

# Personality

What makes us who we are?

Psychology 305A; Lecture 4

**Methods Part 2**

**Begin Psychoanalysis: Freud (Part 1)**

Remember how you were  
going to earn an extra **½ credit**  
towards your course grade?

It's not too late!

- Visit [hsp.psych.ubc.ca](http://hsp.psych.ubc.ca)
- Complete the 30-minute survey
- Deadline is January 30



UBCPsychology



# Class updates

- **Exam 1**
  - Friday, January 16
  - 15 Multiple Choice items; 1 essay question
- **Will cover:**
  - What is personality (introduction to course); Ch. 1
  - Methods in personality research; Ch. 2
  - Freud/Psychoanalytic Approach; Ch. 9
  - You are responsible for material in text and class lectures
- **Bring a No. 2 Pencil**
- **Questions?**

# **Personality Research Methods Continued**

# Information Derived from Test Data

- **Physiological**
  - Individual differences in biological responses (i.e., heart rate, startle, blood pressure, etc.) to stimuli
    - E.g., startle reflex to loud noise

# Information Derived from Tests

- **Projective techniques**
  - E.g., the Rorschach
  - Perception of the stimulus reveals something about mental state or personality

# What do you see?



# Test-Data

- *Advantages*
- **Allows measurement of characteristics not easily observable**
  
- *Disadvantages*
- **Must infer that the test measures what you think it measures**
  - Validity issue



# Descriptive Methods

## Case Studies (Life History)

Intensive examination of a single person or group



# Case Study Method

- **Obtained from life history (interviews, autobiography)**
- **Other life records (Life Outcome Data)**
  - School grades
  - Criminal records
  - Work record
  - Facebook page

# Case Study Method: An Example

- **Why did Margot in the Royal Tannenbaums become a playwright?**
- **Data sources**
  - School grades
  - Diaries, journals
  - Plays
  - Family history (e.g., divorce, sibling relationships, adoption)

# Case Study Method

- **Advantages**

- Rich source of hypotheses
- Allows for studies of rare behaviors

- **Disadvantages**

- Observer bias
- Difficult to generalize
- Difficult to reconstruct causes from complexity of past events

# Using LOTS of data

- **Example: Shyness**

# Measuring Shyness

- **Self-Report Questionnaires**

## ITEMS ON SHYNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

“I feel tense when I’ m with people I don’ t know well.”

“I find it difficult to talk to strangers.”

“I have trouble looking someone right in the eye.”

“I am socially somewhat awkward.”

# Measuring Shyness through Observation:

- **Paces; shuffles feet; knees tremble**
- **Extraneous arm and hand movement**
- **No eye contact**
- **Face muscles tense**
- **Moistens lips**
- **Clears throat**
- **Breathes heavily**
- **Perspires**
- **Voice quivers; speech stammers**

# Measuring Shyness

- **Test Measures**

- Psychophysiology

- Heart rate, skin conductance, etc.
    - Cortisol levels

- Brain imaging

- Response to novel stimuli
    - Right brain activation

- Behavioral

- Walking in the middle vs. side of hallway

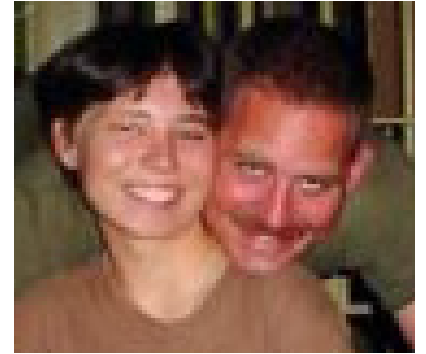


# Measuring Shyness

## – Life records data

- # of social clubs joined
- # of dates in the past year
- Attended school reunion

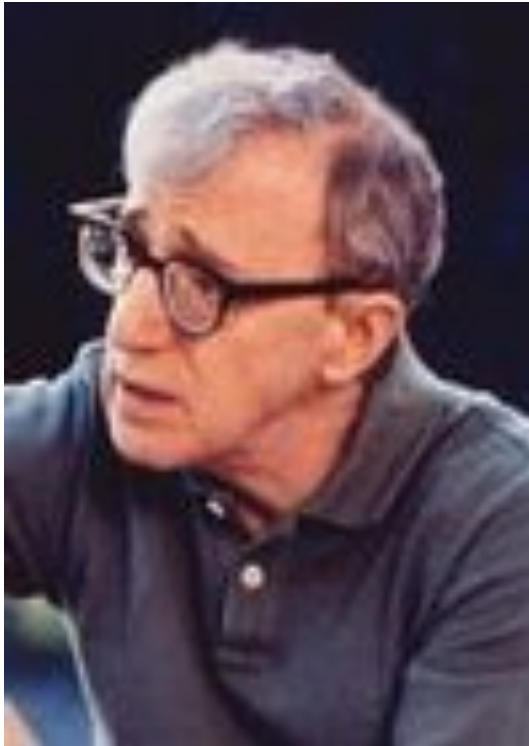
# Example: Using LOTS of data to understand Chuck Graner



- **L-data: Life records**
  - Employment records at prison; court records related to spousal abuse
- **O-data: Observer data**
  - Ratings by Graner's ex-spouse, other prison guards, military supervisor's, his parents, etc.
- **T-data: Test data**
  - IQ scores
  - Brain imaging and other physiological measures
- **S-data: Self-report data**
  - Personality tests completed when he entered the military

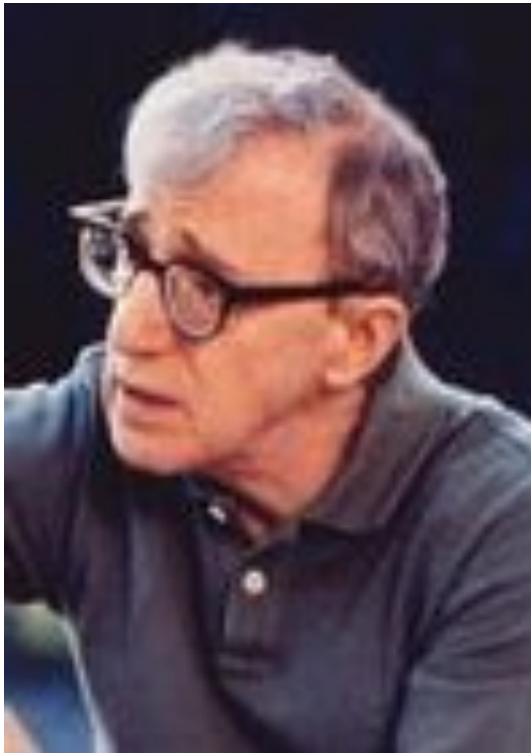
# Which Method to Use?

- Who is more extraverted?



# Which Method?

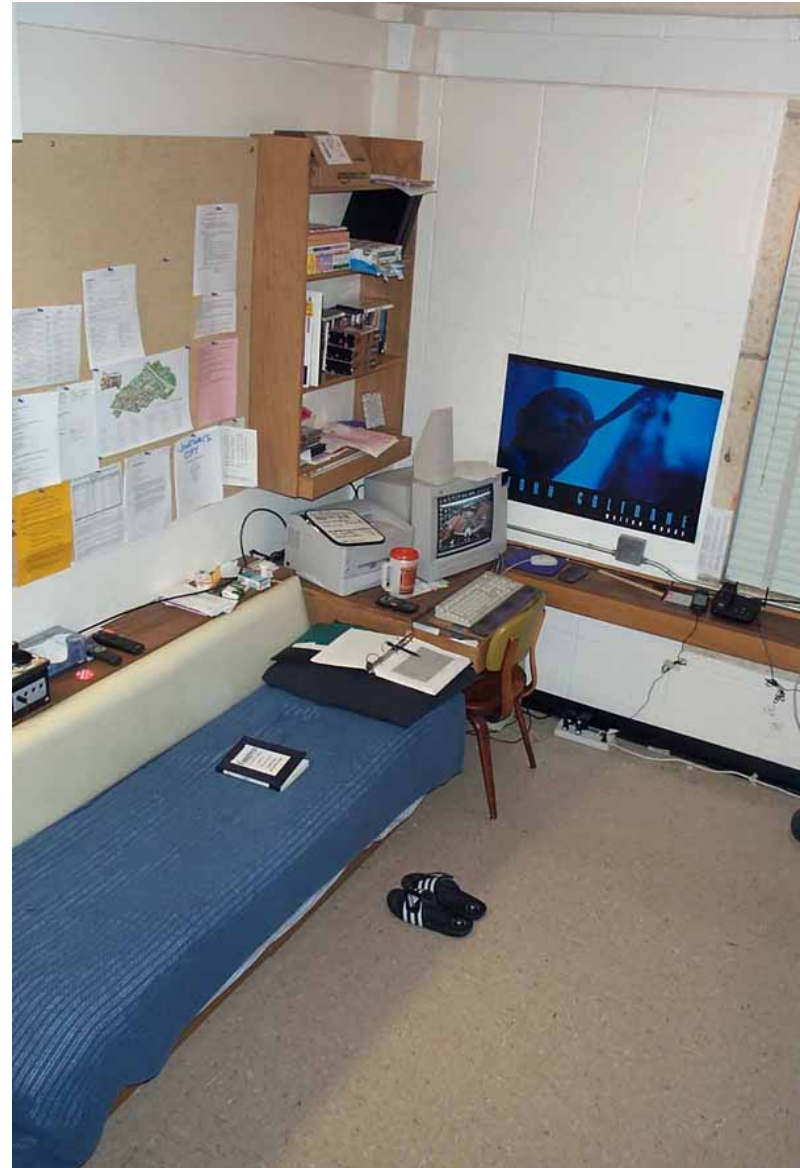
- Who is more conscientious?



# Which Method?

- **Some traits are more easily judged by observers**
  - E.g., extraversion
- **Other traits require other methods**
  - Dorm room study
    - Which traits could you best judge by seeing someone's dorm room?

# How would you rate these people's personalities?



# Dorm Room Study Results

- **Which traits are easiest to rate from observing a dorm room?**
- **Observers were most accurate in rating**
  - Openness to Experience
  - Conscientiousness
  - Extraversion
  
  - (based on correlations with self ratings and ratings by two close peers)

# Evaluating Personality Measures



# Evaluating Personality Measures

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## Reliability

Extent to which scores on the measure are stable and replicable, vs. amount of error or randomness in the measure

# Measuring Reliability

- **Test-retest reliability**
  - Are scores highly correlated across 2 testing times?
- **Internal consistency reliability**
  - How do the items on a single measure “hang together”?
    - Do all items measure the same construct?
  - Correlation among the items
- **Inter-rater reliability**
  - For O-Data only
  - Do multiple observers agree?

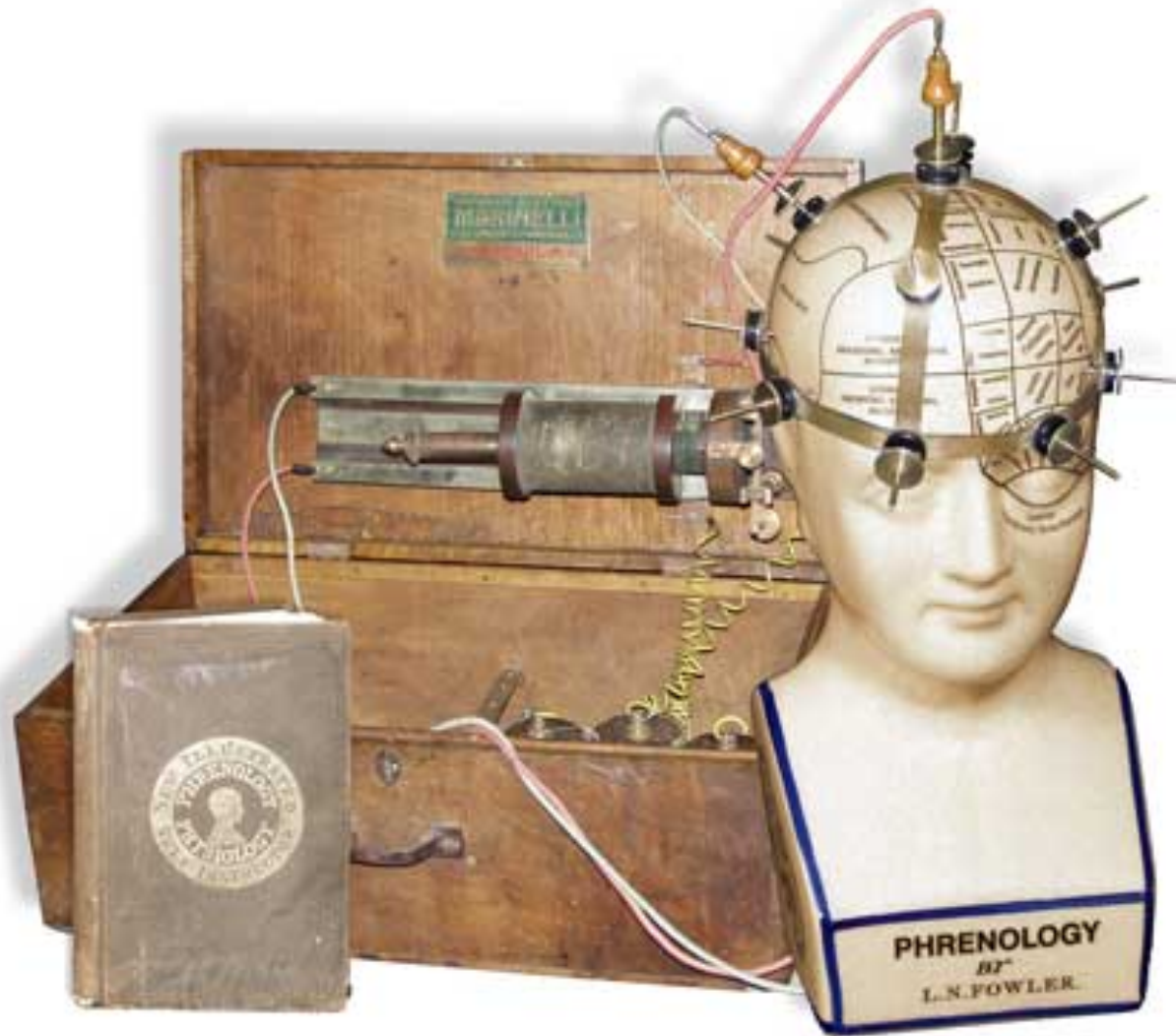
# Evaluating Personality Measures

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## Validity

- Degree to which measure *assesses what it is supposed to assess*
- Bulls eye analogy
  - Reliability = are you hitting the same spot each time?
  - Validity = are you actually hitting the bulls eye?

# Reliable but not Valid



# Measuring Validity

- **Face validity**
  - Does it measure what you think it measures?
- **Predictive validity**
  - Does it predict an external criterion?
- **Convergent validity**
  - Relation to other measures of same variable
- **Construct validity**
  - All of the above

# Inter-rater Reliability and Validity

## An Example: Measuring Height (without a ruler)

- **How tall am I?**
- **Reliability of ratings of height**
  - Average correlation between two judges = .76
  - Reliability of 5 judges is about .90
- **Validity is high**
  - Individual judges correlated .71 to .86 with actual height
  - Mean of 6 judges correlated .90 with actual height
  - If measures are more reliable, they provide a more valid assessment!
  - By combining the judgments of multiple people (or using multiple items on a personality test) we can get fairly reliable and valid measures of personality (reliabilities about .80-.90)

# Next Class

- **Freud's model of personality**