

Social Psychology

NTC's: set seven

Lectures 22-25
Apr. 2nd – Apr. 11th



Winter 2013: PSYC 215

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NTC's brought to you by McGill Psychology Students' Association

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Please note that it is YOUR responsibility to pick up NTC sets from the MPSA Office. You can pick them up during our office hours, Monday to Thursday 11:30 am -5:00 pm.

LECTURE 22: APRIL 2nd, 2013***Last class: Fiske's point about immorality***

- Someone engages in a certain behaviour and that person explains the behaviour in terms of a different relational model. The thrust of his idea is that two people may disagree and you might see someone's behaviour as immoral and repugnant but it may be because they are operating in a different relational model.
- However, he's not claiming therefore that all behaviour is moral. One of his points was that there can be a consensus within a group or society about what is the appropriate relational model or moral motive that should operate in a situation. If someone violates it though, the person could try to excuse themselves by appealing to a different relational model or moral motive.
- If someone invokes a different relational model or moral motive may be used to excuse their own bad behaviour. So sometimes it's genuine and authentic because that person comes from a group has a different understanding of what moral motive to apply, but he's not so naïve that he doesn't know that people exploit this.
- Fiske is not saying that even if someone comes from a different group or culture where they apply different relational models or moral motifs, we can still try to explain that and help us understand why a judge would say a victim is paralyzed so now you should sever your spinal cord, Fiske is not saying that we should understand that and therefore say it is okay. We should understand so we don't dismiss the person as evil but we could still challenge that and say that we have a consensus that this is not appropriate.

This week is about close relationships and next week will be about subjective well-being (happiness).

- Social psychology in 1980, at that point all of social psychology was done in the US and some in Canada and a little bit in Europe. Social psychology was the study of individuals and the focus was exclusively lab experiments. The field studied what it could within a one hour lab experiment. In Europe, psychologists were more interested with what was going on with groups and countries and social identity theory emerged. But in North America there were just a few people who were studying close relationships. Most of them involved initial interpersonal attraction, because that was something you could do in a lab. You could manipulate what information you gave a participant about another person in the next room and you could see what information would lead them to like the person more/less.
- When he was an undergrad there was something called 'screw your roommate dances'. Your roommate would get you a date, but was working for you so you didn't have the fear of rejection. You had no idea how many people your roommate approached to ask to go to the dance with you.
- A lot of studies were done in Boston about students in dating relationships.
- The few people who were trying to study this decided to get together and made a book called "close relationships". It's unusual in social psychology that a book would have such an impact it had. This book was more to push the field to go in another direction. These authors were saying that if social psychology is truly social we have to do more than study strangers in a laboratory, we have to study ongoing close relationships.

- Strangely enough, another thing that helped the field study close relationships was computers. Why would advances in computers help study close relationships?
 - Computer technology helped people who wanted to do field research. Years ago, doing basic simple statistics was a lot of work. if you're doing field research instead of lab experiments one of the problems you face is that you don't have the experimental control of a lab experimenter. You're not able ethically to randomly assign people to conditions.
 - There is a show: Occupation Double
 - There are two houses, and the way it used to work was that there were ten guys in one house and six in the other. The first night, the girls vote of four guys and every subsequent week the voted off one guy until there was one left.
 - Once that guy was left, he starts to vote the women off. This becomes interesting because a woman wanted to choose a guy whom she could hope would pick her.
 - Second year into the show, a graduate student in our department went on Occupation Double
 - Before he was a graduate student he played a confederate in one of the prof's lab experiments where women had to meet him. It was presumed that women would like him.
 - And then two years later he goes on the show, he actually won. People validated his experiment since he was a good confederate.
 - Generally speaking when you look at field research, you need to statistically control for all these other factors that could explain why someone is happy in a relationship. As computer technology took off, people developed newer and better statistics.

Sociometer Hypothesis:

- Leary says that it's not that self-esteem is important, but self-esteem is like a symptom. It is information about something else that matters and this is whether you have the psychological sense that you are accepted and included with others. He compares it with a fuel gage, once you have the sense that you are accepted by others, the fuel gage points towards full, which means you have high self-esteem. Once you have the sense that you are rejected by others, and the fuel gage will indicate low self-esteem.
- In addition to our basic physiological needs, we have basic psychological needs where you need to be connected to others to have a certain sense of belonging.

Overview

- *Today we will go through the topic of relationship illusions. Just as we are motivated to see ourselves positively we are also motivated to see our partners positively.*
- *In February, we talked about positive illusions. Relationship illusions are an extension of that. Not only are we motivated to see our partners positively but also ourselves in a positive light.*
- *We will also talk about the fact that we are not always confident that our partners see us in a positive light. This is a problem among people who are chronically low in self-esteem. They don't believe or have the confidence that others really do accept them.*

Some of the ironic and pretty sad effects of having this doubt and insecurity and about how low self-esteem people may undermine and sabotage the things they most want.

- *On Thursday we will cover attachment and how people regulate attachment bonds.*

Those of you in romantic relationships, think about what percentage of your peers partners is your partner better than in terms of intelligence, warmth, sense of humour and physical attractiveness.

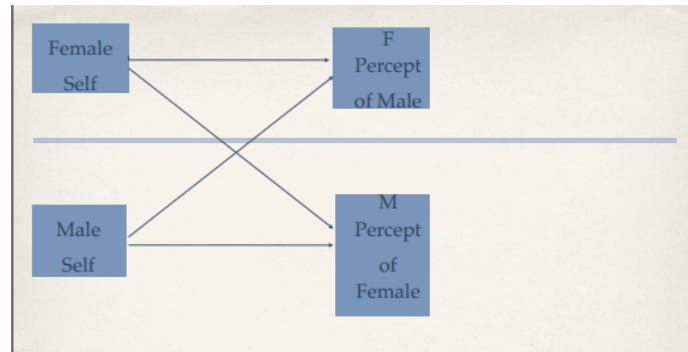
- Every person in a relationship thought their partner was better than at least fifty percent of the peers.
- We all can't be better than average. Yet we tend to see ourselves better than average and we see our partners as better than average.
- There were a number of studies where people rate themselves and their partner, and despite the fact that we rate ourselves positively, married women rate their husbands more positively than their husbands rate themselves and vice versa.
- Women in dating relationships rate the guys more positively than the guys do themselves - however men in dating relationships don't.
- One writer said that love is thinking he's as smart as Bill Gates and attractive as Orlando Bloom. Commitment is thinking he looks like Bill Gates and is smart as Orlando Bloom. Today we are going to do the love side.

Idealization and the Construction of Satisfaction in Close Relationships:

- Murray, Homes and Griffin, their idea was that what we do in relationships is that idealizing or having this positive view of a partner might be a good thing. Not only are we saying we may have illusions, but they want to argue that this helps people in close relationships.
- We will look at what evidence they have that we do this, and how does this help sustain relationships.
- They assessed in couples three things: what your self-perceptions are, you rate yourself in terms of a bunch of qualities, then you rate those qualities in terms of how much your ideal partner would have and then you rate how much you think your own partner has in terms of those qualities.

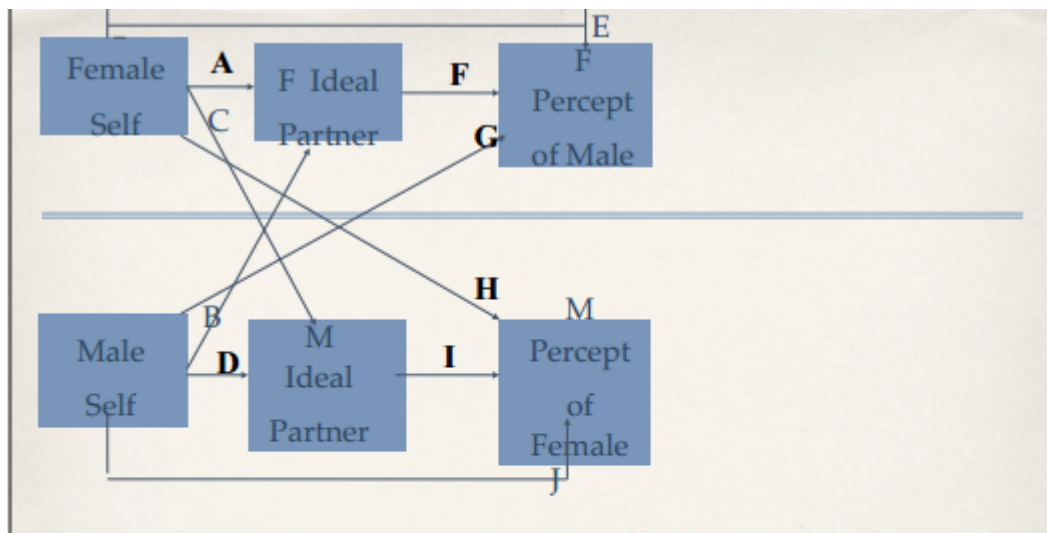
We walk through the blue diagram:

- How she sees herself corresponds with his perception of her. The diagonals are the reality or accuracy path. The projection path is mediated through ideals. They suggest that what happens is the more positively we see ourselves, the more positive our ideal partner is.
 - So if I think I have good qualities, then my ideal partner is going to be more positive. The better you feel about yourself, the higher your expectations.
 - The interesting thing though is that the ideal you come up with, is the lens through which you see your partner. You project your ideals to your partner. People in relationships want to see their partners coming close to their ideals.
 - We project what we ideally would want onto our view of how we see our partner.
 - Reality is I see her the way she sees herself. Above and beyond that I see something even more positive than what she sees herself.
 - So do people do this? And what are the consequences of doing this?



Predicting Ideal Partner:

- Is your ideal a reflection of your partner's image?
- It could be that your partner has certain qualities and you adjust your ideal to what you've got. Imagine your partner is very intelligent but not at all athletic. The idea would be that you would adjust your ideal to make athletic not important and intelligent really important. What your partner has influences your ideal.
 - What they found was that the way you are and your own self-image influences what your ideal is. So the qualities you have, you expect to see them in your ideal partner.
- The letters in bold are the paths that are significant. The important ones to see is male self-up to perception of male and female self-up to perception of female self. Those are reality paths, G and H. it's not that our images of our partners are out of touch with reality. The authors are emphasizing that beyond reality, F and I are significant. Those indicate that we see our partners in terms of our ideals, beyond what our partners say they have. The reality paths are G and H. The construction paths are projected through F and I which are the ideals. Don't worry about E and J.
- So the main point is that how we see our partner is a combination of two things, reality (how our partner see s him/herself) plus the projection of what we ideally want to see.



Satisfaction:

- They found that people do this idealization. But is it associated with being happy?
- The **projected illusion hypothesis** is that you are happy to the extent that you see your partner more positively than his/her self-perceptions justify. The more you idealize your partner, the happier you will be, that's projected illusions. The more you project your ideal onto your partner, the happier you will be.
- **Reflected illusion hypothesis** says that you are happy to the extent that your partner idealizes you. So the fact that your partner idealizes you does make you more happy and satisfying in the relationship, despite your faults.
- They found evidence for both hypotheses.
 - So the more we idealize our partner the happier we are, and the more our partner idealizes us the happier we are.
- However, this is one moment in time. If you just have correlation of data in one moment of time, you can have all these nice paths, and they do some advanced statistics to give us more confidence that this is the direction it goes but it's still one moment in time.
- We need to see what happens over time, who becomes satisfied over time.
 - They tested this out in a number of studies and put forth three reasons why they think illusions help rather than hurt relationships.
 - The buffering hypothesis is that sooner or later in relationships things happen that are not great, negative things happen. The more time you spend together the more interconnected lives are and the more you will encounter things that will challenge the relationship. Having this reserve of good feeling about your partner, having these illusions will help you overcome those times when negativity arises. This is the buffering hypothesis, illusion help withstand inevitable negative relationship events.
 - Reflected appraisal hypothesis is that individuals come to see themselves through their partner eyes. The more you idealize your partner, the more over time you partner will come to see him/herself in a positive way. So you boost their self-image. This is good for them and the relationship. You having illusions will bring the partner closer to that view that you have.
 - The third hypothesis is that these illusions will help transform faults and turn them into virtues. They will motivate us to put positive spin on something that could be seen as a negative. This is the transformation hypothesis. You take a fault and make it look like an endearing quality, "isn't that cute, he doesn't wash dishes..."

Buffering Effects of Men's Illusions Predicting Relationship Stability:

- Evidence of the **buffering hypothesis** came from this longitudinal study. The y-axis indicates the proportion of people who are still together a year later.
- The left set of bars are for couples who throughout the years showed low negativity.
- However, the buffering hypothesis is concerned with those who have high negativity where there should be higher risk of breakup. You should have a lower number. The three bars on the right are lower than the three on the left.
- The off-white bars are those who were high on relationship illusions, who are more likely to still be in a relationship than the others. Those who have high illusions are at a 65% survival.

- So low illusions and high negative are at the 95% breakup and those who have high illusions are close to 65% survival.

Reflected Appraisals Hypothesis:

- The **reflected appraisal hypothesis** found that his perception of her predicted changes in her self-perception and her initial perception predicted changes in his perception.

Changes in relationship satisfaction:

- In terms of changes in relationship satisfaction, there is a small effect for reality and this is when self-image predicts change in partner's happiness. So women who had positive self-image, the guys became happier, and those who had a negative self-image, the guys were less happy.
- In the previous slide we were saying that the more we do this idealization the more you alter the partner's perception, when you do studies like this what we really mean is that it happens more than chance.
- It doesn't mean that in every couple, if the guy idealizes her, she has a more positive self-image.
- The better way to think about this is that here is a battle of wills going on. You have on person with a certain self-image, and the other person who has an ideal image of you. So who is going to win out? Is your self-image going to alter the other person's view of you and affect their happiness? Or is their idealized view of you going to alter your self-image and influence your satisfaction?
- The fact is with some couples, his idealization wins out. With other couples, her negative self-image undermines his happiness. If she has low self-esteem there is greater risk that his happiness will decline.
- On the other hand the more she is able to idealize him the happier she is overtime while he also becomes happy overtime.

Transformation hypothesis:

- Murray and Holmes got people to say that their partners had or did not have certain characteristics.
- In the first study, they had those in dating relationships to list the instances of when you and your partner had disagreements. However, people don't like to report all sorts of disagreements so they don't put many of these down.
- But what Murray and Holmes did was that they pulled the rug out. They lure them in to write their disagreements by telling them that it is healthy for people to have conflict and that this was proven by a psychology article. So now the participants felt that it was a good thing to have conflict.
- So what happens is that those who get that start thinking about all sorts of conflict experiences they had. They are invested in seeing the relationship in a positive way and then they are told that this is a good thing in the relationship.
- They found this with conflict but also found it with similarities. Most people were emphasizing how similar they were in their partners, but then they were told that Psych Today (a journal) said that it's good to have differences, and so couples in that conditions start receiving instances of how they are different to embellish the relationship.
- So how far can you push the idea that illusions are good for a relationship?

Limits to Idealization and the Construction of Relationship Satisfaction:

- Earlier in the term, we talked about self-verification, where we want people to verify our self-concept. Swann was arguing that we don't just want people to see us in a positive way (self-enhancement) but also as how we truly see ourselves. Well how does this fit with relationship illusions?
- Swann argued about the marriage shift. When you are dating you want positive feedback. Earlier in the relationship you want positive evaluations from the other. He also argued that for long term commitment, you want that person to know the true you. His argument was that if you have a relationship where your partner expects you to be things that you're not then this is going to be a problem over time. Early on you just want the person to like you but for long-term commitment you want less illusions and more accuracy.
- If you look carefully at Swann's work and Murray's work, Swann studies intimacy and Murray studies happiness and satisfaction. So Murray studies whether you feel good and Swann studies whether you feel your partner understands you or cares about you.
 - Understanding almost implies accuracy. So part of the difference between Swann and Murray is that illusions help fuel positive feelings but the self-verification may help foster a greater sense of intimacy. Because you feel that the person knows the true you.
- What about people who have low self-esteem?

When Self-Doubts Turn into Relationship Insecurities

- Low self-esteem people have their own doubts and insecurities. If you have enough experiences in your life where you felt excluded and not accepted, then how do you cope with that?
- As much as we want closeness with others, we also try to protect ourselves from rejection. Rejection is not fun or pleasant. If you are afraid that you will experience rejection you will do things to keep yourself from experiencing it.
- **The contamination hypothesis:** when experiencing self-doubts, low self-esteem individuals assume partners share their disappointment. It's not just that they assume their partners will be disappointed in them, but because they have this history of exclusion and rejection, they've learned that they need to protect themselves and avoid experiencing rejection. So the contamination hypothesis suggests that when rejection is looming you've got to do something.
- One thing you can do is distance yourself from that person. If you leave him you don't give him a chance to reject you.
- Low self-esteem people, when their self-doubts arise they will rate their partners more negatively. They tell themselves that "He was not that great anyway".
- In contrast she argues that high self-esteem people engage in compensation hypothesis.

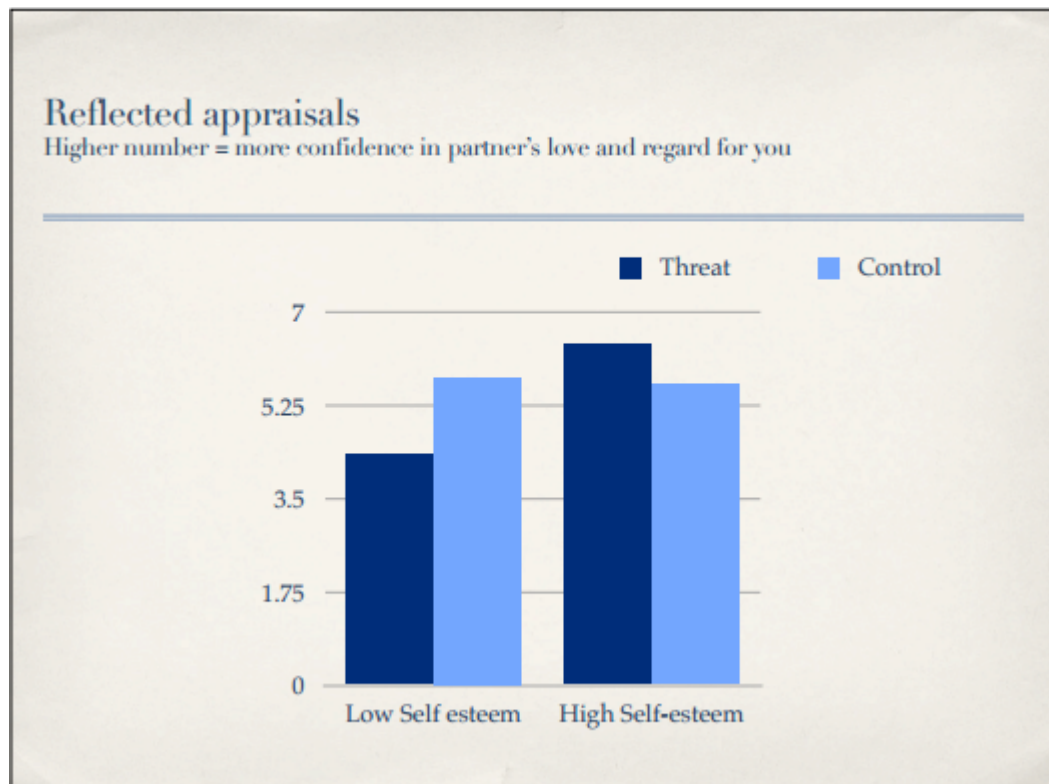
Compensation hypothesis:

- High self-esteem people come to believe that others accept them. They believe that the person is good to them. So when they think of their own self-doubts and shortcomings this person is their resource, or helps them feel better. So turning to that person is a resource. You compensate of your own self-doubt by thinking about how good that person is for you.

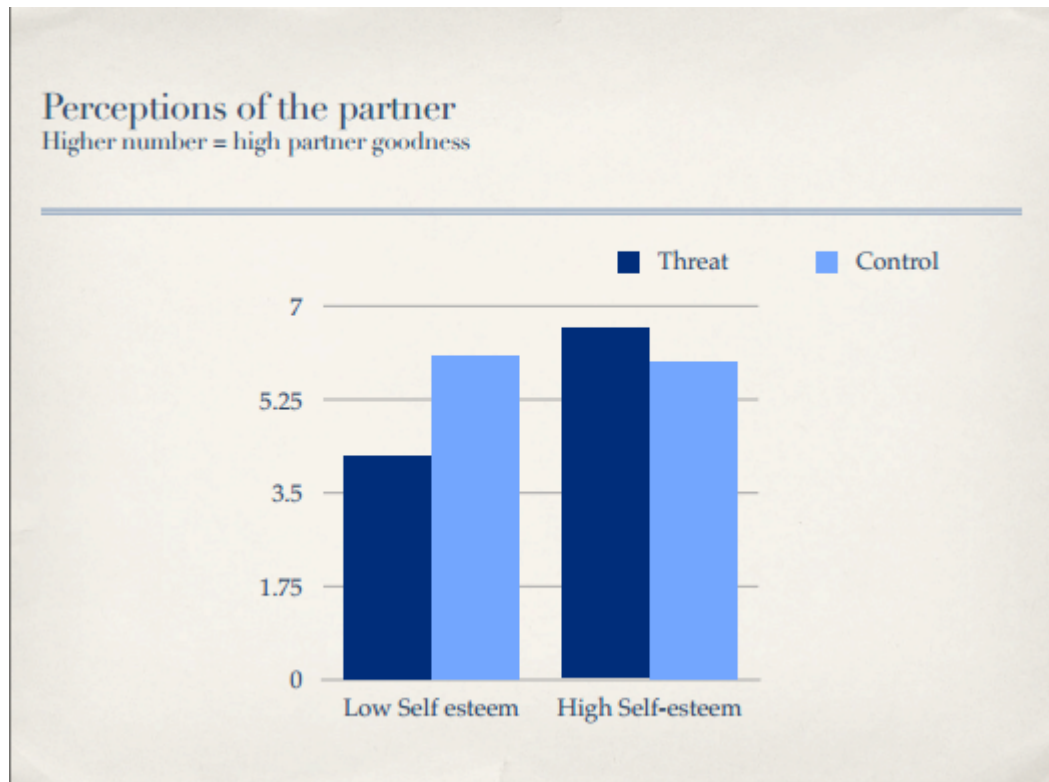
- So low self-esteem people believe in conditional acceptance. “The only reason she is with me, is because she hasn't found out yet about what a loser I am.”
- Whereas, high self-esteem people are more likely to believe in unconditional acceptance.

Guilt About an Earlier Transgression:

- In the first demonstration of this, Murray had people remember a time when you disappointed your partner and assessed how much confidence you have that your partner views you positively and your perception of your partner.
- What happens is high self-esteem people, when they think of their shortcomings, have even more confidence.
- For low self-esteem people (the dark bar is the threat condition) where they had to think of a time when they disappointed their partner. Their confidence in their partner's love for them drops.



- What's surprising is that their view of their partner drops. When low self-esteem people think they disappointed their partner, their view of their partner drops. It's almost like they try to protect themselves from the dump when they disappoint their partner.
 - Thus you devalue the person so it doesn't hurt when the rejection comes. So before they reject you, you decide that they weren't worth much anyway.



When Rejection Stings: How Self-Esteem Constrains Relationship-Enhancement Process

- Three different procedure in which we downgrade our partners
 - **Secret selves:**
 - In this study, in one condition, there are things about ourselves that our partners don't know, and that's okay you can go that way a long time. But in another condition, sooner or later your partner finds out.
 - **Unspoken complaints:**
 - In one condition they have minor irritations that people do with their partners and they set it up so that half of the people tick off all these things they do that would be irritating to their partner. Whereas in the control condition only 4 of the 19 things are irritating.
 - The idea is that in the irritating condition, you are being reminded that you do things that your partner doesn't like about you.
 - What they're saying in these situations is that high self-esteem people can roll with that but low self-esteem people have a fragile situation, and are in this relationship and it's great but they have a tentative idea that this may not work. When they are reminded of things like this, it reminds them of why it always fails.
 - **Fault finding partner study**
 - You and you partner come into the lab, and you are given a sheet and told to write down aspects of your partner's character that you dislike.
 - It even says that it's okay if you only come up with one, but try to come up with as many as you can.

- In the same room your partner is writing continuously. But he is given a question of writing items (up to 25) that he can think of that are found in your apartment.
- Low self-esteem people freak. They already doubt the relationship so when they see their partner writing like this, they are uncomfortable.

Threats to Acceptance:

- In each of these studies, the secret selves, the unspoken complaints, the partner finding fault, trigger a threat to acceptance and make you question whether your partner really accepts you.
- These do not diminish high self-esteem people feelings about their partner. People with high self-esteem have just as positive view of their partner as control but people with low self-esteem have a decrease in their feelings about their partner.
- It would not be shocking that they would worry that their partner would have a lower view of them. But not only do they think that my partner must not have a positive view of me, but it's also that the low self-esteem people then start lowering their rates of their partner.
- Low self-esteem people read more into acute problems and ambiguous situations. They have a history of being rejected so there is an ambivalence because at the same time they want to be closer.
 - They take those acute situations and interpret those in big ways. A high self-esteem person might look at an event, and be less likely to dive into the relationship based on this one thing. They are not as quick to make a big judgement about one instance. Whereas low self-esteem people are unsure and uncertain.
 - Some of the strategies they used is they derogate the partner. They also reduce closeness and increase distance not only physically but also psychologically. When they are worried that they are going to experience the rejection they back off.
 - So what's the irony? The irony is that the partners evaluate them just as positively as high self-esteem people's partners but they don't have confidence in that. Their partners are willing to forgive as much as those of high self-esteem people. They show as much satisfaction.
 - But for how long?
 - So if you go back to the battle of wills. In one scenario, you have low self-esteem but you are fortunate that your partner's positive regard for you can reassure you to the point where your confidence becomes higher. You become less concerned with analyzing the relationship every day and as you become more confident your partner's positive regard for you helps you become more secure and you don't sabotage the relationship.
 - The other scenario is that you are relentless in your insecurity and despite the fact that your partner loves you, you wear them down. And whenever you have doubts you distance yourself from that person and you do things that send the wrong message and you do end up getting rejected.
 - *On Thursday we will do attachment.*
 - *Shows YouTube video: The Strange Situation – Mary Ainsworth.*
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUUU>)

LECTURE 23: APRIL 4, 2013**Recap:**

- Last class was the sociometer hypothesis, relationship illusions, sad state of people with low self-esteem... A couple people asked at the end of last class: How do you know in the sense of the dilemma low self-esteem people face when there are ambiguous signals. I think part of the way Murray tried to set it up was in the recognition of the real world –it isn't always clear-cut what that means in terms of the behavior or expressions of the other person. What she tried to do is go with this in ways where we can say the other person hasn't done anything to you, but because we've instilled some ambiguity, how will you interpret that and what conclusions will you jump to?
- I think the secret-self study is especially useful because you don't even need the other person in the room because there, all you're doing is you're thinking about things about yourself your partner doesn't know and then thinking about the idea that the partner is eventually going to find those things out. It's nothing that the partner has done to indicate that he or she doesn't love you or doesn't have positive regard for you. There's nothing in that manipulation that sends a message from the other person; it's all about one's own internal, inner doubts and insecurities.
- Another thing that Murray/Holmes talked about is the issue "how do we calibrate between self-protection and seeking closeness?" Seeking closeness has risk. Let's give low self-esteem people a break for a moment – putting yourself out there is a risk for anyone. The question is how much do you want to put yourself out there? How vulnerable do you want to make yourself? How much do you want to invest? How communal do you want to be when there is the risk that the other person could exploit that? There is always risk. What they're saying is we have to work with that risk and calibrate it. Take a step or two forward, see how it goes. If that seems pretty good, I'll go a little further and a little further.
- On a first date, you might not disclose every secret in your life. They'll run the other way. Gradually over time, you might reveal more about yourself. What they might suggest for low self-esteem people, when there are those ambiguous symbols, you don't, based on one signal, jump to very big conclusions unless it's an unambiguous symbol. What's that scene in love actually when Colin Firth forgot something, comes back, and there's his girlfriend with his brother having sex. Not only is she cheating on him, she's cheating on him with his brother. This is not to say, "You shouldn't interpret that in a bad way. Don't jump to conclusions too quickly." With things like that, it is clear that you should run the other way.
- What they're talking about is there are a lot other things in daily life that are not that. Example: Your partner doesn't smile or laugh when you expect them to. "Uh oh, that's a really bad sign. Any day now he's gonna dump me." Maybe you get a signal and say, "I'm not sure what that means." Their suggestion instead of diagnosing the entire relationship based on that one little, discrete bit of information. Maybe I need to see over the next couple days if that fear I have is really warranted or maybe it really isn't. Maybe over the next couple days something else does happen, "Oh, today he did smile at me! Maybe it isn't so bad." Try to calibrate this in small increments. Take a step or two forward. If there is something you're fearful, step a little bit back, but you don't run the other way. One of the difficulties for people with low self-esteem is instead of taking a

little bit forward or a little bit back, when they think there's chance, sometimes they run towards them and overwhelm them and scare the hell out of them or they go the other extreme. So they're swinging too much to each extreme. That's what Murray and Holmes were saying trying to calibrate this thing between approaching and seeking closeness versus trying to protect the self.

ATTACHMENT

- Today we're going to talk about attachment. I showed you the video clip on Tuesday of the **strange situation** where the child is in the room with the mother and the experimenter comes in, the mom leaves and then the mom comes back. They're looking to see in these instances how does the child behave. What are some observations you have about the strange situation (things we were able to learn from that procedure)? Was the child happy during the entire clip? When was the child not happy? When the mom left, the child was not happy. And then what happened after that? How did the child settle down? When the mom returned, the child settles down. They're looking at the distress of separation, and they are also not only interested in that distress, but the reunion. If the child is great psychologically, the child won't cry – that's not true! A kid is going to cry when mom leaves and they're in a strange situation (especially a child at the age). But then the question is “will the child be soothed by the mother returning?” They show the child settling down, but that doesn't always happen. Once they get distressed, even the mother returning is not a source of comfort. Another thing they had was different toys and things in the room. They look to see how much the child will explore his or her environment. This is a new environment and they want to see if the child is willing to go to the other side of the room and try something different? It becomes important → is the mother there because there mother serves as a ‘secure base?’ That security you have with the mother allows you to go venture out a bit. The idea is “Mom is here, Mom provides security so I can go try something new” even at that young age. There are people in your life that support you as you try different things. What a difference that makes as a student, taking on different jobs, doing different things, that sense of ‘I can explore something –maybe it will work; maybe it won't.’ If it doesn't, there are people that will still accept you and not just say, “We knew you were a screw-up. We were waiting for it to happen and now you've shown that to us.”
- The notion of schemas (mental models) are important in attachment because they help us get through the day and navigate our social world. Close relationships are so fundamental to social well-being and that's what Larry was saying on the sociometer idea—that we have this need to belong; we're gaging whether that need is met, well it's not surprising then that we might develop mental models to regulate this basic human need of belongingness. So attachment tries to capture some of that in terms of this notion of the mental model of self to others.
- The notion from attachment theory is that it starts early on because the caregiver is so vital to a child's development.
- John Bowlby is the person who first started writing about this. He was asked by the World's Health Organization to do a report on juvenile delinquency in England. One of the things he noticed is among those adolescents in London over a number of years, who were juvenile delinquents, he went through the records and saw high incidence of maternal issues (either mother had died when the child was young, or something else had

happened to the mother). This led Bowlby to think about the bond between the mother and child how foundational it is to the impact, even in adolescence, in terms of the child's social development.

Features of an Attachment Relationship

- Features of the mother-child relationship. I mentioned there's a secure base that allows exploration. The child will maintain proximity – the child wants the mother in the room, will try to stay near the mother, and will protest separation from the mother. The attachment figure, the mother in this case, provides a safe haven, (a third feature they talk about in child attachment work) which is the idea that that person is a source of comfort when threatened.
- That picks up on the idea I was just saying that then if you do fail or bad things do happen to you in life, the safe haven idea is that this is some sort of resource that can buffer you, provide social support, and comfort in difficult times.
- Question Answered: We're getting into the issue of how stable is all of this? Even in the adult attachment literature, the person who launched all the research on adult attachment had read Bowlby, all the stuff on child attachment, was also very interested in psychoanalytic work and psychodynamic theorists, and he thought this is what adult experience is and adult relationships can be thought of in terms of attachment. When he first came out with this, it really took the field by storm. As I said on Tuesday, until the 1980's, there was hardly anything in social psychology about existing close relationships. In 1987 Phil Shaver comes out with adult attachment theory. People said, "Wow, an actual theory that might explain adult close relationships." He took the ideas of the child attachment literature from Bowlby and others and said, "This informs adult relationships." For Phil Shaver, it was more than that. Phil Shaver really saw the infant experience and the adult experience as one unbroken thread. I guess in 88/89 we had at UCLA for a visit. There were 15 of us sitting around a conference room at a table. Of course, all of us our reservation was 'this is all fine, but you seem to be emphasizing roots in infant attachment. It sounds like you're blaming it all on mom.' Look at any adult who's screwed up – it seems to be mom! Do you really think adult psychopathology, adult separation and divorce; all the things of adulthood come back to the mother-infant relationship? He was saying yeah at the time. We pushed him further. Two of the faculty in the room knew them and turned to them and said you know my mother - case closed, great example! I needed analysis for 5 years because of my mother. That was the thinking 1987, 88, 89. Hopefully by the end of today's class, I'll give you a sense of how people have modified that thinking. It was Professor Baldwin who was here and a graduate student of mine who is a professor at Laval and they did studies that actually challenged the conventional wisdom of this one attachment model.
- For Phil Shaver, at the time, you would have one attachment model. You would either feel securely, anxiously, or avoidantly attached to mom based on how she treated you as an infant. Whichever of the three you had, that was it! All future relationships for the rest of your life were determined by that – that was the thinking in 1980. Whatever Mom laid down as the groundwork, you would apply that mental model to every future significant relationship.

Strange Situation

What are these three features of the relationship? These are the three:

- **Secure:** caregiver sensitive and responsive to the infant's signals. The infant would seek comfort upon reunion.
- (In fact there's another construct the developmental people talk about called **maternal sensitivity** – they think that's an important precursor or setup to attachment security, the idea that the mother sensitive – is she clued in? Is she picking up on the right signals, catching your signals and being responsive in an appropriate way? Is mom responding when needed but not smothering you either? The infant is allowed to explore a bit, but the mother provides enough security and protection.)
- Those children who were classified as anxious and ambivalent – their caregivers tended to be inconsistent. Sometimes, the caregiver was providing support when needed, but other times when needed, it wasn't there. And other times, when it wasn't needed the caregiver was inserting herself in the situation. The infant, they described, became preoccupied because he/she isn't being reassured. Mom isn't there reliably when needed. "I'm not sure if Mom will be there. Is she gonna be there? Is she going to help me?"
- Those who were characterized as **avoidant**, their caregivers tended to be very distant and rejecting. The idea was that the infant learns, "the caregiver wasn't there for me, don't even turn that way – it's not a resource." Those children, strangely enough, were not as distressed when mom left the room. "Well, what's the big deal? Mom isn't a source of comfort anyways, so Mom leaving doesn't change things all that much."

Mental Models Of Attachment

- Then as they developed the strange situation, they could classify children. The majority of children tended to be securely attached. Roughly 60 to 65 % were classified as secure, 20 to 25% as avoidant and roughly 15% as anxious/ambivalent.
- There's a further breakdown, go take child development and hopefully they'll explain all that to you.

Child-Caregiver Versus Adult Relationships

- A couple of things about child vs. adult. Two things to think about when we move from child to adult relationships. **The child requires physical contact to feel secure.** Adults can have a sense of security just by what a partner or person says, or even by remembering (even when the person is not there) times when the partner has been there.
- Adults seem to have greater ability to draw on a **sense** of security from an attachment figure whereas infants that physical contact seems to be important. Also, **adult relationships are typically reciprocal.** Mother-infant → it's about the mother meeting the infant's basic physical needs whereas in adult relationships, it's more of a reciprocal relationship.
- Either way, they argue that it all comes down to the sense of **felt security** whether we're talking about an infant, an adolescent, or someone older. Do you have this sense of felt security? The sense that you can explore and try things and someone will be there for you? The sense that when things go badly, there's someone you can turn to during those difficult times? That sense of felt security because of this attachment figure?

Which of the following best describes your feelings?*Hazan & Shaver, 1987*

- I'm going to give you the three paragraphs from the original Hazan-Shaver attachment measure. You would read these three paragraphs and choose which one best characterizes you.
 1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.
 2. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend upon them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.
 3. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.
- Of the three infant attachment ones, which would you label these? Secure, avoidant, anxious. They simply wrote these three paragraphs.
- The Rocky Mountain News, the main newspaper at the time in Denver, contacted Phil Shaver because he was a loneliness researcher and they wanted to do something about that. He said, "Actually, what I think is really important is not loneliness per say, but adult attachment." They let Hazan and Shaver put something in their Sunday magazine for the newspaper they got people to endorse which of these three describe you and fill out these other questions and send them in to their lab. That was the very first exploration of adult attachment. As I said, people in the field loved this because:
 1. There was a theory behind it.
 2. All you have to do is give people these three paragraphs and you can classify them and correlate them to anything you can think of and write a paper on it.
- Within the next 3 or 4 years, there were over 200 papers posted about this. In 1993, I was doing a seminar on close relationships and I wrote to Phil Shaver and he sent me a list of over 200 papers different people had published using this. It was just huge

Correlates of Insecure Attachment Models

- What were some of the correlates they were finding? The anxiously attached tended to be higher in jealousy, have low self-esteem, showed more obsession, more indiscriminate self-disclosure, and more procrastination.
- Procrastination is not specific to romantic relationships, but related to all your personal goals. Anxiously attached people were procrastinating about doing anything in their daily life. "Should I wear red or blue? It would become a huge issue in the morning. Should I take this course or that course? Should I go for the sushi today? I'm not sure," and they would stand there for fifteen minutes whereas the securely attached people would stand there for a minute, "Do I want sushi today? Hmm, Yeah, I'll take it." Procrastination is partly driven by perfectionism. It often comes about because we want to get it right, but we're so afraid of making a mistake that they become procrastinators.
- The anxious are higher in jealousy – you're out with friends and your partner laughed at your girlfriend's joke, "Uh uh, he's flirting with her, he's sleeping with her! He couldn't just laugh at her joke!" They tend to be low in self-esteem. Think about some of the

findings on Tuesday by Murray and Holmes –how often was it low self-esteem? Well, low self-esteem people were probably often high in attachment anxiety. They obsess and just as they may be jealous and overreact to a negative cue, when they engage in approach behavior (when they're trying to get close), they can run too much toward you (**indiscriminant self disclosure**). Anxiously attached people are likely to share way too much.

- I just remembered the worst instance of self-disclosure I ever experienced – it was at Pearson airport, I was waiting to get on the plane, and this guy just starts talking to me. The guy had been imprisoned, he was telling me about why he was in prison and he was telling me about his mother and how that all worked out. And then he goes further about prison life – it's all men, but you have urges and you have needs. "You know, no." That was a moment where I thought "maybe Phil Shaver was right and maybe we can blame it on his mother. So we have that indiscriminant self-disclosure.
- Avoidantly-attached people say to themselves, "I can't count on people! People will just let you down. I know that! I'm smart, I figured it out, I'm not going to put myself out there." So avoidantly attached people don't put themselves out there so they're high in uncommitted sexual relations. Also, because they're on their own and they think others are going to let them down, they're more hostile toward others, relatively speaking. If you have to do it all on your own, substances might help to medicate and help you get through the day. They're actually more likely to use alcohol and other substances to reduce their tension. So these are just some of the early findings on attachment.

Distress and Coping Responses to War

- One early study Mario Mikulincer if any of you are interested in the topic of adult attachment, this is the guy. This guy has published more papers in the last twenty years than any person in social psychology. Most of his papers are about adult attachment. One of his early papers on this, he was looking at Israeli students during the Gulf War looking at those who were living in dangerous areas versus less dangerous. They knew how many scud missiles came to their respective neighborhoods. In some neighborhoods, there were a lot of scud missiles that came in and other neighborhoods, there were less.
- What he found is that the anxiously attached were more distressed during this period while the avoidantly attached exhibited more hostility and more illness symptoms. Some people were wondering "is that a sign by trying to deal with it all on your own, does it get under the skin and make it hard to cope with this distress?" In terms of how they cope with stress, securely attached people in this study were more likely to seek support from others. Anxiously attached people were more likely to just try to focus on their emotions. Avoidantly attached people were more likely to use a coping strategy called **distancing** where they try to get away from everyone else, "Get away from me; let me deal with this by myself."
- These seemed pretty logical given the ideas underlying attachment theory.

Physiological Responses to Stress

Feeney & Kirkpatrick, 1996

- One issue that came up about this is (as I was just saying) how does this get under the skin? One interesting study actually tried to get back to the strange situation, which I showed Tuesday with the mother and infant. What would it be like to do something like

this with adults? What if you were in the lab with your dating partner and then your dating partner had to leave the room and we did something to stress you. Back then, the typical stressor in the lab was math problems that you had to do really fast. This was before they ever knew about stereotype threat. “Let’s give female students math problems; get their heart rate up; get them all stressed...” But, the dating partner is in the other room.

- Does this separation of the partner (the supposed attachment figure) actually lead to physiological distress? It did for people who were anxious and avoidant in their attachment. It didn’t for the secure people. What the authors suggested is for adults, even if the other person steps out of the room, you understand that they’re just down the hall. When you’re a baby and Mom leaves the room, Mom’s gone – she’s just gone. Whereas for adults, when the other person steps out of the room, there’s still that sense they’re in the building (they’re not Elvis), you can still count on them and they’ll be back soon. **They suggest that knowledge of the partner down the hall helped those who were securely attached.**
- Also, there’s work suggesting **if you’re securely attached, you don’t even see stressful events as stressful.** When you face some daily challenge or difficulty, just that sense that there are others available *if* you need them makes it easier right now to cope with what’s in front of you. The funny thing about that is if you have secure attachment figures, if you have people you believe you can count on, you might not even have to turn to them as much. Just knowing you can turn to them makes it easier for you to make it personally, individually to deal with the situation. Just knowing you’ve got that in reserve makes it easier for you on your own to cope with the stressor.

Avoidants

- One issue that came up early on – how do you characterize people who are avoidantly attached? The developmental people were starting to see with children that there is a real mix of who these kids are. The adult attachment people also started wondering how much are the avoidantly attached people just generally disinterested in others “Uh, I don’t care what any of them think” versus they are so convinced that they’ll be rejected by others that they just crawl under a rock because of that strong feeling of rejection.

Attachment Dimensions and Types

Brennan’s reformulation of the Bartholomew & Horowitz attachment types

Fear of Closeness & Dependency	Anxiety about	Relationships
NO	NO	YES
NO	Secure	Preoccupied
YES	Dismissing	Fearful

- What emerged was a splitting of this from three categories to four. What they did is they said, there are probably 2 dimensions of attachment: anxiety (how much do you worry

about your close relationships; I worry a lot about my relationships; I worry a lot about how people feel about me). That's across the top. The avoidance idea → you can think of avoidance as a fear of closeness and dependency. People who are avoidantly attached → they're afraid of getting close and dependent because IF you get close you get dependent, you're going to be disappointed. People are just going to let you down. I'm talking about this categorically right now (oh, people do this, they're avoidant), but in fact these things are continuous and most of us at times might worry and at times we may be a little concerned about how close or dependent I should get in this situation.

- What they're looking at, though, is that some people may have a very strong **fear of closeness and dependency** and some people may have a very, very strong sense of worry about what others feel about them. When they cross these, they said some people may have that anxiety (worry), and that's the people that are preoccupied about relationships.
- Some people may have that fear of closeness and dependency and be kind of standoffish, distant, and they call them **dismissive**. They're actually some people who have both the worry and this fear of closeness and dependency. They call those people **fearful** in attachment. Usually the people who have both of these going on simultaneously are people who come from really harsh childhood environments. Often there's either physical abuse or substance abuse among the parents. That is one place where you're likely to see very harsh childhood environments carrying over into an adult sense of anxiety and avoidance, whereas preoccupied and dismissive are more labile – there's more movement there. People are more likely to move in and out of those. Someone may be preoccupied at one point in their life and they might move into the secure area another time. Their childhood environments were probably not so extreme to lock them in that much. I want to be careful when I say 'lock them in.' I don't want you to walk away saying, "Professor Lydon said if there was substance abuse in the home, there's no changing you – there's no help!" It's saying that the chances of that are much greater. If you had an extremely harsh childhood, it's going to be that much harder to change your mental models. If Mom was a bit standoffish, but she fed you and changed you and didn't totally reject you. But other people come along in your life and you learn new things (sort of a punch line by the end of today's class).
- This is sort of the short version of what you would get in an advanced interpersonal relationships class about attachment. I put this up as reminder that although a lot of research on attachment is about individual differences (some people are high in anxiety versus low in anxiety; high in avoidance versus low in avoidance). That's individual differences – it's a personality type of thing. Attachment theory also says the attachment system works in a certain normative way for all of us. Individual differences may give a better idea of who might show some of the specific patterns of behavior.
- What they talk about is whenever there's a stress or threat to us (whether physical or psychological), they argue that the attachment system gets activated. When we're under threat what gets activated is this sense of "is there an attachment figure available? Am I on my own out here? Or do I have that sense that there are others who will help me and support me?" Whenever any of us experience threat or stress, the attachment theory kicks in at an implicit, unconscious level we're thinking about "do I have any support available (anyone to help me, an attachment figure, available)?" There are all sorts of factors that will influence my answer to that question.

- If my answer to that question right now is yes, well that will bring down my sense of distress. If the answer is yes, just knowing that will lower my stress level a bit. If, for whatever reason my answer is "I'm not sure." Unconsciously, it's not just kicking in and I'm unsure, then I'm likely to be vigilant looking either physically in my environment or mentally in my head whether there's anyone I can turn to or count on for acceptance. If in this quick implicit, unconscious process I move beyond that uncertainty and conclude, "Actually, I probably am on my own here," I'm likely to adopt more self-reliant coping strategies.
- As you can imagine, attachment anxiety and avoidance can fit in here but what attachment researchers want us to appreciate is that any of us under threat or when stressed, the attachment system should kick in. And then it becomes a matter of, in this given situation, am I able to bring to mind some attachment figure that provides a sense of security? If the answer is yes, down-regulate the stress. If no, then I start to do a search for someone I can turn to. If the answer is I can't, I engage in self-reliance and distancing.

Now I'm gonna show you a few clips of Jenny and lieutenant Dan. Then I'm gonna ask you to analyze in terms of their attachment. Are they secure, pre-occupied, dismissive, or fearful? Then I'll come back to this issue → how much is childhood attachment destiny? Or can life, life's circumstances, or the close relationships you form in adolescence and adulthood make any difference in altering your sense of attachment? We'll come back and see how Jenny and lieutenant Dan turn out in the end.

Video: Jenny's Dad <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qq5NWgSa0iA>

Video: Jenny Drugs <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-J7FMZwxdw>

Video: Lieutenant Dan <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef3WKvMKfsI>

Video: Proposal http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-47cwN0w_c

Attachment analysis of Jenny and Lieutenant Dan:

- They're both super secure right? (Joke). I knocked out ¼ so you have a 1/3 chance of getting it right. Lieutenant Dan is showing substance abuse (how many bottles did he discard in like a minute there?) In another clip I was going to show you around New Year's and he brings over two prostitutes and it goes very badly. What is good about that scene is you see a lot of hostility in the end in his character. What about Jenny? What did you pick up about Jenny's father? He's abusive. She's running into the field. The mother died and the father is abusive.
- 20 years later what is Jenny doing? Abusing herself and then she's suicidal. Where would you put Jenny in terms of these? Fearful. I'm realizing as I say that (of course it's a movie, though), the conclusion today will be contrary to what I said 15 minutes about fearful → that it's very difficult to change. It is very difficult to change, but in Hollywood you can do anything. Even in the real world, even fearful might change. Jenny, given incredibly harsh childhood environment, is probably in that fearful cell. You see that in terms of how she's not just doing some substance abuse, she's abusing herself pretty severely and she's actually suicidal.

- Given the way Jenny and Lieutenant Dan are, as I was saying earlier today, for quite a while, attachment theory would have assumed this would be set in stone. She’s fearful now and she’s fearful to the grave. He’s dismissive; he’s going to continue to be dismissive. But then there was Professor Baldwin’s work where they were administering attachment measures finding if they gave the same measure to people twice, 30% were categorized with a different attachment category the second time they got the questionnaire. It got to the point when he and his collaborator put the word out to anyone who had attachment measures at two points in time and say, “Send us your data.”
- The other thing remarkable about this was the 30% people re-categorized kept coming up over and over again regardless of when the second assessment was. Time 1 might be Jan. 2012 and time 2 might be Jan. 2013. In some studies, time 2 was June 2012 or February 2012 (6 weeks after time 1!) They kept getting this sort of change. I have here too, using people’s time 1 attachment, they were only able to correctly predict 63% of those people in terms of their category in time 2.
- There were a couple interpretations of this. The attachment people’s interpretations, another Canadian psychologist Kim Bartholomew, suggested it was a problem in measurement (giving self-report questionnaires were unreliable). She advocated doing semi-structured interviews to get at what your true attachment is. There might be something to that.
- Professor Baldwin was coming from a social cognitive standpoint and he just didn’t buy the idea that adults only had one model of attachment available in memory. He thought by the time you’re an adult, chances are you will have had significant others in your life that relate to you in more than just one way. What he did is he had people list the ten most impactful relationships in their life and rate those relationships in terms of attachment models. What he found is people who were securely attached, as you would expect 70% of their relationships out of the ten they described as secure. But look, people who were avoidantly attached 57 of their ten were secure. People who were anxiously attached, 60% of their 10 they felt secure with. What Baldwin was suggesting is we have available in memory secure, anxious, and avoidant relationships. Mom might have been one way, your big sister might have been another way with you, your best friend could have been another way, your piano teacher might have been another way.

General Attachment	Relationship Secure	Attach Avoid	Model Anx
Secure	70	22	8
Avoid	57	30	12
Anx	60	21	19

- You might have all sorts of experiences with people that represent these different attachment models. So the avoidance – what set them apart was that even though only 30% of their relationships were avoidant, that was a higher percentage of avoidance than people who are secure or anxious. Even though the anxious reported only 19% of relationships being anxiously attached, that was higher than secure and avoidance had, having only 8 or 12%.

- That said, some attachment people questioned “are these 10 relationships really that significant that attachment relationships are special and you probably would only have 2, 3, 4 people who really should be called **attachment figures** (for another day)?”
- Other researchers found when people are applying for a marriage license, 80% report a secure attachment model. Yet, some of you might recall earlier today → in a general population, only 62% are securely attached. The suggestion is that when you're getting married, if you don't feel good when you're getting your marriage license, you never will probably. Even 20% who are chronically insecure, when you're getting married that's a time where you'll experience more of a sense of relationship security.
- They also found that securely attached people that stay in their dating relationships, most of them are still secure a year later because that significant relationship in their life is still intact. But, when they looked at securely attached people who broke up, half of them after the breakup were no longer reporting attachment security. All of this is suggesting there may be more malleability; more give. That actual relationship experience may alter our sense of attachment security.
- If this is true, then if you have more than one attachment model available in memory, it should be possible to prime different attachment relationships. If you have more than one available in memory, you should be able to prime different ones. You cannot prime what is not there. If you don't have it, it can't be triggered. Priming is about triggering or bringing to mind something that is already in your head. This study was built on the idea that more than one attachment model was available in memory. They primed either warm/supportive versus critical/judgmental attachment relationships. These were female undergrads that had to go through a guided visualization, imagining themselves facing an unplanned pregnancy. These were mostly 19, 20 year old undergraduates at McGill. So you're at McGill, you're at that age. Just picture yourself closing your eyes, listening to someone guiding you through these steps. “I'm late. I'm due... I'm overdue! What's going on? I'm a little concerned. Time for the pregnancy tests, results are positive. Turn off the tape recorder. Answer these questions. How distressed are you while thinking about that? It turns out if you were subliminally primed with the words on the left, you reported less distress about the prospect of an unplanned pregnancy. In fact, the words on the left were different even from a neutral control group. The words on the right, you're worse off than that neutral control group in terms of how stressed you are and in terms of how you would cope with unplanned pregnancy.

• helpful	• critical
• supportive	• nagging
• caring	• rejecting
• accepting	• hurtful
• loving	• distant

Video: Jenny dying <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISJ0VsnCvDo>

- I'll give you the closing 2 minutes and we can talk about that next class. Next week is going to be about what makes us happy and what doesn't make us happy. This will be a good lead in. Next week, we'll start with what impact does Forrest have on Jenny and Lieutenant Dan?

LECTURE 24: APRIL 9, 2013***The two concepts last week:***

- Attachment and relationship illusions
- Why do illusions benefit relationships? Maybe it would create a disaster since it's all built on illusions?
 - **Buffering hypothesis:** illusions help withstand inevitable negative relationship events.
 - **Reflected appraisal hypothesis:** individuals come to see themselves through their partner's eyes
 - **Transformation hypothesis:** link faults with virtues.
- Attachment had two dimensions:
 - You could be high or low on anxiety or avoidance.
 - If you cross them you get four boxes.
 - If you are high in anxiety but low in avoidance, you are preoccupied.
- **Subjective Well-Being**
 - *Today and Thursday we will wrap up this course on the study of subjective well-being, happiness and life satisfaction.*
 - This is an area that has exploded in the last ten or fifteen years.
 - We'll talk about what we mean when we talk about subjective well-being, the Minnesota twin study and how heritable is subjective well-being and how much does life experience matter.
 - Today he'll talk through some of the research on money and happiness and what are the tentative conclusions. On Thursday we will talk more about how much can life choices can impact people's subjective wellbeing and the concept of miswanting which is wanting the wrong thing. How good are we in knowing what will make us happy. We will look into the profiles of happy people.
- **How Do People Assess Subjective Well-Being:**
 - The three measures are: life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect.
 - They are all explicit measures.
 - There has been recent work on measuring the implicit measure of mood but most of the subjective wellbeing literature is about the explicit measures.
 - Life satisfaction asks us to step back and make a judgement on how my life is and the things that influence my judgement might be very different then what is associated with my daily experience of being happy.
 - In studies that examine this, they will ask how happy you have been in the last 24 hours, or will simply page you to report how happy you are.
 - I hate to tell you this but when parents are paged, there is a stronger positive correlation between momentary happiness and sitting and watching television, versus their momentary happiness and doing something with their child.
 - But if you look at life satisfaction, it's completely different.
 - The more people are able to spend time with their child, the higher their life satisfaction.
 - This tells us that we will have to look more carefully at the different between the two things.

- **Construct Validity of SWB:**
 - How valid are these measures?
 - They are not simply due to social desirability
 - It's not a matter of people giving responses that experimenters are looking for. There are ways to measure how much a person tries to give the right answer. So it does not seem to be simply giving the researcher what you think they want to hear.
 - Secondly, self-reports tend to correlate with peer and family reports.
 - There have been studies where your friends and family members rate your subjective well-being, and it correlates with the ratings you give about your subjective well-being. Adds a sense of validity to your reports.
 - Recent life events seem to be associated with SWB.
 - It's more of a question of how long-lasting the impacts of life events are.
 - This has been a big contentious area of research, but recent events do seem to move people and it adds to the confidence of their self-reports
 - Also the healthier people are the happier they are.
 - Measures of well-being is subjective
 - The whole point of this is what is your subjective sense of how happy or sad or satisfied you are with your life. Your subjective judgement is what they are trying to study. We are not trying to say that given the conditions of this country/village you cannot be happy. Researchers are saying that people might still be happy, so what are they feeling/saying?
- **Most People Are Happy:**
 - If you are interested in this topic you can Google Ed Deener. He is an experimental social psychologist. The most memorable experiment he did was the study of kids at Halloween and the bowl of treats.
 - The manipulation was that behind the bowl was a mirror. If you see yourself in the mirror, it makes you objectively self-aware.
 - He then studied happiness and SWB.
 - One of the things he noted was that most people are actually happy.
 - If you look within the US and international survey most people are above neutral point.
 - Why is that?
 - Some of the suggestions is that it might be functional for us to have a **positive set point**. That way, we are more likely to notice things that are different from our set point. We will be quicker to react because they are in contrast to our base line. As a result we might evolve coping strategies.
 - A positive set point is adaptive because it motivates us to pursue goals more.
 - It may be adaptive because happy people are mating people.
 - Set point is sometimes thought of as something that is fixed. It's not that we have a set point that we're locked into, but that we have a soft set point that through

genetics and early experience, there is room to move us up and down. Our sense of happiness is not fixed.

- So why is it worth studying SWB?
- *Shows us YouTube video of Living Life in the Nun Study:*
 - David Snowdon studied these people because they lived for decades in a homogenous environment.
 - Secondly, they had all these records about the nuns. He had a confidence in what environment they lived in.
 - He approached the nuns about his study and they thought that their lives were about education and this is another chance for learning to happen. The agreement was that these nuns would allow their brains to be autopsied and these order of nuns signed up.
 - Snowdon did this and discovered that many of these women became nuns in the 1920s and '30s. For many of these girls, this was the path to achieve higher education.
 - He studied Alzheimer's, but there were all sorts of spin offs. One of the things he did was he coated these short essays with positive emotion. How much positive emotion is expressed in the essays that the girls had to write back in the '20s?
 - And then he asks: how much does positive emotion matter? He realizes that it does matter. These women who were high on happiness lived on average seven years longer.
 - Positive emotion at age 22, predicts how long you will live.
 - Is it genetic?
- **The Heritability of Happiness:**
 - Lykken and Tellegen looked at monozygotic twins versus dizygotic twins.
 - The numbers on the slide are correlation statistics.
 - If two things are positive correlated you get a (+1). A (-1) would mean a negative correlation, high on one axis, lower on the other. The closer you get to 0, the less of a correlation.
 - In social psychology, people's behaviour and positive attitude was correlated by 0.3
 - If you square the correlation, it is equal to how much variance is accounted for in that relationship. So if you square 0.3, it means that 9% percent of the variability of a person's behaviour could be predicted by their attitude.
 - So the twin study found that the stability of SWB was 0.6.
 - Knowing how happy you are today we can now predict what your happiness will be like a few years from now with this value.
 - The correlation in predicting SWB from MZ twin was .48
 - So we can predict one twin's happiness from another twin's happiness.
 - So how much of what is stable about happiness is heritable?
 - 80% of what is stable could be due to genetic influence.
 - Often, if you are reading a chapter in a book, or an article by someone who wants to make mention about heritability and happiness you might see a statement about 80%. But it's 80% of what is stable. If you want to know how much of Twin 1's happiness today can predict Twin 2's happiness ten years from now, you take 0.48 and you square it. You get

24. So 24% of the variance in people's reports of happiness could be accounted for by this. So these are two different questions.
- The fact is a bunch of it is not stable. So if we say that we are not going to consider anything due to change or life events, then it is up the portion of genetic availability.
 - So we can only say with some confidence that 24% of this is genetic.
- How much does Mary Kate's SWB at 20 predict Ashley's at 30?
 - 24%.
 - But how much of Mary Kate's is stable?
 - 36% of her happiness is stable. Of that 36%, 80% could be shared by Ashley.
- **Can Money Buy Happiness?**
 - Is wealth associated with subjective well-being and does it increase subjective well-being?
 - The difference between the two questions is that the first one is the association/correlation factor but doesn't tell you whether wealth influences subjective well-being. The second is asking if wealth is causal in increasing subjective well-being.
 - **Wealth:**
 - We know that people who are wealthy live longer, are healthier, have better mental health, have less incidence of clinical depression and fewer stressful life events. Wealth is associated with a lot of good things.
 - **Poor:**
 - People who are poor are more likely to drop out of school, be victims of violent crime, and be faced with teen pregnancy.
 - **Are People in Wealthier Countries Happier than People in Poorer Countries?**
 - But then within countries, are wealthier people happier than poor people?
 - It does seem that people in wealthy countries are happier on average than people in poorer countries but there are a number of hypotheses because people in wealthier countries tend to have different political systems, human rights etc., so we don't know why wealthy countries are on average happier than poorer countries.
 - **Individuals Within Countries:**
 - If you look at studies involving thousands of people, the correlation between income and happiness is weak. It is statistically significant but the magnitude is small. In one paper the correlation was 0.13. If we square this it means around 2% of the variance in people in SWB might have been attributed to their income level.
 - However, even though there are weak correlations you can look at the data in another way.
 - If you look at a life satisfaction measure and say what percentage of people are above midpoint, 95% of the rich are and 65% of the poor are. So the correlations are small but if you break it down there is some meaningful difference.
 - These are subjective experiences; you can find people in poorer communities finding life satisfaction.

- The other way this can be looked at is what percentage of people are reporting more negative emotion than positive emotion. In Canada, its 16% of the poor and only 4% of the rich. So the poor are four times more likely to have this negative greater than positive affect. And across nineteen countries, the poor are three times more likely to experience negative affect being greater than positive affect.
- **Link Between Income and Happiness is Stronger Within Poor Countries:**
 - This makes sense since in poor countries there is an increase in living standard by moving from poor to rich.
 - There are also stronger effects among the poor within a nation.
 - Even in western countries if you go from very poor to somewhat poor, you will have an increase in SWB.
 - Then what tends to happen is that it flattens out.
 - In most of these studies, one of the difficulties you have is you have people who are in the middle range of income. You have very few in the high end. Is there something different about people in the high end?
 - Yes. Very poor to somewhat poor you get an increase, somewhat poor to middle class you get an increase, and then you get a flat line between middle class to super-rich. You don't see increases. But if you push all the way out, the super-rich were on average 1.0 higher in terms of life satisfaction.
 - This doesn't tell us whether the wealth led to the higher life satisfaction.
 - Secondly, we have to be careful when we look at judgements of life satisfaction that is sometimes different than when you ask people during the day and ask how happy they are right now.
 - There is something called **the focusing illusion**. There was a study done on whether people in California were happier than people in Ohio. We think that they should be happier because the weather is better. If you get people to focus on that then they realize that they are supposed to be happier. If they don't realize this, you actually don't see any difference in happiness between people in California and Ohio.
 - Being poor does not undermine happiness if you are a poor student.
- **Change in Income:**
 - Two studies did not find an effect in change in income predicting changes in well-being. However, there was a Russian study that did find a significant effect.
 - The Brickman study was for years almost like a Gospel in social psychology. A year after certain events people return to their baseline level of happiness.
 - There was a study done on lottery winners and football pool winners and it was found that they are slightly happier a year later.
 - It could also be the reverse; it could be that happiness helps you make money.
- **Does Happiness Increase Income?**
 - As long as you don't start out really poor then happiness can increase income. If you look at working class or middle class young people, the happier they are the more their income increases over the next several years. So happy people make more money.
 - There is the issue of why you want the money.

- **Materialism:**
 - If your goal in life is to make money it will undermine your happiness. This is the dark side of the American Dream.
 - They bought the BMW, and they have the 3M\$ Mill Valley house and they still wake up in the morning and say 'I don't feel good about myself'.
 - Well maybe it's not that your goal is to make money but you need to ask yourself why you want to make that money.
 - The negative motives for money are to have a house and cars better than others and to prove to others that you are not stupid.
 - But people have positive motives like wanting to have a feeling of security, just compensation of effort and to be able to support the family.
 - It is those negative motives of money that correlate to lower subjective well-being. If you are striving to make money for these sorts of reasons you are likely to be less happy.
 - What if you are able to attain the goal of making money? What they found was that people who considered money important as a goal were slightly less satisfied twenty years later. There was a slight decrease in satisfaction for the average person. The effect becomes stronger the poorer you are and the effect becomes weaker the richer you are.
 - This makes sense. If your goal is to make money and you make it then that's good. If the goal is to make money and you kind of make money you're probably not that happy.
 - If you place importance on making money and you are not making money, then you are not meeting your goal and you are less satisfied. If making money is important, for the average person it will slightly decrease their life satisfaction.
 - If you have a goal to make money and you are rich, doesn't mean you are happier it just means you don't have the same decrease in happiness.
 - If you have a bunch of rich people and some placed importance in making money and others didn't there is no difference in how happy they are. If you are rich, then it really doesn't matter. The fact that it was important to make money doesn't bring you down but it also doesn't bring you any further up. Among the rich people, those who thought that making money was important in life and those who didn't are equivalent.
- **Individuals:**
 - People who have money are happier. People who seek money in general are unhappy. People who seek money for higher order values such as security do not suffer because of that goal to seek money. Money is associated with health which is associated with a sense of security.

LECTURE 25: APRIL 11, 2013**Exam Info:**

65 to 70 multiple-choice questions, a dozen or so 2-point questions. Part I is standard multiple-choice questions and then questions that require more time and thought (might have a couple blanks or questions that might say each of the following is true, except...).

Note:

Essay grades should be in the Thursday before finals.

If you're getting a B or better in PSYC 215, you should be fine in Interpersonal Relationships. Maybe if you get a C you'll still do okay.

Clicker Quiz Question Recap:

- After having bonus questions that have half, three-quarters of the class get right, I did not expect this. In a way, this is good because this is feedback to me. The reason I was asking this was because it was not avoidance; it was something else. I can find out which things were not clear.

	General	Relationship	Attach	Model
Attachment	Secure		Avoid	Anx
Secure	70		22	8
Avoid	57		30	12
Anx	60		21	19

- What Baldwin did was he assessed the general attachment style: are you securely attached, avoidantly attached, or anxiously attached? That's essentially your attachment to relationships in general, or sometimes some people would call it your chronic attachment (almost like a personality variable). Then he asked, "List ten people in your life (family, friends, etc...)" and then he asks, "What sort of attachment do you have with each of these ten people?" Those numbers are percentages. The surprising finding was no matter what your general attachment is, whether it's secure, avoidant, or anxious, the majority of your ten relationships you say, "Oh, I'm securely attached to that person, I'm securely attached to that person." Avoidants had more avoidant relationships than anyone else (30%). Similarly, the anxiously attached, 19% of their relationships were anxiously attached, which is a low number, but it is more than other people had.
- Some attachment researchers look at this and might say: How significant are these ten relationships? Maybe you feel securely attached to a bunch of people that aren't that close to you and the three or four most important relationships you feel insecurely attached to.
- What Baldwin and others took away from this is that most of us have probably had significant relationships in which we've had different attachment relationships. Most of us have probably had more than one type of attachment relationship in our life. Even if

you have a certain attachment to Mom, you might have a different attachment to a best friend, sibling, or romantic partner.

SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING (SWB)

Today, we are going to wrap up on subjective wellbeing and wrap up the course.

DO LIFE EVENTS MATTER?

If happiness is not all about our genes (somewhat about our genes, the twin study suggested), we might think “then it’s about life events”.

Life Events and Individual SWB

Suh, Diener, & Fujita, 1996

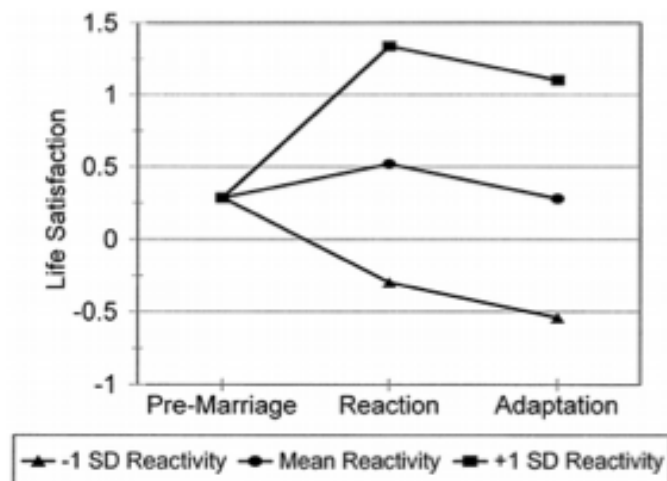
- One study with life events with students over a two-year period, what they found was recent events based on attachment in the last three months were associated with students’ subjective wellbeing, but events that happened 4 or more months out were not associated with students’ SWB. This was actually a bit of a surprise. “Oh, life events should matter a lot.”
- But then people returned to the idea of **set point theory**. The idea of adaptation and set point theory is that events happen to us (good things might make us feel good for a little while, bad things might make us feel bad for a little while), but generally we are very adaptive and what we do is eventually we return to whatever our own personal baseline is. So that by adulthood, because of our genetic makeup and our early life experiences, we have a certain level of happiness.
- From 0 to 10 you might be a 9, your friend might be an 8, the person living across the hall might be a 7. Set point theory is saying that's your set point. Events might move you around for a little while, but after time passes, you’ll adapt to that and come back to wherever your set point or baseline is. If you come into a lot of money, you’ll feel really good for a while, but then you’ll get used to it.

German Socio-economic Panel Study

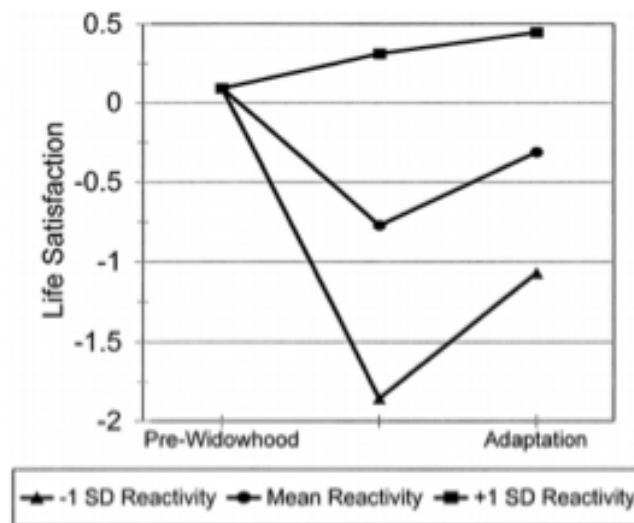
- In recent years, people have had access to bigger and longer studies. One that has been most popular to use is a study from Germany that had a very large sample of people since the early 1980s on a panel basis. One of this was an analysis of 3600 people and asked how happy are you with your life right now on a scale of totally unhappy to totally happy. What they found is actually a quarter of the people experienced significant change in life satisfaction between 1984 and 2000. 10% experienced a big change. 24% was statistically significant, but you might look at the magnitude of change and say, “Well, would I even notice it if I moved from a 7 to a 7.25 on a 10 point scale?” It was a reliable change on average, but 10% of the sample actually had a big change. This led researchers to start talking about a **soft self point**: let’s not throw out the fact that genetics and early experience give us a starting point, but that might not be set in stone and we may not be completely locked in, in terms of that set point.

Marriage and Widowhood

- One of the other ways this group looked at this was to focus on two relationship events that they thought might make a difference in people's lives (supposedly, relationships are a strong correlate in SWB). They looked at people who were about to get married and how much does this increase their SWB and how much does widowhood decrease their SWB?
- There are two phases they talk about. The **reaction phase** is when the event happens (the short-term impact). You get married. How much happier are you in those twelve, twenty-four months following getting married compared to how you were before, whereas the **adaptation phase** is after two years. They were wondering: events might elicit a reaction in us, but do we eventually come back to where we started?
- First of all, all that stuff about married people are happier people... Well, married people are happier before they got married. The authors are saying, "It's not that marriage makes you happy, happy people are happy already." Although, you could look at that and say the reason they get married is because their relationship was great. It still might be the case that great relationships make you happy. Life satisfaction increased the year prior to marriage. You're in this relationship and your happiness is going up, "Hey, this is great, let's get married." It's a little slightly different twist in that. They didn't find an increase in life satisfaction after marriage, but maybe it's because there was already such an increase in the year before.
- But in trying to look at this idea of soft set point, there's a lot of variability. You could look at 2000 people and get an average but that might miss the fact that 500 people are going in one direction and 500 people are going in the other direction. You average it out and say, "The line looks flat."
- They teased this apart. They identified three groups. They said, "Sure, there are some people who are pretty stable, who's life satisfaction before marriage, two years after getting married, and years later is pretty much the same. But, there are some people who have a strong positive reaction to getting married, so they go up." The authors asked: If they come up, do they come all the way back down? The answer is no; they drop off some, but they don't come all the way back to where they started.
- Sadly, the people who have a negative reaction, they don't come back either. In fact, they're continuing to go down. In the first year or two they're not doing well, it's not like it's going to turn around.



- This suggested some people may have that set point, but for some, a life event might elicit a reaction and they may not completely come back to where they started.
- Similar results were obtained when they looked at widows. They found that two of the three groups here, as you expect, have a negative reaction to widowhood. In two groups, a year or two after their spouse dies, their life satisfaction has declined. What they show here is the ones who have some drop in life satisfaction tend to return to their baseline. Ones who have an extreme drop (a very strong negative reaction) to their spouse dying, even six or seven years later, they're still not back to where they started. The author is suggesting the stronger your reaction, the less likely you are to adapt. The stronger your reaction in the short run, the less likely in years later will you come all the way back to your baseline.



- Note: SD stands for standard deviation (basically, groups who had divided them into a somewhat average, positive, or negative reaction).
- In case any of you were wondering, the group on top you may be thinking that's weird. The thought is (maybe not all the cases) that the top line may reflect when your spouse has had a chronic illness. So the years prior to your spouse dying are incredibly stressful and draining. You've already experienced a lot of this up to the years leading up to the death of your spouse. This might be a relief just because of the physical toll on the person, which might cause this change.
- What they concluded from this is that the strong form of set point theory is wrong. We don't all necessarily return to our baseline. They also point out that our baseline is not neutral – most people are on the happy side to start off with. What they're saying is the extent to which people achieve their goals can wear off and can require achieving greater goals. That is part of the **hedonic treadmill**. One of the concerns of the hedonic treadmill is you have success and if your wellbeing is contingent to you, if you have a success, the effect of that wears off and you have to have even greater success and even greater success. There is this concern that if our wellbeing is tied to meeting our aspirations, do we have to go higher and higher and higher? Do we achieve something, and then get accustomed to that and then need something more?

- Almost like a drug addict. You get a certain amount, you get used to it, and then you need a stronger dose to get the same effect. There are stories about Nobel Prize winners who at the end of their lives feel like they are not satisfied with their life. Even people who have had great successes sometimes will report less satisfaction than they had expected. The challenge is to get off the hedonic treadmill and off the idea that our self-worth is contingent on those aspirations.
- Today, I'm going to point out some of the other things that are less performance related that actually seem to be more lasting contributions to people's wellbeing.

German Panel Study 25 yrs

Heady et al, 2010

- The latest turn of the German Panel Study, some other factors that predicted people's wellbeing over time, the first one, it goes in the other direction: it's not that having a neurotic partner makes you happier; a neurotic partner makes you less happy. People who are with someone who has a lot of ups and downs and negative emotions actually affects their partner's life satisfaction.
- They also looked at: How much of a priority do you give to different goals in life? What they found is especially for a category of altruism which was people saying an important goal for me is helping others: "An important goal for me is to be involved in things in my community and do things in my community." That was the best predictor among the gold measures of increasing SWB over time. The more people were striving to do things for other people, the greater increase in SWB.
- There was also some increase for family as a goal, but not as big. Part of the difficulty they had with that was it was hard to get an effect when everyone was saying that it is an important goal.
- There was a small negative effect if success was a goal. If success, for it's own sake, was an important goal, those were the people who's life satisfaction actually declined a bit.
- Religious people tended to have more of an increase in SWB.
- Unemployment really hurts, and not just in the short run. One of the things that I thought was interesting from this study → people who were unemployed, even years later (say you're unemployed for 9 months and then you go back to work and we look at you six years later, you've been working for 5 years now) have not completely come back to who they were before they were unemployed.
- That is why people are trying to understand why this has such a lasting effect. Does it create a sense of doubt or uncertainty in people?

Unhappiness

- Typically when we look at the issue of happiness, we think of it as getting what we want. "If we just get what we want, we'd be happy." Well, the work on this wanting says maybe not. Maybe sometimes, we get it wrong (we want the wrong things). We're not happy because we actually don't want what we end up getting.
- The first way they studied this was the **snack study**. They bring students in, give them a list of all their favourite snacks, and say, "What snack do you want next Monday for the next 8 weeks." There's the list. "What do you want this week? What do you want next week? What do you want next week? What do you want next week?" For this group at

the University of Texas, a very popular snack was a Snickers bar. They had students saying, "I'll take Snickers this Monday, I'll take Snickers next Monday. Nachos are my second, I'll take nachos the third week week." They come in and say, "Geez, it would be nice to have that Snickers bar." They're using the wrong theory! "I'm going to get tired of Snickers bars I'll put a different snack." I'm not asking what snack every hour of the day today. We're asking what you want this Monday and next Monday. A week later, it's not like you're gonna get tired of Snickers bar! "Oh, variety is good, I shouldn't have the same thing." They put down nachos, but they're actually less happy. This is the first example of **miswanting**, thinking, "I'm going to want nachos by the third week. Put me down for nachos."

Misinterpret Feelings

- The second way we miswant is we misinterpret what our feelings are telling us. How I decide how I'm going to enjoy that future event → called **affective contamination**. You're having these positive feelings because the term is coming to an end, you've registered, last day of lectures, great...
- Somebody asked you about doing something two weeks from now. Affective contamination says you may mistakenly transfer some of that positive feeling you have about my courses and finishing classes to how much you might like doing that thing two weeks from now.
- It's sort of like the old study on weather and life satisfaction. They survey people the first cool rainy day in the fall and the first sunny day in the spring and show people's overall life satisfaction is significantly different. People were not appreciating that the weather that day was contributing to their judgment at the time.
- When we're trying to decide what we want, sometimes positive or negative feelings from other sources contribute.

Miswanting Over Time: Durability Bias

- Then there's the durability bias. How long do the effects last? This will make me happy. We sometimes underestimate how long of a benefit we will get from that. The first study → people had to forecast "How happy will you be Monday after your school team wins the game Tuesday versus how happy will you be Tuesday after your team has lost the game?" Students overestimate the duration and impact of the team winning versus losing on how happy they are. "Team won, I'm going to feel great that week." The effect of the team winning dissipates quicker than we realize.
- Second study → they had people forecast how happy they will be a month after this election if your candidate wins or loses.
- This was back in Texas, there was a guy running for governor by the name of George W. Bush. There were Bush and Richard supporters. They found that people overestimated how much impact the election results would have on their subjective wellbeing a month later. This is not to say these things didn't have any influence, but we overestimate how much influence they have.
- Just to show that this effect is so robust, doesn't matter what your IQ is, how many years you've been in school, they went and did the same type of study to university professors. They had to forecast how happy they'd be with their life two years after getting tenure

and two years after not getting tenure. "If I don't get tenure, my life will fall apart, everything will be awful."

- They overestimate the impact the tenure decision has on their SWB. The miswanting guys are saying there are a lot of other things going on in our lives. We have an ability to adapt to our circumstances. Sometimes we overestimate the impact of these things.

Focalism

- Part of the reason they suggest is we focus on the event that is most salient to us. Of course, if I ask you how happy you're going to be before and after you get tenure versus not get tenure, or the election result. I'm focusing you on that event. As I mentioned on Tuesday, another way they did this was comparing people living in Ohio versus California. "Of course people in California would be happier because it's so beautiful out there and a wonderful place to live." They focused on where they lived and thought about that issue and thought, "Geez, I live in a beautiful place." People in California, "Oh, we must be happier than people in Ohio." But when you asked in a very neutral way and didn't have people think about living in a warm weather state versus cold weather state, they actually didn't find differences in SWB. Sometimes, a particular event grabs our attention and we make judgments based on that and forget about other things that over time won't matter.

Immune neglect

We also ignore our capacity for positive illusions. This is the broader idea that we have the ability to adapt, come back from negative events, and put positive spins on them.

It's a Wonderful Life

Koo et al 2008

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIOQZCmp02o>

- They actually did a take off. The guy lives in a small town. He has all these big dreams and each time he thinks he's going to live his big dreams, something else comes along. He's going to go away, but his brother goes first. His brother's going to come back, but has met a girl at university so he's not coming back to town. So George has got to stay and run the family's savings and loans. When he finally gets married, he's going to travel the world. The day they're ready to leave on their honeymoon is the day the stock market crashes so they have to use the honeymoon money to keep the bank running. Finally what happens is his uncle messes up with the bank deposit. The old guy that's out there to screw them doesn't tell them he's actually got the money, so George is desperate. The idea is to give him a chance to see what life would be like if he didn't have that life.
- What Tim Wilson and his colleagues said about all this SWB and happiness research is that we have to look at the good things we have in life. They're saying there might be a benefit to that. The good things we have they're present and we're kind of used to them and we might be used to them and take them for granted. If we think about not having some of these things and try to think about what it would be like if this didn't happen or that didn't happen among good things in our life, we may be happier. This might get our

attention and we might think through more of that. They actually found that thinking about the absence of positive events that have happened in our life actually increase our life satisfaction even more. We appreciate and are happier with our life when we reflect upon how some of the good things that have happened might not have happened. That has even more of an impact than thinking about just the good things that have happened to us. We can think about the same life event, but the difference is you're imagining them not happening instead of just remembering it and having the good feelings.

What Is NOT Associated With SWB

Turns out they typically do not find age effects or gender effects on SWB.

Very Happy Students

What do they find? With students, the most reliable correlations are very happy students tend to have close friendships, strong family relationships, if they have a romantic relationship it's a good one... The amount of time they spend with family and friends seems to be a good correlate with SWB. Being able to spend time with people you're close to and of course not being neurotic.

Happy Old People

- What about with old people? It's a lot more about their physical life circumstance. Do they have decent housing, how much physical functioning do they still have? How isolated and lonely are they? How severe or chronic is their pain? The things that might predict our happiness in youth still might matter later in life, but there are other things that kick in in terms of basic, daily function. You still find even among old people, the extent to which they have marriage or a support network is associated with their happiness.
- **Mediated by mastery** → The reason why these things have an effect on happiness is because of MASTERY. The reason why decent housing, physical functioning, regulating pain contributes to our happiness is if we don't have physical functioning, we don't feel like we have a lot of control in our life. We don't feel the sense of mastery or I can affect my environment and I can make things happen. It becomes very important. As young people, it might be something you take for granted because you are able to accomplish so many different things. They're saying to the extent we start getting confronted with an inability to make things happen (even simple things in our life) and to the extent we don't feel we have mastery or control of our environment, our SWB goes down.
- The relative impact of these might move around. I think they would suggest that all of these would have some association and what they come back to is this issue of mastery. We could also ask whether there are differences in culture of how important mastery is. Maybe you're in a culture or you've been socialized to allow others to do more for you so the social support network might alleviate some of that (because it is more important to be supported by others than to feel a sense of control in that particular culture).

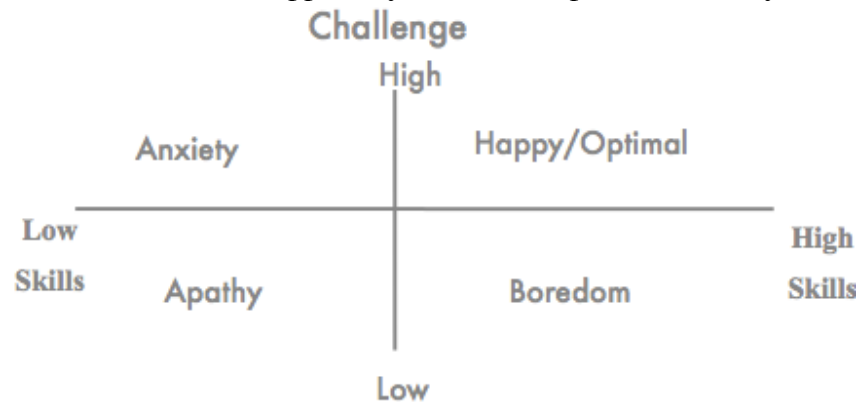
What Is Associated With SWB

- Some of the ingredients to being happy, first thing they talk about a concept called **personal resilience**. Some people are just more resilient. They have optimism; they look to the future and believe good things can happen. They feel good about themselves. They

feel like they can impact their environment. They're resilient people. Resilience does all sorts of things. We just look at events in different ways depending on how resilient we are. As I've been saying in these previous slides, it keeps coming back to relationships. Having high quality relationships with family and friends seems to be one of the most reliable predictors of a happy life.

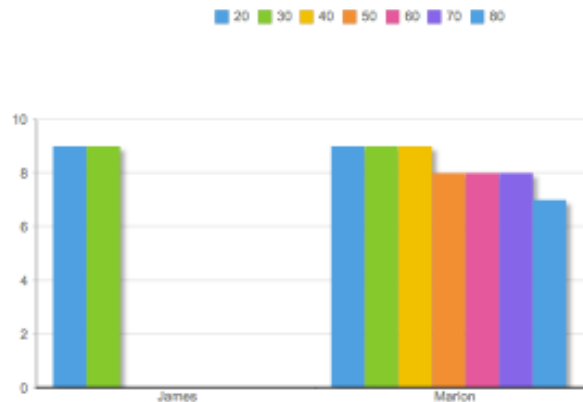
Work

- For work, I just want to show you, remember before I was saying how important employment is. But even if you are employed, happiness is getting the right match between challenge and skill. If you're in a work environment where there's very little challenge and you don't have skills, you're likely to be apathetic. If there's low challenge and you have high skill, you think, "This is going to be so easy!" But actually, boredom sets in. If it's a challenging environment and you don't have the skills for that environment, what tends to happen is you tend to experience anxiety.



- Work is not a comfortable place to be because there's a constant sense of "this demands more of me than I can deliver." That's anxiety provoking. What they suggest is work leads to happiness when there's this match in which you're able to find a type of work that meets your skill level. Something that you actually have some skill and you're being challenged to use those skills that you have.
- Frequency matters more than intensity. Sometimes we think, "If these really big things happen in our lives, we'll be happy." What tends to happen is more: how frequently do we have good things? Extreme positives and extreme negatives may not be where the action is as much as how frequently are we having good days? How frequently are we on the positive side of life?

SWB (0 - 10) from Age 20 to 80



- Here we have, hypothetically, the lives of two people - James and Marlan. James in his 20's, very happy. 30's very happy. And then dead. Marlan: 20 he's very happy, 30's very happy, 40's very happy, 50's pretty happy, but not quite, but 50's, 60's, 70's still pretty happy, in his 80s not bad, still pretty good.
- Who's life would you rather have? How many of you want Marlan's life? Most of you want Marlan's life. That makes sense logically, but if we present just the James life and say how happy do you think this person would be with their life? Then a separate group of people consider this life: very happy, very happy and then in their last five years they were still happy but not as happy as they were in their previous 50? What do people do? They actually give higher ratings to the James scenario than the Marlan scenario. It's crazy right? All of you are like Marlan, of course Marlan.

James Dean Effect – Duration Neglect

- We call it the James Dean effect (the actor who died young, this sort of mythic creature for decades). It captures what is called **duration neglect**. When we think about whether something is going to be very good, we tend to focus on the peak and the end. How positive was the most positive moment? And how positive was the last moment? And that we don't give sufficient attention to is the duration of the experience.
- With James, the most positive is 9 and the end is 9. For Marlan, the most positive was 9, but the end was only 7. If you're just given James, "Oh, that's a great life." If you're only given Marlan and you don't get to compare it to James, you say, "That's a very good life, but not quite as good."
- They talk about this even with people going to the dentist. How painful? What people tend to do is think about the most painful moment and how painful it was by the end. We tend to neglect how long was the pain? You get these weird findings where I give you the scenario of excruciating pain for ten minutes and then pretty severe pain for another ten minutes, you say, "Okay, how bad is that?" Then I give other people a scenario, excruciating pain for ten minutes, really bad pain for another ten minutes, and pretty painful for another hour, people actually give the second one a lower rating of discomfort

and pain. They're looking at the peak and at the end. They're neglecting that it's 60 more minutes of pain. If we see them side-by-side, we can figure it out.

- *We tend to look at the peak and the end and we don't give sufficient consideration to how long the period was.*

How of Happiness

- How do we become happy? People wrote be more grateful; be more mindful. I'm not going to go into that, there are other professors in the psych department trying to study what that actually means and carefully choosing people's activities. They've actually tried to do training to make people happier by doing gratitude exercises or try to get people to think consciously about what activities you're going to do this week and this month.
- I should point out though with gratitude, it's not one of those things where the more you do it, the better it is. It turns out that if you have people (once a week) reflect on what they're grateful for, they're happier. But if you have people do it 3 times a day, there is no effect. So some of these things, there can be too much of a good thing. If you do that over and over again, it wears off in terms of effectiveness.
- Fate provides a set point time (what you're genetics are, the history you're born in), all of these things sets a set point. My brother likes to say, "Boy, we won the lottery in history. We were born white male in North America in the 20th century. We're not responsible for that; that just happened. Our standard of living is better; our availability to education is better. All these things came our way without anything to do with us per say. Fate provides a set point, we didn't choose our parents; at least most of us didn't. The roll of the dice (the genes we got, the people who care for us) set that set point.
- But more and more we're seeing life can move us up and down from that set point. There's also the notion that small changes can sometimes over time lead to big changes. That's what the trajectory idea is. Sometimes we are so focused on the big things, sometimes the small things that we do that don't seem that significant can have a cumulative effect over time and create different habits.
- Beware of the implicit theories we can have like the James Dean effect. Neglecting the duration of something could lead us to make wrong choices.
- Also what I was suggesting on Tuesday, some people said maybe how to be happy isn't even the question. Some people might say the question is what makes sense to you? What gives purpose to your life? What is meaningful to you? What really matters to you? Engaging in those sorts of things might result in you being happy. Maybe we shouldn't be so focused on what am I going to do today that is going to make me happy? Rather, what am I going to do today, this week, this year that is meaningful and important and gives me a sense of purpose? Maybe the happiness part will take care of itself.

Being Happy

- Research shows that meeting basic physiological needs makes a difference. Remember Tuesday people in poor countries and the poorer people in the country have the biggest benefit from an increase in income. Having our basic physiological needs met is important and makes a difference.

- But beyond that, we see again and again nurturing and close relationships adds to people's happiness.
- The German panel suggests altruism, trying to be more directed to others and not self-focused makes a difference.
- Having work (first of all, being employed and unemployed) and work that is satisfying can make people happy.
- A lot of social psychology from the textbook and things I said earlier in this term have been about automaticity and implicit, unconscious processes. There are times when I think we are sending you off with this idea that it's all automatic and unconscious, and a lot of it is, but it's not all that way. When we think about happiness and SWB, maybe we need to reflect on when do we make conscious, willful choices? We know that takes energy and it is **ego depleting** (another concept from the course), but making those choices matters. So choose wisely. Why?
- Because of this trajectory idea. You make this choice and say, "Wow, if I could just figure out the right major or maybe taking time with a certain person will lead to something to set me on another path."
- The other reason why it's suggested is being careful about the willful choices we make is that over time those can become automatic. Part of the idea of automaticity is not just that we're just automatic, but sometimes when we make these choices, we work at them and if we stick with it, then that becomes automatic. What do you want to be automatic in your life? Do you want junk food and crap to be automatic? Or good stuff to be operating automatically in your life? That's part of the idea of taking care with those choices, but lastly, to not be paralyzed by making choices. You could look at this and say, "What course? What major? How do I know? Oh God, if I don't choose right, my whole life is screwed." The other message from social psychology is we have a great ability to adapt. Don't be paralyzed, make those choices and rest assured you will adjust to whatever life throws at you. You're saying, "Bullshit, professor Lydon!" Well, that's my hope for you. Make them and enjoy them.
- Take care!

GOOD LUCK WITH EXAMS!! ☺