

Lecture 3

The Person





Outline

Motivation: What Drives Us

Knowledge: Our View of the World

Feelings: Attitudes, Emotions, and
Moods

Focus on Method: Assessing Feelings

Introducing the Self



Part I: Motivation: What Drives Us

Motivation –

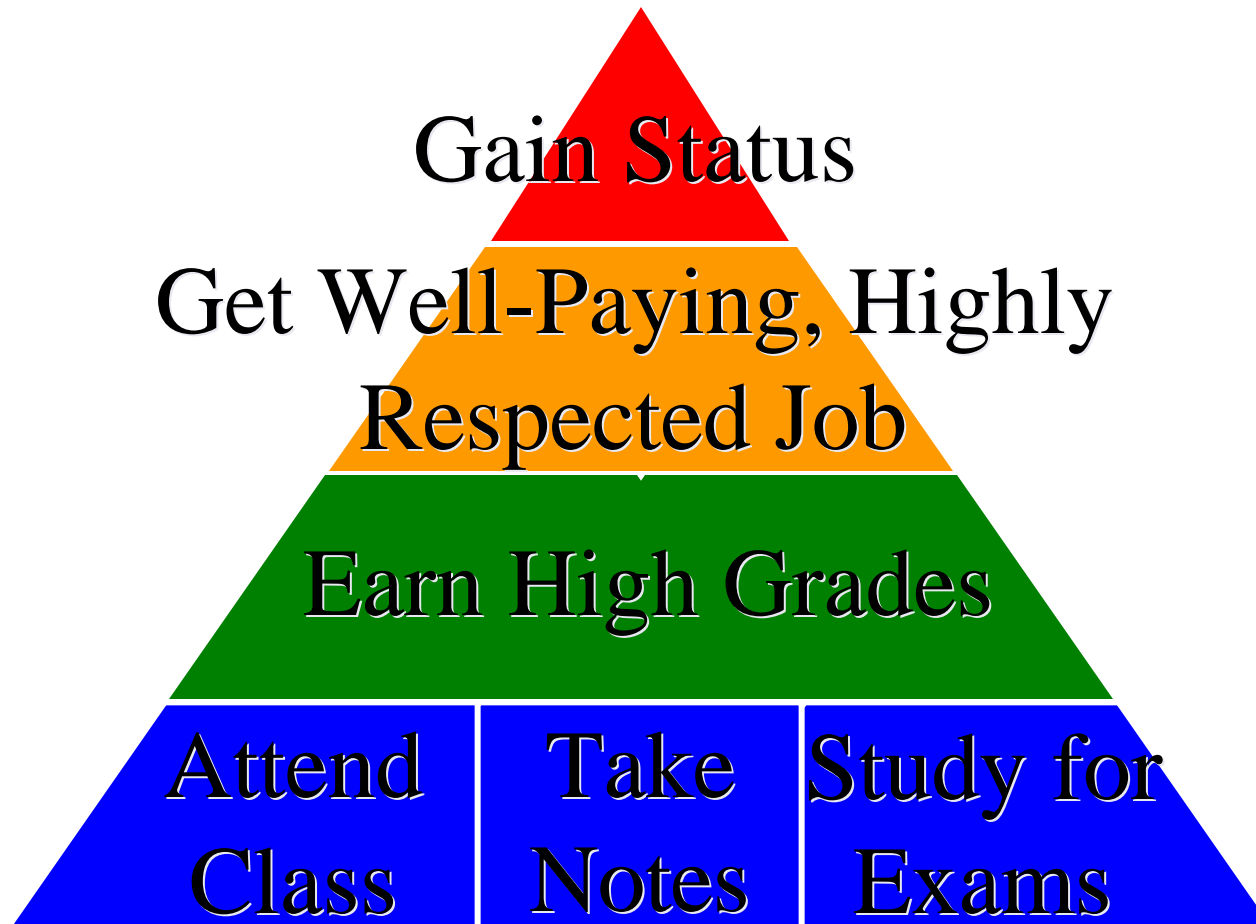
the force that moves people toward their desired outcomes

Goal –

a desired outcome; something one wishes to achieve or accomplish

Motive –

a goal fundamental to social survival





Motivation

Attention –

the process of consciously focusing on aspects of our environment or ourselves



Motivation

Automaticity –

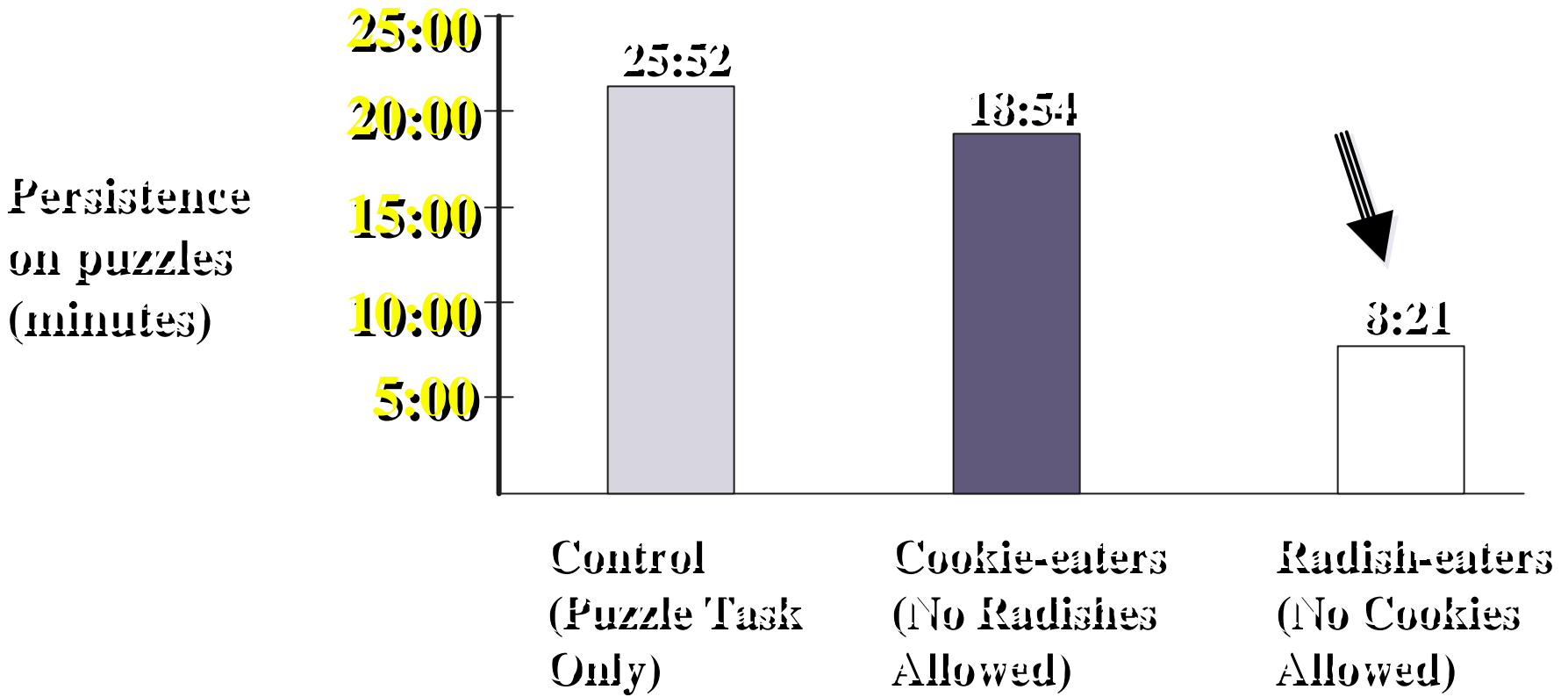
the ability of a behavior or cognitive process to operate without conscious guidance once it's put into motion

Willpower: Use it and lose it.

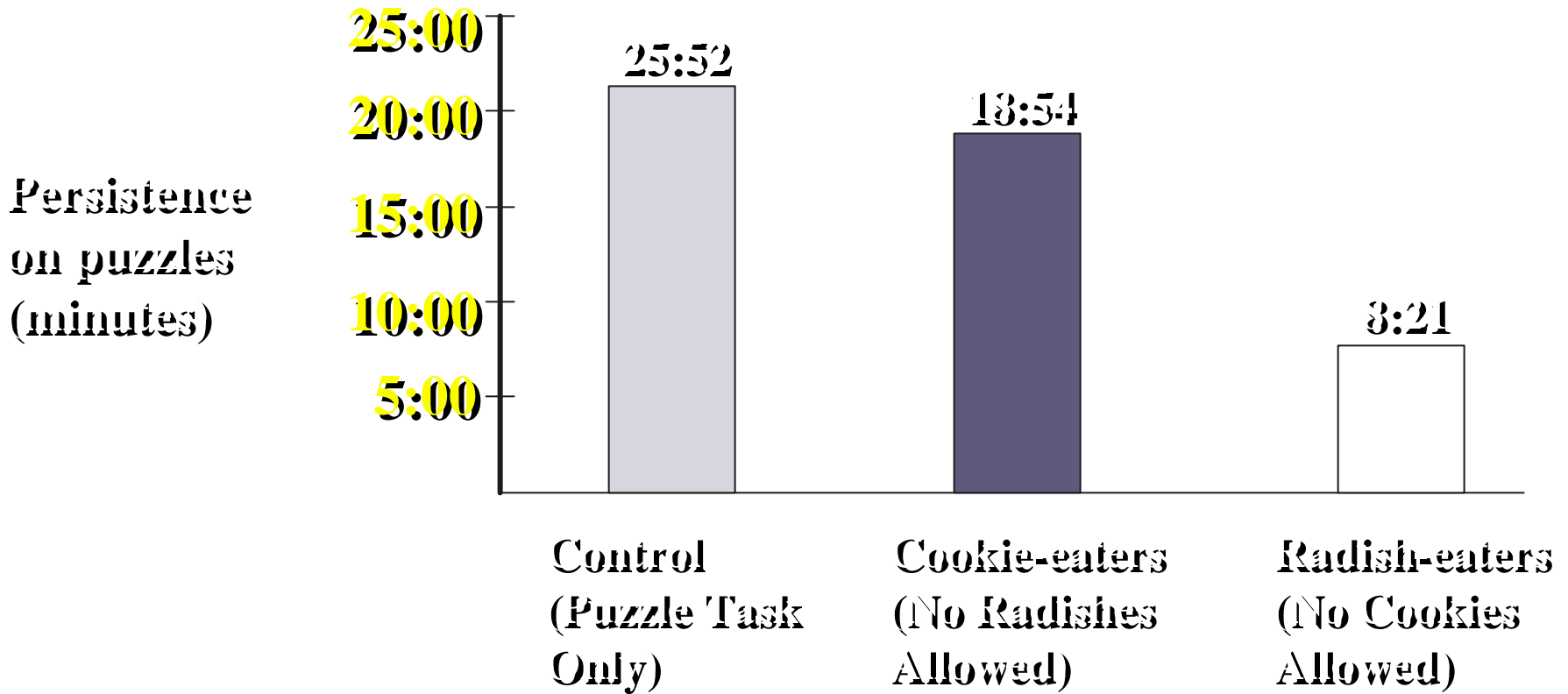
Participants in one experiment were asked to eat radishes rather than nearby cookies.

Others were asked to eat cookies and ignore the radishes.

The students were then asked to solve puzzles (which, unbeknownst to them, were actually impossible).



Participants who had to exercise will-power to resist the cookies had less will-power left over for the difficult puzzles



These findings are consistent with the hypothesis that:

Using willpower for one task reduces its availability for later tasks.



Motivation

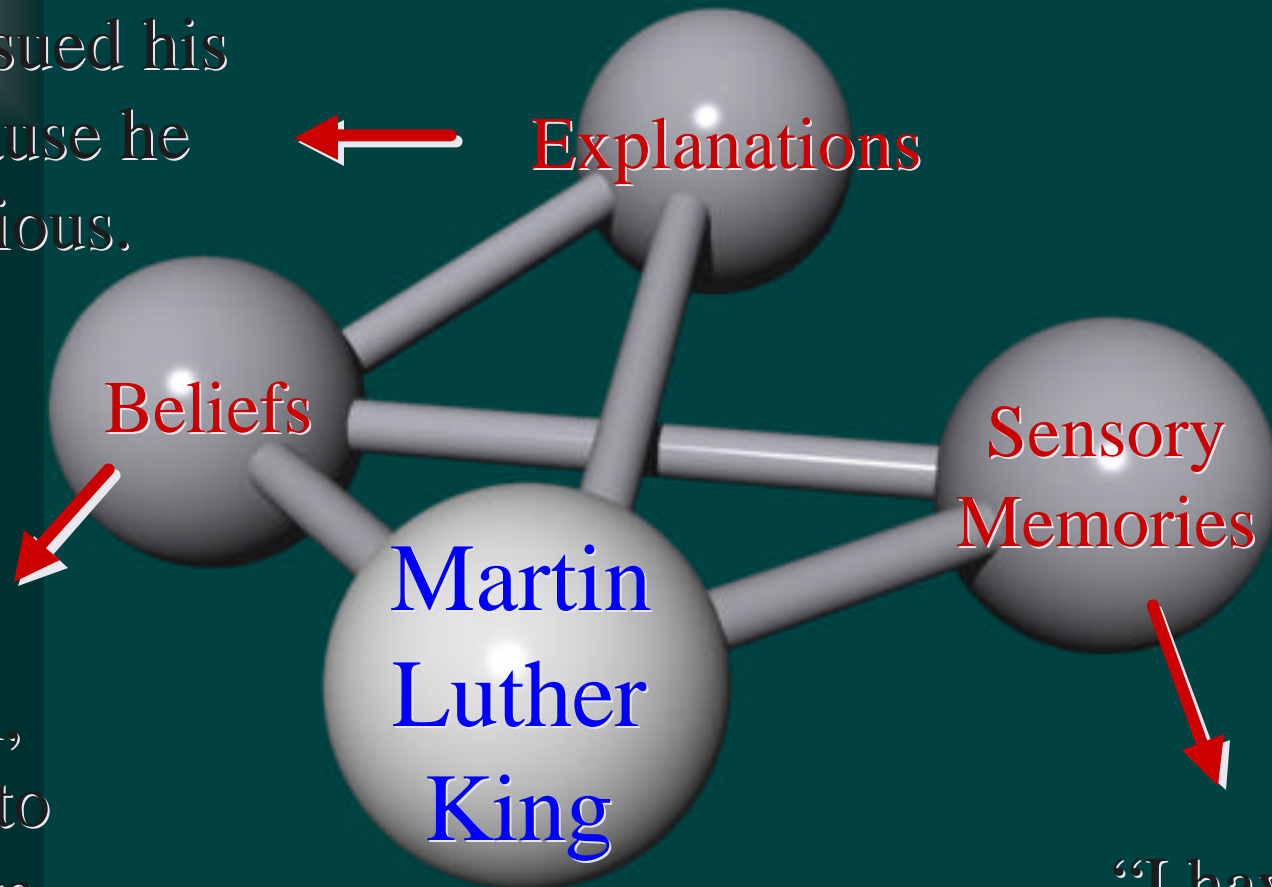
Willpower –

the self-control strength used to overcome counterproductive impulses to achieve difficult goals



Part II: Knowledge: Our View of Ourselves and the World

King pursued his goal because he was religious.



He was spiritual, wanted to eliminate discrimination.

"I have a dream..."



Knowledge: Our View of Ourselves and the World

Exemplar –

mental representation of a specific episode, event, or individual



Knowledge: Our View of Ourselves and the World

Schema –

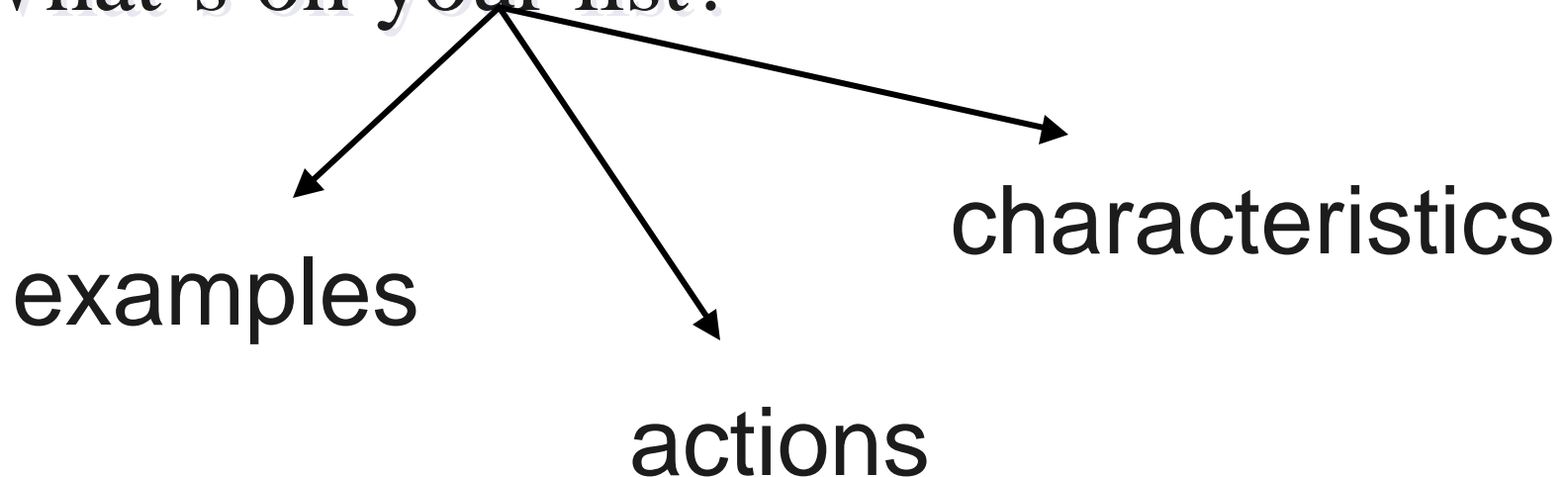
a mental representation capturing the general characteristics of a particular class of episodes, events, or individuals

How are Schema Constructed?

Example:

List everything you think about famous humanitarians such as Gandhi?

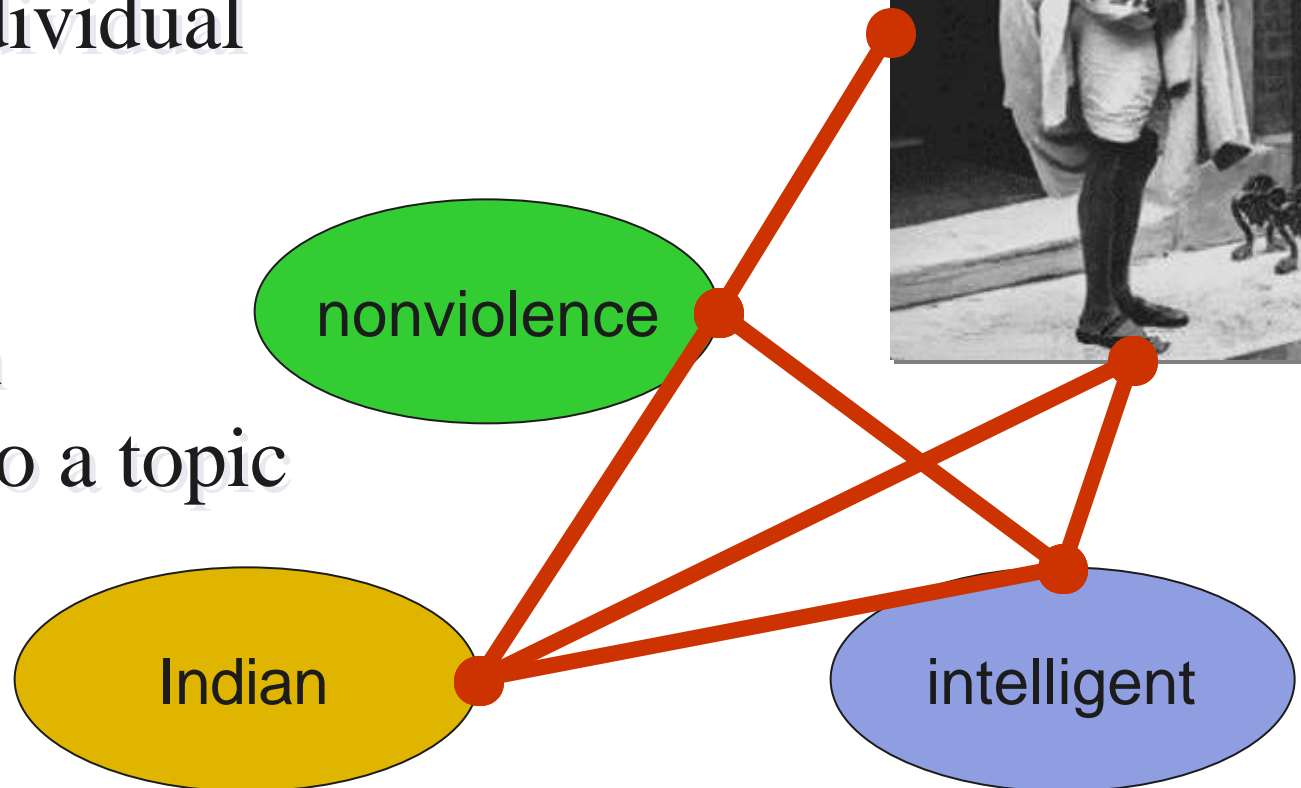
What's on your list?



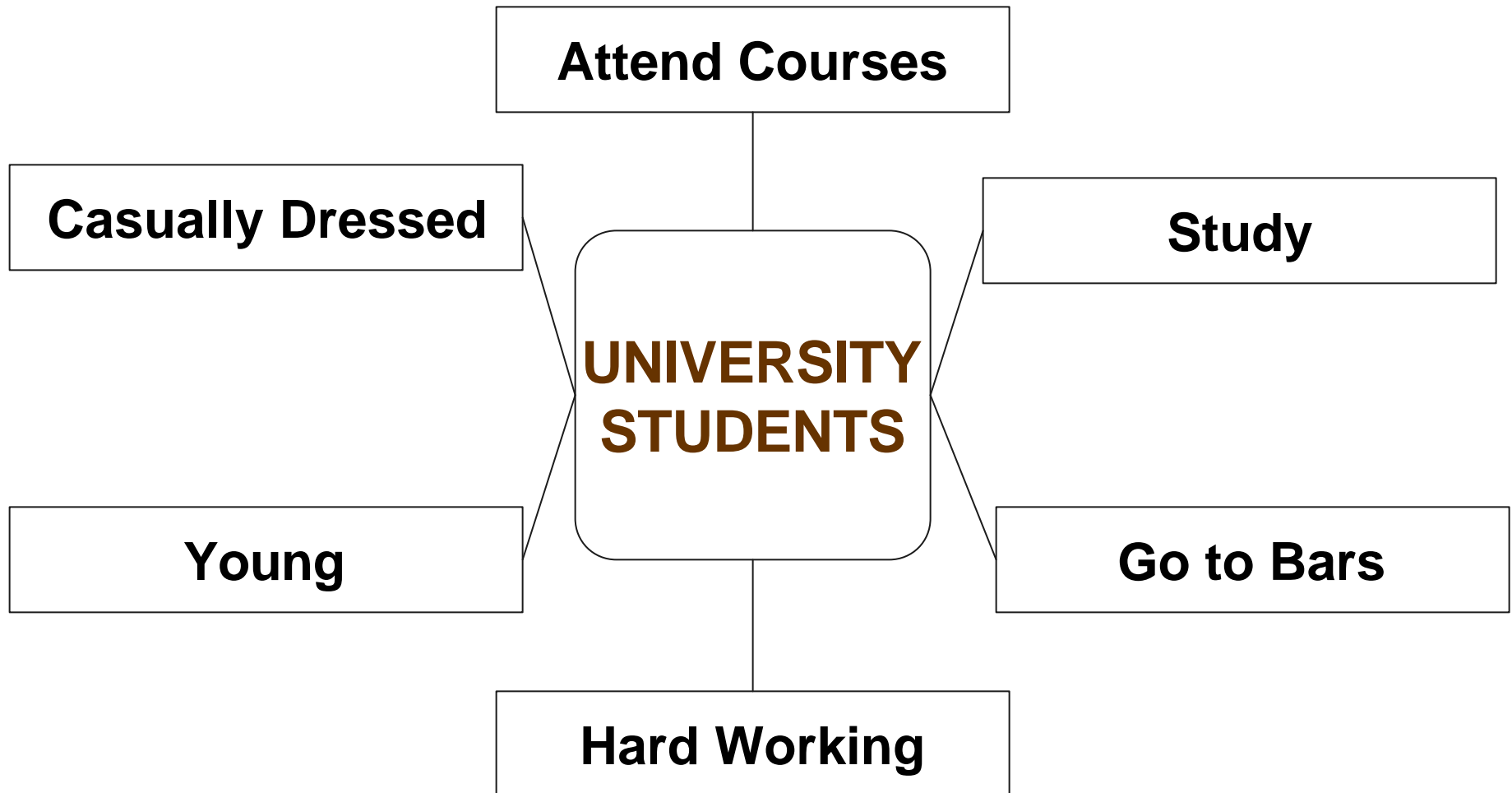
Schema Construction

Exemplar →
knowledge of
specific episode,
event or individual

Schema →
generalized
information
connected to a topic



Possible Schema of University Students



Numerous types of schemas are used:

- Person schemas (e.g., introvert, extrovert)
- Role schemas (e.g., professors)
- Event scripts (e.g., ordering at restaurants)
- Self-Schemas (e.g., who am I?)

How Do Schema Influence Cognitive Processing?

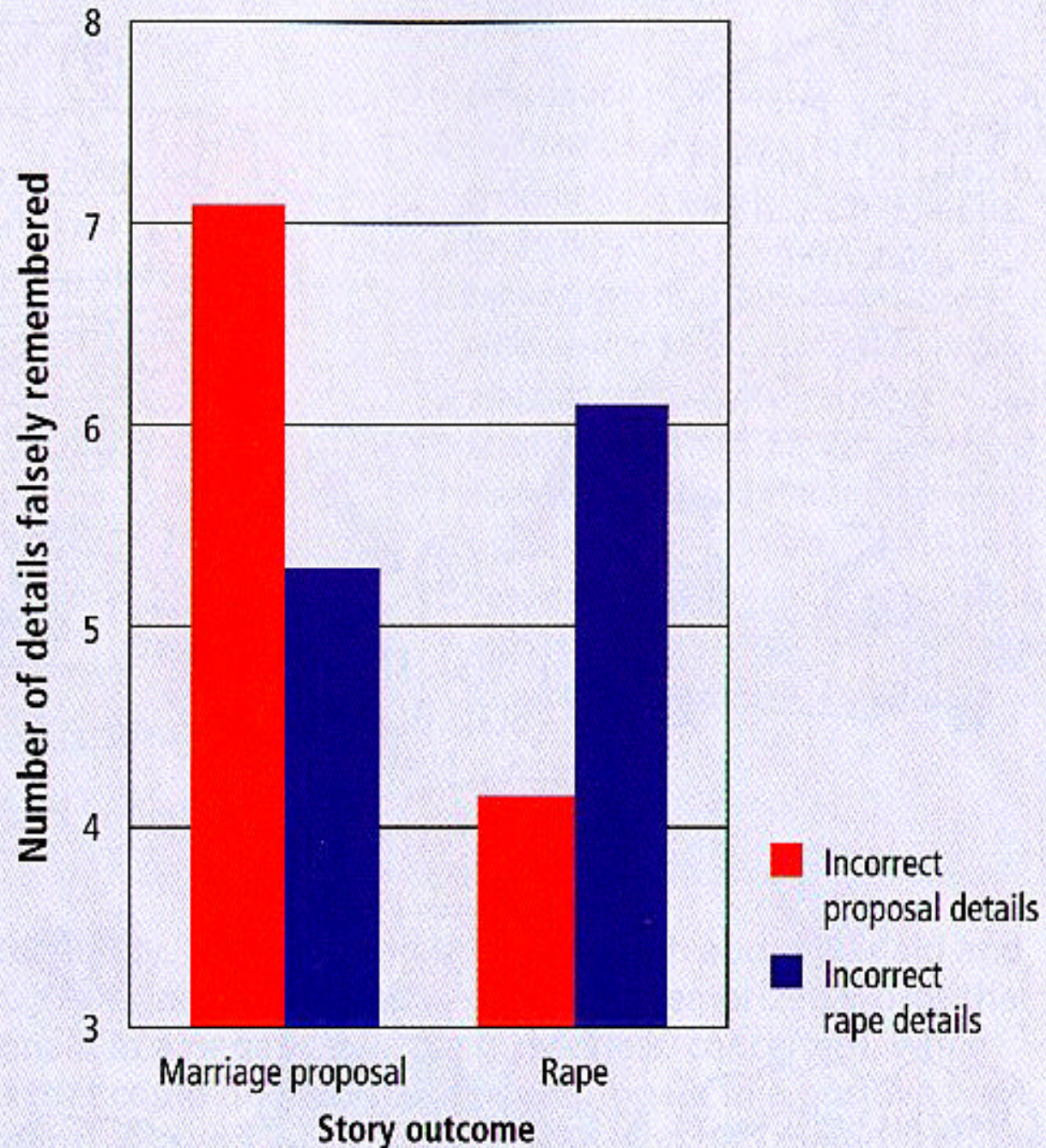
Carli (1999) had participants read a story about a woman named Barbara and her relationship with a man named Jack. After dating for a while, Barbara and Jack went to a ski lodge for a weekend.

In one condition, the story ended with Jack proposing to Barbara. In a second condition, the story ended with Jack raping Barbara.

Two weeks later, the participants were given a memory test. They read a list of “facts” (really information that was not in the original story) and had to decide if they had appeared in the original story.

Some of the details were consistent with the original story, but had not actually appeared in the story (e.g., Jack gave Barbara a dozen roses; Jack liked to drink).

Memory was biased toward schema-consistent information . . .



Although schemas are useful much of the time they have an important limitations with potentially dangerous consequences.

When we rely on categories, we often assume certain things to be true of a particular instance just because we have placed it in a particular category. But, not all category members are the same, and the differences might be quite important to consider.

Perseverance

Once formed, a schema is difficult to change.

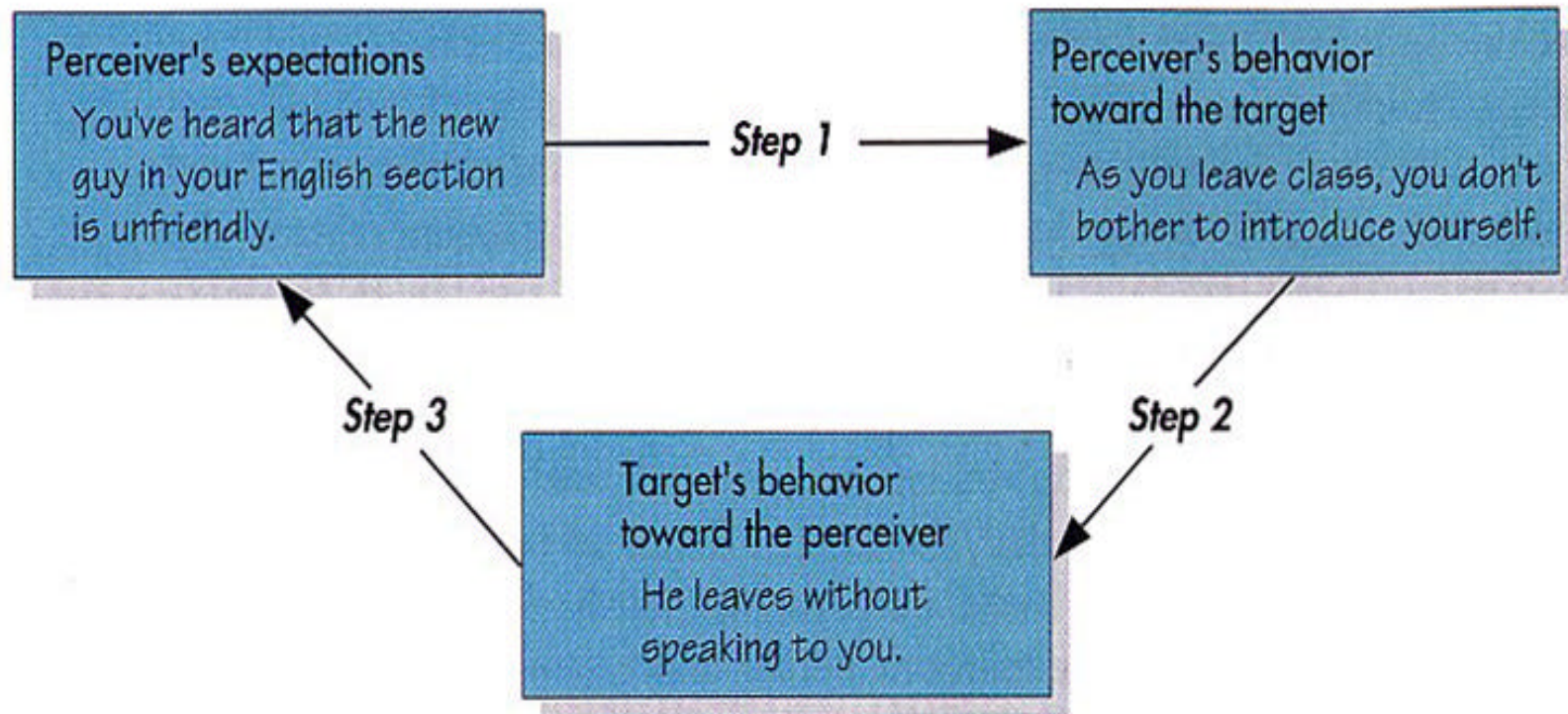
Schema serve as useful tools in helping us make decisions. If we had to change our schema all the time, they would become less effective in simplifying our lives.

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

One of the most powerful effects of a schema is in directing behavior in ways that confirm the expectations embedded in the schema.

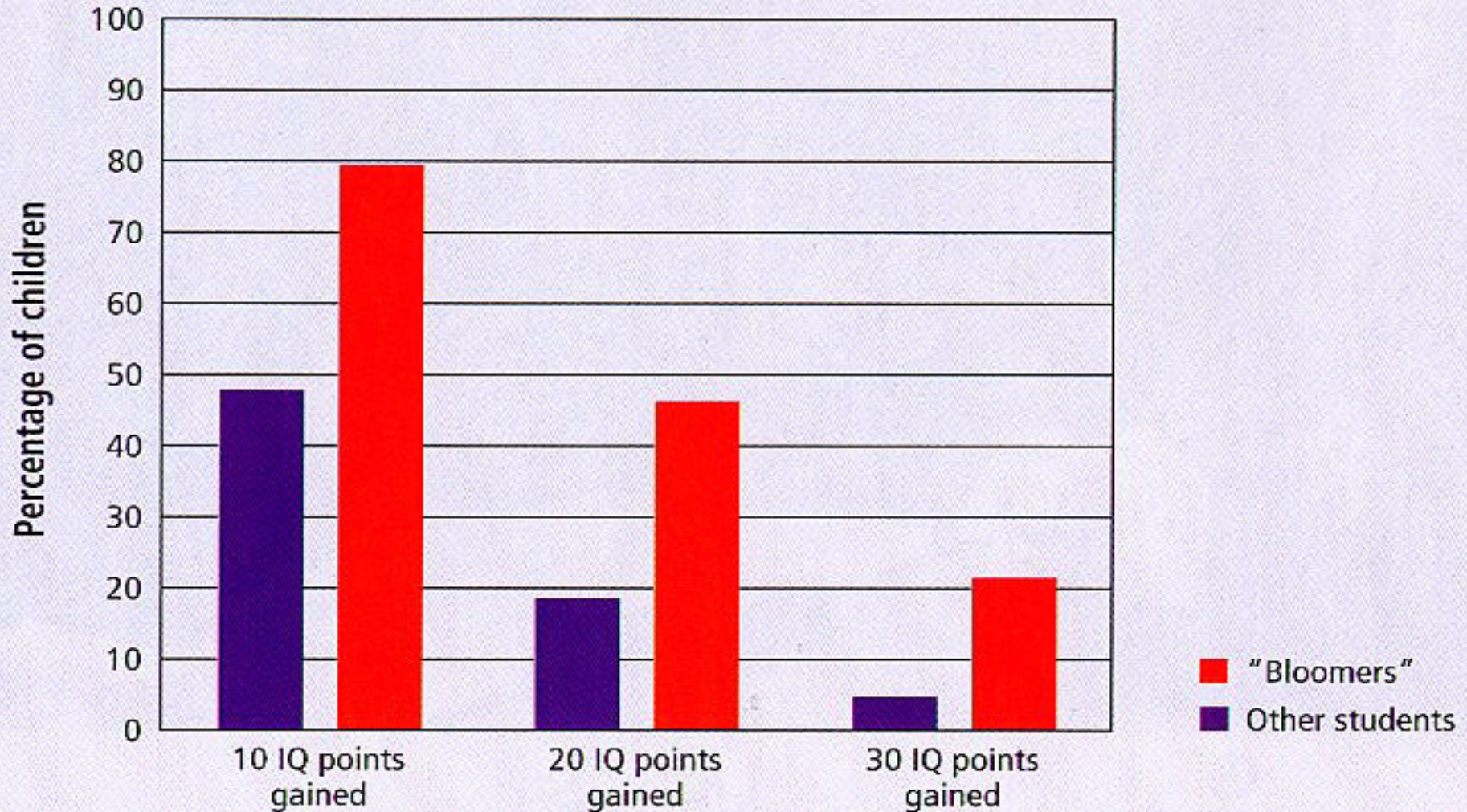
FIGURE 4.10 The Self-fulfilling Prophecy as a Three-Step Process

How do people transform expectations into reality? (1) A perceiver has expectations of a target person, (2) The perceiver then behaves in a manner consistent with those expectations, (3) The target unwittingly adjusts his or her behavior according to the perceiver's actions.

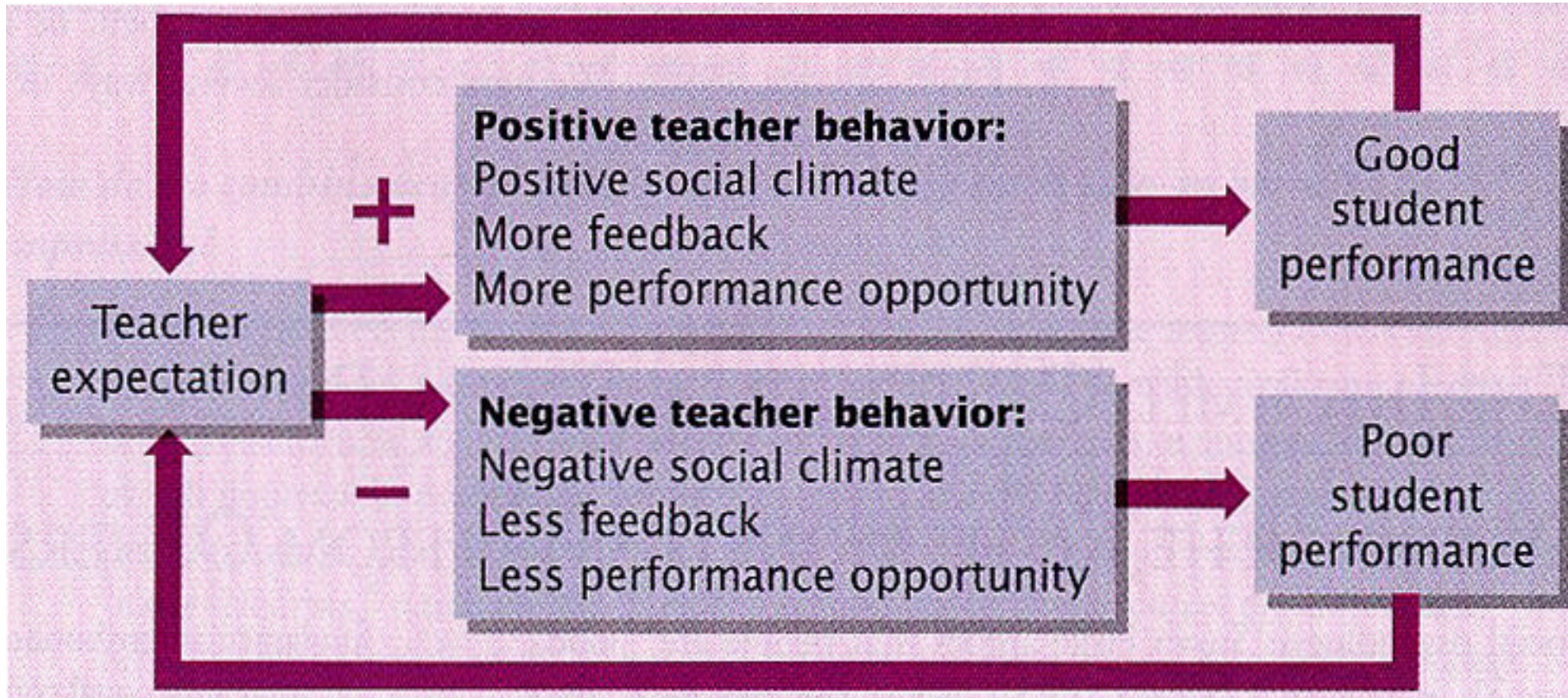


Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) administered an IQ test to elementary school children and then told teachers that some of the children had scored very well and were likely to “bloom” academically during the year. These “bloomers” were actually chosen randomly. They were no smarter than the other students at the beginning of the year. At the end of the year, the children were given the same IQ test.

“Bloomers” outperformed other students at all levels of actual talent.



What happened?



These behavioral differences usually happen without conscious awareness and are especially likely when we are distracted.



Part III: Feelings: Attitudes, Emotions, and Moods

Attitudes –

favorable or unfavorable feelings
towards particular people, objects,
events or ideas



Feelings:

Attitudes, Emotions, and Moods

Emotions –

relatively intense feelings
characterized by physiological
arousal and complex cognitions
(e.g., fear, anger, joy)

Emotions are more intense than
attitudes.



Feelings: Attitudes, Emotions, and Moods

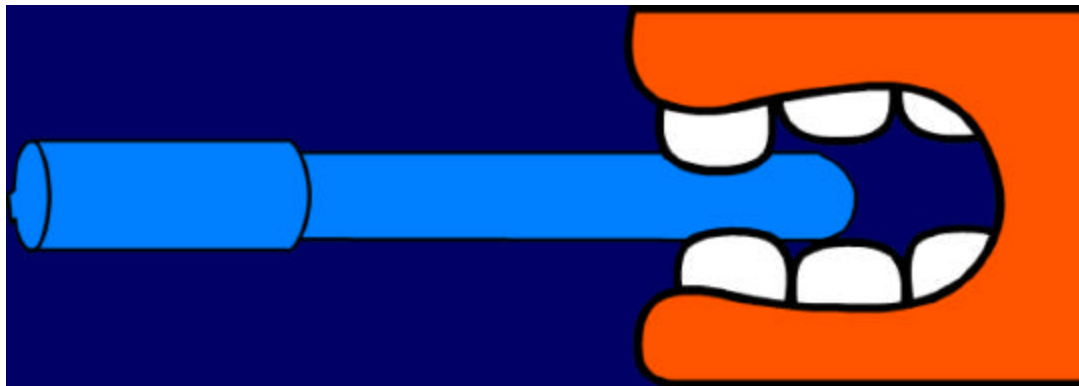
Moods –

relatively long-lasting feelings that are less focused than emotions, and not directed toward a particular target



Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Gently hold a pen between your teeth, making sure it doesn't touch your lips.





Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Now grip the end of the pen firmly with your lips, making sure it doesn't dip downward.





Proximate Contributors to Feelings

In an experiment by researchers Fritz Strack, Leonard Martin and Sabine Stepper, students read cartoons while holding the pen with either their teeth or their lips.



Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Compared to control participants who held the pen in their hands, those who held the pen in their teeth rated cartoons as funnier.

Those who held the pen in their lips rated the cartoons as less funny.

Why?



Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Holding the pen between your teeth contracts the facial muscles into something like a smile.





Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Holding the pen firmly between the lips creates an expression similar to an angry grimace.





Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Our feelings are influenced strongly by how we appraise our situations.



Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Who is happier following Olympic performances – Silver medalists or bronze medalists?



Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Researchers analyzed films from 1992 Olympics, and found that athletes who won Bronze medals were happier than those who won Silver.

Why?



Proximate Contributors to Feelings

Silver medalists talked about how close they had come to a Gold.

Bronze medalists imagined winning no medal at all.

Counterfactual thinking –
process of imagining alternative versions of actual events

The reactions of Olympic medal winners often show the different effects of imagining “what might have been” . . .



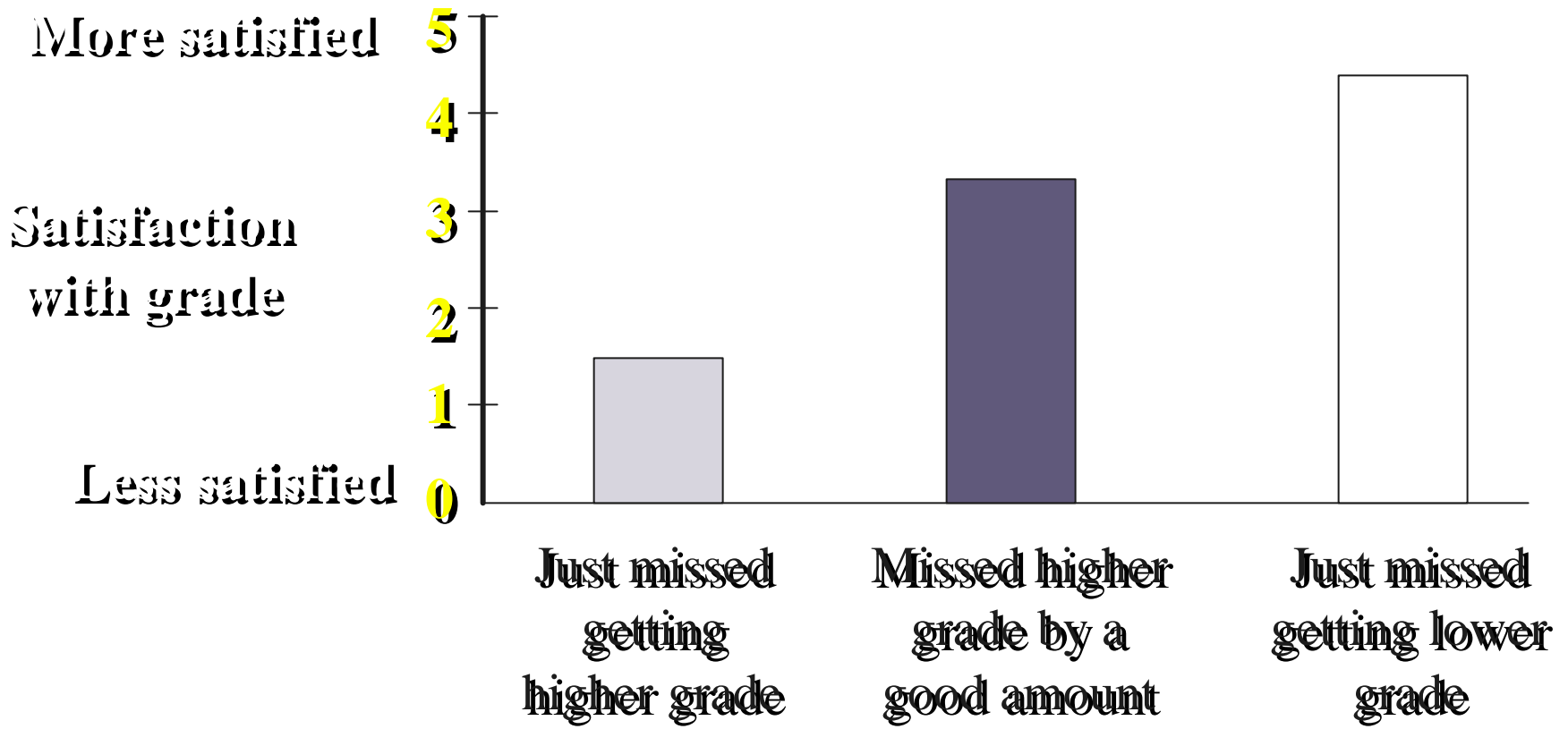
When Doing Better Means Feeling Worse

After receiving their grade in
Introductory Psychology, Cornell
students were asked to report:

Their final numerical grade

The grade they had expected to receive

How satisfied they were with their
course grade.



Students who had just missed the cut-off for the higher grade were *less* satisfied than students who had missed the cut-off for a lower grade.

When Doing Better Means Feeling Worse

In other words, a student who received an 81 (just missing a C) would likely be happier than a student who received an 89 (just missing an A).



Focus on Method: Assessing Feelings

On a 9-point scale –

1 = extremely sad

9 = extremely happy

How do you feel right now?



Focus on Method: Assessing Feelings

The self-report method asks a person directly, “how are you feeling?”

Self-report may not work if people have reason to hide their feelings.



Focus on Method: Assessing Feelings

Feelings can be inferred from the following:

behavior (e.g. clenched fists or frowns)

physiological measures (e.g. heart rate, blood pressure)

Researchers search for convergence between self-reports, behaviors, and physiological measures.



Part IV: Introducing the Self

Take a minute to write about yourself.

What did you list?

Examples of past behavior?

General characteristics?

Self-concept

(Who am I?)

I am.....

I am.....

I am.....

I am.....

I am.....

I am.....

Self-Concepts and Self-Schemas

Self-schemas: Mental representations of self-knowledge.

Preconceptions (“I will win, always”)

Theories (“I am good because I am religious”)

Expectations (“I will be rich”)

William James (1902) : Three Components of the Self

James categorized the “self” into three components (material, social, spiritual)

One can make many more complex categories, but James’s typologies are a start for considering the various dimensions of the self.

Material

Tangible people, objects, or places that carry the designation *my* or *mine*.

James argued material items are not simply valued for what they provide, but are prized because they *are part of us*.

Examples: Diplomas, stamp collections, photographs, gifts.

Social Self

The social self refers to how we are regarded and recognized by others (social identities).

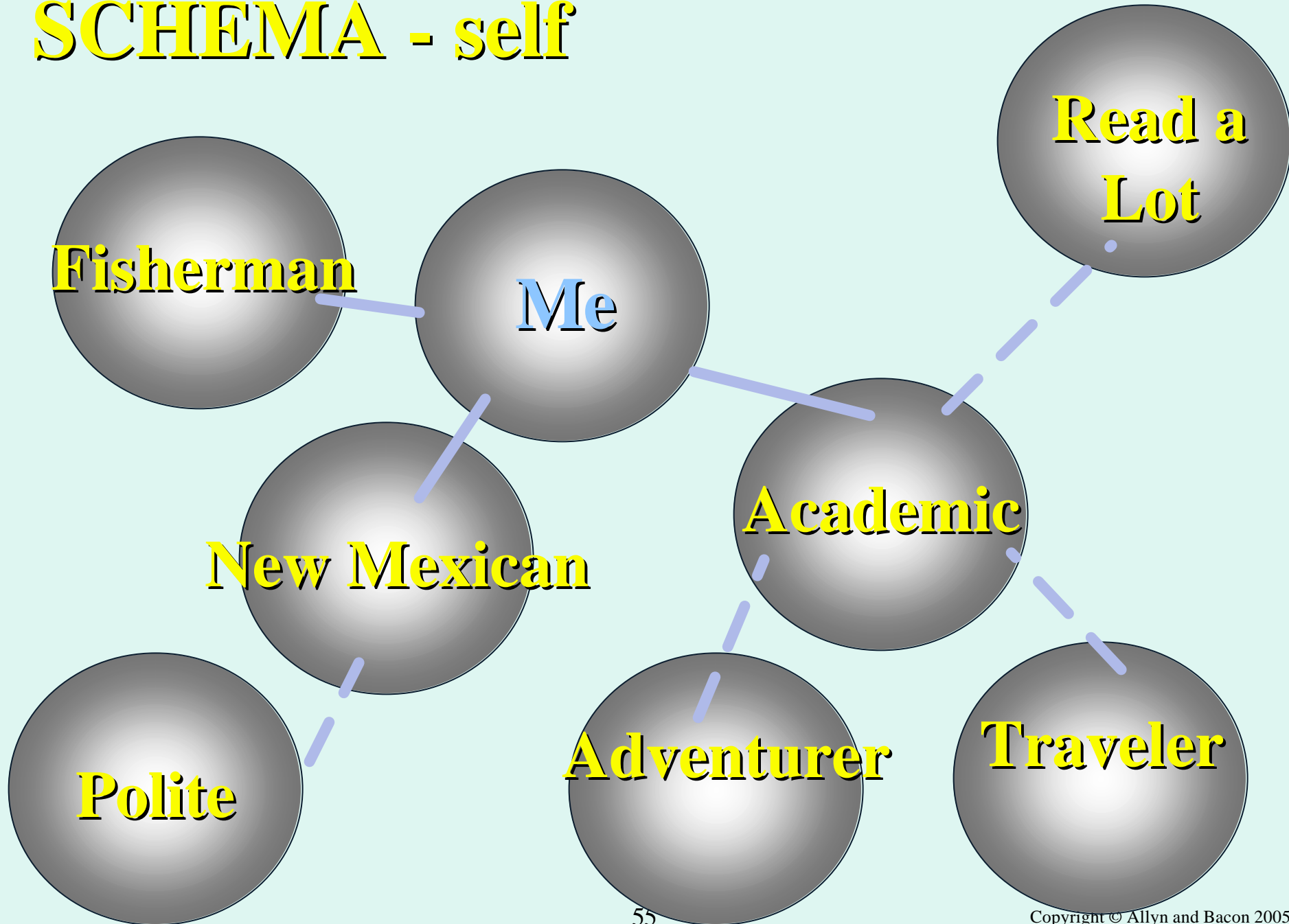
Personal relationships (husband/wife), *ethnic/religious* (African-American, Muslim), *political affiliation* (Democrat, Republican), *stigmatized groups* (criminal, alcoholic), and *vocation* (professor, artist).

Spiritual Self

Inner self, or our psychological self, that is comprised of everything we call my or mine that is not a tangible object, person, place, or social identity.

How does it feel to be us? For example, our perceived abilities, attitudes, emotions, interests, traits, wishes and desires.

SCHEMA - self



Self-schemas: Possible Selves and Self-esteem

Possible selves: Self-schemas are not only concepts about who we are, but who we might become.

Self-esteem: A person's overall assessment of their self-worth. Self-schemas provide mental images of who we are, and self-esteem is our overall "rating" of ourselves based on these concepts.

Self-schema make us the *center* of our worlds

Self-reference effect: When information is relevant to our self-concepts, we process it *quickly* and *remember* it well.

People remember information about themselves, and often see themselves as responsible for events in which they played a small role.

Development of the Social Self

What forces influence the emergence of our self-concepts?

Genetic Factors Influence Personality

“Big Five” personality
scales show variation
in personality *types*.

introversion-extraversion

2.) emotional stability

3.) agreeableness

4.) conscientiousness

5.) openness

Environmental and
social factors important
in explaining personality
factors.

**•However, twin studies
illustrate that
personality types are at
least partially
influenced by genetic
factors.**

Learning institutionalized roles

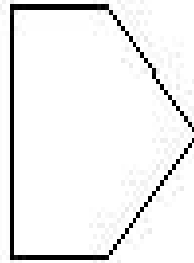
Example: Joining the Marine Corp exposes an individual to a new set of rules about how to live.

New roles change the self-concept of individuals.



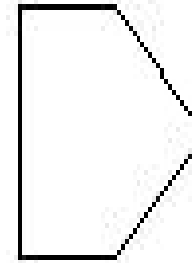
Self

- timid
- shy
- informal



Marine Corps Rules Stress:

- tough
- athletic
- aggressive
- professional
- proud



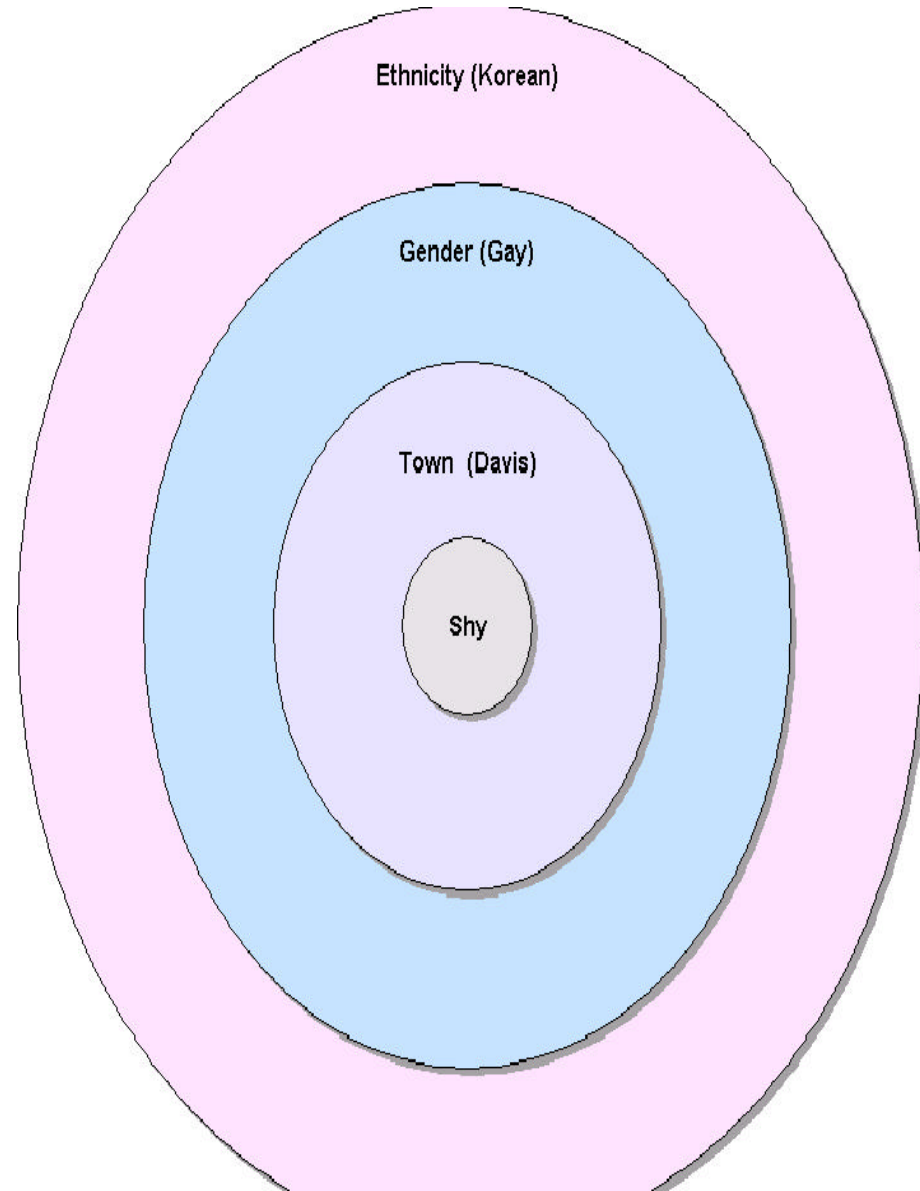
New Self

- Self-reliant
- More outgoing
- proud

Social Identity

Self-concept contains information about your social identity.

Socialization at various stages in an individual's life bring them various social identities (towns, ethnicity, nations, etc.)



Social Comparisons

Am I rich? Am I
beautiful? Am I
happy?

How we view ourselves
is largely influenced by
comparing ourselves to
others.

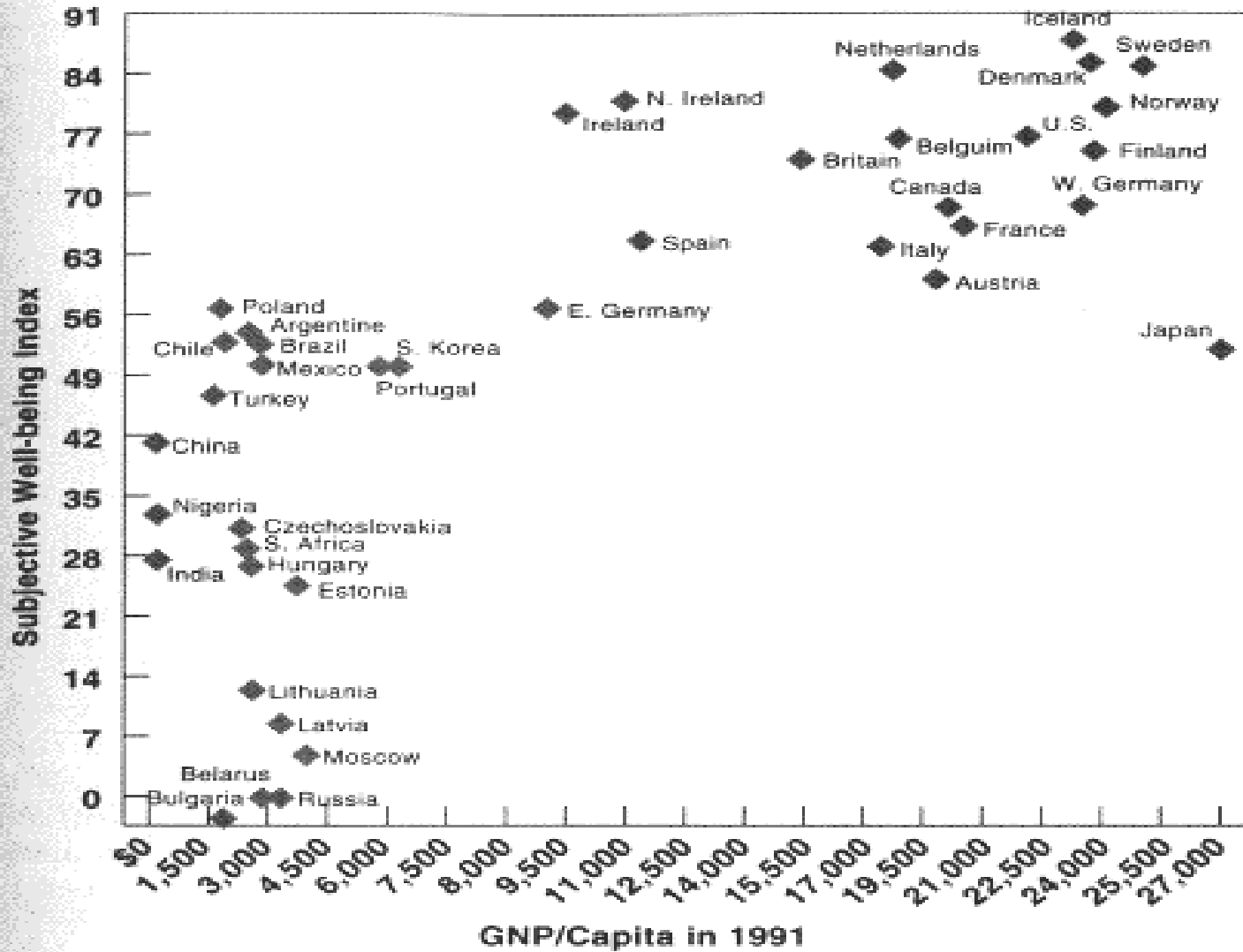


Social Comparisons: Does Money Really Make People Happier?

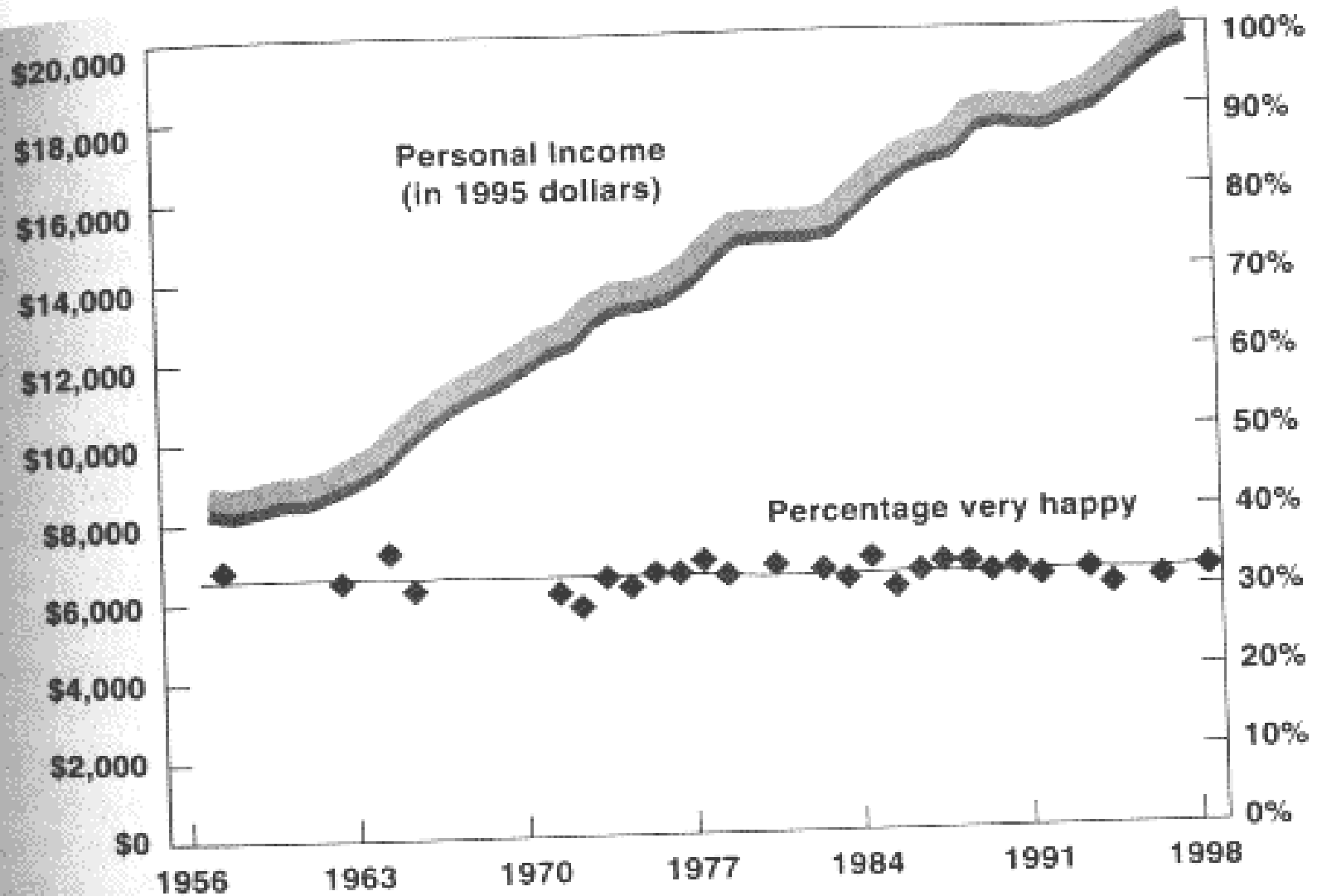
Correlation between wealth and happiness is surprisingly weak.

Happiness is lower among the very poor, but once people are meeting their basic needs, they self-report to be happy.

Relative deprivation is important; People report they are happy, as long their “frame of reference” is among people of **similar** socioeconomic standing.



Source: From Ronald Inglehart, 1997, p. 62.



Source: Happiness data from General Social Surveys, National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago. Income data from Bureau of the Census (1973) and *Economic Indicators*.

People living in the Tanzanian village I worked in told me that they were happier before I started living there.

“Brian, you have a motorcycle, a car, medicine... food all the time. Before you came here, I knew I was poor, but now I really want things.”

