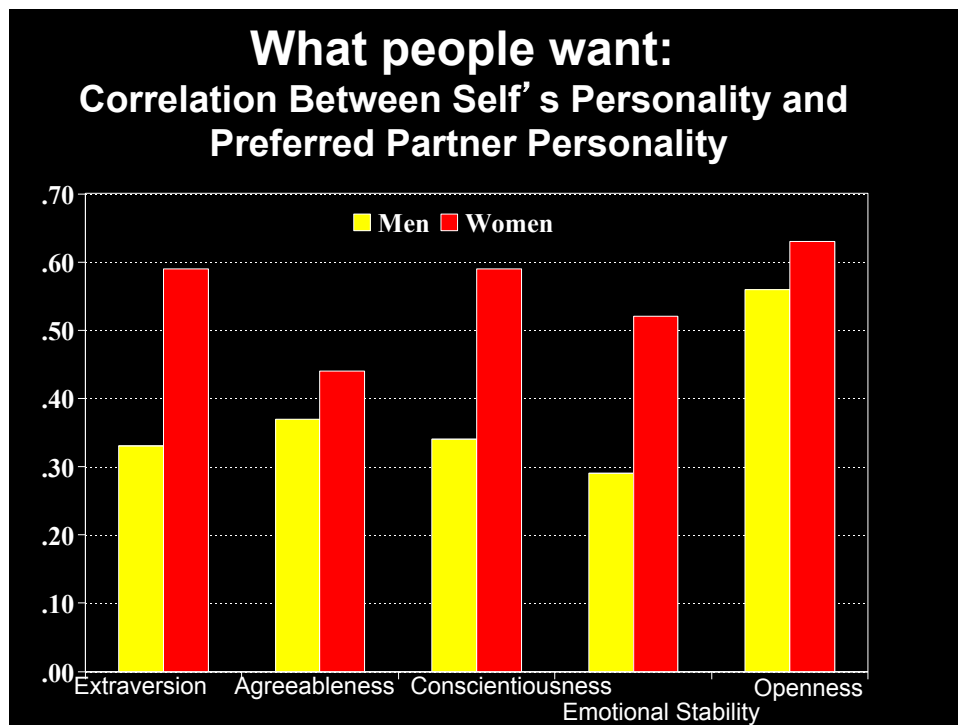
Personality and Relationships

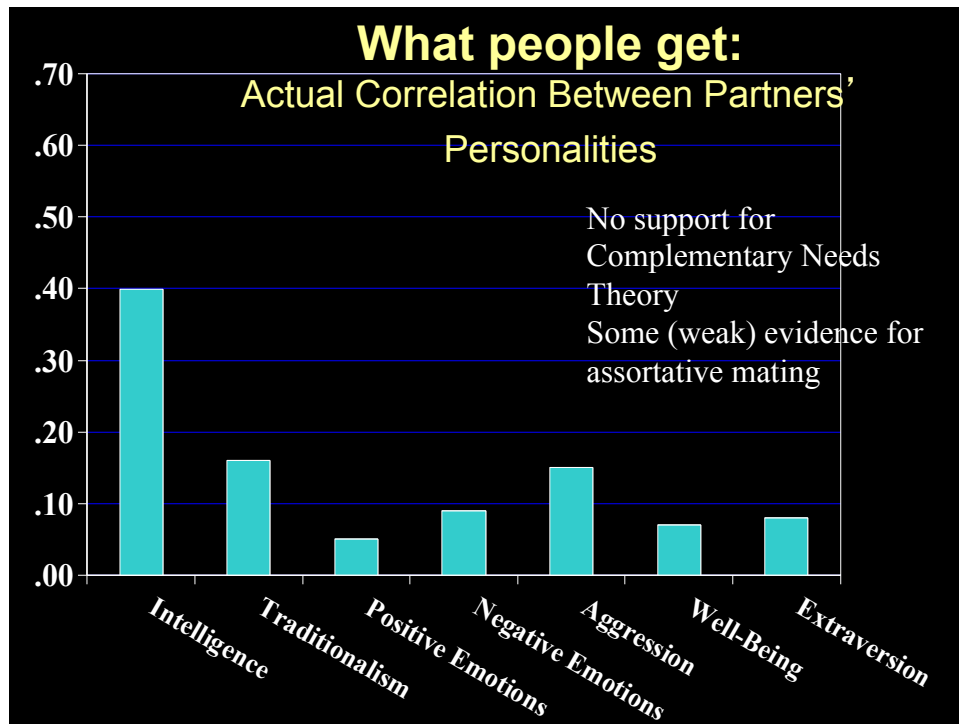
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Personality and Relationships

- Attraction Similarity Theory
 - Assortative Mating
 - We're attracted to people like us
- Complementary Needs theory
 - We're attracted to people whose personality complements ours
 - Opposites Attract
- Which is right?

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Is similarity related to relationship satisfaction?

- Couples with similar personality traits are not necessarily more satisfied in their relationship
- But, if partner is similar to your “ideal personality” then relationship satisfaction is higher
- What makes an “ideal” partner? Which traits do people want in a partner?

What do people want in a partner? (International Sample)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mutual attraction/love (2.81) – Dependable (2.50) – Emotional stability (2.47) – Pleasing disposition (2.44) – Good health (2.31) – Education/Intelligence (2.27) – Sociability (2.15) • Less important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Chastity (1.06) – Similar religious background (.98) – Similar political background (.92) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Females <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mutual attraction/love (2.87) – Dependable (2.69) – Emotional stability (2.68) – Pleasing disposition (2.52) – Education/Intelligence (2.45) – Sociability (2.30) – Good health (2.28) • Less important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Similar religious background (1.21) – Similar political background (1.03) – Chastity (.75) |
|--|---|

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What should people want in a partner?

Which traits are actually related to relationship satisfaction?

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Traits that Predict Partner's Satisfaction

- Overall:
 - Husband: A, ES, O/I (in wife)
 - Wife: A, C, ES, O/I (in husband)
- Confide:
 - Husband: A (in wife)
 - Wife: A, ES, O/I (in husband)
- Sexual:
 - Husband: A, C, ES (in wife)
 - Wife: A (in husband)
- Enjoyment:
 - Husband: A, ES (in wife)
 - Wife: A, ES (in husband)

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Which traits predict future relationship quality and conflict?

- Longitudinal study assessed three traits:
 - Positive Emotionality (PEM): Confidence, enthusiasm, social warmth, well-being, and zest
 - Negative Emotionality (NEM): Threshold for negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, fear
 - Constraint (CON): Self-control, harm avoidance, and endorsement of social norms

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Correlations with Relationships

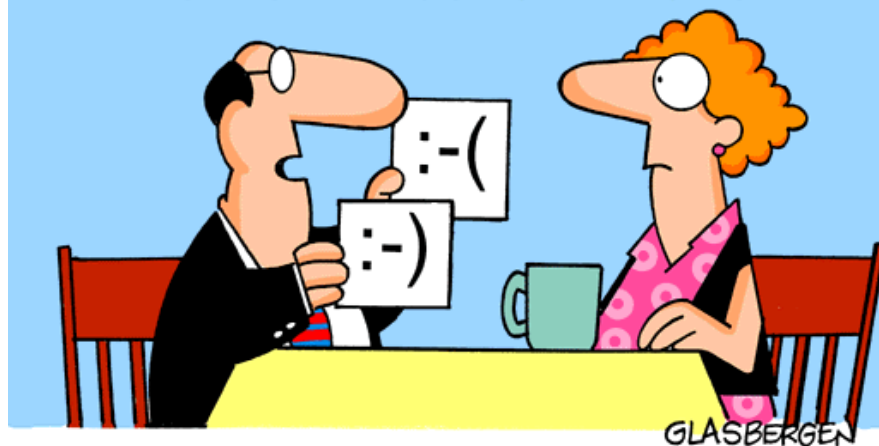
- How does age 18 personality (PEM, NEM, constraint) relate to age 26 relationship variables

	<u>Quality</u>	<u>Conflict</u>
• Positive Emotionality:	.14	.00
• Negative Emotionality:	-.21	.22
• Constraint:	.17	-.11

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Expression of Emotion

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“You always complain that I don’t know how to show my emotions, so I made these signs.”

Expression of Emotions in Relationships

- Gottman & Levenson
- Newlywed couples engaged in conflict discussion while videotaped
 - Videotapes coded for emotional responses, style of interaction [Observational data]
 - Physiological measures [Test-data]
 - Couple members rate partner's relationship satisfaction [Informant data] and own satisfaction [Self-data]
- Couples followed up to 5 years later
- Divorce was predicted from data, with 83% accuracy

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The "Love Lab"



Four Main Factors that Predict Divorce

- 1. Criticism vs. Complaint:
 - *Criticism*: Global statement of anger, displeasure, distress, or other negativity, tends to be blaming (e.g., “You never take me anywhere.”)
 - *Complaint*: specific statement of anger, displeasure, distress, or other negativity (e.g., “We don’t go out as much as I would like to”)
- Criticisms (but not complaints) predict divorce
- Escalation of negative affect is very bad
 - De-escalation of negative affect (e.g., through humor) is very good

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Four Main Factors that Predict Divorce

- 2. Contempt: Insult, mockery, sarcasm, or derision of the other person.
 - Includes disapproval, judgment, disdain, exasperation, mockery, put-downs, or communicating that the other person is absurd or incompetent

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Four Main Factors that Predict Divorce

- **3. Defensiveness:** Attempt to protect one's self from perceived attack
 - May include denial of responsibility, counterblame, or whine
 - May be a response to “Mindreading”
 - Attribution of motives, feelings, or behaviors made by one partner to the other partner
 - Example: “You always get tense in situations like this.” “No I don't. You are the one who always gets tense!”

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Four Main Factors that Predict Divorce

- **4. Stonewalling:** The listener presents a “stone wall” to his/her partner.
 - No small “assenting” vocalizations like “mmm” or “yeah”
 - No head nods; neck is rigid
 - There is little gaze at the speaker
 - Little facial movement, but when there is it is negative
 - 85% of stonewallers are male

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Overall Findings

- Four “horsemen of the apocalypse” (criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling) predict divorce
- What distinguishes satisfied and dissatisfied couples is *not* how frequently they conflict, but the way in which negative feelings are expressed during conflicts.
 - Disagreements not more common among dissatisfied couples, but dissatisfied couples more likely to express disagreement with negative affect
- A 5:1 ratio of positive interactions to negative interactions is characteristic of a good marriage
 - ONE negative interaction can wipe out the effects of several positive interactions

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Overall Findings

- Negative emotions are associated with high levels of physiological arousal for men, but not for women
 - Men may avoid negative affect in relationships because it is more physiologically punishing
 - Emotionally, men experience lower levels of negative affect than women

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Personality and Gender

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**But wait, is it even ok to talk
about gender differences in
personality?**

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Talk of Gender Differences: controversial!



- In February, 2005, Harvard University President Lawrence Summers commented in a speech that the differences in men's and women's achievement in math and science (which have been found repeatedly) might be due to genetic factors.

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Talk of Gender Differences

- MIT Biologist Nancy Hopkins left the room
 - “When he started talking about innate differences in aptitude between men and women, I just couldn't breathe, because this kind of bias makes me physically ill.”
 - Summers later apologized, but eventually was asked to leave Harvard

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Talk of Gender Differences

- Was Summers doing anything wrong?
 - Steven Pinker: NO! It's possible that hormones act on the fetus differently, affect cognitive and spatial abilities
 - We won't ever know if this is true unless scientists are allowed to study it and talk about it
 - Liz Spelke: YES! Children are treated differently from such an early age, we can't ever separate the role of environment
 - If we keep talking about it, girls will keep getting the message that they're not as good

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Why is gender differences such a dangerous topic?

- Acceptance of gender differences in ability could promote discrimination
- If young children believe in differences, could inhibit success/hard work
 - Self-fulfilling prophesy

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Gender Difference in Math and Science

- Varies by culture
 - Most prominent in USA, where culture dictates that math is not “cool” for girls
- In the 1980s, American middle-school boys outperformed girls, at the highest ability level, by 13 to 1. Now, it’s 3 to 1.
- Gender difference only emerges after elementary school
 - When math gets harder, boys are encouraged to push through

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Why is gender differences such a dangerous topic?

- But, what about the progress of science?
 - Do we need to talk about the possibility of gender differences in order to learn the *scientific truth*?
 - Or, does this kind of conversation inherently *promote* problematic gender differences?

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UBC research addressed this issue

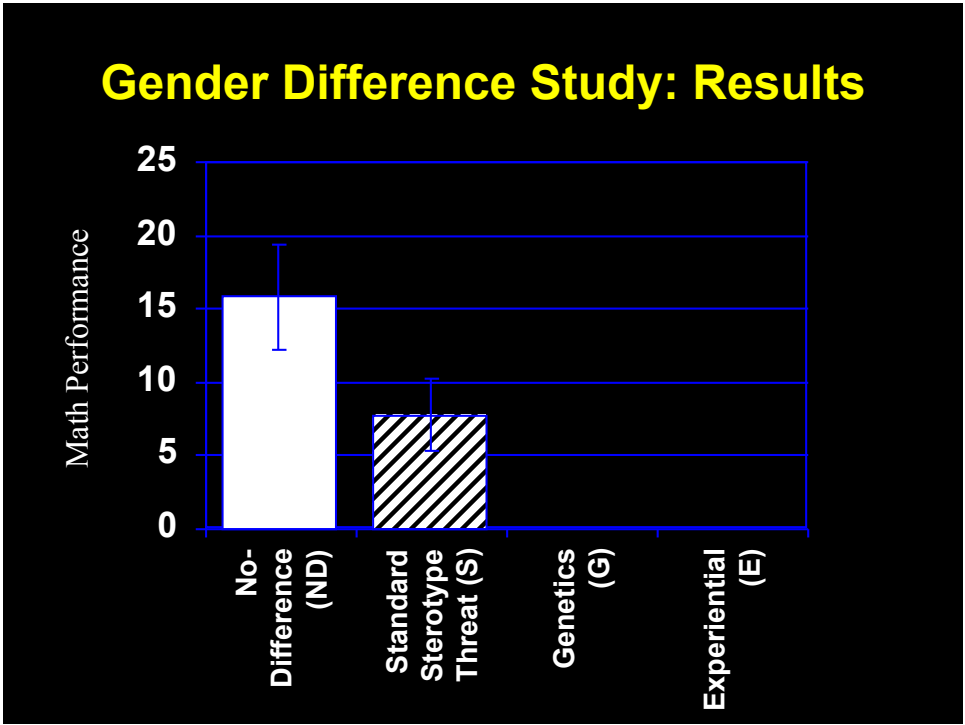
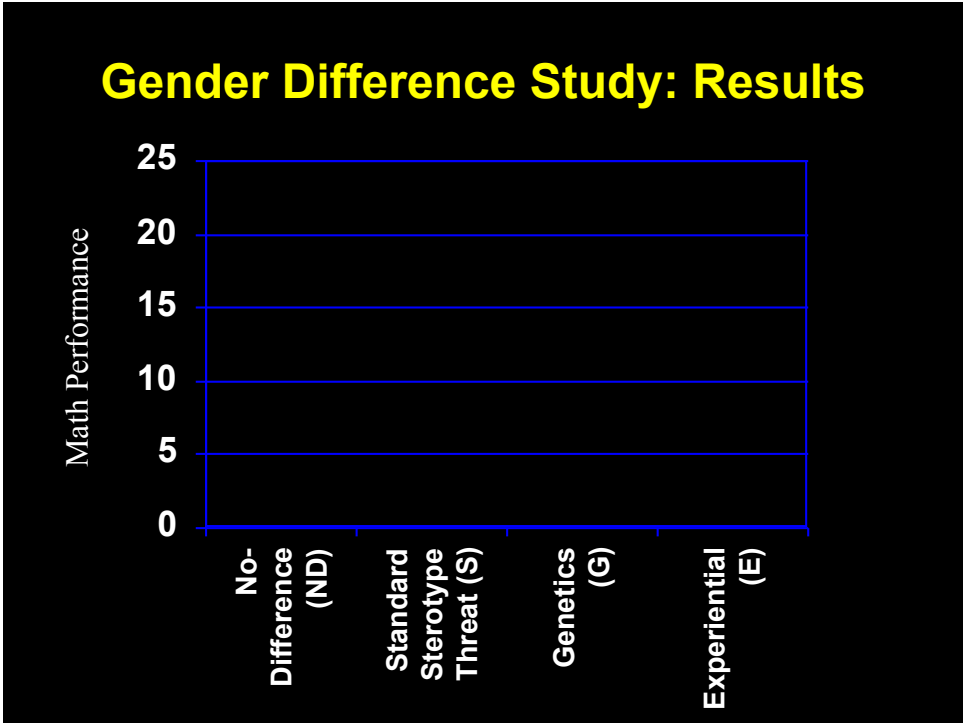
- Dar-Nimrod & Heine, 2006 (*Science*)
- Question: Does telling women that they are genetically worse at math lower their math performance?
 - If so, can we counteract this effect by telling them:
 - A) no real gender difference
 - B) there is a difference, but it's due to environmental causes

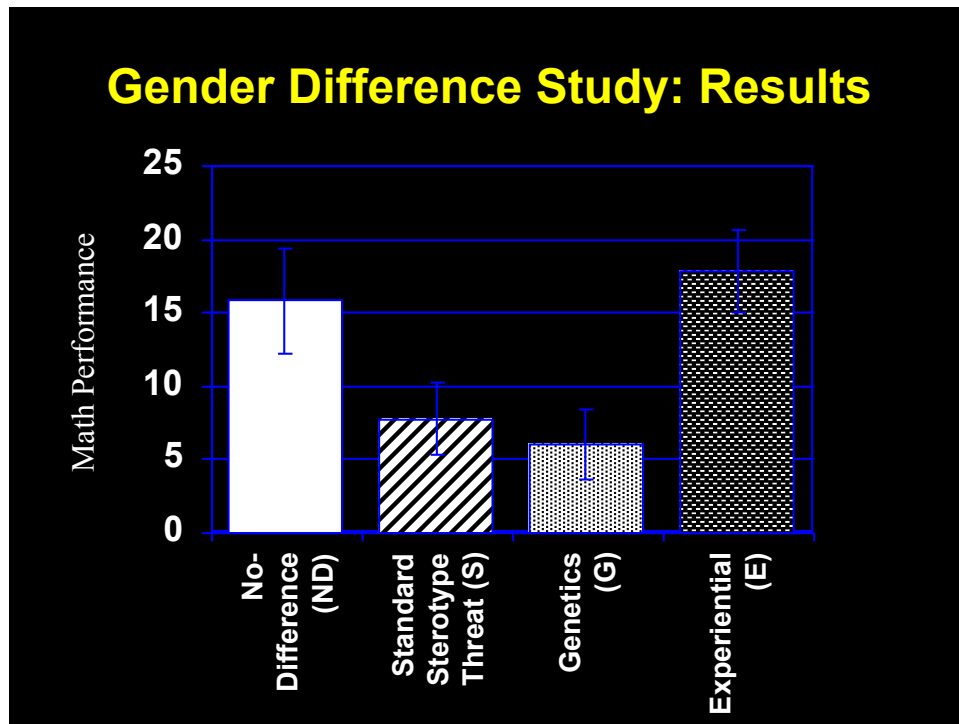
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Gender Difference Study

1. Female pp read an essay
 - Condition 1: Essays argue for a gender difference in math, due to genetic factors (Summers condition)
 - Condition 2: Essays argue for gender difference in math, due to environmental factors (Spelke condition)
 - Condition 3: No essay, but prime gender (standard stereotype threat)
 - Condition 4: Essays argue for no gender difference
- 2. Pp do math test, performance assessed

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Gender Difference Study

- Telling women that gender difference is due to genes hurts their performance
 - Lack of control
- Why does telling them that it's due to life experiences solve the problem?
- What does this mean for research on gender differences?

Are there gender differences in cognitive abilities?



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Gender Differences in Personality (positive effects mean men > women)

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Extraversion | <i>d</i> |
| – Gregariousness | -.15 |
| – Assertiveness | .50 |
| – Activity | .09 |
| • Agreeableness | |
| – Trust | -.25 |
| – Tender-mindedness | -.97 |
| – Aggressiveness | .40- .86 (depending on measure) |
| • Conscientiousness | |
| – Order | -.13 |
| • Emotional Stability | |
| – Anxiety | -.28 |
| – Impulsiveness | .06 |
| • Openness | |
| – Ideas | .03 |

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Gender Differences in Emotion

- Women experience more negative emotions
 - Greater frequency
 - Greater intensity
- Women score higher on measures of empathy

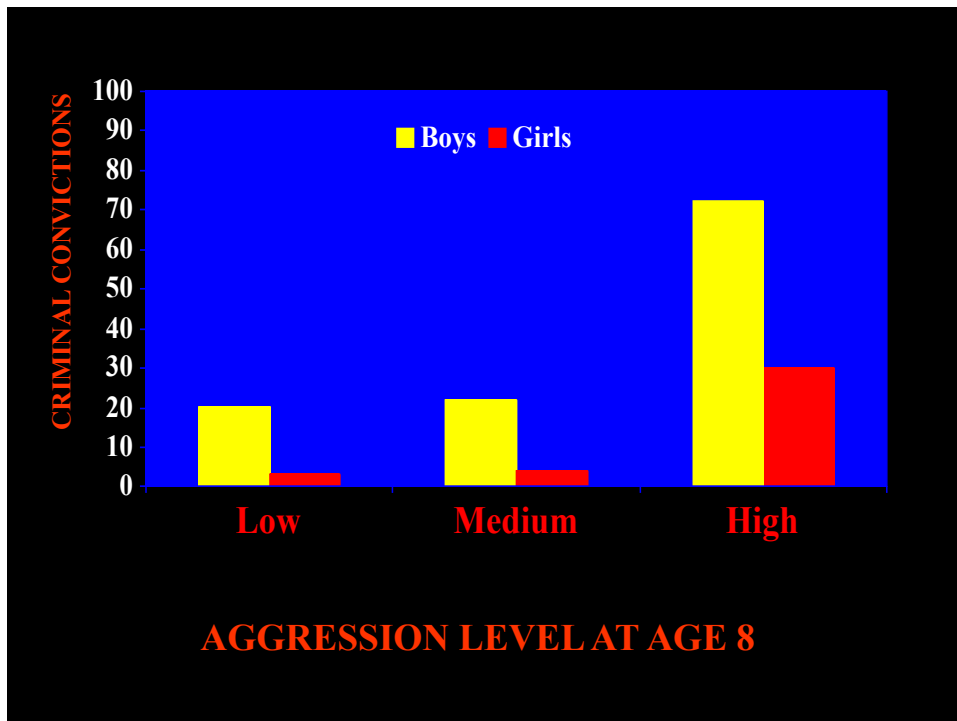
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Is there a gender difference in aggression?

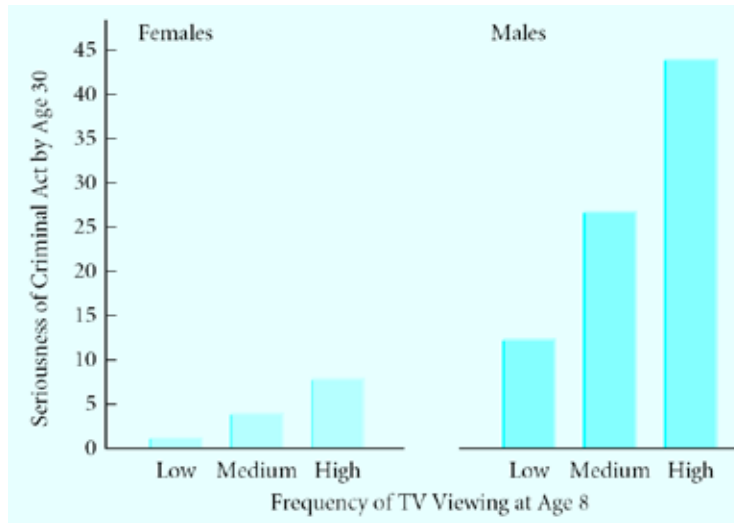
- Until age 2, No!
 - In fact, some evidence that aggression is more common in play groups dominated by girls
- By age 4 or 5, boys show higher aggression
- By adolescence, boys are much more aggressive
 - And more conduct problems, higher delinquency
- Conduct disorders are 6-10 times more common in boys
- Men commit more crime across cultures

Homicide trends in the U.S.

- **Males were almost 10 times more likely than females to commit murder in 2002**
- Male offender/Male victim 65.1%
- Male offender/Female victim 22.6%
- Female offender/Male victim 9.9%
- Female offender/Female victim 2.4%

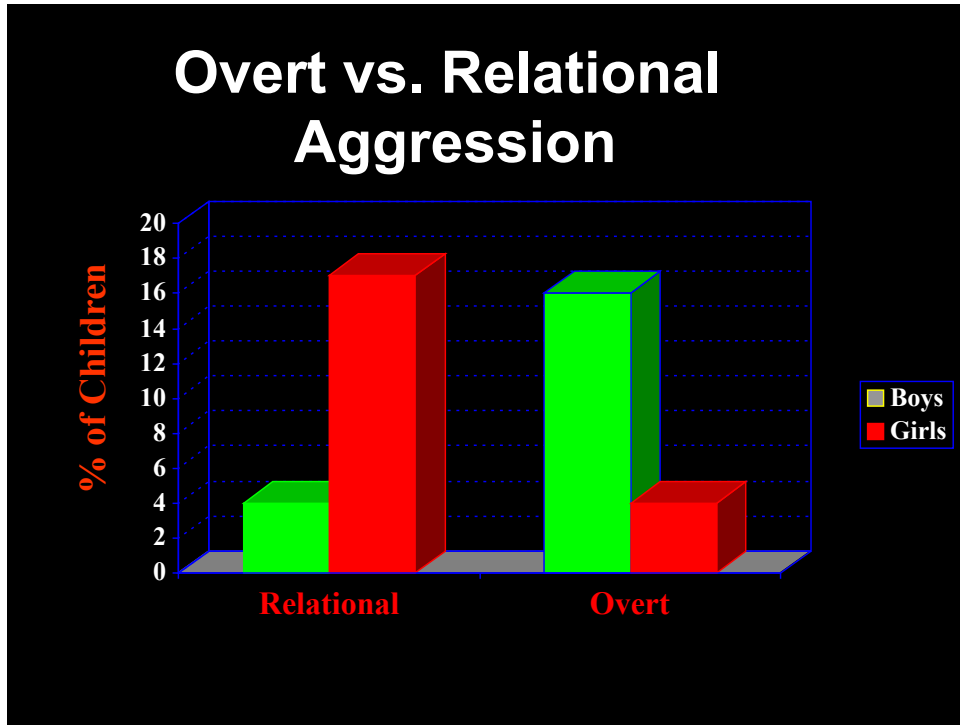


TV viewing and aggression

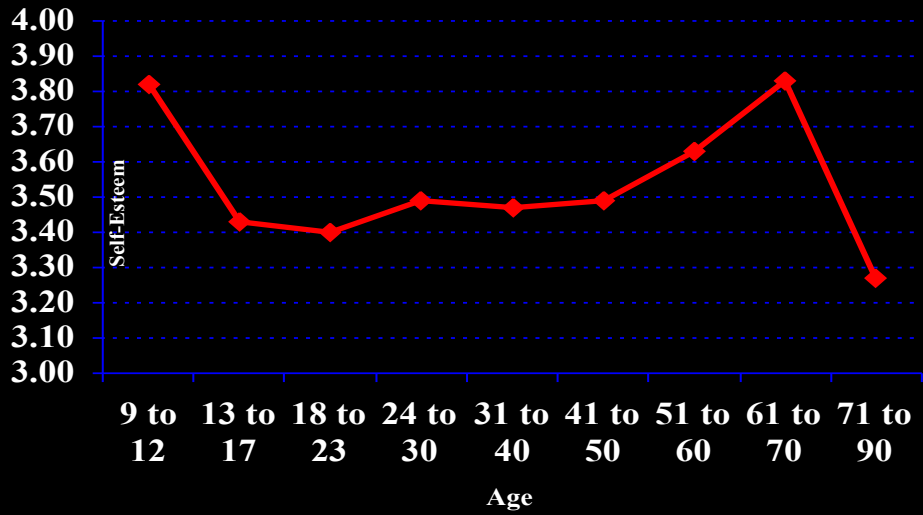


Explaining the Gender Difference in Aggression

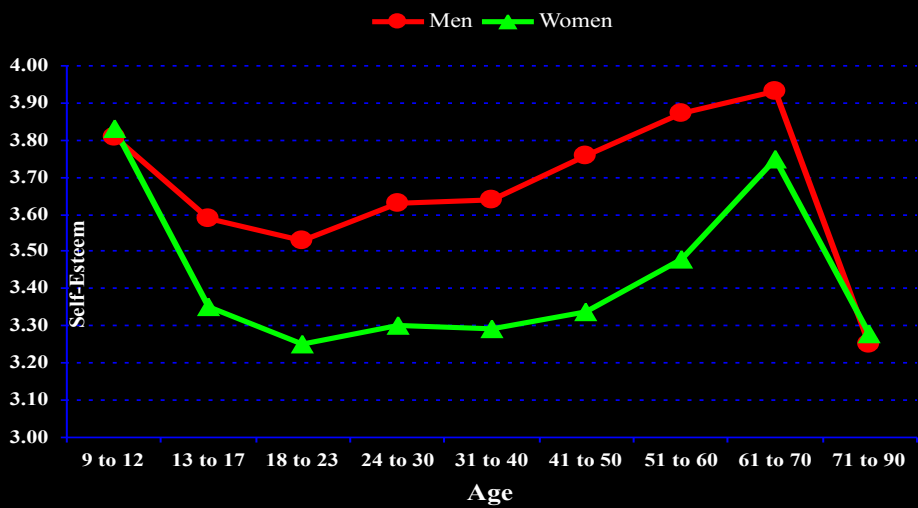
- Girls show aggression differently than boys
- Overt aggression (male)
 - Physical assaults (hitting) and verbal assaults (yelling, insulting)
- Relational aggression (female)
 - Excluding others; withdrawing acceptance; spreading false rumors
- Study of 3rd-6th grade children
 - Examined overt and relational aggression
 - Peer nominations of aggressive kids

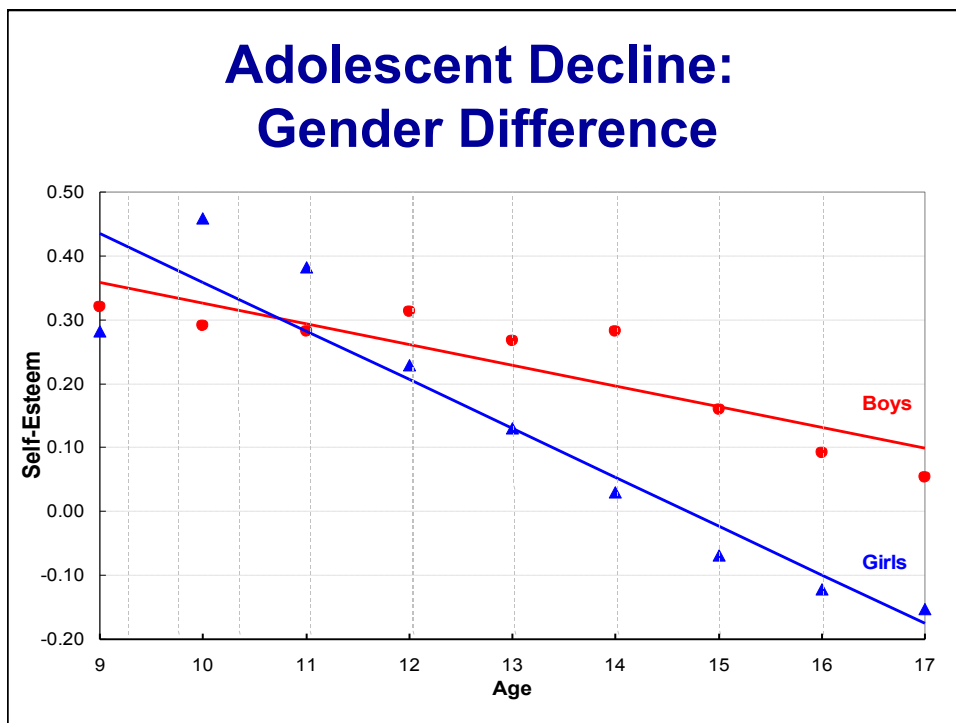
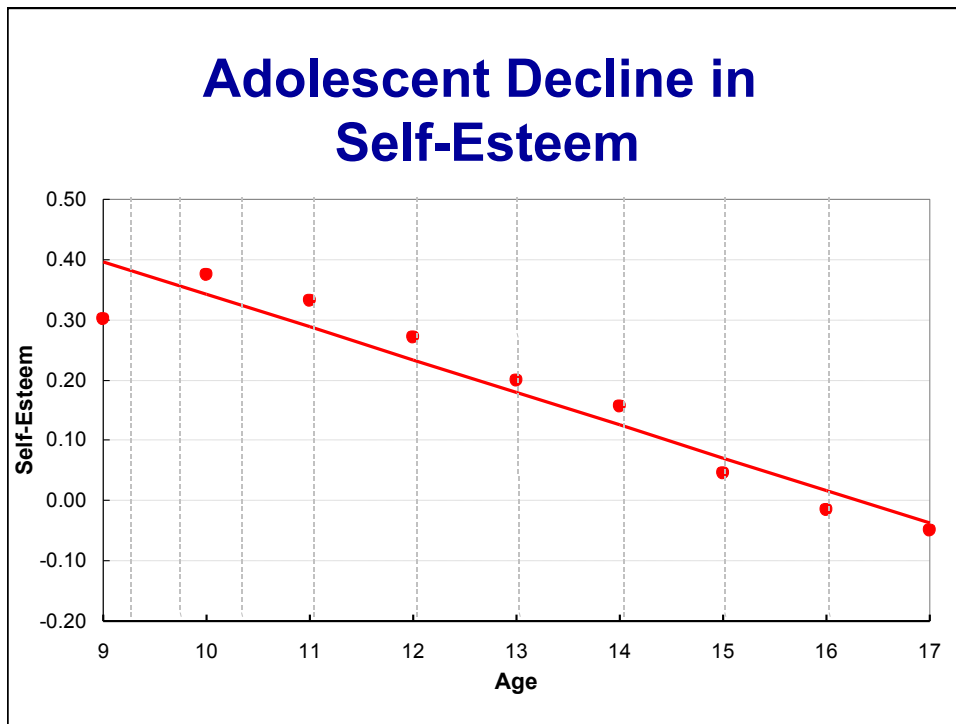


Is there a gender difference in self-esteem at every age?



Self-Esteem By Gender and Age

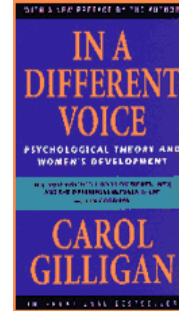




Why Do Girls Show a Greater Self-Esteem Decline than Boys?

What happens at adolescence?

- **Girls' self-confidence fairly high until age 11 or 12**
 - Assertive about feelings
- **During adolescence**
 - Many girls accept stereotyped notions of how they should be (behavior and looks)
 - Repress true feelings
 - Adopt a “nice” and woman-like self-presentation



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Why do adolescent girls decline in self-esteem more than boys?

- Idealized standards of beauty may contribute to girls' declining self-esteem
- Girls' bodies change with puberty, making it much harder to maintain the idealized body type presented by the media

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Gender Difference in Body Image

- Review of 222 studies over the past 50 years (Feingold & Mazzella, 1998)
- Findings:
 - Men have a more positive body image than women
 - Gender difference is larger for more recent studies

Body image and girls' self-esteem decline

- Experimental evidence
 - Exposure to media showing thin body ideal linked to lower self-esteem
- Quasi-experimental evidence
 - Introduction of American TV in Fiji increased prevalence of eating disorders in adolescent girls, and led to more negative body image

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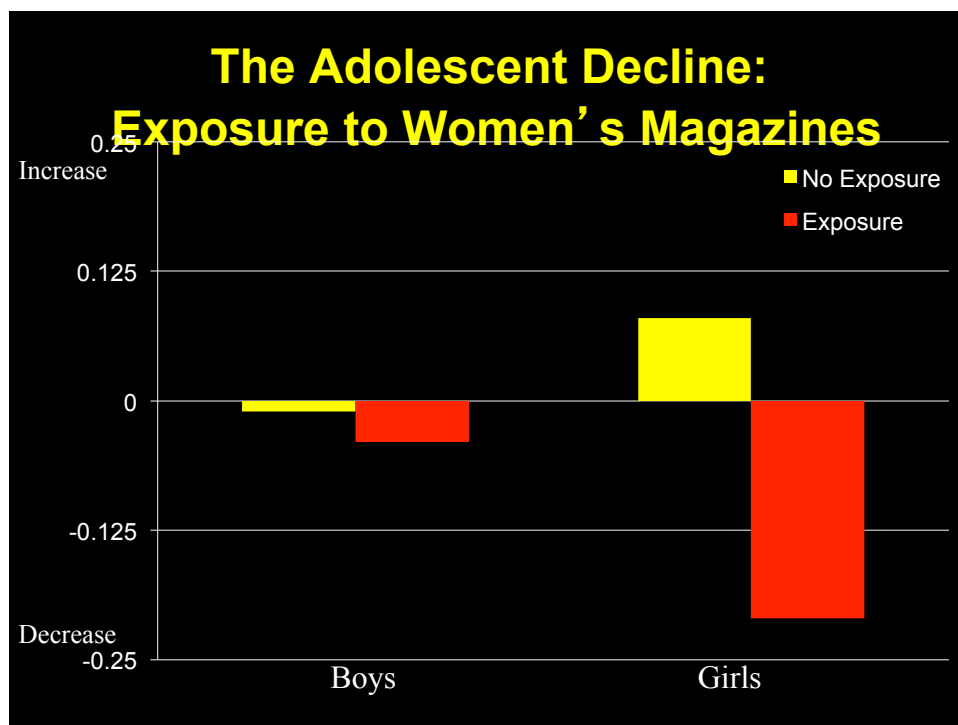
Body Image- Self-esteem Study

- Hypothesis: Girls in countries that begin receiving magazines depicting idealized body images will show larger decline in self-esteem during adolescence

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Methods

- Internet sample
- 34 countries
- Measured self-esteem in children (ages 9-12) and adolescents (ages 13-17)
 - Self-esteem levels drop, overall, between these two age groups
- Coded each country for availability of popular women's magazines (*Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, *Vogue*)
 - 11 countries have access to these magazines



Gender Roles

Popular conceptions of gender,
which may influence behavior

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Sex Differences vs. Sex-Roles

- Sex Differences
 - Actual differences between males and females in personality traits, self-esteem, aggression, achievement, etc.
- Sex-Roles (Gender Identity)
 - Stereotypes or beliefs about what it means to be a “man” or a “woman”
 - Socialization of boys and girls to act in “gender appropriate” or sex-stereotypical ways
 - Development of gender identity

Summers Controversy

- The discussion continued...
- March, 2007, in the *New York Times Magazine*, Harvard government professor Harvey Mansfield said of Summer's comment:
 - “He was expressing seriously the notion that women, innately, have less capacity than men at the highest level of science. I think it's probably true. It's common sense if you look at who the top scientists are.”

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Mansfield also said:

- “We need [gender] roles. Roles give us mutual expectations of what is either correct or good behavior. Women are neater than men, they make nests, and all these other stereotypes are mostly true...”
- Is he right? Do we need gender roles to tell us how to behave, and how to expect others to behave?

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Research on Gender Roles

- The study of androgyny
 - 1970' s: politically motivated search to separate sex roles and biological sex
- Masculinity and femininity
 - Personality dimensions
 - Men and women can be high or low on both (or either)
 - Masculinity: Instrumentality, assertiveness, dominance
 - Femininity: nurturance, emotional expression, empathy

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Select the letter that describes where you fall on the scale:

1. Not at all aggressive A B C D E Very aggressive
2. Very whiny A B C D E Not at all whiny
3. Not at all independent A B C D E Very independent
4. Not at all arrogant A B C D E Very arrogant
5. Not at all emotional A B C D E Very emotional
6. Very submissive A B C D E Not at all submissive
7. Not at all boastful A B C D E Very boastful
8. Not at all competitive A B C D E Very competitive

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Score yourself

- Masculinity/Instrumentality: Mostly D's/
E's
- Femininity/Expressiveness: Mostly A's/
B's
- Androgyny: Mostly C's

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Are masculinity and femininity sex-related dimensions?

- Now typically studied as **instrumentality** and **expressiveness**
- Gender schemata
 - Cognitive orientations that lead people to process information through a sex-linked perspective
- One study found that variation in gender-typical behaviors is partly due to genetic variance
 - In women, 38% of variance in gender-typical behaviors due to genes
 - Genes for sex-typical behaviors → but these genes are not necessarily linked to biological sex

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Stereotypes about Gender

- Highly consistent across cultures
- Men
 - Aggressive, autonomous, achievement-oriented, dominant, exhibitionist, persevering
 - INSTRUMENTAL
- Women
 - Affiliative, deferent, nurturant, self-abasing
 - COMMUNAL
- Stereotypes converge with actual sex differences, but are larger (exaggerated)

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Gender Stereotypes

- Cognitive component
 - Social categories (e.g., 'dads', 'soccer moms')
- Affective component
 - Positive or negative feelings that result from categorization
 - i.e., sexism, preference for one gender over the other
- Behavioral component
 - Treating people differently because of their social category
 - E.g., job discrimination
 - E.g., teachers giving more attention to boys

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On the Final Exam

- Focus will be on last section of the course
- But, it will be cumulative, in the sense of covering major themes of critical importance throughout the course
 - Major approaches to personality (e.g., psychodynamic, humanistic, motive theory, traits, biological)
 - Big issues/topics:
 - Person vs. situation
 - Trait taxonomies- Five Factor Model
 - Methods (LOTS, reliability & validity)
 - Self Esteem & Narcissism

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Next Week

- Last class!
- Culture and Personality
- Overview of course, Wrap up
 - Larsen & Buss, Chapters 17 & 20

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