



A

B

C



A

B

C



A

B

C



A

B

C

*Asch, 1951*

# How many of you own something from one of these companies?



# Fads



# Lecture 10

## Social Influence



# Social Influence

Have you ever:

Asked a friend what was appropriate to wear to a dinner, party, or wedding?

Agreed to buy something you didn't want?

Agreed to attend a social event because someone else asked you to?

Changed your behavior in response to a direct order from a police officer, parent, teacher, or school official?

# Outline

Categories of Social Influence:  
Conformity, Compliance, and  
Obedience

Goals of Social Influence:

Choosing Correctly

Gaining Social Approval

Being Consistent with Commitments

# Social Influence

*Social influence* –  
a change in overt  
behavior caused  
by real or  
imagined  
pressure from  
others



"All those in favor say 'aye'."

"Aye."

"Aye."

"Aye."

"Aye."

"Aye."

# Categories of Social Influence

*Conformity* –

changing one's behavior to match the responses or actions of others (no pressure necessarily)

# Categories of Social Influence

*Compliance* –

changing one's behavior in response  
to a direct request

# Categories of Social Influence

*Obedience* –

changing one's behavior in response to a directive from an authority figure

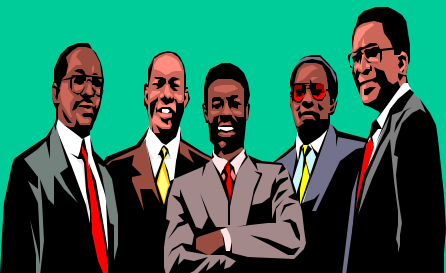
# Definitions

Conformity

Compliance

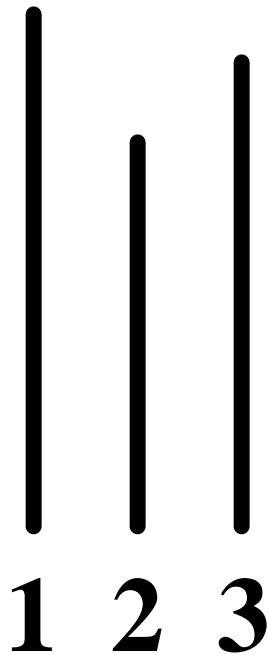
Obedience

Increasing pressure on the individual



# Conformity: Asch's Research on Group Influence

Which of the lines on the left most closely matches line A on the right?



What would you say if you were in a group of 6 others, and all agreed the answer was 3?



The unsuspecting subject (second from right) must

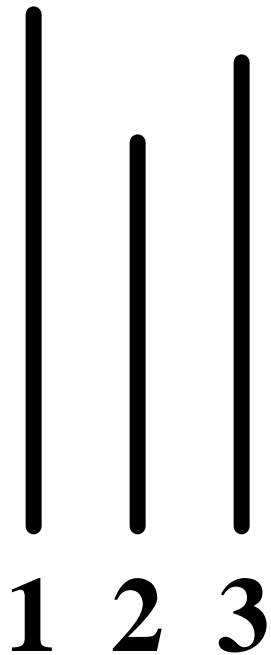


decide whether to go along with the incorrect group, or, to trust his senses and break the majority.



# Conformity: Asch's Research on Group Influence

When alone, 95% of participants got all the answers correct.



But 75% went against their own eyes at least once if the group gave a wrong answer.



# Conformity: Asch's Research on Group Influence

Conclusion: People faced with strong group consensus sometimes go along even though they think the others may be wrong.

# Compliance: The “Foot-in-the-Door” Technique

*Foot-in-the-door technique* –  
a technique which increases compliance with a large request by first getting compliance with a smaller, related request

# Compliance: The “Foot-in-the-Door” Technique

## Example:

People are first asked to wear a tiny button supporting a worthy cause;

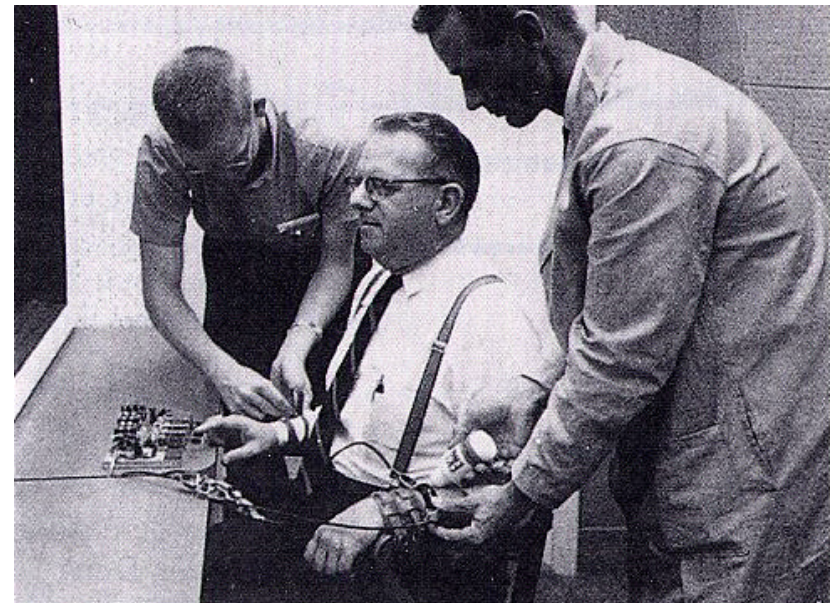
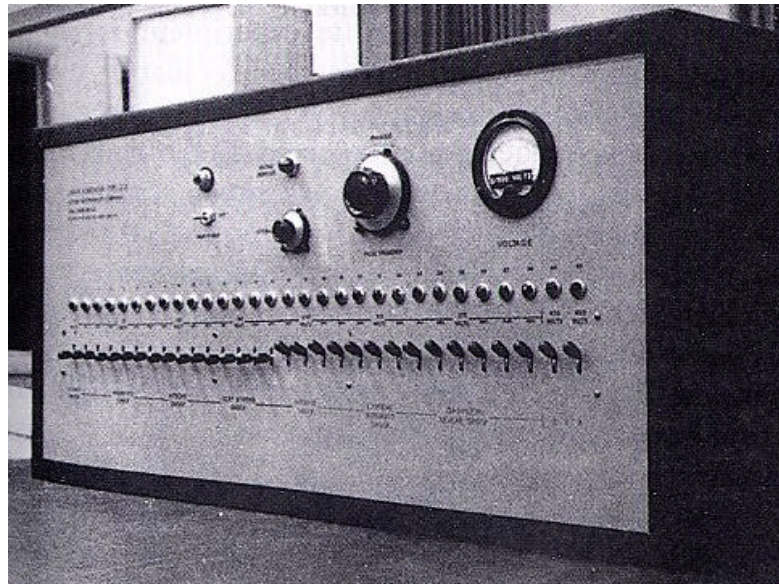
Later they are asked to put a billboard on their lawn.

# Obedience: Milgram's Shock(ing) Procedure

What would you do if an experimenter studying “the effects of punishment on memory” asked you to deliver painful electric shocks to a fellow participant?

What if the other participant was a middle-aged man who had been treated for a heart condition?

Stanley Milgram wanted to know if these acts were the product of deranged individuals, or, if under the right circumstances just about anyone might act with aggression when ordered to do so.



## TRANSCRIPT OF LEARNER'S PROTESTS IN MILGRAM'S OBEDIENCE

75 volts Ugh!

90 volts Ugh!

105 volts Ugh! (louder)

120 volts Ugh! Hey this really hurts.

135 volts Ugh!!

150 volts Ugh!!! Experimenter! That's all. Get me out of here. I told you I had heart trouble. My heart's starting to bother me now. Get me out of here, please. My heart's starting to bother me. I refuse to go on. Let me out.

165 volts Ugh! Let me out! (shouting)

180 volts Ugh! I can't stand the pain. Let me out of here! (shouting)

195 volts Ugh! Let me out of here. Let me out of here. My heart's bothering me. Let me out of here! You have no right to keep me here! Let me out! Let me out of here! Let me out! Let me out of here! My heart's bothering me. Let me out! Let me out!

210 volts Ugh!! Experimenter! Get me out of here. I've had enough. I won't be in the experiment any more.

225 volts Ugh!

240 volts Ugh!

255 volts Ugh! Get me out of here.

270 volts (Agonized scream) Let me out of here. Let me out of here. Let me out of here. Let me out. Do you hear? Let me out of here.

285 volts (Agonized scream)

300 volts (Agonized scream) I absolutely refuse to answer any more. Get me out of here. You can't hold me here. Get me out. Get me out of here.

315 volts (Intensely agonized scream) I told you I refuse to answer. I'm no longer part of this experiment.

330 volts (Intense and prolonged agonized scream) Let me out of here. Let me out of here. My heart's bothering me. Let me out, I tell you. (Hysterically) Let me out of here. Let me out of here. You have no right to hold me here. Let me out! Let me out! Let me out of here! Let me out!

### Instructions used by Experimenter to Achieve Obedience

Prod 1: Please continue. *or* Please go on.

Prod 2: The experiment requires that you continue.

Prod 3: It is absolutely essential that you continue.

Prod 4: You have no other choice; you must go on.

The prods were always made in sequence:

Only if prod 1 had been unsuccessful could prod 2 be used. If the subject refused to obey the experimenter after prod 4, the experiment was terminated. The experimenter's tone of voice was at all times firm, but not impolite. The sequence was begun anew on each occasion that the subject balked or showed reluctance to follow orders.

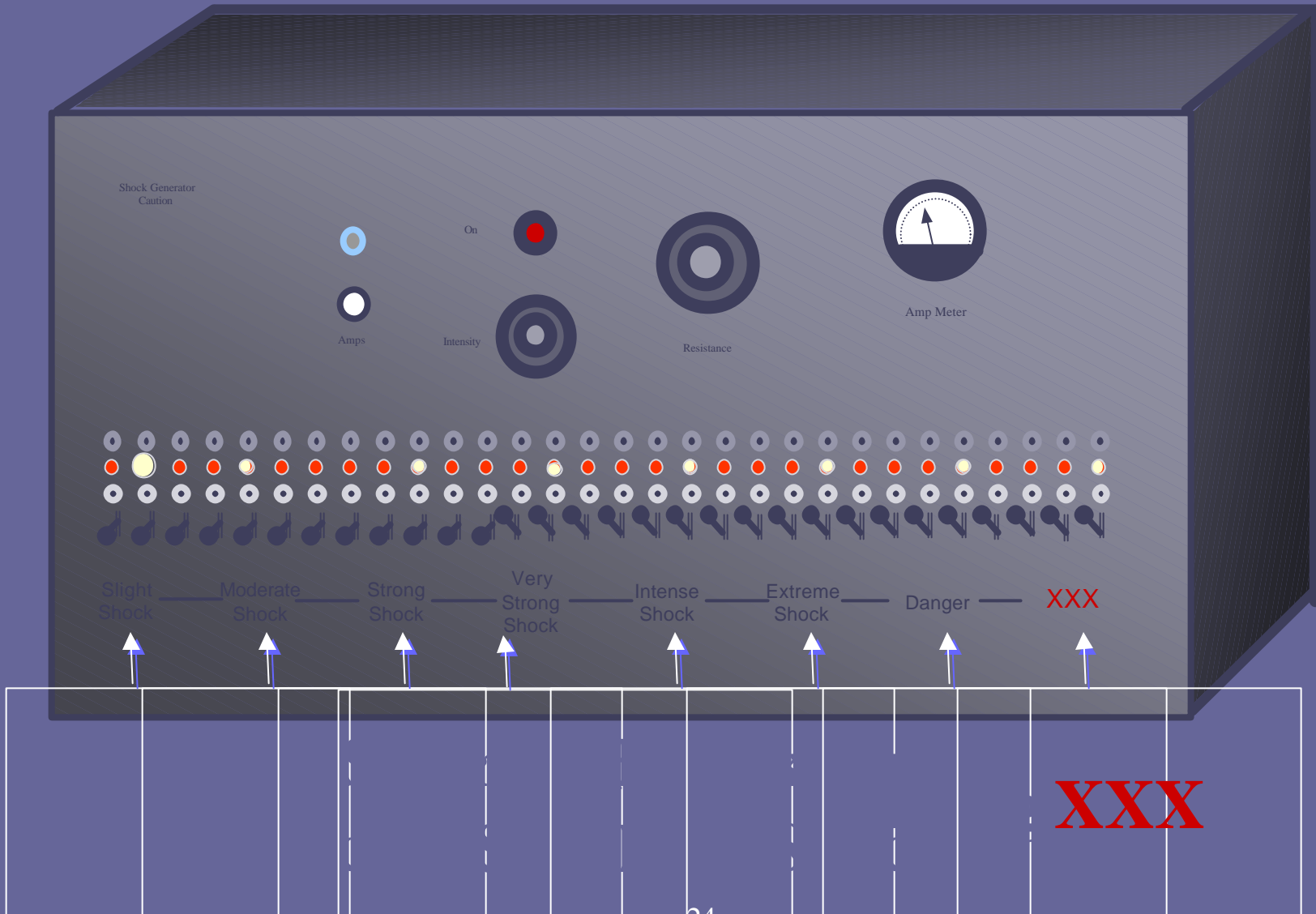
Special prods. If the subject asked whether the learner was likely to suffer permanent physical injury, the experimenter said:

Although the shocks may be painful, there is no permanent tissue damage, so please go on. [Followed by prods 2, 3, and 4 if necessary.]

If the subject said that the learner did not want to go on, the experimenter replied: Whether the learner likes it or not, you must go on until he has learned all the word pairs correctly. So please go on. [Followed by prods 2, 3, and 4 if necessary.]



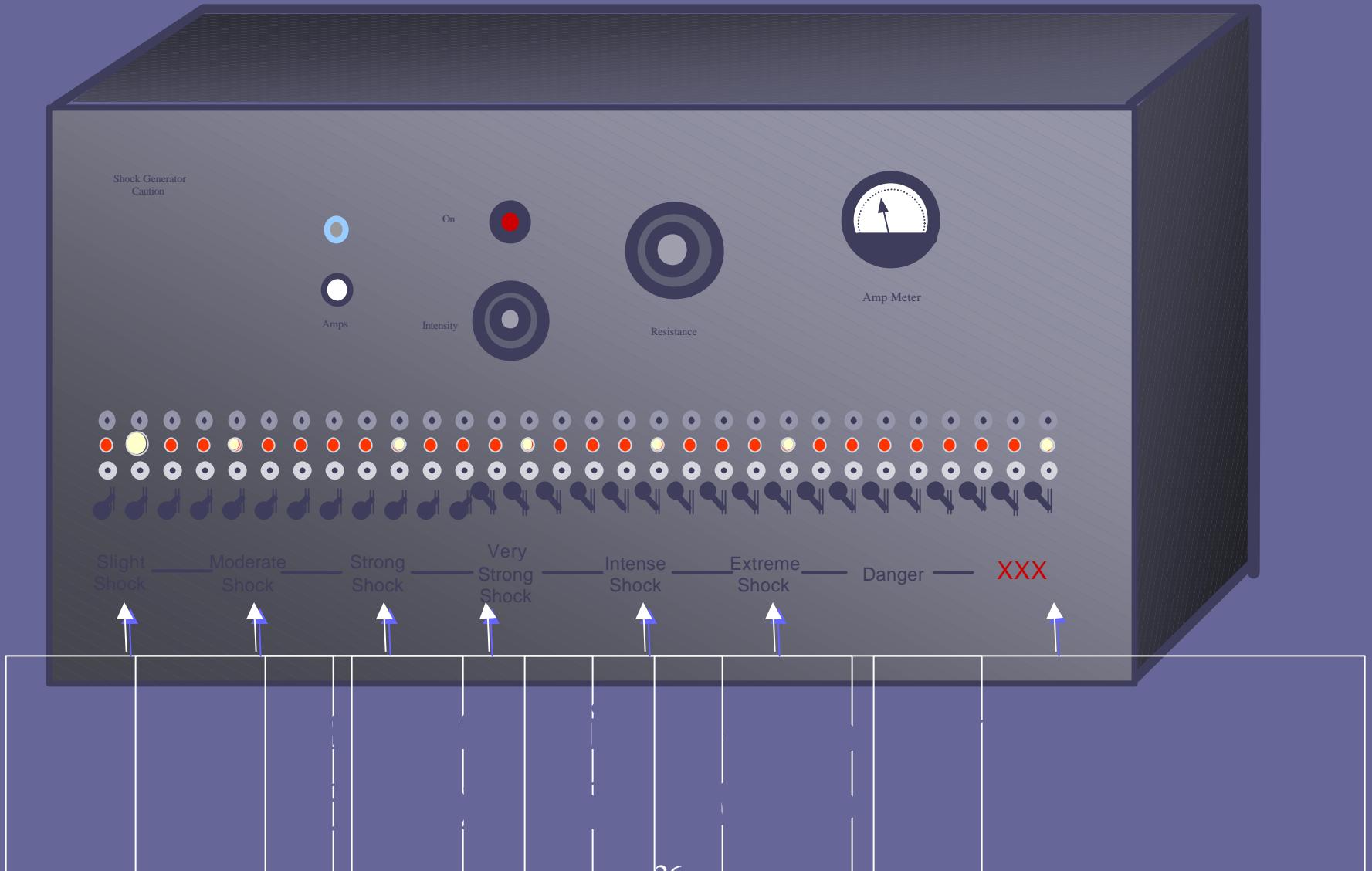
# Milgram's Shock Generator





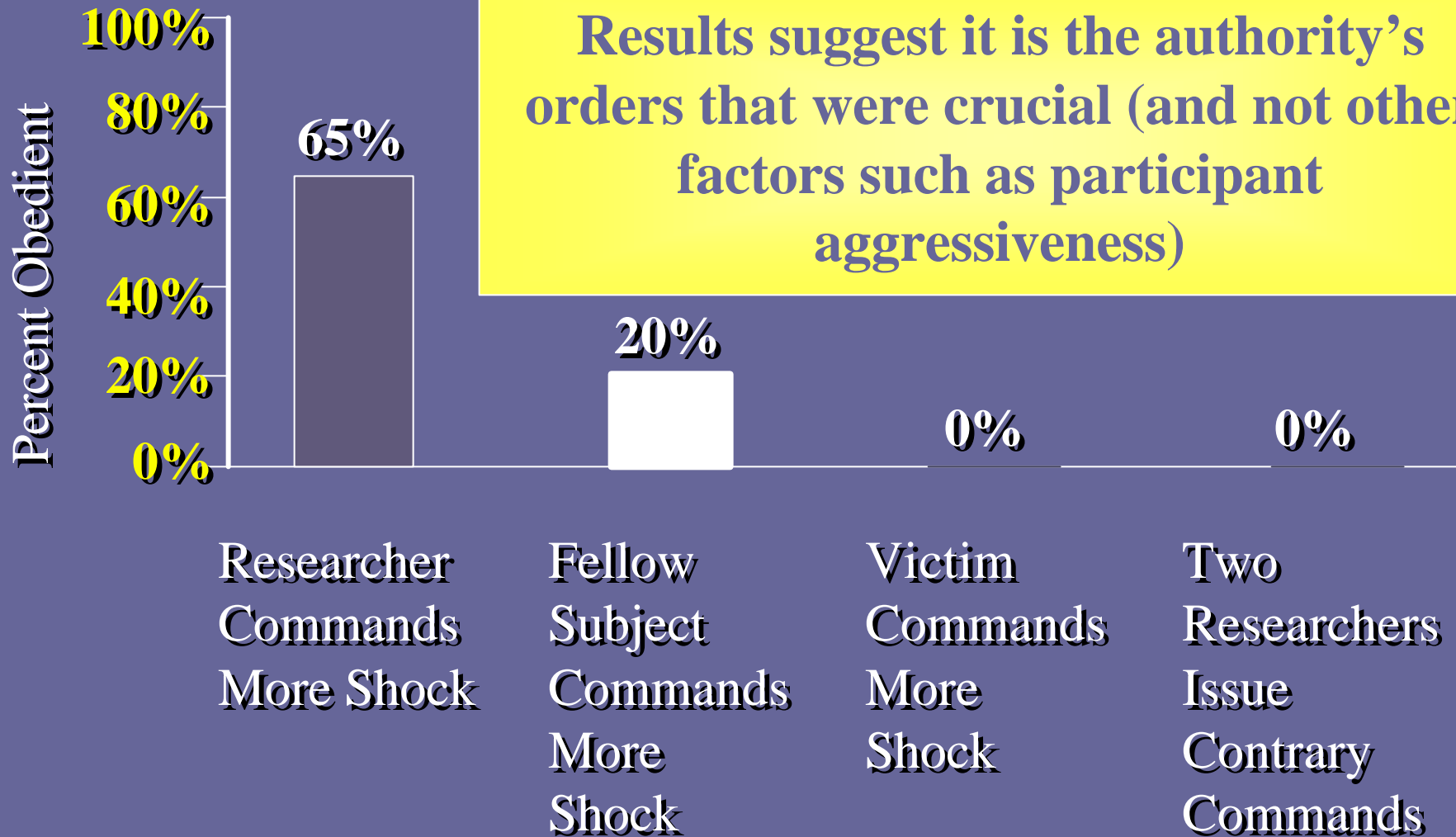


# How Many Obeyed?

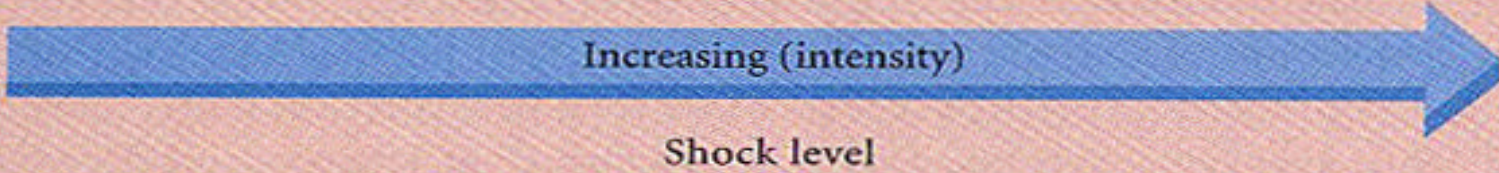
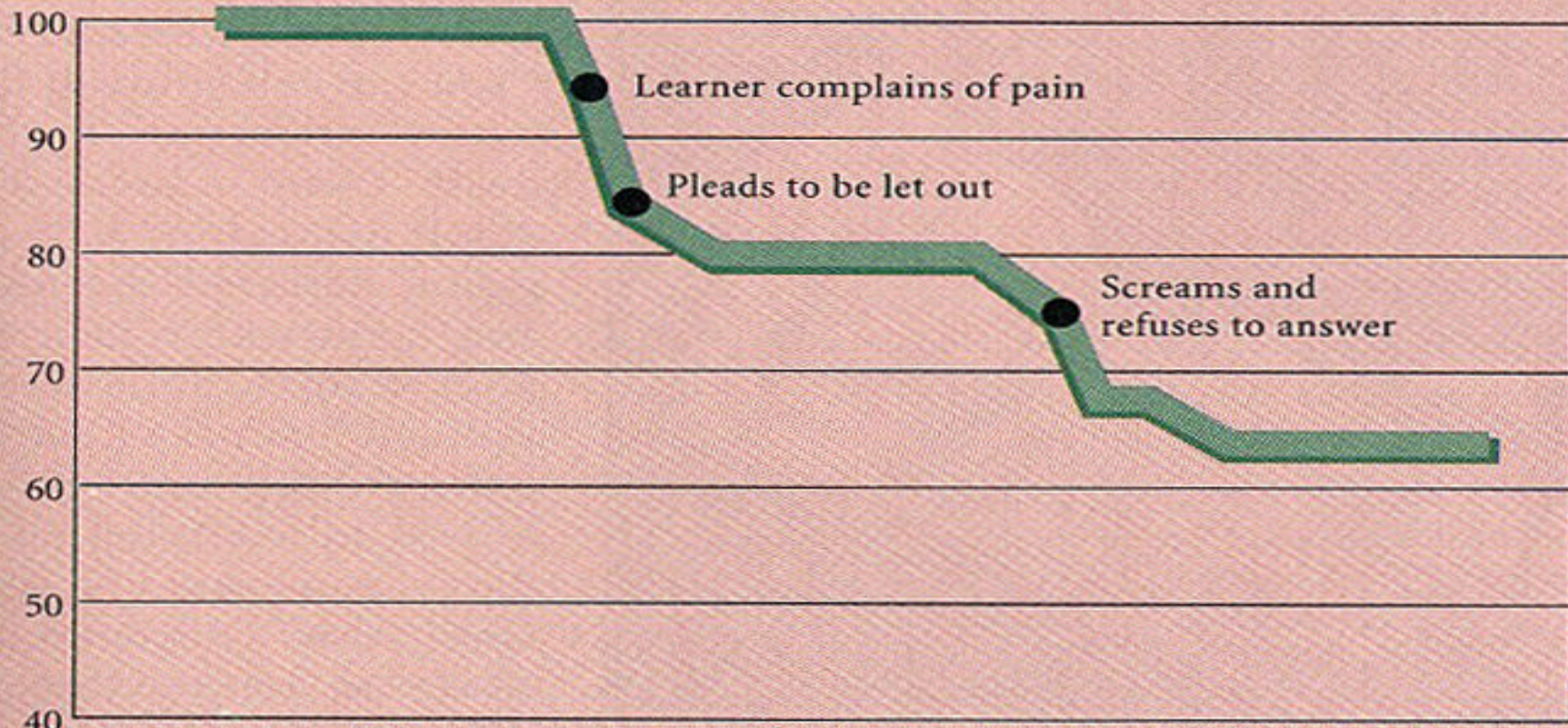


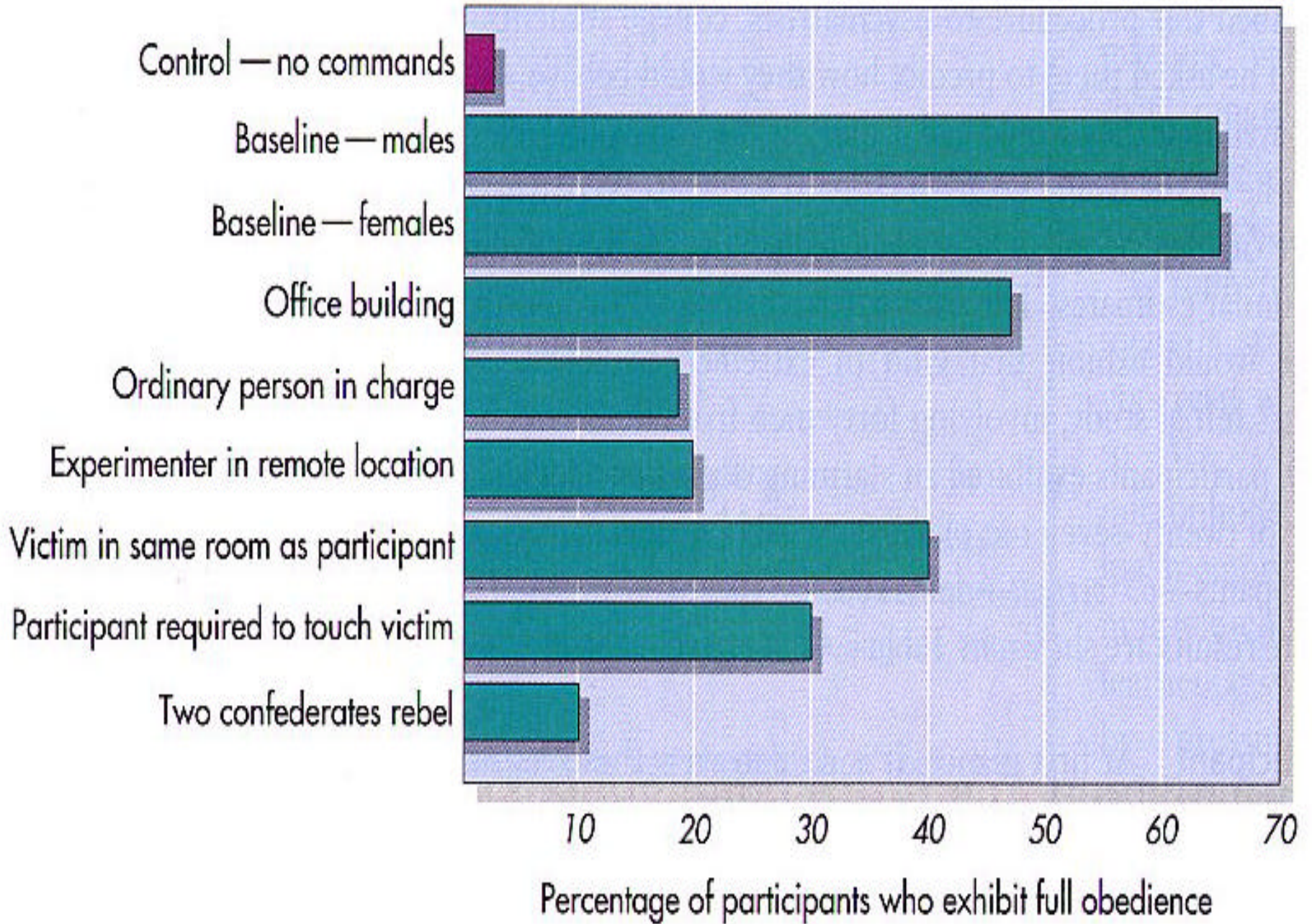


# Obedience To Authority



Percent of subjects still obedient





Couldn't happen again?



Jonestown

My Lai



# The Goals of Social Influence

People yield to social influence to achieve one or more of three basic goals:

To choose correctly (Make decisions)

To gain social approval

# Choosing Correctly

We have a motive for competence (to master our environments for rewards and resources). In other words, we want to make good decisions.

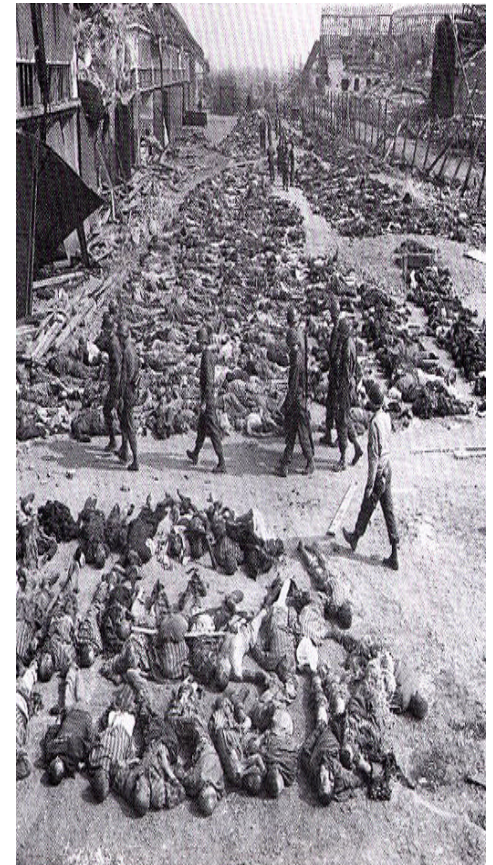
To be competent, we must make correct choices.

# Authority

Authority figures can be very influential because they are often experts.

Following their directions can provide a shortcut to choosing correctly.

*Expert power* –  
the capacity to influence that flows from one's presumed wisdom or knowledge



# Social Validation

*Social validation* –

an interpersonal way to locate and validate the correct choice

People frequently look to the behavior of similar others for social validation.

The larger the number of people performing the behavior, the more persuasive it is.



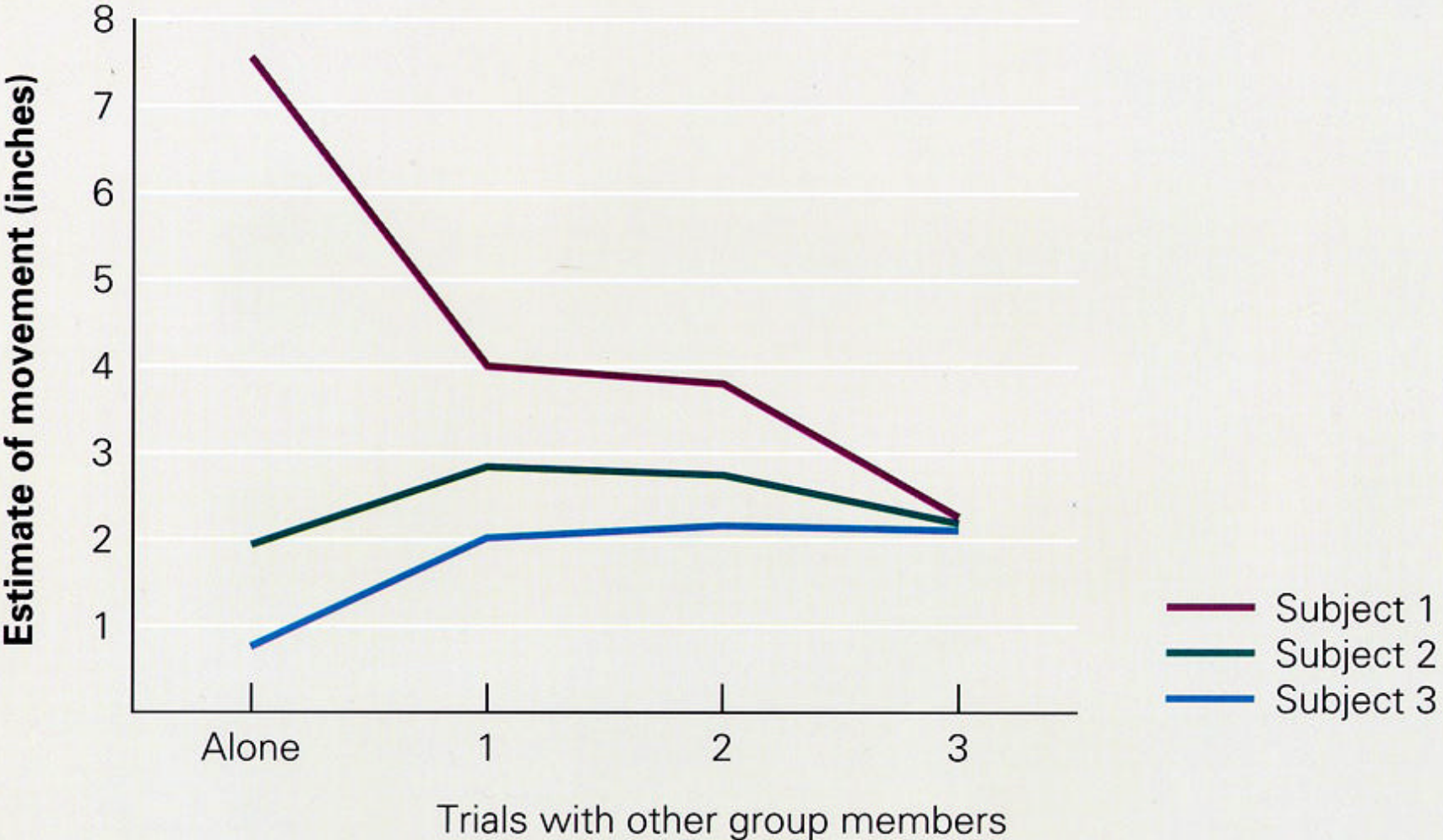
# Uncertainty

In ambiguous situations, people tend to rely on information provided by others.

Sherif asked students to judge the apparent movement of a stationary light on a wall (autokinetic effect).

Judgments were strongly influenced by what other group members said.

Sherif found that diverse judgments converged in a group and that the group norm persisted when new members joined.

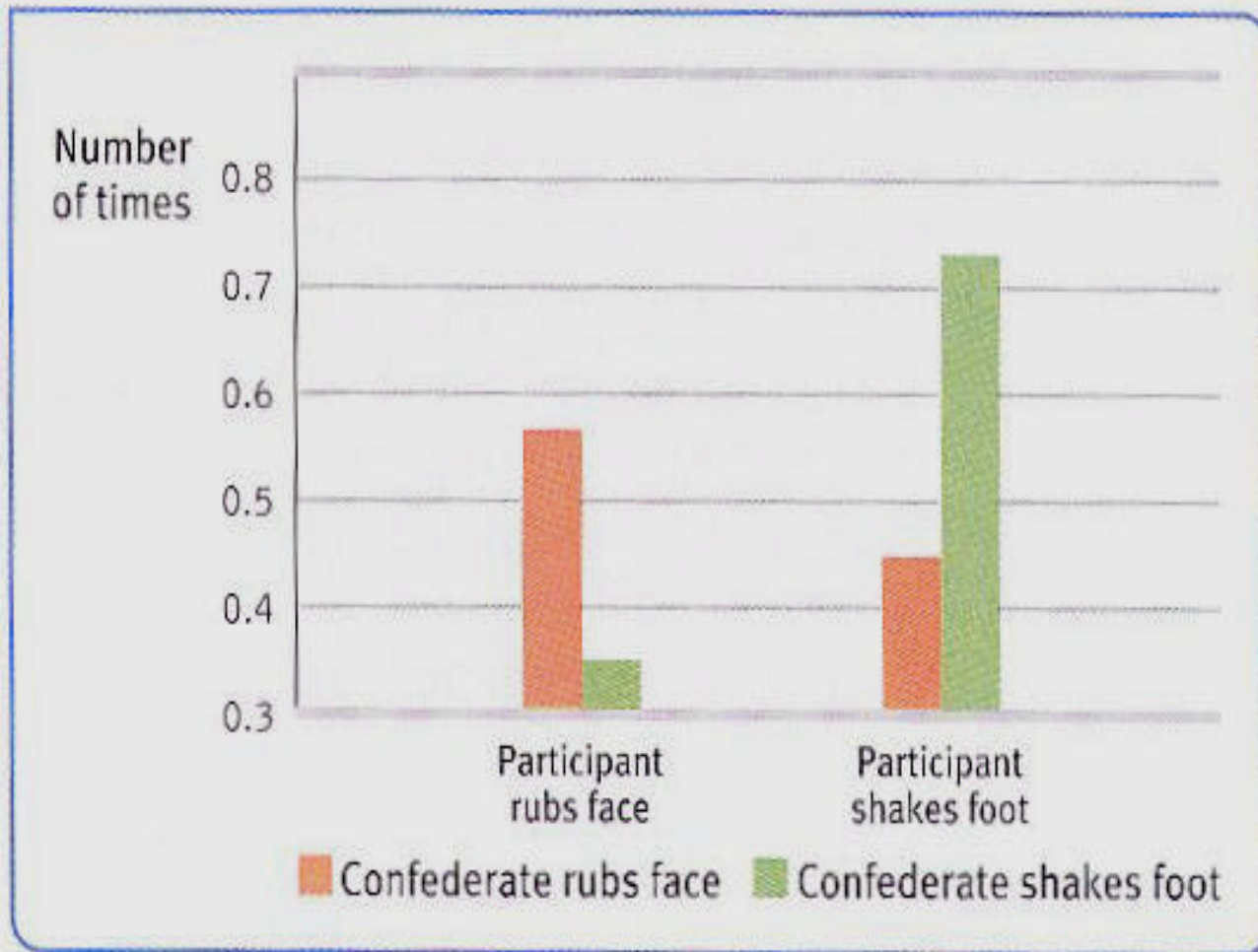


# IMPORTANT COMPARISONS

**Sherif** used the autokinetic effect to determine if norms would develop in a group and then persist as group membership changed.

**Asch** used line judgments to determine if characteristics of the group would affect conformity to an emerging norm.

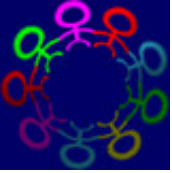
# Does imitating others simply “spill over” into other aspect of life?



**FIGURE 18.4**

## **The chameleon effect**

When with a face-rubbing or foot-shaking confederate, participants tended to likewise rub their face or shake their foot. (Data from Chartrand & Bargh, 1999.)

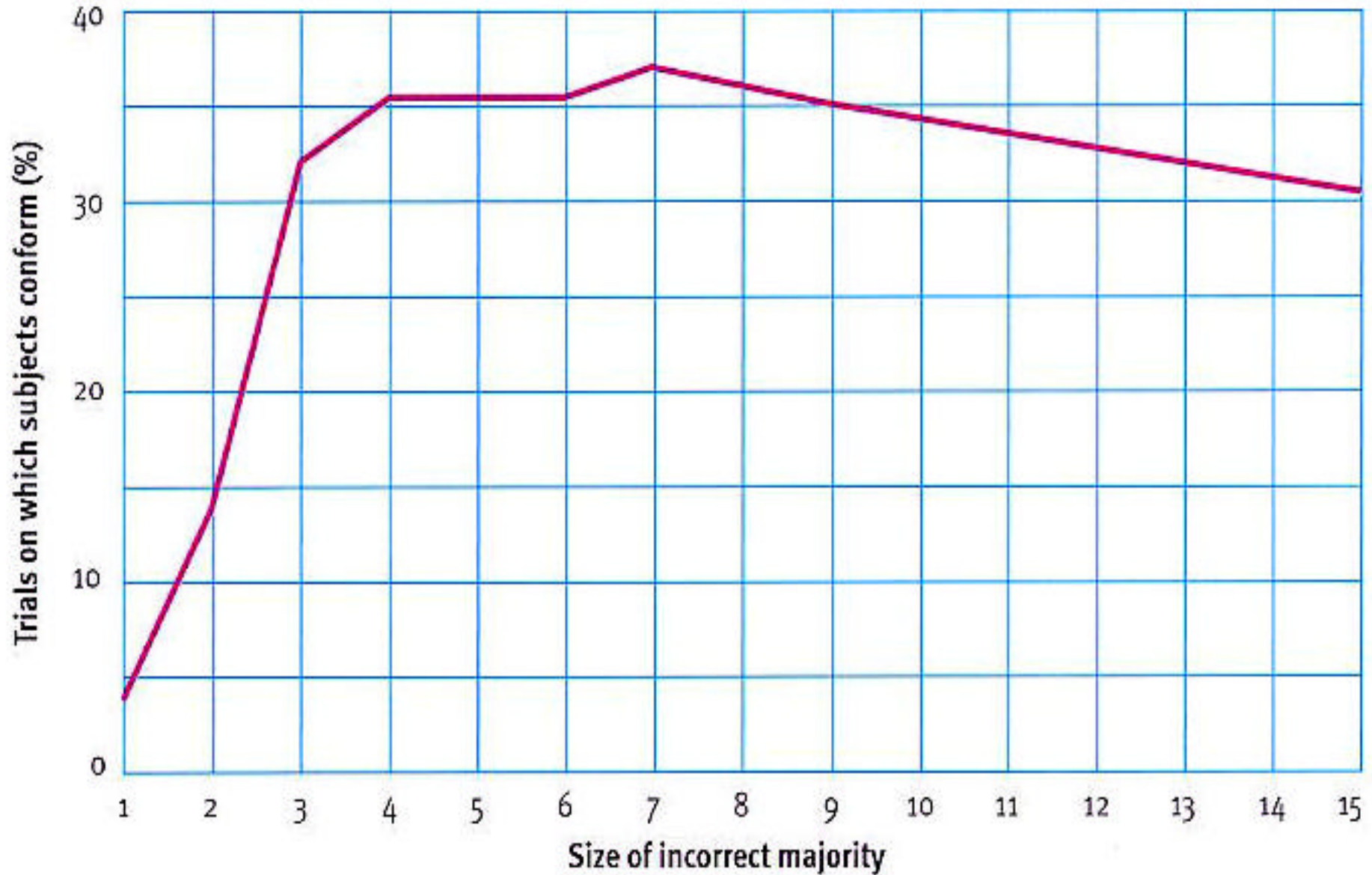


# Consensus

We are especially likely to follow the behavior of others when:

there is strong consensus among the others (example: a large group all agrees that the shorter line is the longest one)

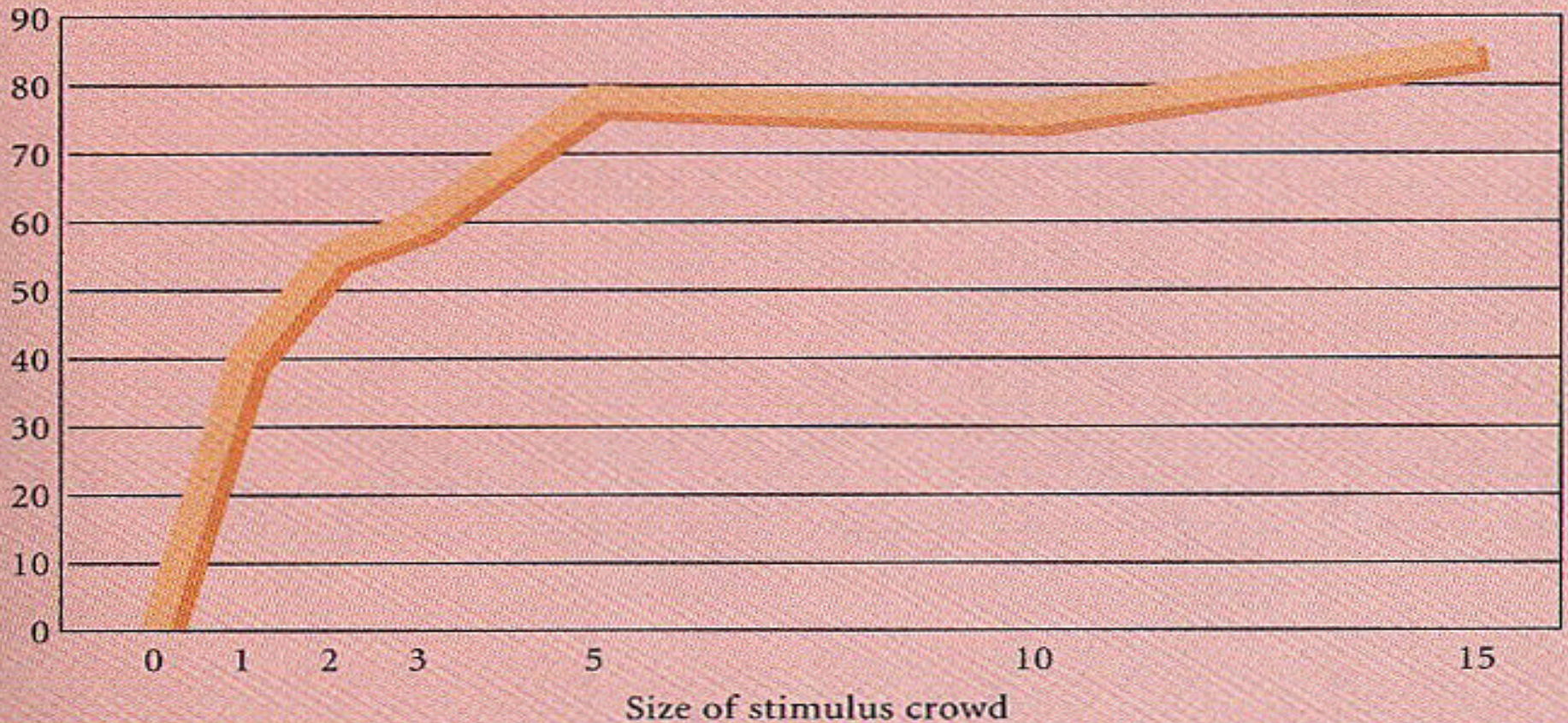
# Group size and Conformity

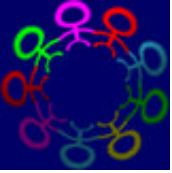


Stand on a street corner and look up . . .

The more “models”, the greater proportion of individuals that conform.

Percent passersby





# Similarity

We are especially likely to follow the behavior of others when:

the others are highly similar to us

Example: “copycat” suicides involve individuals similar in age and sex to the victim in highly publicized cases.

# Gaining Social Approval

Sometimes being factually correct may make us unpopular.

Groups put strong pressure on those with deviant positions.

# Social Norms: Codes of Conduct

*Descriptive norms* –

norms that define what behaviors are typically performed

Example: Most college students dress casually for classes.

# Social Norms: Codes of Conduct

*Injunctive norms* –

norms that define what behaviors are typically approved or disapproved

Example: It is inappropriate to wear a bathing suit to most classes.

# Social Norms: Codes of Conduct

*Norm of reciprocity* –

the norm that requires that we repay others with the form of behavior they have given us

# Social Norms: Codes of Conduct

The *door-in-the-face technique* works by asking for a large favor and then retreating to a smaller favor.

This second request is typically accepted because the concession seems like a favor.

Thus, this technique capitalizes on the reciprocity norm.

# Social Norms: Codes of Conduct

The *that's-not-all technique* works by making an initial offer, and then just before the target responds, enhancing the offer.

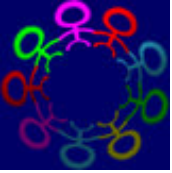
The enhancement is designed to seem like a favor, and capitalize on reciprocity.



# Desire for Approval

Certain individuals are very concerned with social approval and seem highly motivated to gain the respect of those around them.

Researchers have found that these individuals tend to adopt the voice patterns of interaction partners.



# Others' Appeal

We are more likely to “go along to get along” when the person attempting to influence us is appealing due to

Physical attractiveness (good looking fundraisers generated 42% vs. 23%)

Shared group membership (“I’m a student too” doubles donations from students)

# Being Consistent With Commitments

Personal commitments tie an individual's identity (or self-image) to a position or course of action, making it more likely that he or she will follow through.

# Commitment-Initiating Tactics

The Foot-in-the-Door Technique

The Low-Ball Technique

The Bait and Switch Technique

# The Foot-in-the-Door Technique

Compliance with the initial request changes one's self-image to be consistent with that first favor.

It would be inconsistent with this image to refuse the second request.

## TACTIC

## FIRST STEP

## SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

**Labeling**

## TACTIC

## FIRST STEP

## SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Gain Target's Compliance With a Small Request**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

**Labeling**

*example:*

**“Would you sign a petition to help feed starving ex-CEOs of dot.coms?”**

## TACTIC

## FIRST STEP

## SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

**Labeling**

**Gain Target's Compliance With a Small Request**

**Would you sign a petition to help feed starving ex-CEOs of dot.coms?**

**Make A Related, Larger Request**

**“Would you work for 2 wks. in the CEO soup kitchen?”**

Experiment: housewives called and asked if they would answer a few questions about the kinds of soap they used. All agreed.

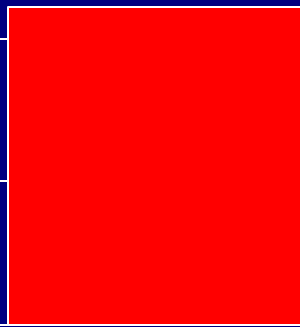
Several weeks later a second request was made: Would they allow a 5-6 man team to come out and inventory their household products, with the freedom to go through all closets and drawers (requiring two hours)?

% Agreeing to Second Request

60  
50  
40  
30  
20  
10  
0

Second Request Only

First and Second  
Requests



# The Low-Ball Technique

After making an active choice for something, people take “mental possession” of it and it becomes part of their self-concept.

It is often easier to continue with the commitment than to change the self-concept.

# TACTIC

# FIRST STEP

# SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

**Labeling**

**Get an Agreement to a Specific Arrangement**

**Get Customer to Agree to Buy a New Car for \$15,000**

## TACTIC

## FIRST STEP

## SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

**Labeling**

**Get an Agreement to a Specific Arrangement**

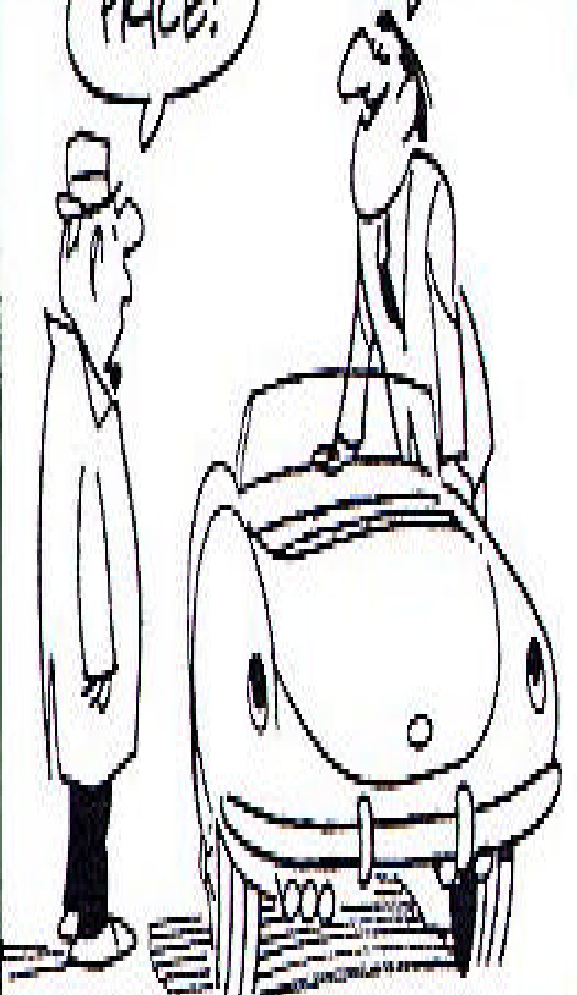
**Get Customer to Agree to Buy a New Car for \$15,000**

**Change The Terms of The Arrangement**

**“Oh, you wanted tires and seats? Then that’ll be \$15,999.”**

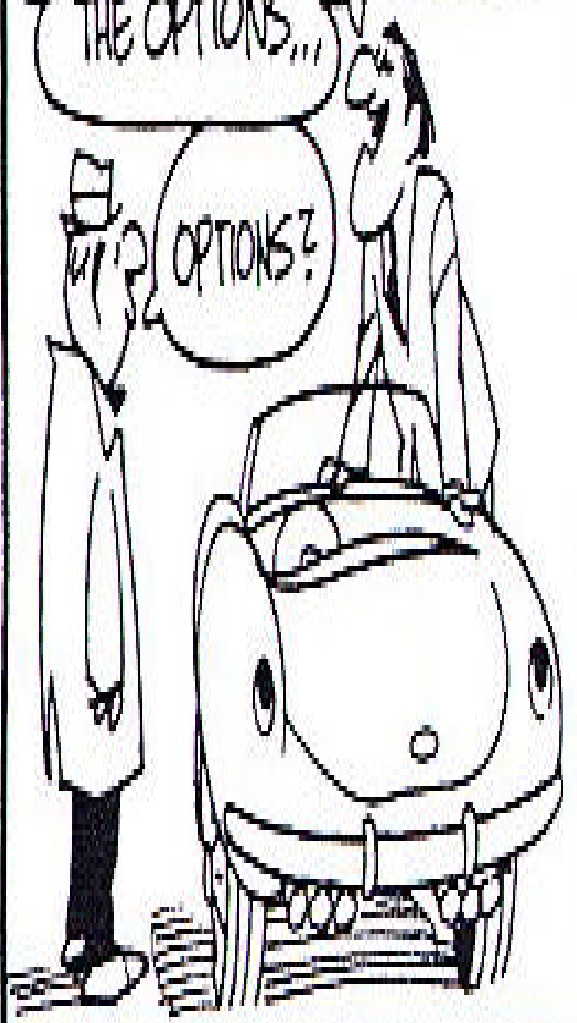
NOW, I CAN'T BELIEVE THE PRICE!

SHE IS A STEAL, ISN'T SHE!

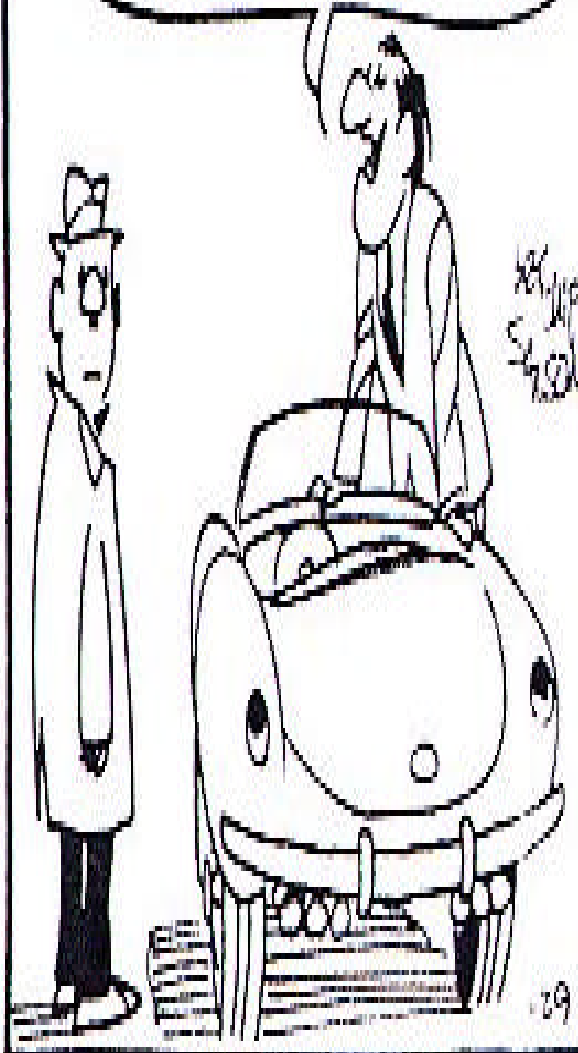


OF COURSE, YOU'LL PROBABLY WANT TO AVAIL YOURSELF OF SOME OF THE OPTIONS...

OPTIONS?



YOU KNOW, HEADLIGHTS, TIRES, BUMPERS... LIKE THAT...



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# The Bait and Switch Technique

The Bait and Switch gets people to accept a deal they would have dismissed if it had been offered first.

It works by getting people to make a commitment to a general course of action (e.g., buying a new stereo).

# TACTIC

# FIRST STEP

# SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

**Labeling**

**Advertise a Low Price on a New Stereo**

**Spur The Target to Take a Course of Action**

## TACTIC

## FIRST STEP

## SECOND STEP

**Foot-in-the-Door**

**Low-Ball**

**Bait and Switch**

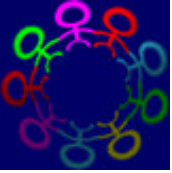
**Labeling**

**Advertise a Low Price on a New Stereo**

**Spur The Target to Take a Course of Action**

**“That stereo is junk, but just \$99 more buys this beauty!”**

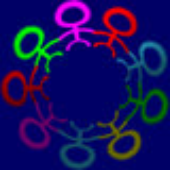
**Describe Course as Unwise, Suggest Alternative**



# Active and Public Commitments

One way people come to perceive and define themselves is through an examination of their actions.

Like active commitments, public commitments—especially when freely chosen—lead to consistent future behavior because they alter self-image.



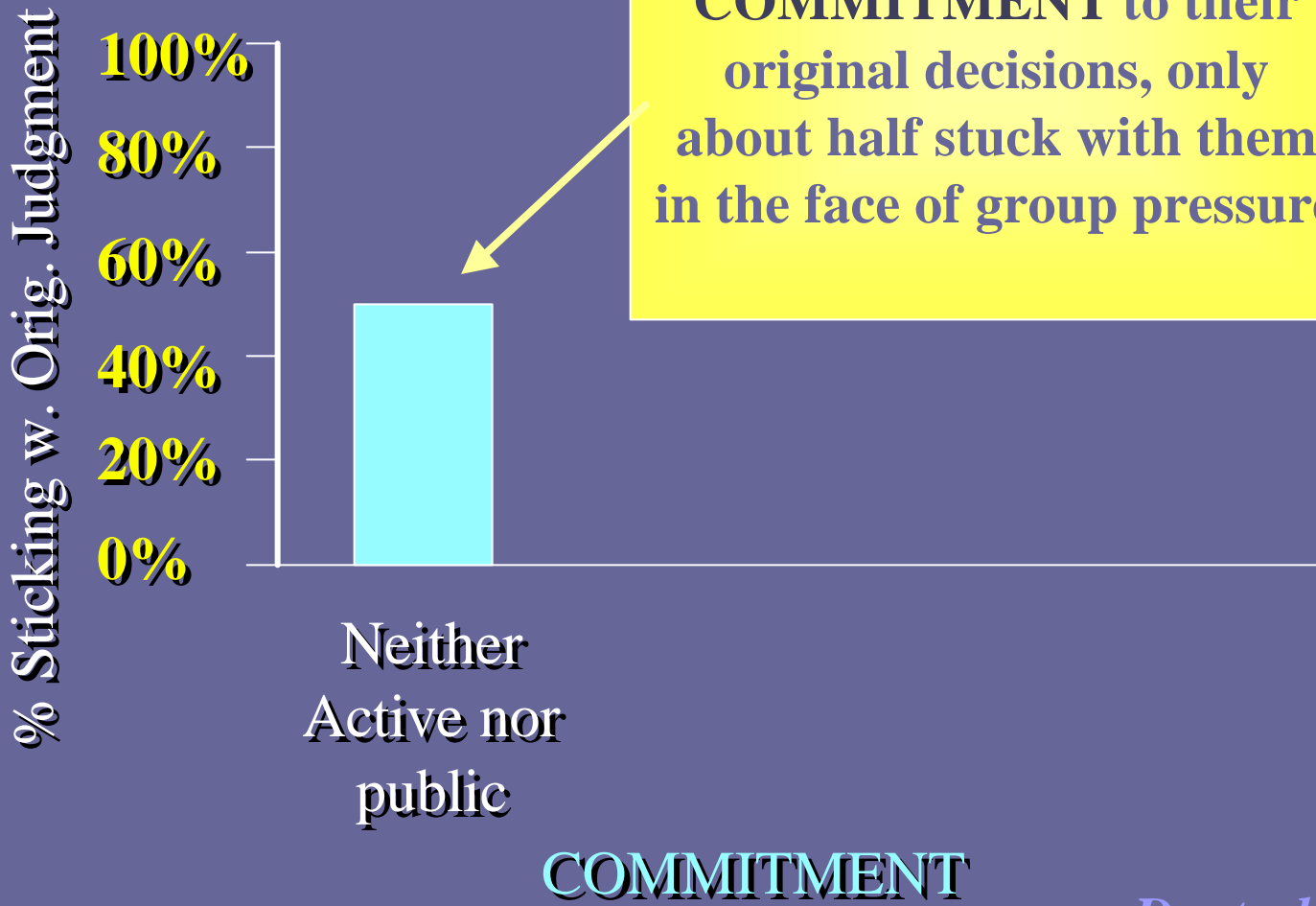
# Active and Public Commitments

Students in one experiment were asked to judge lines in an Asch-type experiment.

Before hearing group members make erroneous judgments,

Some privately wrote down their judgments  
(Active Commitment Only)

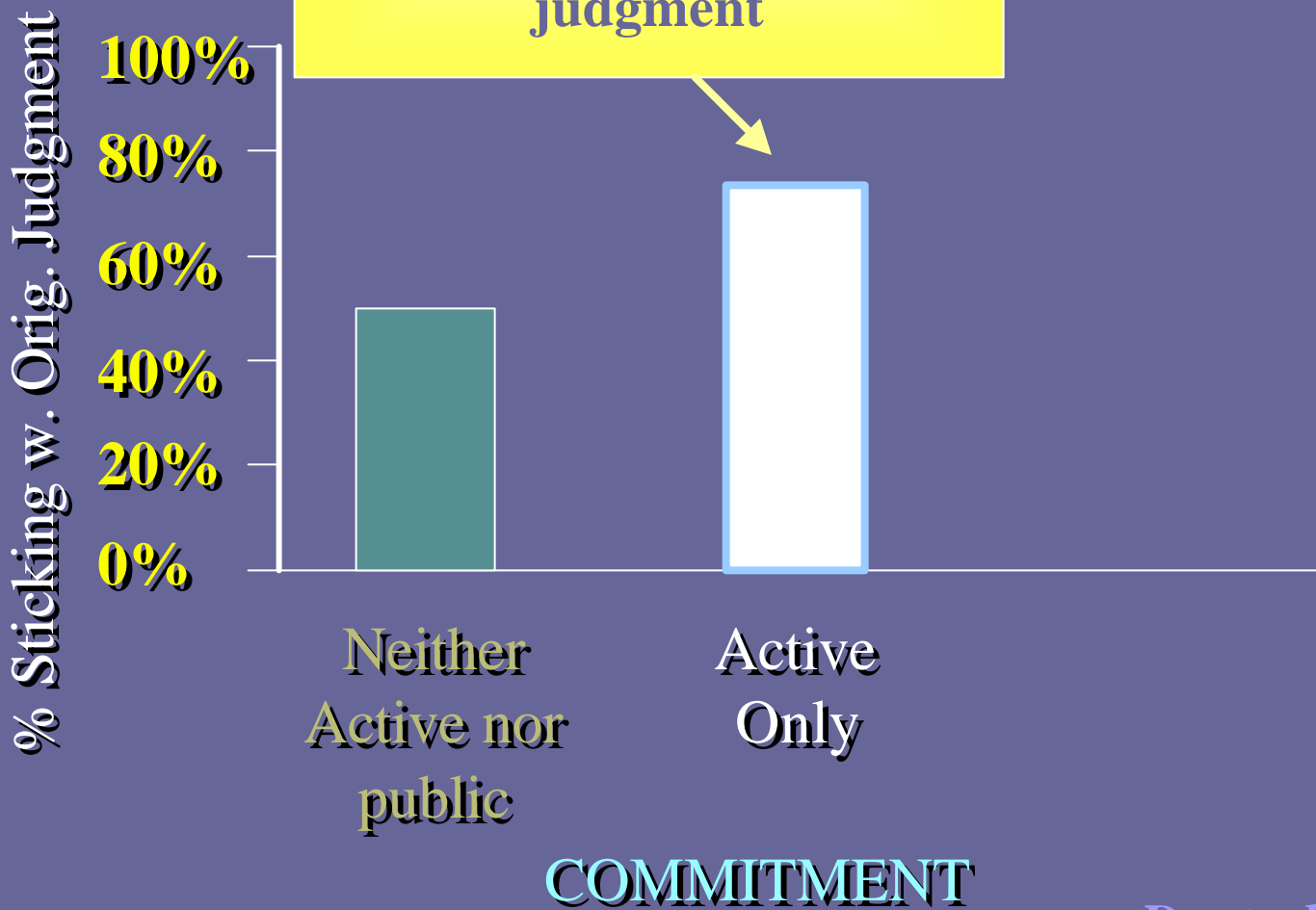
Others wrote their judgments and gave them to the experimenter (Active plus Public Commitment).



*Deutsch & Gerard, 1955*



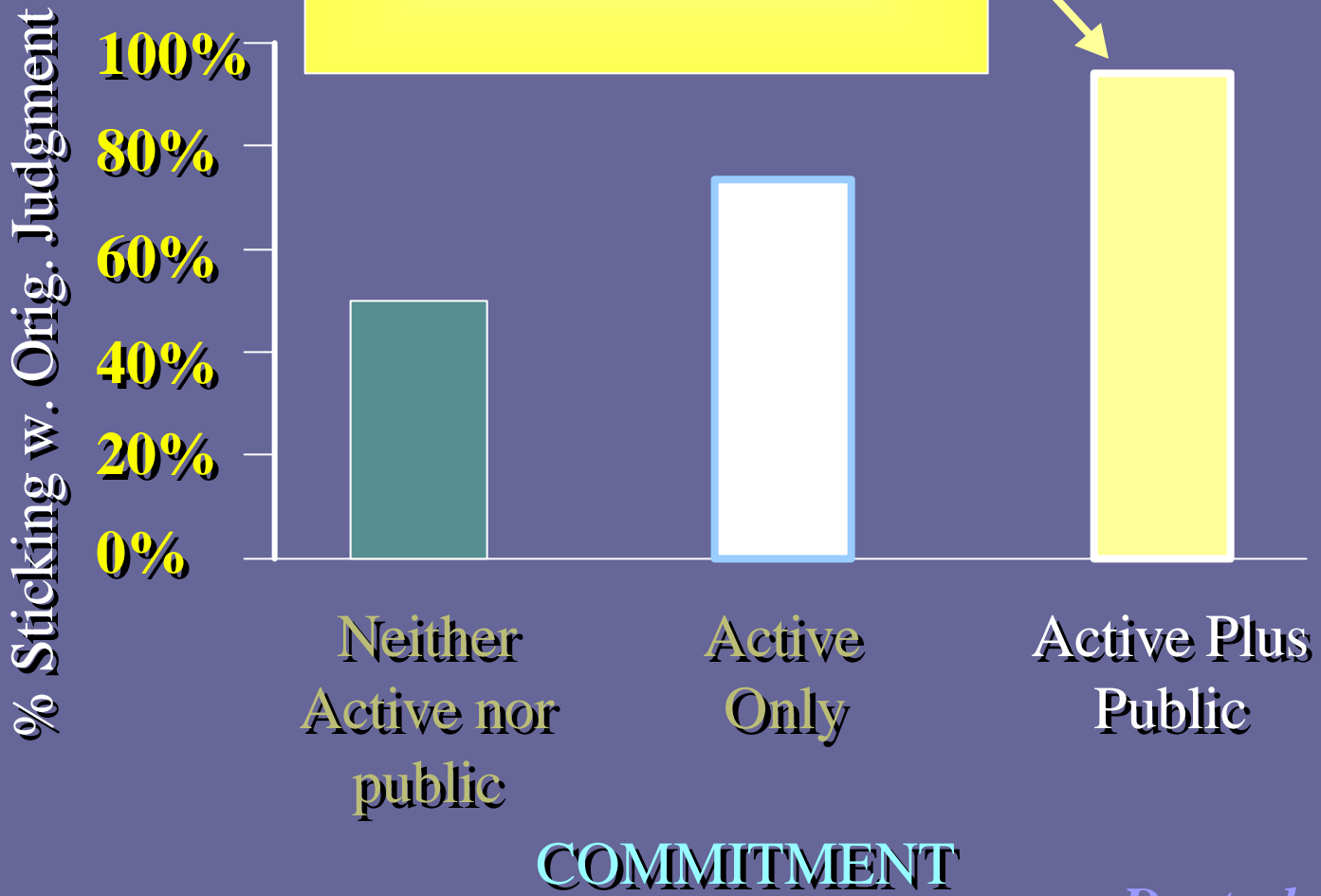
Making a **PRIVATE COMMITMENT** increased the likelihood of sticking to the original correct judgment





# Public Commitments

Making the commitment PUBLIC further increased the likelihood of resisting group pressure



Deutsch & Gerard, 1955