

Personality

What makes us who we are?

Lecture 10 Personality and Culture Course Overview

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Final Exam

- Tuesday, Dec. 12th, 7 pm
 - Swing 121
- Approx. 1:45-2 hours
- ~ 45 MC (~ 66% of total)
- ~ 1 longer short answer (~33% of total)

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On the Final...

- Most extensive focus on:
 - Social Relationships
 - Personality and attraction
 - What makes relationships work vs. not
 - Gender
 - Gender differences in personality
 - Gender roles/ gender identity
 - Culture (today)
 - Overview (today)
- Chapters 17, & 20

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On the Final...

- But, it will be cumulative, meaning:
 - Know the broad theoretical perspectives we've covered in the class:
 - Psychodynamic, Motive, Humanistic/phenomenological, Trait, Biological, Behaviorist, Cognitive/Learning
 - How would each theory explain personality?
 - Other themes/topics that are central/recurrent:
 - Methods in personality research, trait approach, person vs. situation, self-esteem vs. narcissism, PEN model, B5 model, motives

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Personality and Culture

5

Culture Perspective on Personality

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What is Culture?

CULTURE:

Shared systems of meaning that provide the standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting among those who share a language, a historic period, and a geographic location



Useful metaphor -> **culture = game rules**

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Useful metaphor:
culture = game rules

Does John from Iowa know the rules of this game?

What kinds of situations in our culture require a knowledge of game rules?



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Culture ≠ Race or Ethnicity

What are the differences between these?

A Classic Anthropological View

- Children, when they are born, are without culture, and hence are without personality, and almost without social relationships. The very fact of birth may be described as the termination of a biophysical relationship and, in the usual course of events, its replacement with a social relationship. Social relationships, then, expand with maturation; new culture is demanded in which to respond to other people so that the relationships are possible. The acquisition of that culture is ipso facto the growth of the personality. As the personality develops, the characteristic way of responding to given stimuli becomes more highly developed and, at the same time, more set.

– Bohannan, 1963/1971, p. 20

CULTURE & PERSONALITY



“We are forced to conclude that human nature is almost unbelievably malleable, responding accurately and contrastingly to contrasting cultural conditions.” (Mead, 1935, p. 280)

But Mead (1954) also observed that “.... the individual’s inclination to respond in a certain way is relatively stable when the cultural context is understood.”

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MODERN CULTURAL VIEW

Personality traits as products of biological and cultural evolution.

CULTURE → PERSONALITY:

“Personality is completely interdependent with the meanings and practices of particular sociocultural contexts. People develop their personalities over time through their active participation in the various social worlds in which they engage. A cultural psychological perspective implies that ***there is no personality without culture;*** there is only a biological entity”.

(Markus & Kitayama, 1998)

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PERSONALITY → CULTURE

... and there is no culture without personality.

Personality meaning resides in artifacts people use (e.g., living spaces, consumer preferences, preferred icons, etc.) and institutions they support (Hollywood, capitalism, etc.).

[personality → culture]



Commercial brands

(Aaker & Benet-Martinez, 2001)

living spaces

(Gosling et al., 2002)

cultural icons

(Hong et al., 2000)

music preferences

(Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003)

The use and availability of these cultural products, in turn, perpetuates particular behavioral, affective, and cognitive tendencies (personality).

[culture → personality]

Example: “BC/Vancouver Culture”

- Anyone here not from BC?
- What parts of this culture seem (or used to seem) strange to you?
- How would you describe BC culture, compared to the East Coast?
- What about Canada vs. the U.S.?

Personality and Culture in everyday contexts: Personal Ads

San Francisco Chronicle

- 28, SWM, 6' 1", 160 lbs. handsome, artistic, ambitious, seeks attractive WF, 24–29, for friendship, romance, and permanent partnership.
- Very attractive, independent SWF, 29, 5' 6", 110 lbs., loves fine dining, the theater, gardening, and quiet evenings at home. In search of handsome SWM 28–34 with similar interests.
- Where shall I kiss thee? Across Sierra shoulder, skiing. Between acts of Aida, sharing? Fortright, funny, fiery, fit, seeking perceptive, profound permanent partner.

India Tribune (NorCal)

- Gujarati Vaishnav parents invite correspondence from never married Gujarati well settled, preferably green card holder from respectable family for green card holder daughter 29 years, 5' 4", good looking, doing CPA.
- Gujarati Brahmin family invites correspondence from a well-cultured, beautiful Gujarati girl for 29 years, 5' 8", 145 lbs. handsome looking, well-settled boy.
- Patel parents invite professional for their U.S.-raised daughter 26 (computer science) and son 24 (civil engineer), family owns construction firm.

Research on Cross-Cultural Differences in Personality

- (1) LEXICAL APPROACH

Natural language as a window to study cultural universals/differences in personality

FUNDAMENTAL LEXICAL HYPOTHESIS:

Those psychological constructs that are the most salient and socially relevant in people's lives will eventually become encoded into their language; the more important a construct is, (1) the more likely it is to be expressed as a single word and be over represented in the language; and (2) **the more languages and cultures will have a word for it.**

(Goldberg, 1982)

- **Do the Big Five Traits replicate across cultures?**
- **Yes, in Spain – using translated American measures**
- But, what is the limitation of this study?

NEED FOR ANOTHER STUDY THAT:

- (1) Identifies the basic indigenous dimensions of personality description in Spanish
- (2) Assesses the overlap between these indigenous Spanish dimensions and the American Big 5

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COMBINED ETIC/EMIC APPROACH

EMIC APPROACH: indigenous measures
 --> self-reports on 299 indigenous Spanish personality adjectives from the dictionary

PLUS

ETIC APPROACH: imported measures
 --> self-reports on Spanish-translated Big Five questionnaires

Sample
 N = 894 college students from Spain who completed both emic and etic measures

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7 INDIGENOUS SPANISH PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS			
Emic Results (from Indigenous Spanish Personality descriptors, factor analysis)			
POSITIVE VALENCE		NEGATIVE VALENCE	
Amazing	62	Sickening	43
Superior	58	Terrifying	41
Formidable	56	Filthy	41
Resplendent	56	Greasy	39
Not special	-35	Cruel	39
Mediocre	-40	Wicked	38
 CONSCIENTIOUSNESS		 AGREEABLENESS	
Well-balanced	64	Easy-going	54
Moderate	54	Good-natured	49
Reasonable	53	Docile	46
Hasty	-42	Stormy	-45
Reckless	-43	Unreconciling	-47
Crazy			19

Spanish Big 7			
OPENNESS	PLEASANTNESS	ENGAGEMENT	
Bohemian	38	• Happy	54
Mystical	40	• Energetic	53
Quaint	42	• Relaxed	48
Gossiping	-36	• Stressed	-53
Disclosing	-34	• Depressed	-54
Nosy	-30	• Unhappy	-56
		• Ardent	43
		• Seething	36
		• Intense	35
		• Cold	-34
		• Idle	-30
		• Unemotional	-37
		.	

PLEASANTNESS & ENGAGEMENT:
new Spanish factors

Gran placer y poco duelo es el deseo de todo hombre.

Much pleasure and little pain is every man's desire

--Spanish proverb

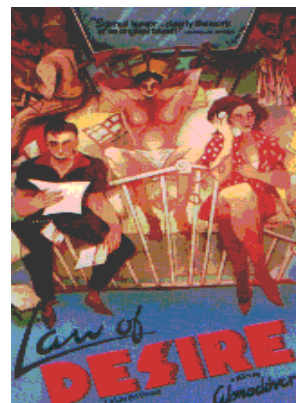
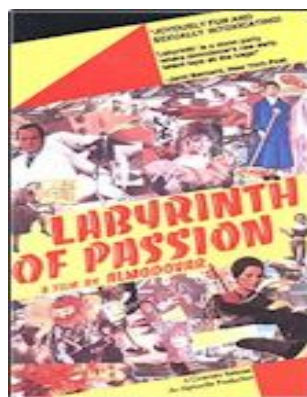


Spaniards passion is the seed that brings them forth, and passion is the flower they bear.

--George Orwell (Homage to Catalonia)

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ALMODOVAR'S FILMS:
A celebration of pleasure/pain and passion



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**OVERLAP BETWEEN THE INDIGENOUS (EMIC) SPANISH
PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS AND IMPORTED (ETIC) BIG 7
INVENTORY**

IMPORTED BIG 7	INDIGENOUS SPANISH BIG 7						
	Positive Valence	Negative Valence	Agreeable- ness	Conscien- tiousness	Openness	Pleasant- ness	Engage- ment
Pos. Valence	.79						
Neg. Valence		.47					
Agreeableness			.71				
Conscientious.				.60			
Openness					.22		
Extraversion						.75	.45
Neuroticism						-.43	.40

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CONCLUSIONS FROM STUDIES:

(1) There is considerable overlap between the Spanish *Siete Grandes* and the American Big 7

**(1b) Exceptions: Pleasantness and Engagement
Instead of Extraversion and Neuroticism**

Also, Openness not quite the same

**(2) Positive and Negative Valence seem fairly robust
across these two cultures.**

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Cultural Differences in Personality: Individualism vs. Collectivism

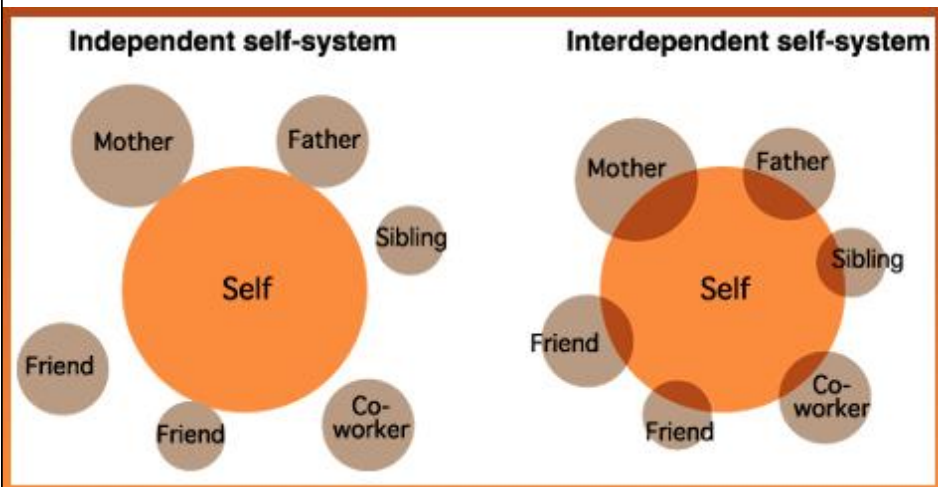
- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus on what YOU want – Minimize role of others in self's behaviors – “The squeaky wheel gets the grease” – Use self-descriptive traits to describe self (e.g., “dependable”) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectivism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Emphasis on interconnectedness of group – Goal: to fit in, promote group harmony – “The nail that stands out gets pounded down” – Use interpersonal roles to describe self (e.g., “daughter”) |
|--|--|

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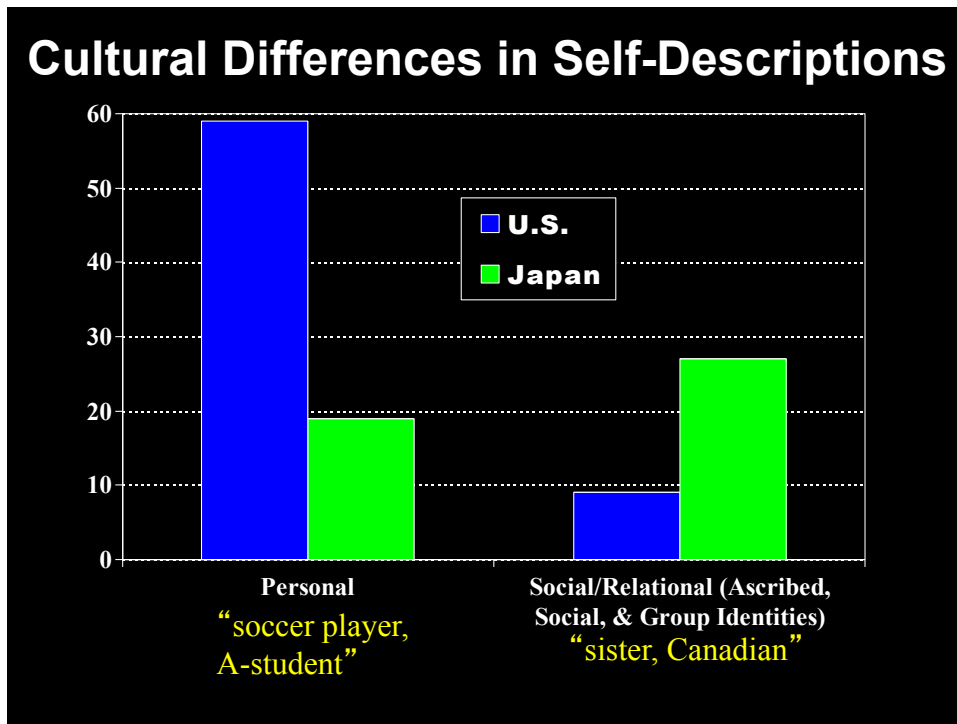
Culture shapes self-representations

Individualistic (Western) Cultures

**Collectivistic Eastern/
Asian Cultures**



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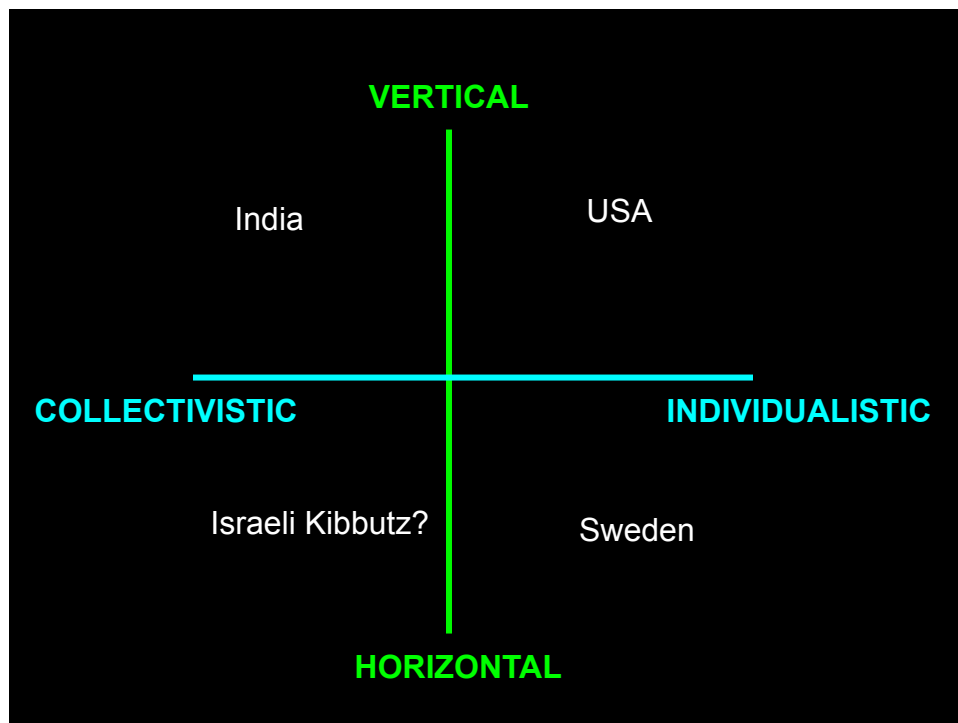
Criticisms of Collectivist/ Individualist Approach

- What countries are we talking about?
 - Almost all evidence of differences comes from studies comparing US and Japan
- Overgeneralization
 - People within each culture may be independent or interdependent
 - May vary by context
 - at work vs. the dinner table

Big Two Cultural Syndromes

- 1. Individualism/Collectivism:** extent to which the self is defined as bound and separate (vs. fluid and interdependent on others around him/her).
- 2. Vertical/Horizontal Relationships:** emphasis on hierarchy and status versus equality; Egalitarianism

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Egalitarianism and Evoked Culture

- Evoked Culture: Cultural differences that emerge as a result of different environments
 - E.g., effects of geography, climate, means of subsistence
- Egalitarianism (vertical vs. horizontal) is correlated with how variable the food supply is
 - Highly variable food supply → more horizontal culture
 - Less variable food supply → vertical culture
 - Why?

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Evoked Culture: Culture of Honor

- Nisbett (1993)
- In cultures of honor, insults must be responded to with aggression
- Depends on economics
 - In cultures based on herding economics, must build reputation (honor) to prevent thievery
 - In cultures based on agricultural (more settled), entire means of subsistence is less easily stolen

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Evidence for Culture of Honor

- USA North vs. South
 - How do people respond to insults?
 - Southerners favor violence more than Northerners
 - Southern economy historically linked to herding
 - Southern violence is specific to reputation insults
 - Supported by lab study in which people were actually insulted by confederate
 - Southerners showed higher implicit associations with violent words, more aggressive behavioural and physiological responses

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Additional Cultural Syndromes

- “Big Four” Cultural Syndromes
 1. *Individualism vs. collectivism*
 2. *Power distance (similar to vertical vs. horizontal)*

Plus...

 3. *Uncertainty avoidance*
 - Tolerance for ambiguity and comfort in unstructured situations VERSUS strong belief in rules, codes of conduct, safety and security
 4. *Gender socialization*
 - Men as dominant and competitive and women as nurturing and caring VERSUS lower differentiation between the sexes
 - “distribution of emotional roles”

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Research on Personality and Cultural Syndromes

- Broad scope: 33 nations
- Each sample filled out questionnaire assessing the Big Five
- Research Question: How does personality (“national character”) correlate with the Big Four cultural syndromes?

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Cultural Syndromes Across Nations

Individualism: developed and Western countries

Collectivism: developing and Eastern countries

-Japan is mid-level

High Power distance (i.e., vertical): Latin, Asian, and African countries

Low Power distance (i.e., horizontal): Germanic countries

High Uncertainty avoidance: Latin countries, Japan, German-speaking countries

Low Uncertainty avoidance: Anglo, Nordic, Chinese cultures

High Gender socialization: Japan, some European countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland)

Moderate Gender socialization: English-speaking countries

Low Gender socialization: Nordic countries, Netherlands, ³⁶ some Latin and Asian countries (Thailand)

Cultural syndromes and personality

Zero-Order Correlations Between Mean NEO-PI-R Factors
and Culture Scores Across 33 Countries

<i>IBM Culture Dimension Score</i>	<i>NEO-PI-R Factor</i>				
	<i>E</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Individualism	0.64***				
Power distance	-0.57**	0.52**	-0.39*		
Masculinity			0.40*	0.57**	-0.36*
Uncertainty avoidance				0.58**	-0.55**

NOTE: E = extraversion; C = conscientiousness; O = openness to experience; N = neuroticism; A = agreeableness.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

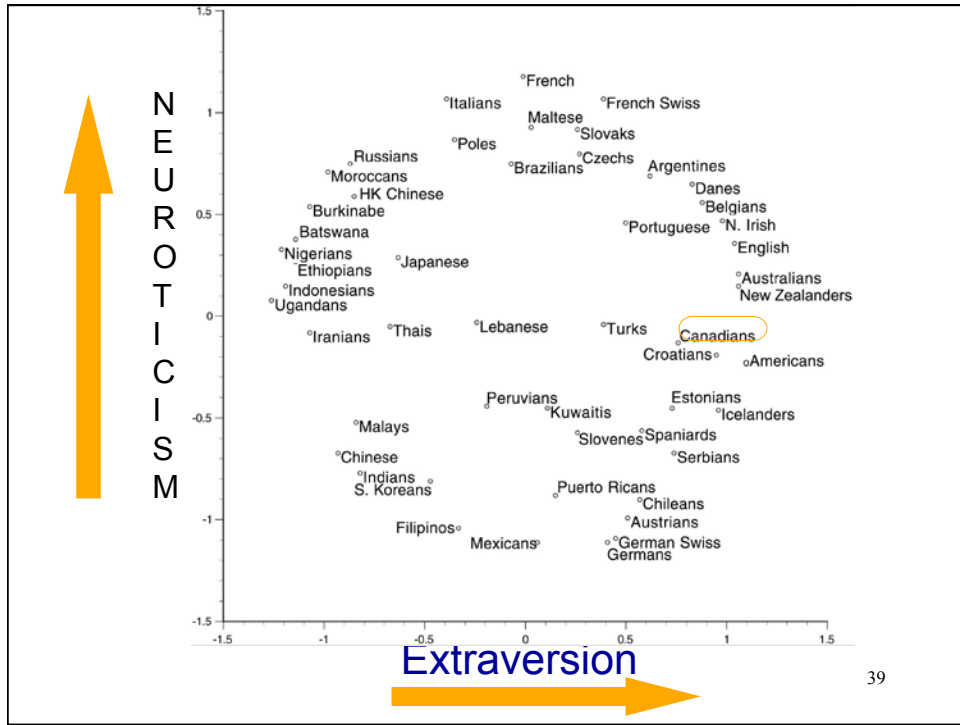
- Personality is linked to culture

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How does personality differ across cultures?

- Personality Profiles of Cultures Project
 - University students from 51 cultures rated someone they knew well on the NEO-PI-R measure of the Big Five

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How does culture create national personality differences?

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Transmitted Culture

- Culture specific ideas, values and beliefs that are transmitted to others within the culture
 - Taught to children early in life, through socialization
- Moral behavior
 - Is it wrong to:
 - Comb your hair in a thunderstorm?
 - Watch dogs mate?
 - Kill a wasp?
 - Have sex during the day?
 - If you're from certain parts of Malaysia, YES!
- Other examples of cultural differences in morality?

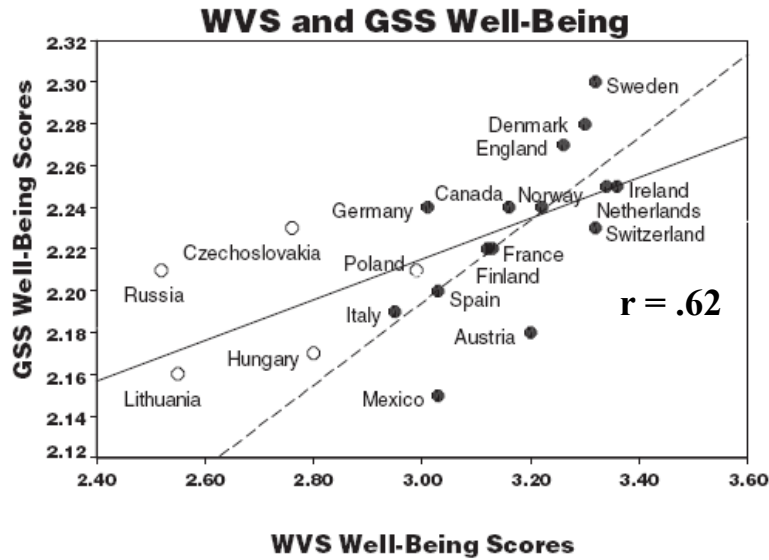
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Transmitted Culture Affects Subjective Well-Being

- Rice & Steele (2004) compared SWB of citizens in 20 nations with SWB of Americans who had ancestors from those nations
 - General Social Survey (GSS) : US survey
 - Taken all together, how would you say things are these days— would you say that you are:
 - very happy
 - pretty happy
 - or not too happy
 - World Values Survey (WVS) : 20 nations survey
 - Taking all things together, would you say you are
 - very happy
 - quite happy
 - not very happy
 - or not at all happy

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Links between SWB of culture of origin and SWB of immigrants



What causes this connection?

TABLE 2
Well-Being by Church Attendance

	<i>Aggregate GSS Well-Being Scores by GSS Church Attendance</i>		
	<i>Attend Church at Least Once a Week</i>	<i>Attend Church Once a Year Attend to Almost Once a Week</i>	<i>Attend Church Less Than Once a Year</i>
Aggregate WVS well-being scores	.79 (<i>p</i> < .01)	.37 (<i>p</i> < .12)	.15 (<i>p</i> < .32)

GSS = General Social Surveys; WVS = World Values Surveys. Cell entries are z-order correlation coefficients. *N* = 11.

Biculturalism

OVERARCHING QUESTION:

How do individuals who have internalized more than one culture navigate between their different and (often opposing) cultural identities?

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BEING BICULTURAL/BILINGUAL = BEING PULLED IN TWO DIRECTIONS ?

“How much is the parrot?” a woman asked. “Wow, ma’ am,” uttered the owner, “this is a very expensive parrot, because he speaks both Spanish and English.” “Oh really? Can you get him to speak in both languages?” “Sure you can. Look, it’s quite simple: If you pull the left leg he speaks English.” And he pulled the parrot’s left leg. “**Good morning,**” said the bird. “And if you pull the right leg like this, he speaks Spanish.” And the parrot said: “**Buenos Dias!**” At which point the woman asked: “What happens if you pull both of his legs, will he speak Tex-Mex?” “Noooo,” answered the parrot. “*I will fall on my ass !!*”

(Mexican American folk tale)

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Variations in the compatibility and fluidity (vs. conflict and dissociation) perceived between the ethnic and mainstream cultures

“Compatible” Cultural Identities

- Unconflicted identities
- Co-exist
 - “I am both”
 - “I am Mexican-American”
- Fluid view of culture
- Complementary
 - Biculturalism as an asset (“it gives you a wider repertoire of behaviors”)

“Oppositional” Cultural Identities

- Conflicting identities
- Choose one or the other
 - “I am Chinese in America”
- Essentialist view of culture
- Dissociation
 - Biculturalism as a burden (“you have to choose and be hypervigilant as to how to behave”)

Bicultural Identity

- Who identifies as bicultural?
- What does this mean to you?

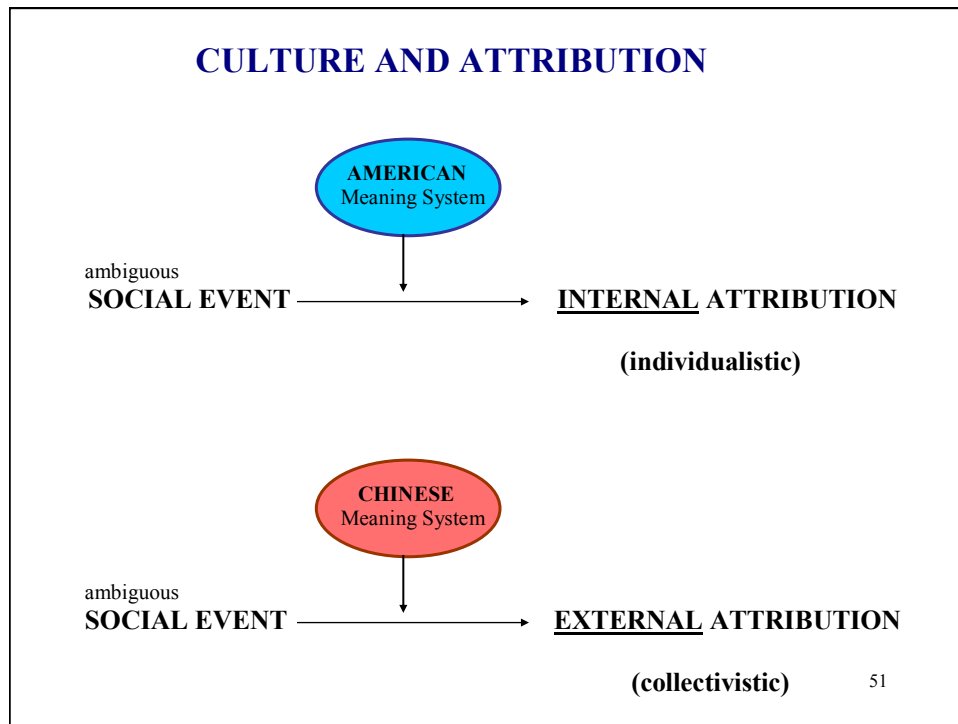
Research Question:

Do bicultural individuals *average* across their different cultural orientations? *Switch* between them? Or eventually simply *adopt* one and *abandon* the other?

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COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE APPROACH TO CULTURE

- Culture as shared meaning-systems -- sets of ideas, values, beliefs, and emotions, organized in associative networks, schemas, and implicit theories
- Individuals can possess more than one cultural meaning-system
- Culture guides behavior only when the relevant meaning systems are cognitively *available, accessible* and also *applicable*



Cultural Frame-Switching in Biculturals: Evidence

- 4 studies, Chinese-American bicultural samples from Hong-Kong and US

Manipulation: Activation of US or Chinese cultural meaning system through priming

Dependent Variable: internal (individualistic) vs. external (collectivistic) explanations for an *ambiguous* social event

CHINESE CONDITION





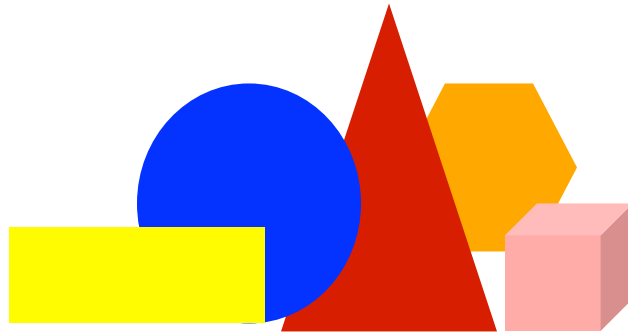
AMERICAN CONDITION





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NEUTRAL CONDITION



geometric figures or landscapes

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AFTER PICTURES:

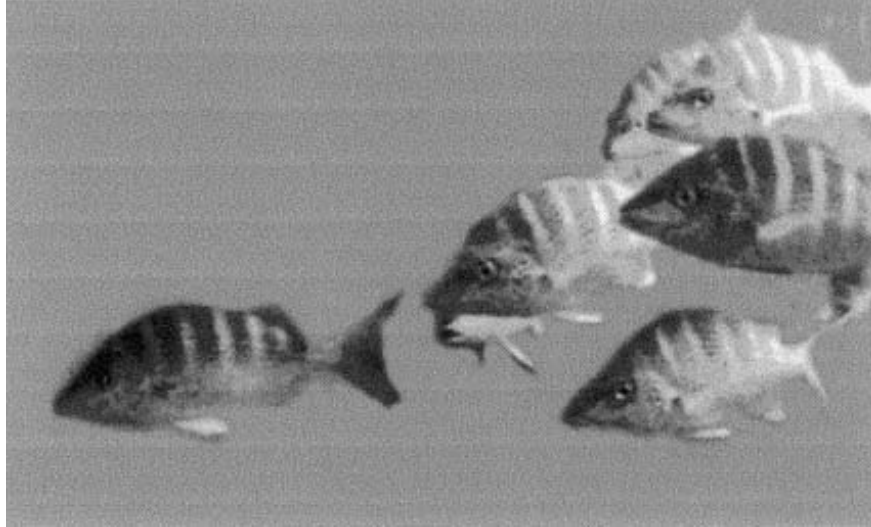
“WRITE AN ESSAY ABOUT CHINESE (or AMERICAN) CULTURE”

→ to ensure activation of their Chinese or American cultural meaning system

-also, to facilitate *accessibility* of culture schemas

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Explanation Task (ambiguous social event)



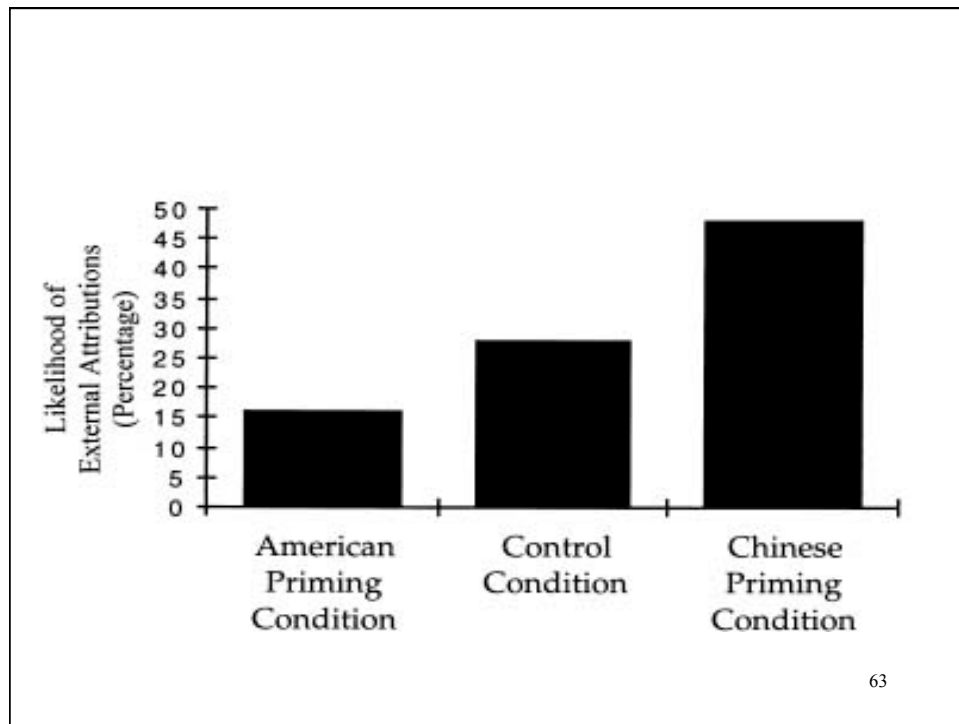
Explanation for Ambiguous Situation

- The one fish is being somehow influenced by the group (e.g., is being chased, teased, or pressured by the others).

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6

Disagree
Completely

Agree
Completely



SUMMARY:

→ **biculturals** have *multiple* cultural meaning systems and can *move between them* in response to cultural cues

**Course Wrap up:
Real-World Outcomes of
Personality**

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Personality and Health

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Which Big Five Dimension is Most Strongly Related to Health?

- Answer: Conscientiousness
 - Careful; methodical; task-focused
 - Not easily distracted; not impulsive

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Low Conscientiousness Predicts...

- Heavy drinking and tobacco use
- Marijuana and heroin use (data from prior to MJ legalization)
- Eating junk food
- Obesity
- Drunk driving & speeding
- Risky sexual behavior

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The Big Five and Development of Health Behaviors

- 1999 study assessed 963 adults
- Originally studied in 1959-1967, as children
 - Childhood personality rated by teachers
- Findings
 - Less agreeable girls → adult smokers
 - Emotionally unstable children → adult drinkers
 - Less agreeable children → higher BMI
 - Unconscientious girls → higher BMI

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Personality and Work Outcomes

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Personality and Work Outcomes

- Large percentage of American corporations use personality tests as part of the hiring and promotion process
 - Personality testing is a \$400 million a year industry
- Most popular personality test is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
 - Used by 89% of Fortune 100 companies
 - 2.5 million Americans take the test each year
 - It's one of the worst personality measures ever developed

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Problems with the Meyers-Briggs (MBTI)

- Categorical distinctions even though all traits are continuous
 - E.g., no one is simply “introverted”
- Not comprehensive
 - Where is ES? A?
- Low test-retest reliability
- No evidence it predicts job success

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Personality and Work Outcomes

- B5 traits do predict career outcomes
- Which traits?
- Conscientiousness predicts job performance across all types of jobs
 - Conscientious adolescents attain higher levels of occupational success by age 50
- Extraversion predicts performance in sales jobs
 - Hiring “greeters” at The Gap

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Personality and Crime

Which traits predict criminality?

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Personality Correlates of Crime and Delinquency

<u>Trait</u>	<u>Correlation</u>	<u>Number of Studies</u>	<u>Number of Participants</u>
Extraversion	.00	14	4,584
Agreeableness	-.41	15	4,673
Conscientious- ness	-.25	14	4,584
Neuroticism	.12	14	4,584
Openness	-.03	14	4,584

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Overview of Course

- Personality addresses critical questions about human behavior
 - Why do people act consistently across situations and over time?
 - What drives human behavior?

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Why do we act consistently? What drives behaviour?

- Psychodynamic
 - Defense mechanisms
 - Repression, reaction formation, projection
 - Instinctual drives (basic instincts)
 - Sex, death
- Phenomenological/Humanistic
 - Self-concept; identity, desire to have high self-esteem, striving to self-actualize
 - Motives, goals (conscious and unconscious)
 - Murray, McClelland, McAdams

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Why do we act consistently? What drives behaviour?

- Trait/biological
 - Traits (stable dispositions)
 - Genes that influence traits
 - Physiology (how genes influence traits; BIS/BAS),
 - Evolution (what is adaptive)
- Learning/behaviorist
 - Learned stimulus-response patterns, reinforcement, modeling
- Cognitive
 - Social learning, personal constructs; locus attributions and explanatory style, schemas

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Which Perspective is Correct?

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Domains of Knowledge

- Personality psychology is typically divided into major theories, perspectives, or “domains of knowledge”
- These differ in
 - theoretical approaches
 - research methods
 - Beliefs about the causes of personality
- But, each domain provides a piece of the puzzle

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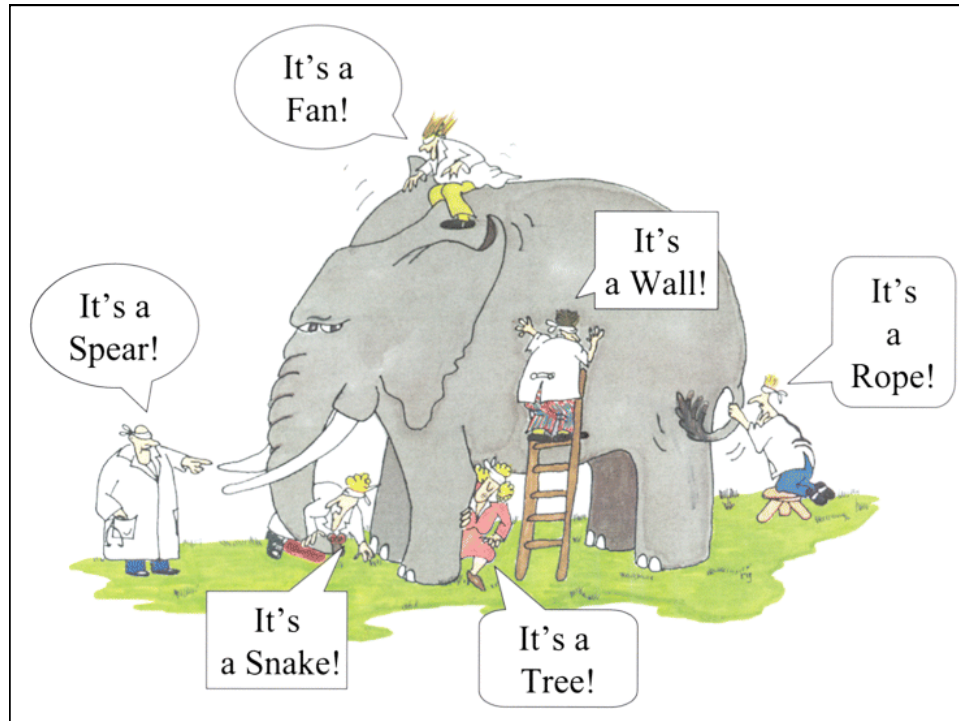
Multiple Perspectives: A Hindu Fable

- “Six blind men from Indostan heard of a creature called an elephant, and they went to study it, to determine its nature. One bumped into the elephant’s side, and concluded that elephants are much like walls. The second encountered a tusk, and decided that elephants resemble spears. The third, grasping the wriggling trunk, decided that elephants are like large snakes. Placing his arms around one of its legs, the fourth man concluded that elephants resemble trees. The fifth felt a floppy ear, and surmised that elephants are a type of fan. Grasping its tail, the sixth decided that elephants are like ropes.

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Each of these men was sure his investigation led him to the truth. And indeed each of them was partly right. But all were partly wrong.

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Multiple Perspectives

- Each perspective provides a different but complementary view of human nature
- “There is no need to choose a single lens for personality when we can enjoy a kaleidoscope of perspectives.”
– Gordon Allport
- Best approach is to choose the perspective that best fits the question you want to ask

That' s it!

GOOD LUCK on the final exam!

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