

# **SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY II**

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**9.00**

# **SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY II**

- **Self Concept**
  - Above Average**
  - False Consensus**
  - Cognitive Dissonance**
- **Impressions of Others**
- **Cultural Differences**
- **Autism**

# ENHANCING OUR VIEWS OF OURSELVES

- most U.S. college students rate themselves as better than average students
- 1 million high-school students rated their leadership; 28% average; *70% above average*; 2% below average; 60% in top 10% in ability to get along with others
- 94% of college instructors rated themselves as better than average teachers

# **ENHANCING OUR VIEWS OF OURSELVES**

- **self-serving attributional bias**  
**success reflects our traits, not situation**
- **did well on tests of sensory or perceptual discrimination, social sensitivity, competitive game - me (poorly, the situation)**
- **can be extended to family, social and political groups, sports teams**

# Constructing social reality

- In the final game of the season, an undefeated Princeton played Dartmouth. It was a hard fought game, and Princeton won.
- School newspapers had totally different accounts.
- Hastorf and Cantril (1954) showed a film of the game to students at each of the two campuses.
- Princeton students judged the game as dirty, thought Dartmouth started the dirty play, and “saw” Dartmouth commit twice as many penalties.
- Dartmouth students saw both as blameworthy, and “saw” an equal number of penalties on each side.

# **Realistic Depression & Illusory Optimism**

- depressed and non-depressed students given tasks that varied in degree of contingency (Alloy & Abramson, 1979)**
- estimate degree of contingency between response (button presses) and outcome (green light going on)**
- depressed students more accurate, non-depressed students overestimated contingency when outcomes were desired, underestimated when outcomes were undesired**

# **False Consensus (Ross et al., 1977)**

- People choosing to engage in a behavior believe that their choice is more common than do people making the opposite choice**
- Carry around sign on campus “Eat at Joe’s” for 30 min - agree, 62% of others will do so; disagree, 33% of others will do so**
- Example: Teenage smokers estimate higher rates of smoking than non-smokers (Sherman et al., 1983); domestic abusive men estimate that about 28% of men have violently thrown things at partner (vs. 12%) (Neighbors et al., 2010)**

# WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CAR?

- **Zimbardo (1980)**
- **two identical cars - one in upper-middle class Palo Alto; one in tough Bronx area**
- **Bronx - no license plate; hood up; stripped within a day**
- **Palo Alto - untouched for a week - smashed a window - stripped within an hour**

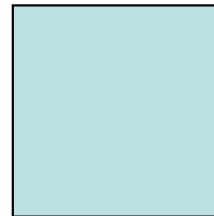


# Use the force for good not evil....

Can you increase compliance with a prosocial request?



Is this ad persuasive?  
What is presented as the norm?



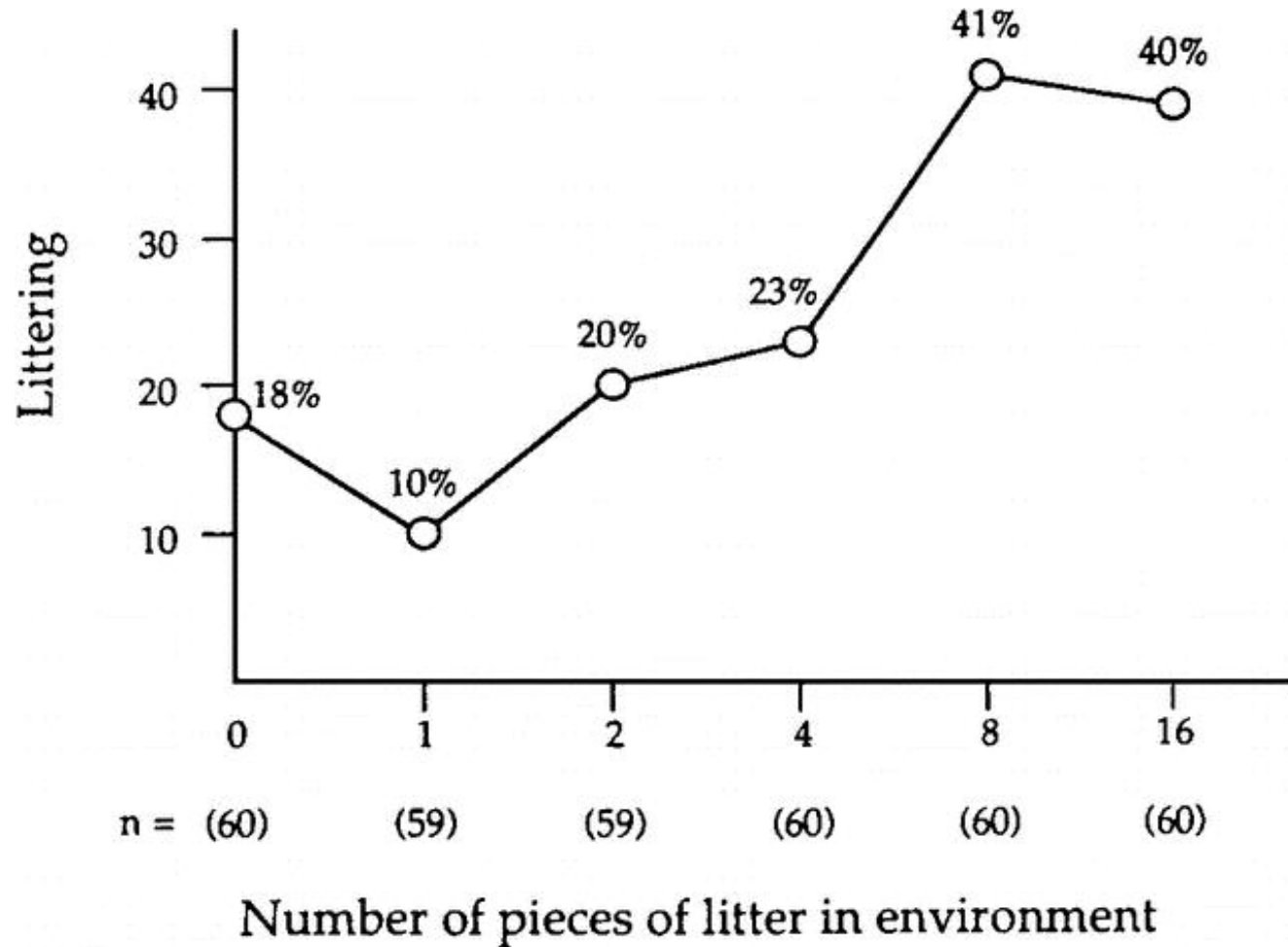
**TAKE A STAND FOR YOUR LAND**



**Help prevent litter and illegal dumping.**

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# Social Norms & Littering



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# Using norms to influence recycling

**descriptive norms**(what most others do)

**injunctive norms** (what most others approve or disapprove of)

**See recycling**

**Approve recycling**

**Disapprove a person who does not  
25.3% increase in recycling amount**



# Attitudes vs. Actions

- **Daffodil Days - buy a daffodil - 4-day campus event to benefit American cancer Society**
- **251 Cornell students**
  - 83% predicted they would buy at least one flower vs. 56% of peers**
  - 43% actually bought a daffodil**

# **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE**

- **Leon Festinger, 1957**
- **discrepancy between attitudes and action (behavior) - conflict**
- **do a boring task (packing & unpacking spools in a tray, turning many screws for a quarter turn)**
- **get \$1 or \$20 to lie and tell next person that task was interesting, worthwhile**
- **really, how was task?**

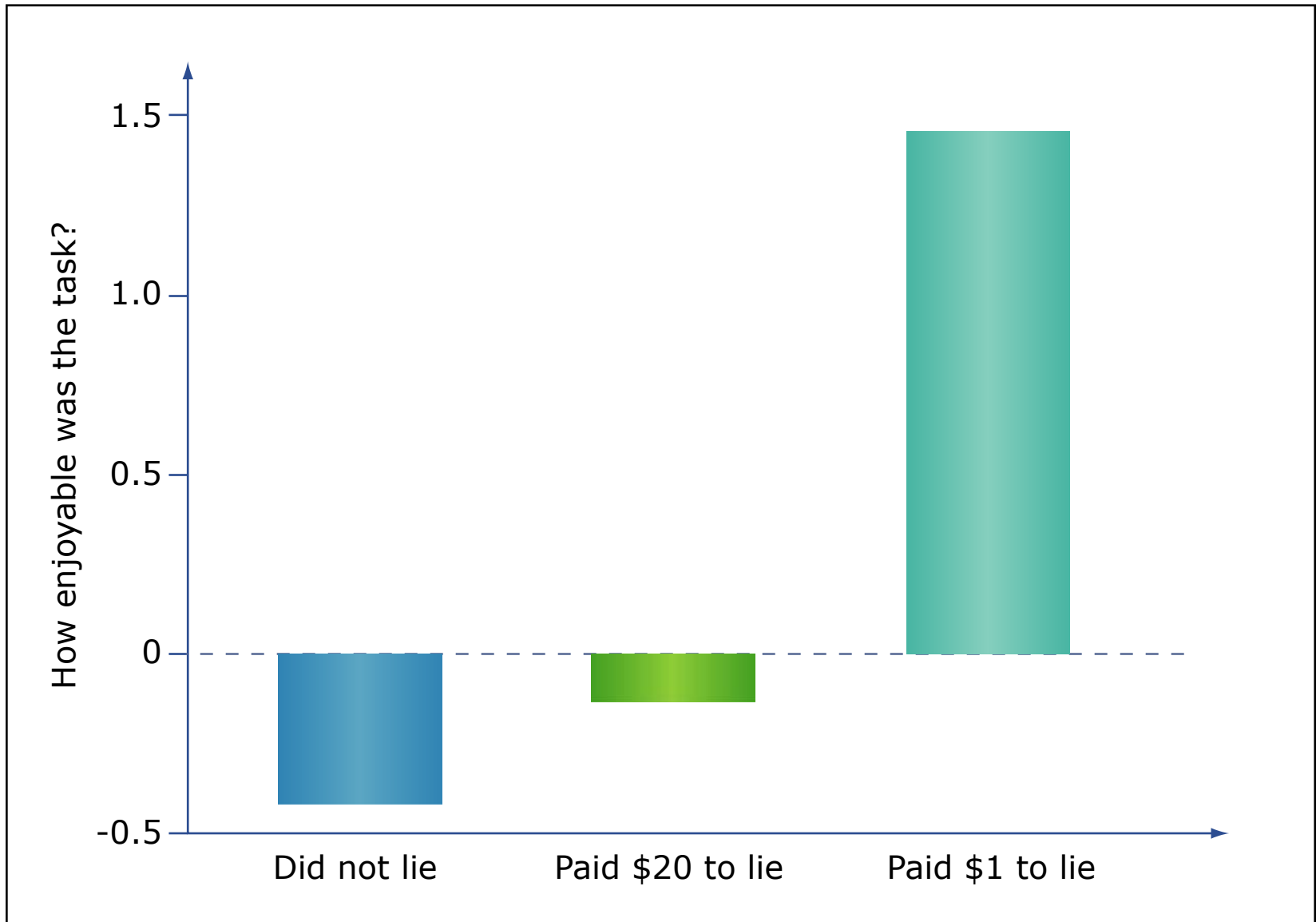


Image by MIT OpenCourseWare.

# COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

- *post-decisional*

**Jack Brehm, 1956, carted wedding gifts to lab**

**rate how much you want desk lamp, toaster, stopwatch, radio, etc.**

**select between two that were equally desirable**

**rate again - upgraded the chosen item, downgraded rejected item (unless examiner picks for them)**

- *colleges, cars vs. trucks, CDs*

# COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

- effort

**courses**

**1959 - to qualify for a research study, some women were required to read aloud obscene words or mild words to male experimenter - then listened to boring lecture on mating habits of lower animals - lecture rated better by difficult qualification**

***why did I do that painful thing?***



# **First Impressions**

**How powerful?**

**How accurate?**

# **First Impressions**

**How powerful?**

**How accurate?**

***Operational Definition***

## **Norman & Goldberg (1966), University of Michigan**

- **Students rate people's personality on first day of class before introduction**
- **Correlation with self-rating, especially “sociable” and “responsible”**

## **Kenny (1988)**

- **250 students, divided into 4 groups who did not know each other, had not spoken together**
- **Rated - *sociable*, good-natured, *responsible*, calm, intellectual (traits of extraversion, conscientiousness) - good agreement with self ratings**
- **But how good are we at rating ourselves?**

## **Self ratings? (Levesque & Kenny, 1993)**

- **4 strangers rate each other on 5 traits**
- **Meet in pairs, videotaped**
- **Judges watched tape, rated extroversion - time talking, arm movements**
- **First impressions correlated strongly with videotape ratings for selves & others**

## **Nalani Ambady (1993) - “*thin slices*”**

- **Videotaped 13 graduate TAs**
- **3 random 10 sec clips, 30 sec per TA**
- **Showed silent clips to students**
- **13 ratings - accepting, active, competent, confident**
- **Correlated global rating with actual end-of-semester rating with students**
- **+ 0.76 correlation**
- **15 sec? 6 sec?**
- **listen to 20 secs of physician speaking during routine office visit, above-chance prediction of which were sued for malpractice**

**High school teachers?**

**Better teachers?**

**5 students - 1 “teacher” - teachers prepared  
brief math lesson - students took test -  
strangers rate 10 sec videos of teachers**

**High rating correlated with high test-scores**

# First Impressions

## *Prior information (Schema)*

**MIT 1950**

**Guest lecturer**

**- 50% students**

**-“People who know him consider him to be a (very warm or rather cold) person, industrious, critical, practical, and determined.”**

**guest appears, leads 20-minute discussion**

**Evaluation (very warm)**

**- Rated lecturer better**

**- Took more part in discussion**

***First impressions hard to change because new information is interpreted to be consistent with already formed impressions***

# First Impressions

## *Prior information*

**self-fulfilling prophecy**

- **elementary school, gave test to students**
- **told teacher who would have good/bad year**
- **end of year: high scores > low scores**



# First Impressions

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# **Physical Attractiveness**

**Physically attractive people judged more intelligent, competent, sociable and moral**

- 5th grade teachers given report cards and photographs of children they did not know**
- Rate intelligence and achievement**
  - Attractive children rated brighter and more successful than unattractive children with identical report cards**

# **Physical Attractiveness**

## **Child's misbehavior**

- **Environmental circumstances if more attractive  
personality if less attractive**

## **Court cases, comparable crimes**

- **Shorter sentences if more attractive**
- **Longer sentences if less attractive**

# Halo Effect

- **global evaluation about a person bleeds over to a specific trait**

***she is likable, so she is intelligent***

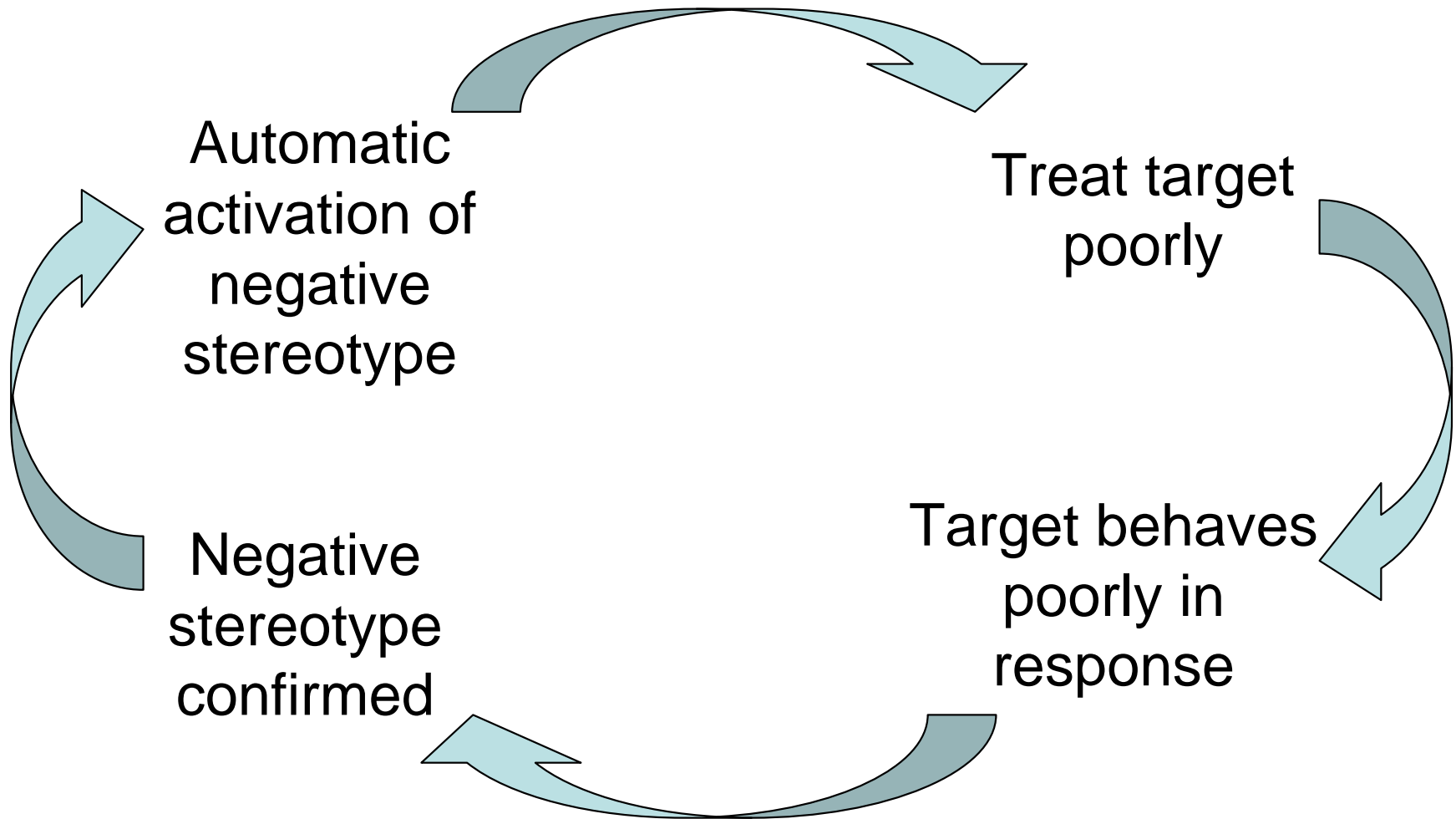
# Halo Effect

- **Nisbett & Wilson, 1977 -“cover story” - students told study was to examine teacher evaluations; was it dependent on amount of exposure (cover)?**
- **2 groups saw videos of lecturer with strong Belgian accent - answered questions in a warm & friendly manner or a cold and distant manner**
- **rated warm version as more attractive, likeable mannerisms, & less accent - without being aware of it (celebrity marketing?)**

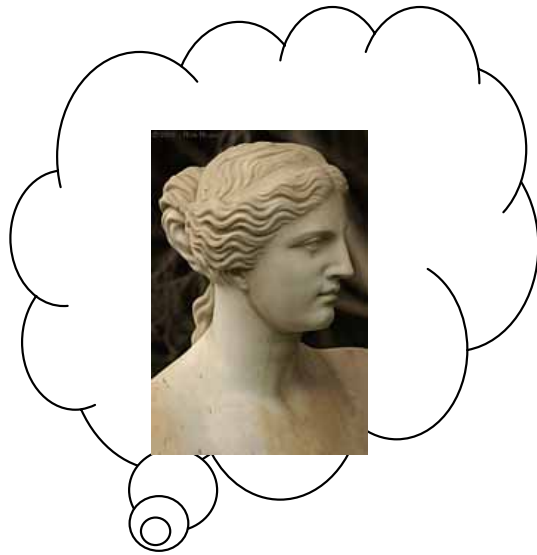
# **Stereotypes**

- **In addition to asking “Why did he do this?” we also ask “What kind of person is he?”**
- **To answer this question, we rely on short cuts and heuristics**
- **These short cuts are necessary, but also can lead to stereotyping, or using simplified social schemas to define whole groups of people.**
- **Stereotypes have bi-directional effects**

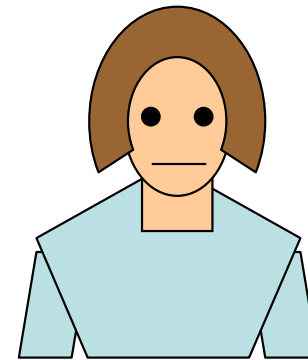
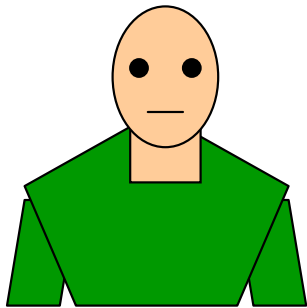
# Self-fulfilling prophecies



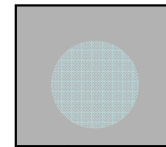
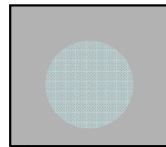
# Beauty in the *ear* of the beholder?



Step 1



**initial impression**  
**10 min conversation**  
**impression**



**10 min conversation**  
**impression**

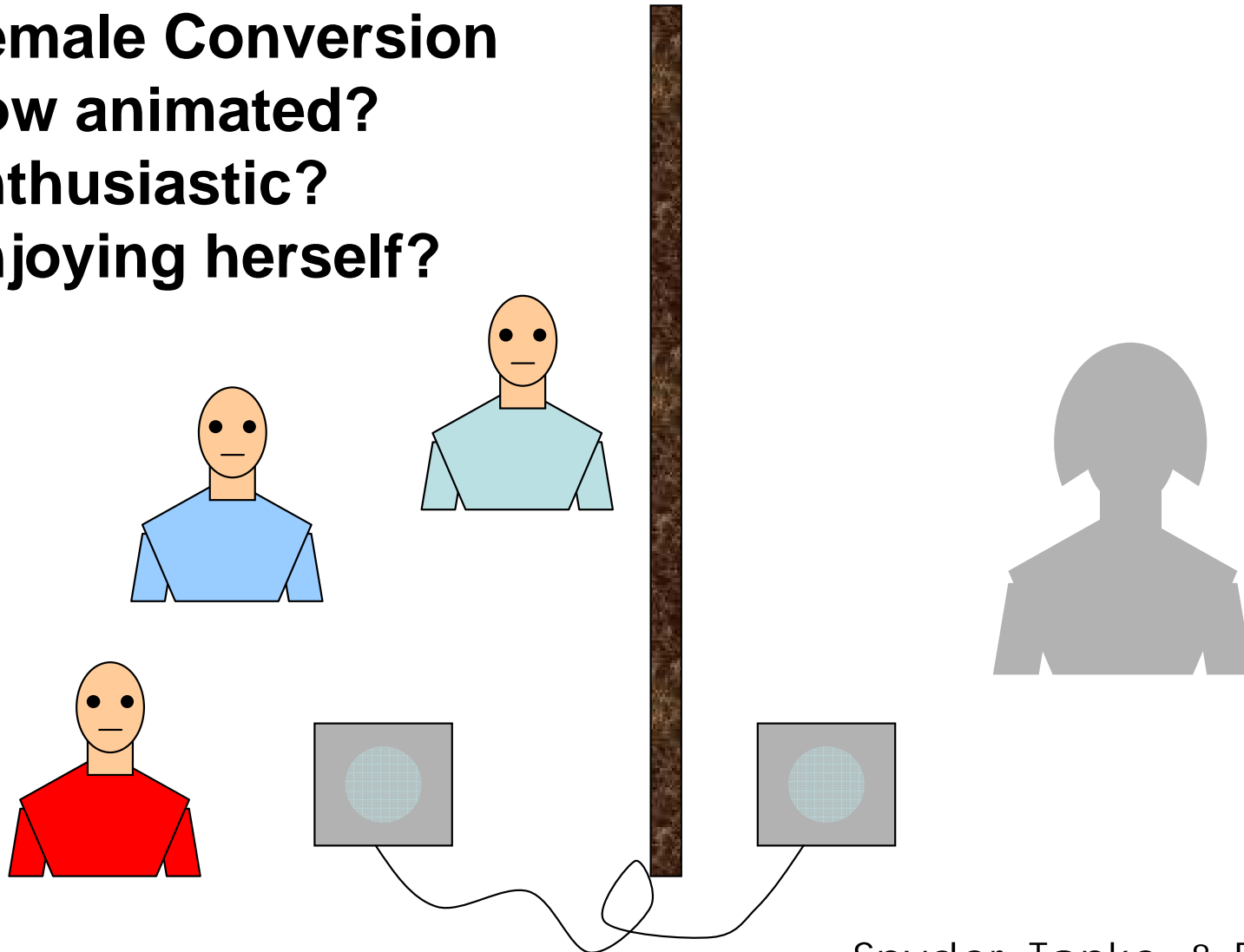
Snyder, Tanke, & Bersheid (1977)



# Beauty in the ear of the beholder?

Female Conversion  
how animated?  
enthusiastic?  
enjoying herself?

Step 2



Snyder, Tanke, & Bersheid (1977)

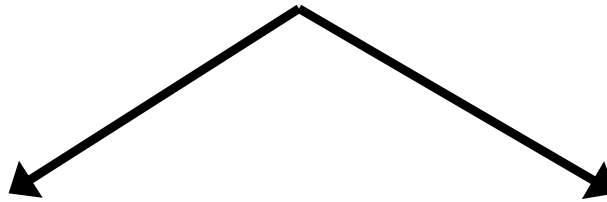
# **Beauty in the *ear* of the beholder?**

- **In the “attractive” condition, women were seen as more sociable, poised, humorous, socially adept**
- **Participants changed their partner’s behavior with their expectations – what had been only a reality in the minds of the men became a reality in the behavior of the women they interacted with**
- **Participants then formed an impression of the women based on that (changed) behavior**



## **Models of Self**

**Communities' ideas about being a person and the social practices, situations, and institutions of everyday life that represent and foster these ideas.**



### **Independent Models**

- **A person is fundamentally separate from others, stable, and consistent.**
- **Actions are under personal control and guided by preferences and needs.**
- **Gives priority to personal needs over group goals.**
- **Stands out, is unique, expresses the self**
- **Values feeling good about oneself and high arousal, excitement**

### **Interdependent Models**

- **A person is fundamentally connected to others.**
- **Actions are primarily guided by social norms and roles.**
- **Subordinates personal needs and beliefs to maintain group harmony.**
- **Meets obligations, expectations, norms, fits in**
- **Values self-reflection, self-criticism and low arousal, calm**

# Relative vs. Absolute Size

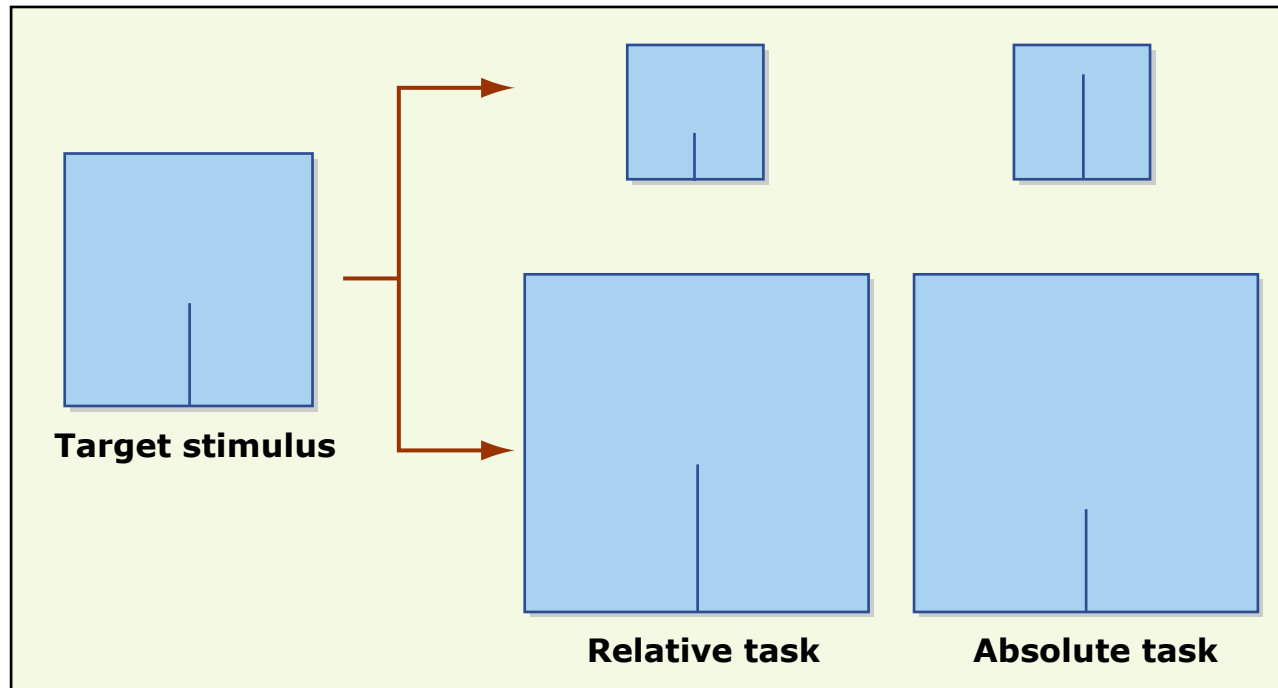


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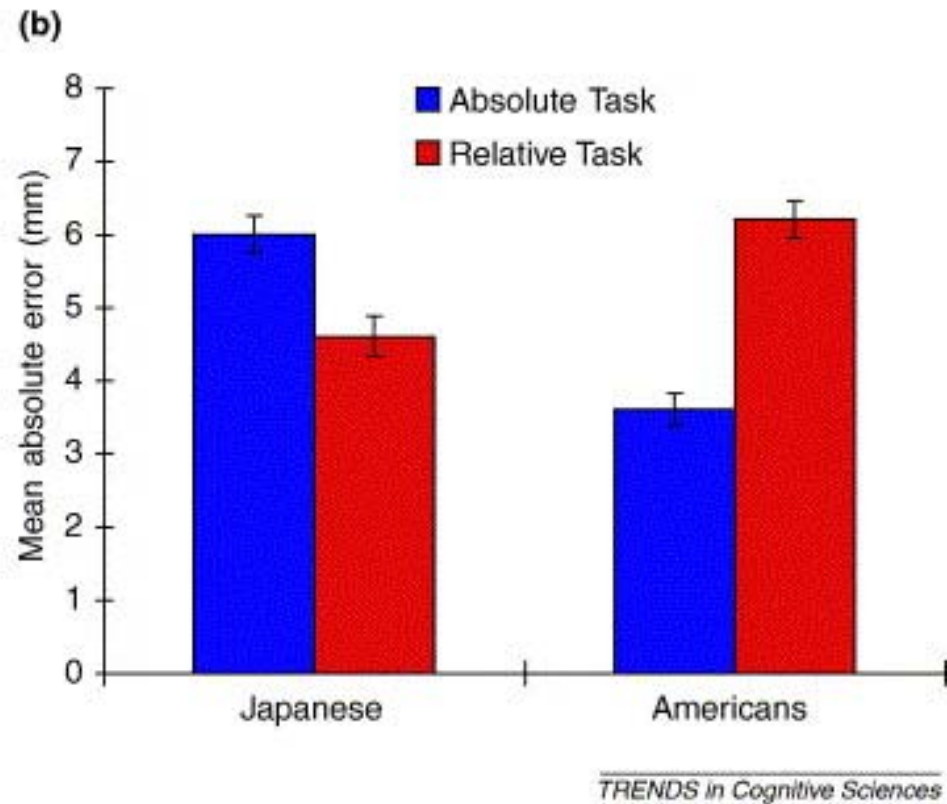
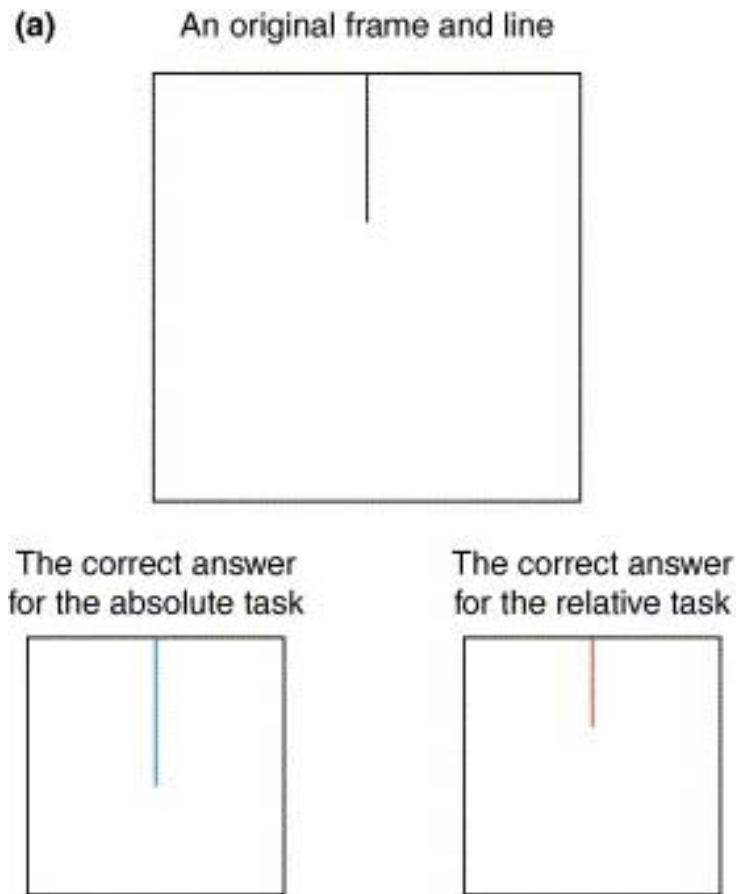
**Look at target stimulus - taken away - see new empty Box, draw line of either equal *relative size* or *absolute Size***

**Japanese subjects more accurate for *relative size***

**American subjects more accurate for *absolute size***

***How malleable?***

## Figure 2. Framed-Line Test



**(a)** Participants were shown a square frame with a vertical line like the one at the top. They were then shown a new square frame of a different size and were asked to draw a line that was identical to the first line in either absolute length (absolute task), like the blue line at the bottom left, or in proportion to the surrounding frame (relative task), like the red line at the bottom right.

**(b)** The error scores show that American participants were more accurate in the absolute task than the relative task, whereas Japanese were more accurate in the relative task, suggesting that Japanese were paying more attention to the frame than Americans were.

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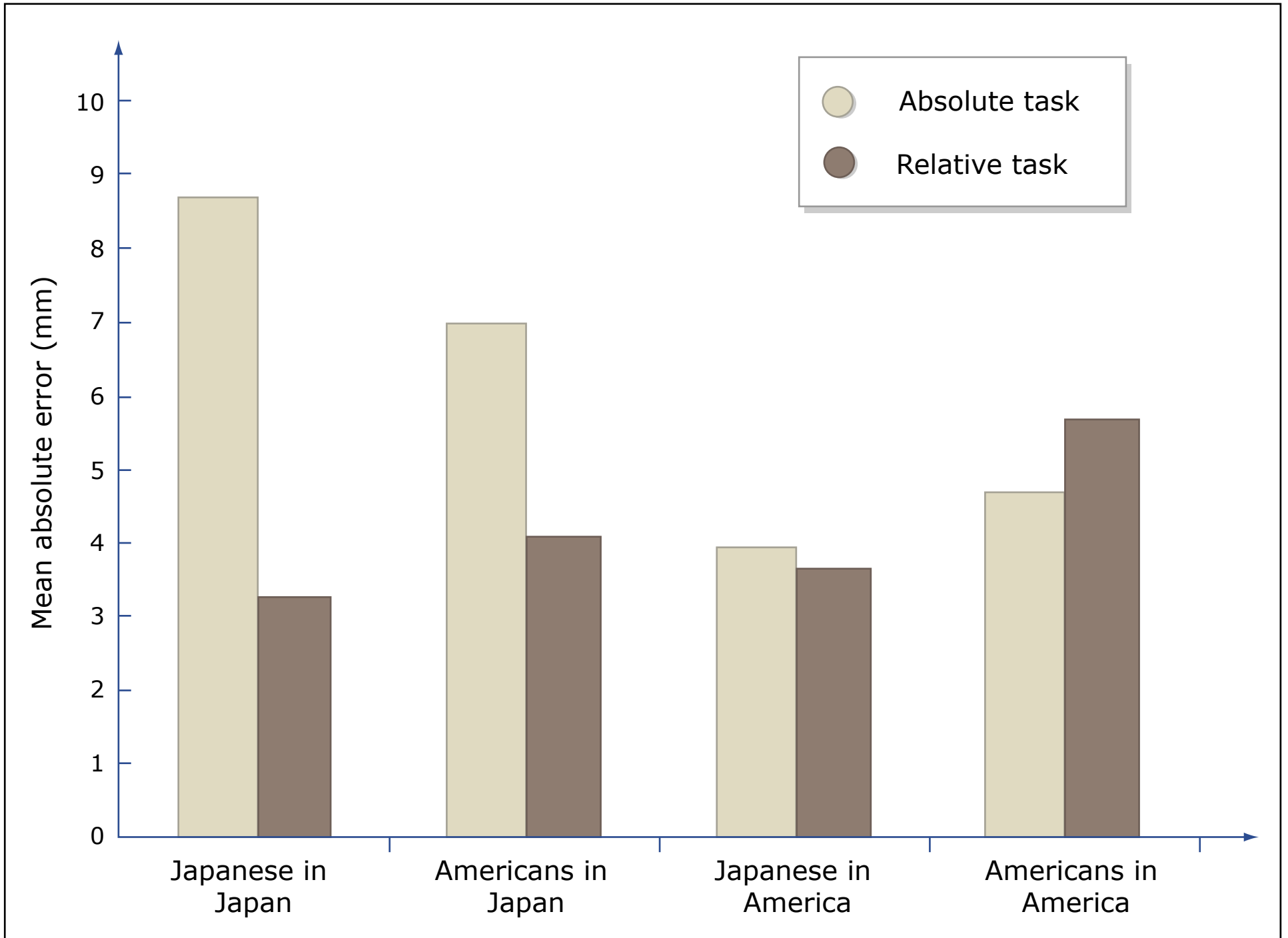
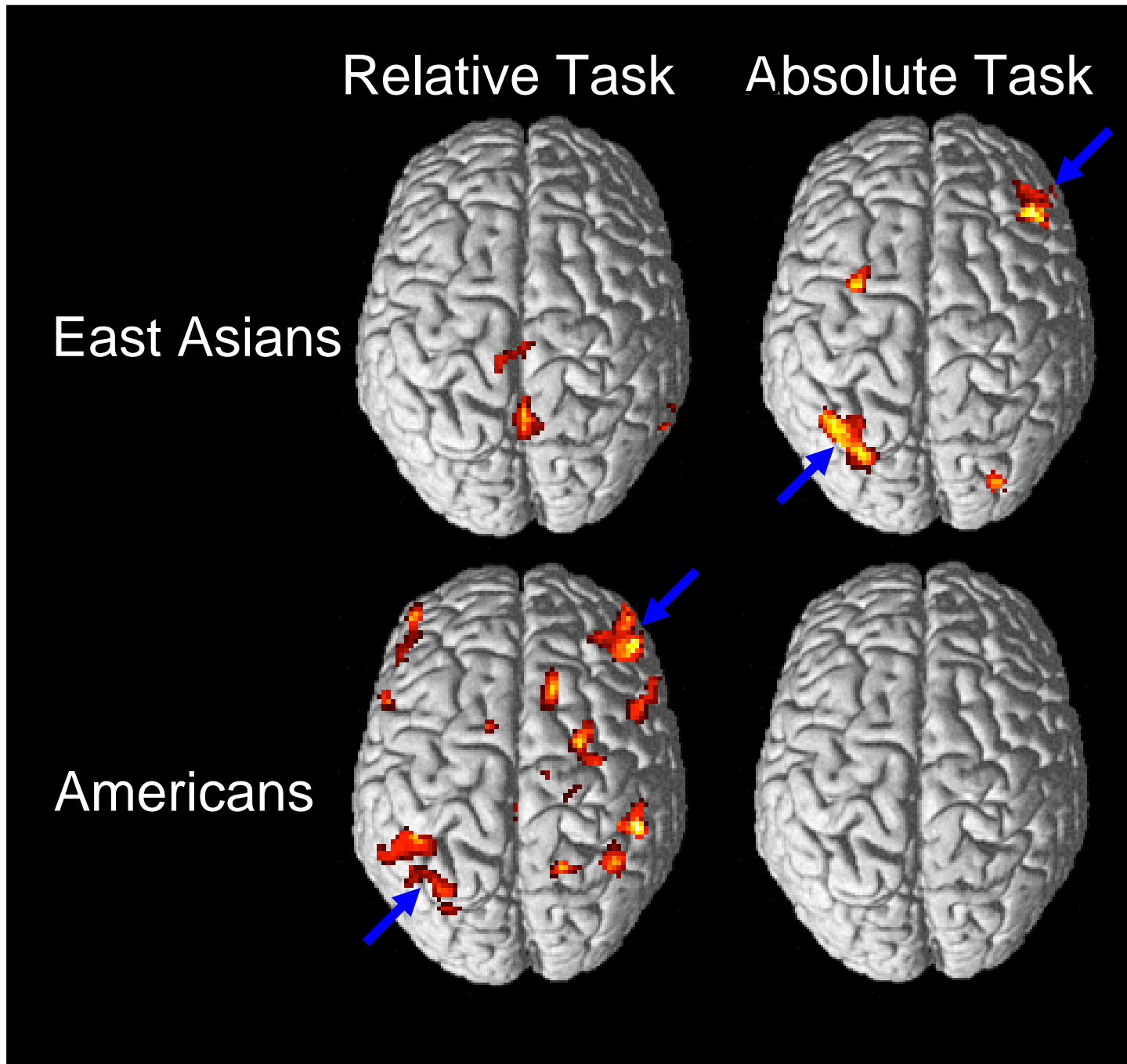


Image by MIT OpenCourseWare. Adapted from Kitayama, S., et al. "Perceiving an Object and its Context in Different Cultures." *Psychological Science* 14, no. 3 (2003): 201-6.

# Greater Brain Activation to Support Culturally Non-Preferred Task





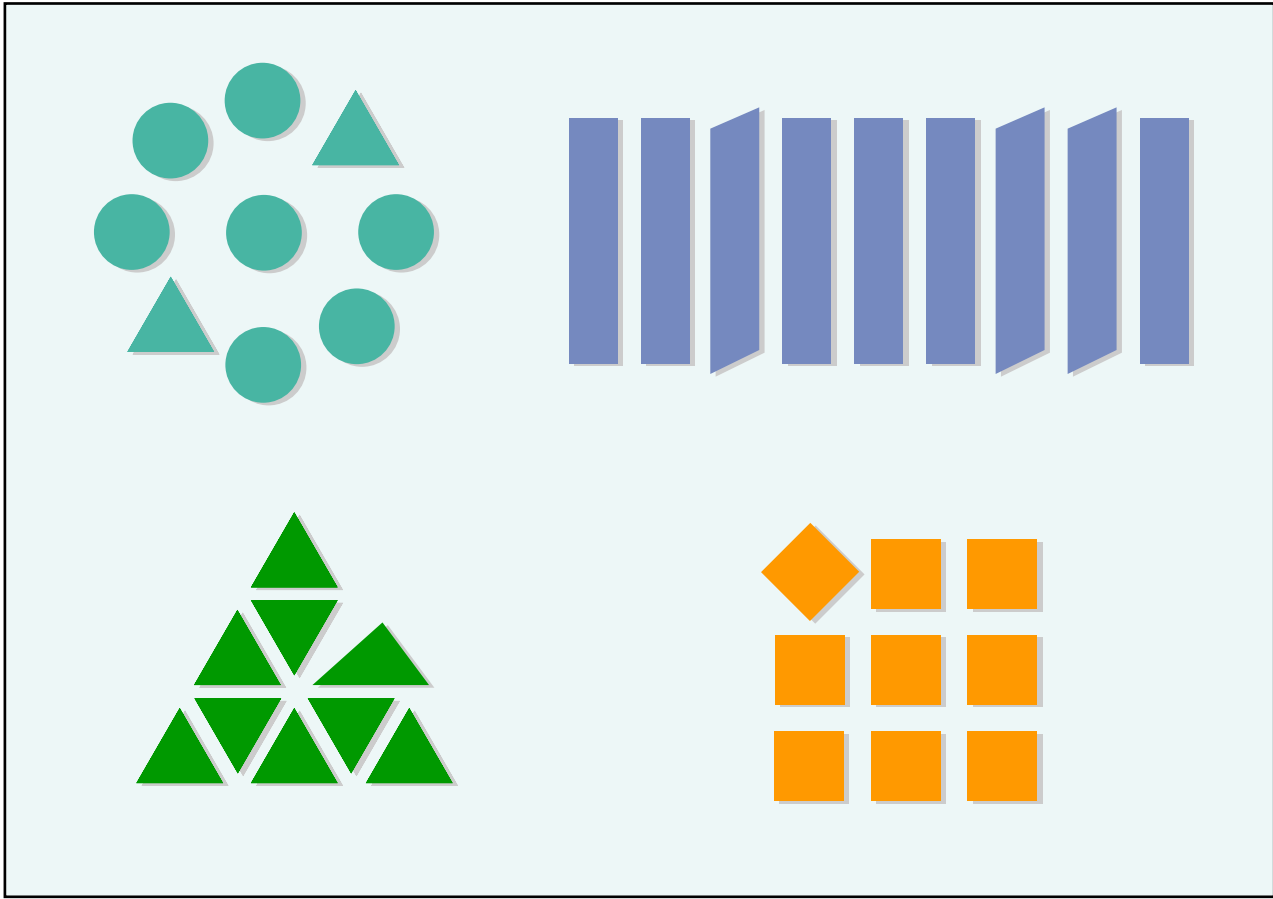
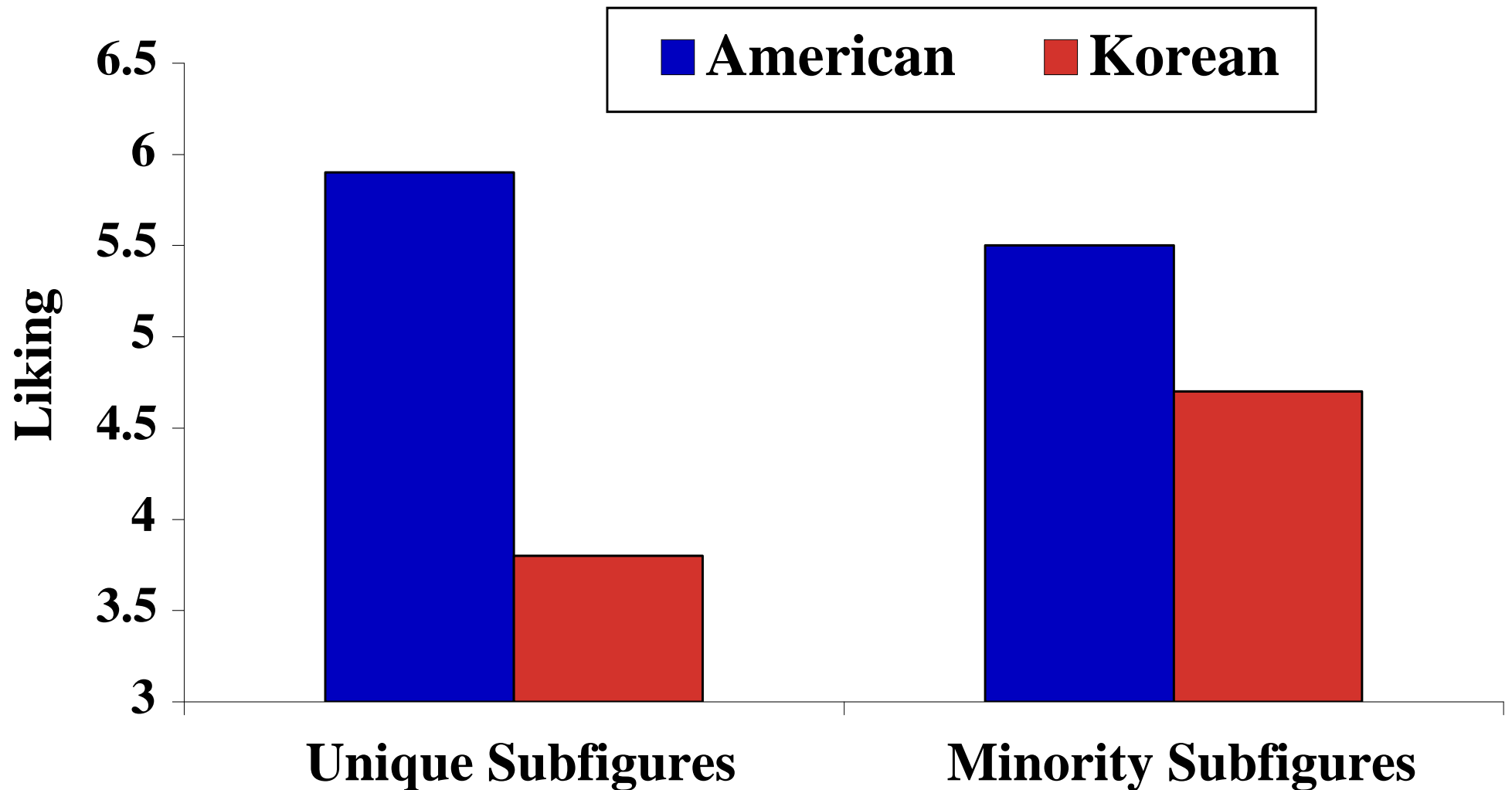


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# Preference for Uniqueness (Kim & Markus, 1999)



# 1+4 Condition

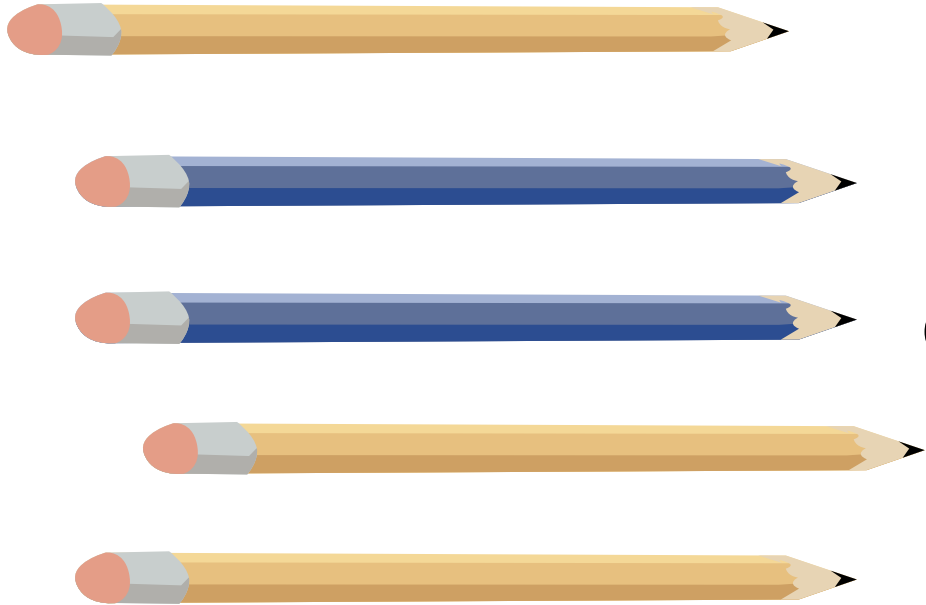


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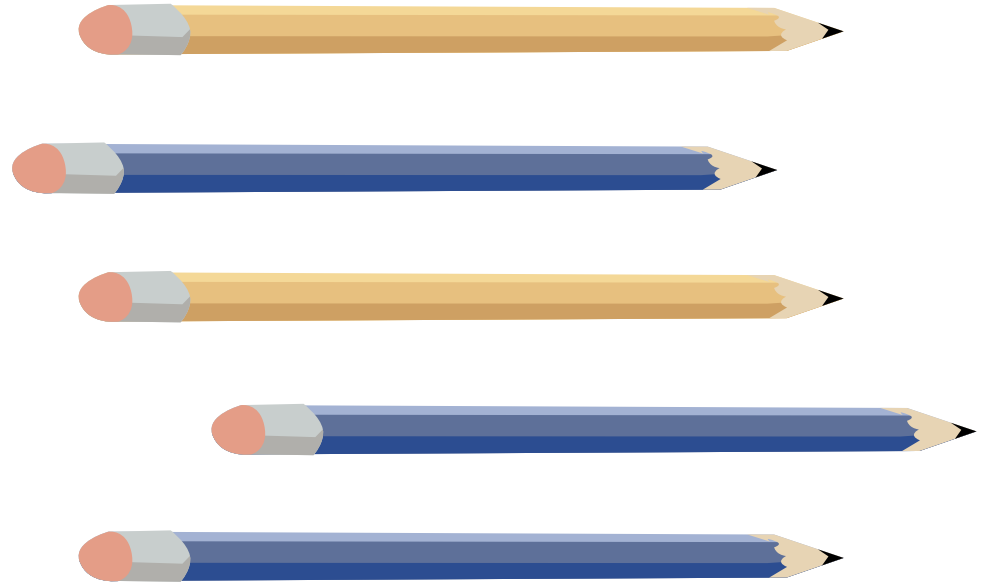


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# 2+3 Condition

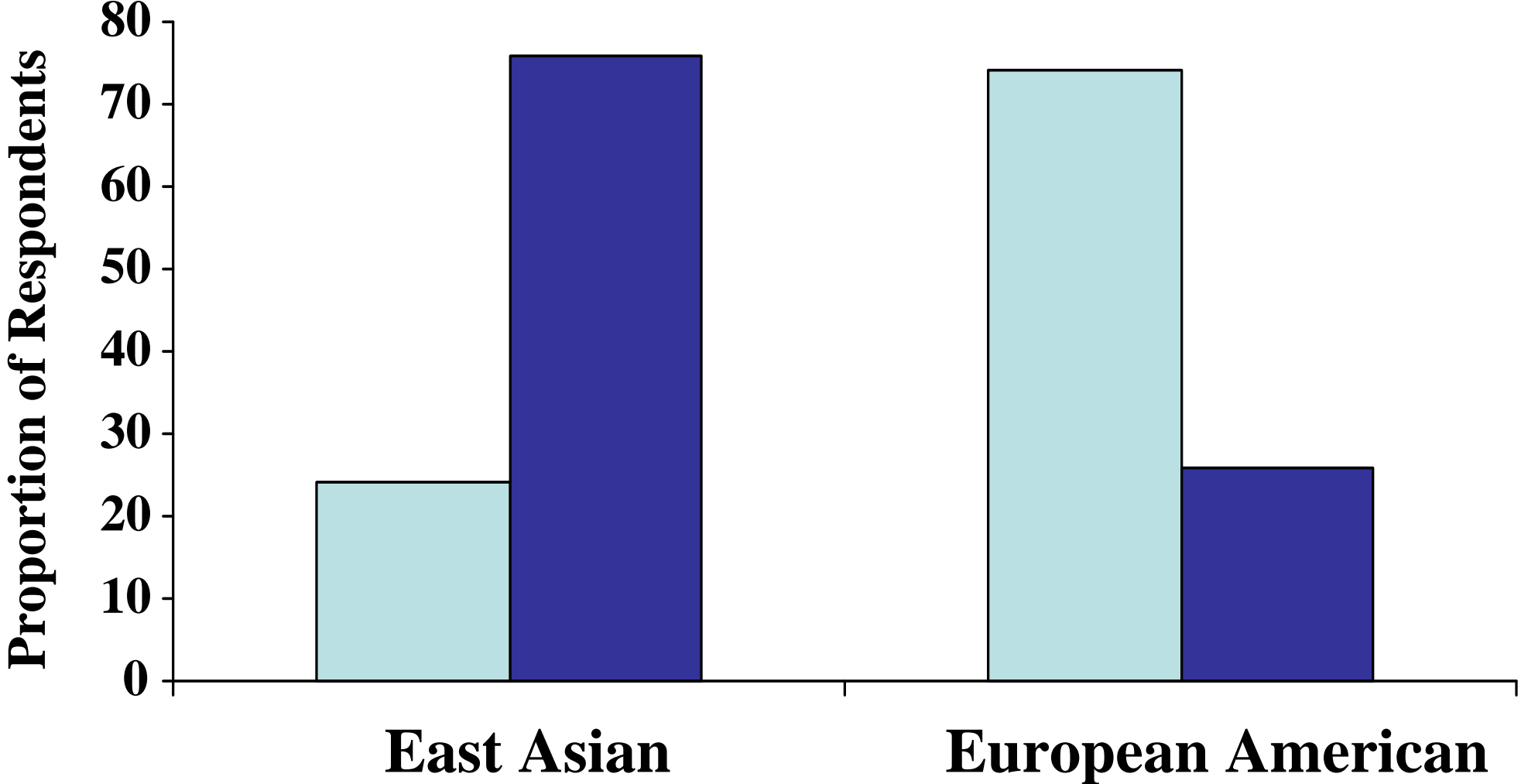


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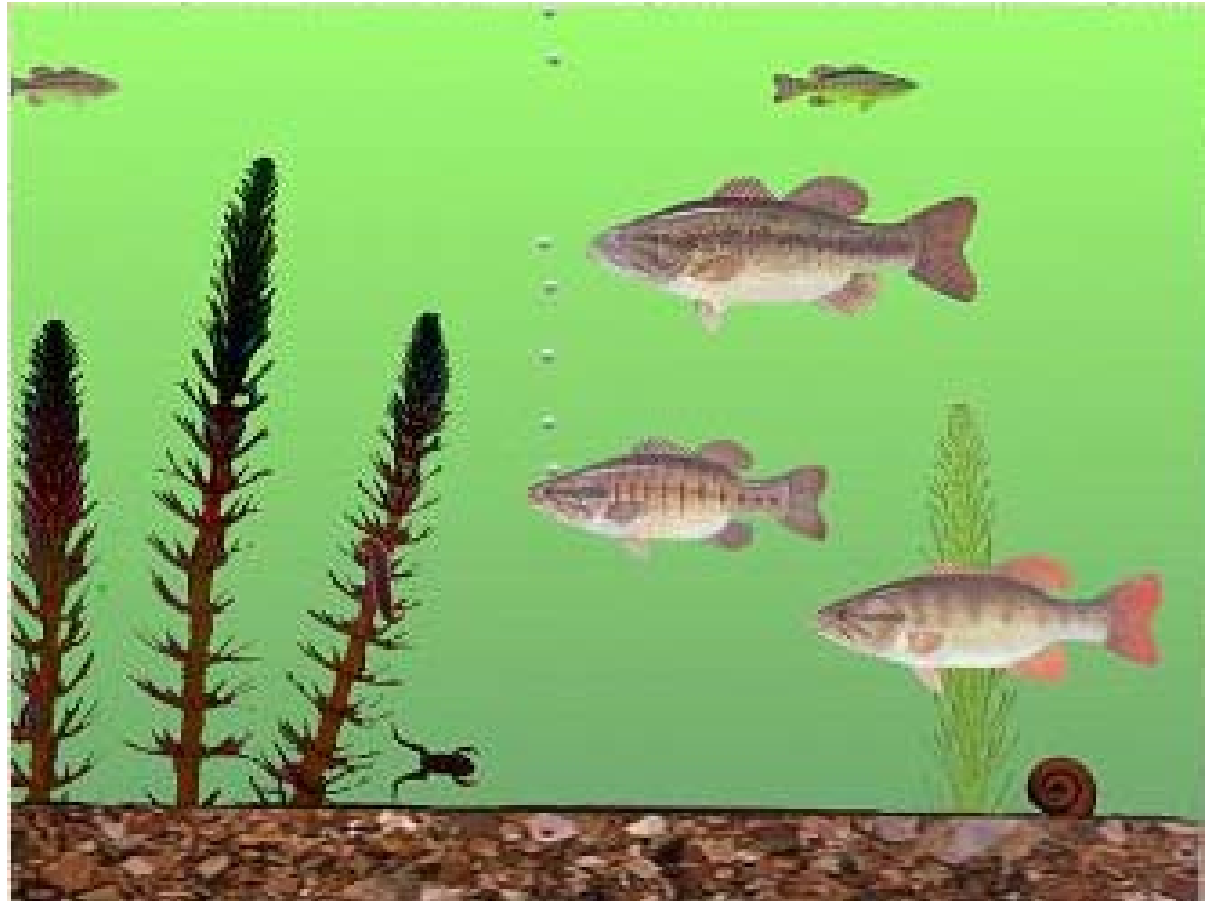
# Unique Pen Choice: International Airport

(Kim & Markus, 1999) \*



# Culture and Attention : The Self-

## The Michigan Fish Test

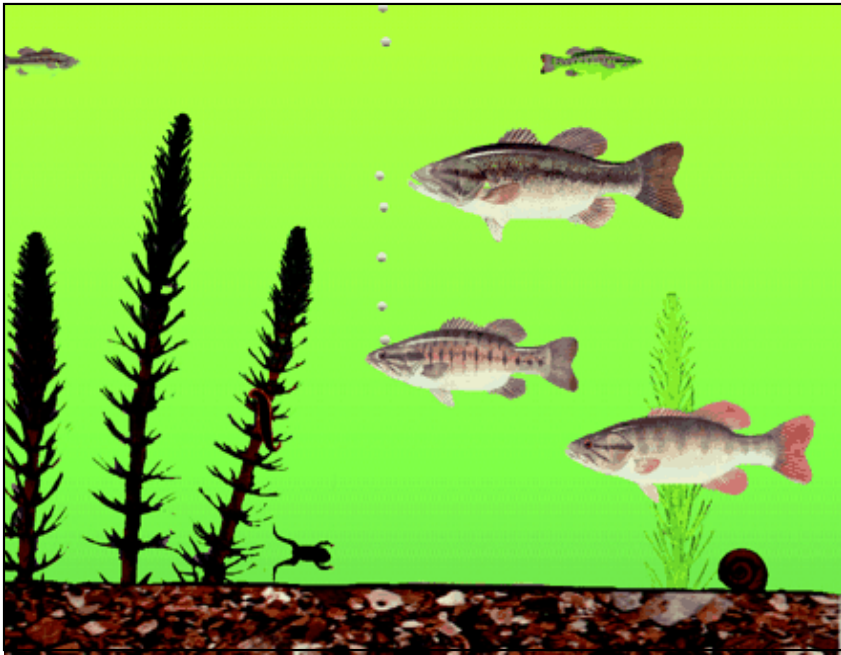


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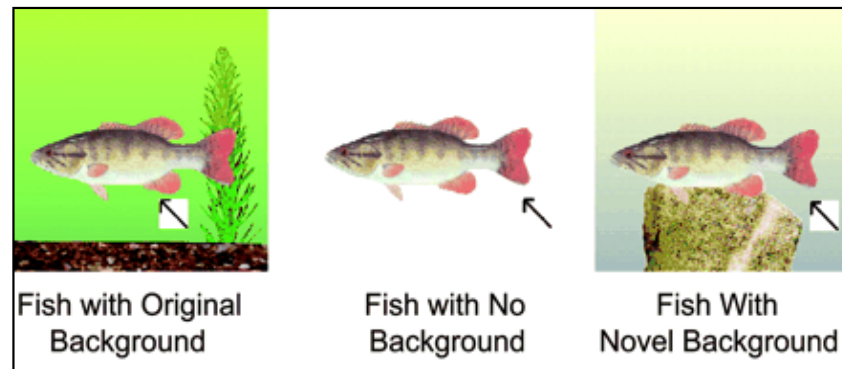
North Americans referred to the attributes of the target fish; the Japanese referred to the background and contextual information as well as the target fish attributes.

(Masuda & Nisbett, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2001)

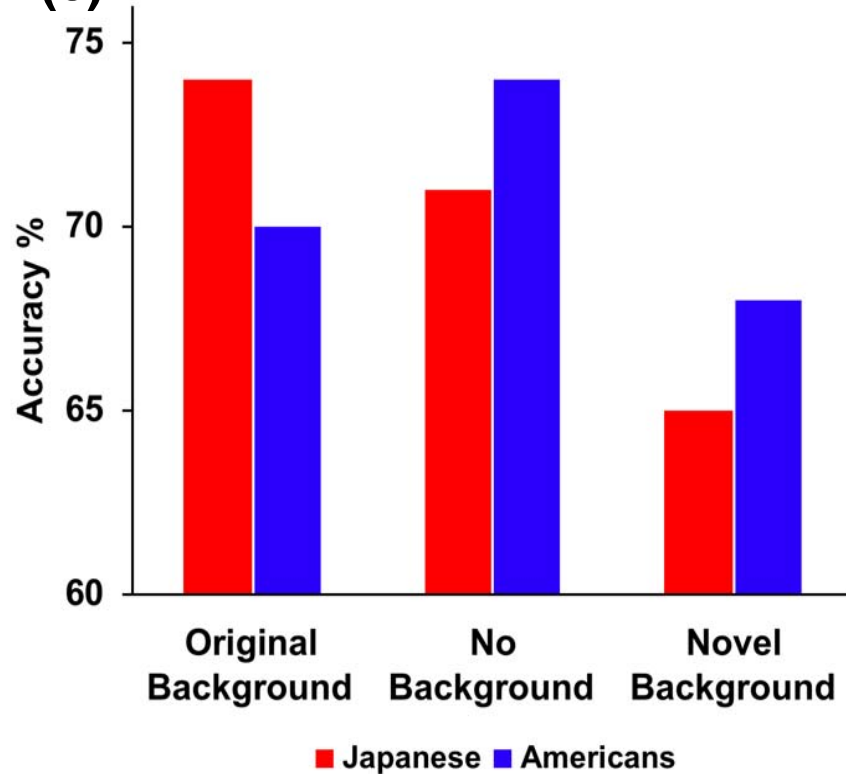
(a)



(b)



(c)



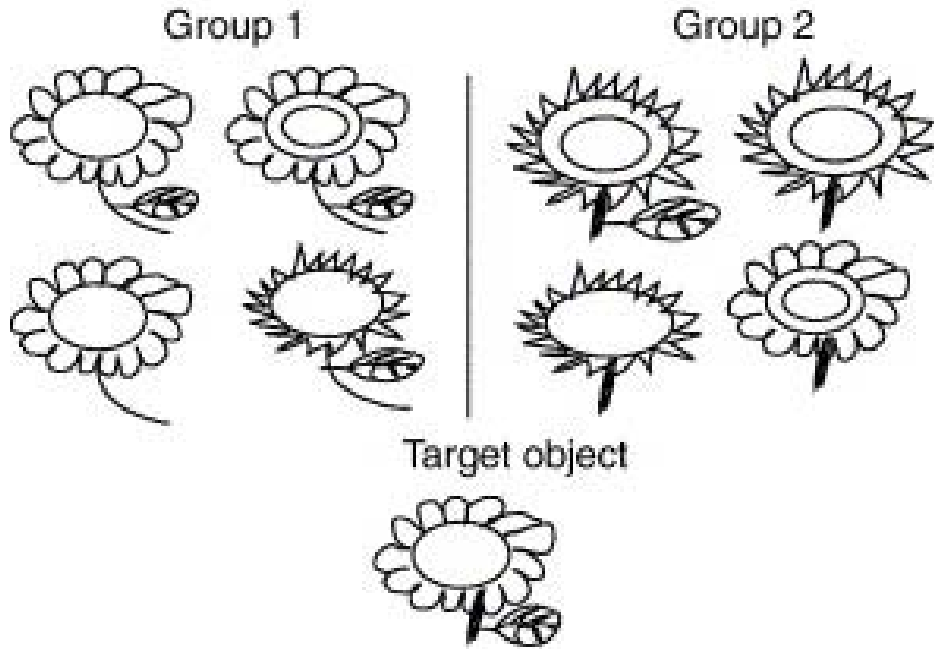
(a) Still photo from animated underwater vignette. (b) Focal fish previously seen viewed against previously seen background (*Left*), no background (*Center*), or novel background (*Right*). (c) Recognition accuracy for previously seen objects. Accuracy rates of Japanese participants varied significantly as a function of background conditions.

Courtesy of American Psychological Association. Used with permission.

Masuda & Nisbett, *J Pers Soc Psych*, 2001

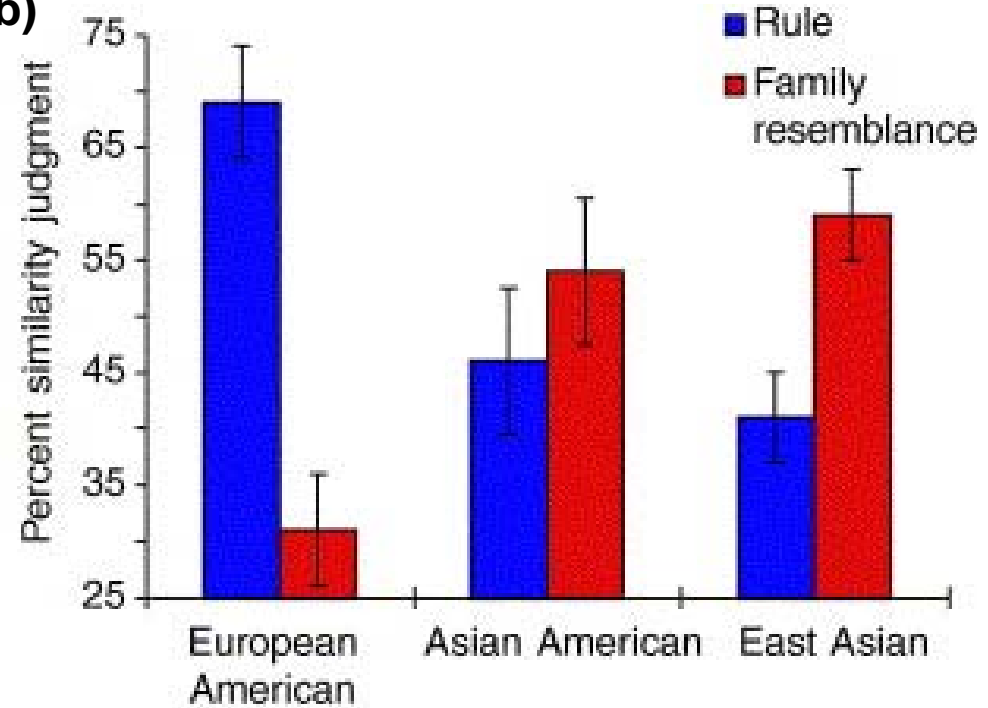
# Figure 1. Categorization task

(a)



(a) Participants were presented with a target object and two groups of four objects, and were asked to judge which group the target object was most similar to. In this example, all the objects in group 2 share the same stem as the target object, whereas the members in group 1 share a large number of features with the target, although no one feature is shared by all the members. Thus, whereas the group 2 shares a unidimensional rule with the target, group 1 is holistically more similar to the target.

(b)



*TRENDS in Cognitive Sciences*

(b) European Americans much more often perceived similarities based on the unidimensional rule, but East Asians more frequently perceived similarities based on holistic judgments of family resemblance.

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Nisbett & Miyamoto, Trends in Cog Sci, 2005



# **Fundamental Attribution Error**

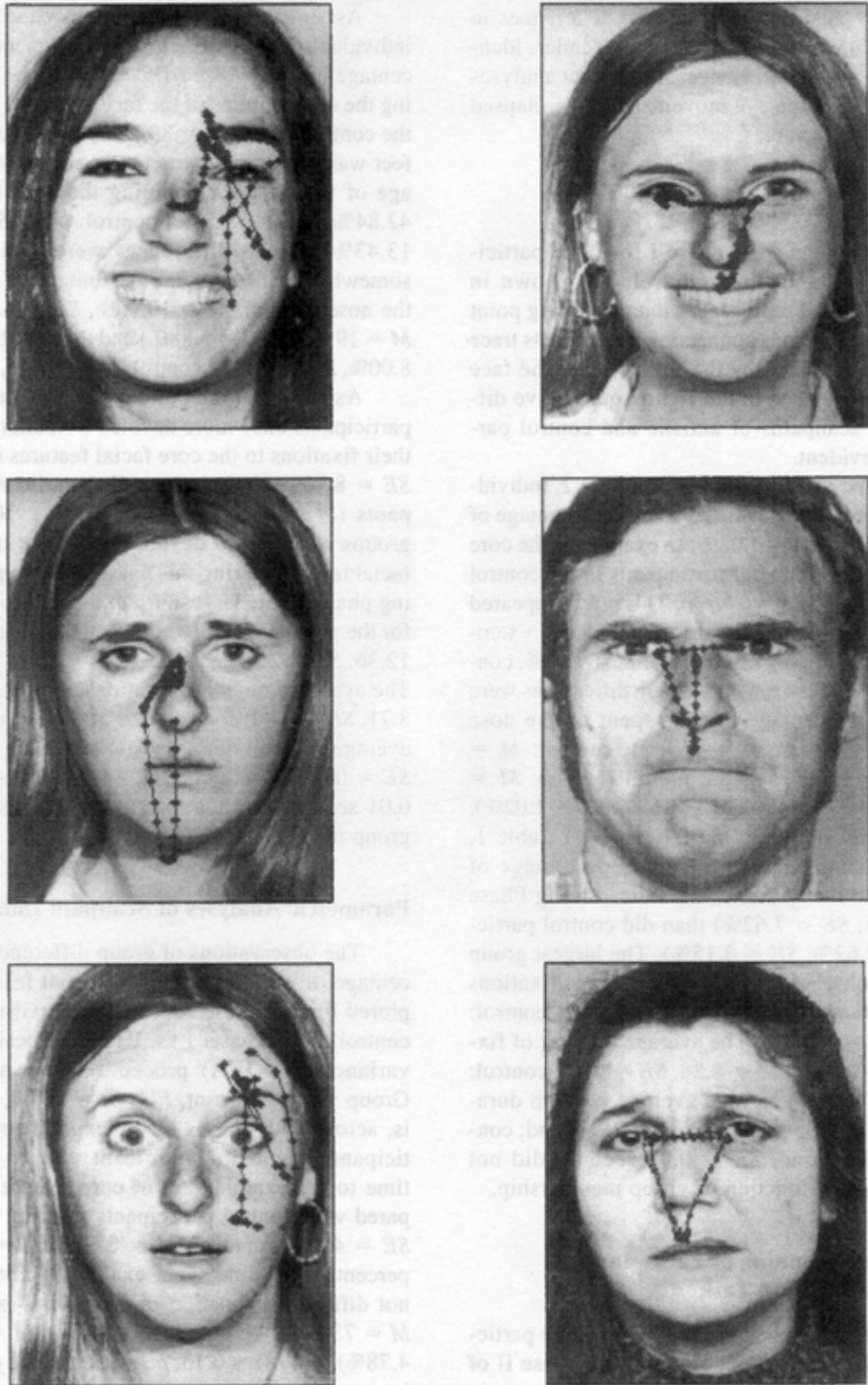
- **disposition (personality) vs. situation**
- **more emphasis on interpreting actions in terms of dispositions in US**
- **more emphasis on interpreting actions in terms of situation in India, China, Japan, Korea**
- **East Asians less susceptible to attractiveness bias than Westerners**

# AUTISM

- **prevalence 1/110-140 – dramatic increase in recent years (awareness?)**
- **diagnosed by age 3**
- **4 males/1 female**
- **social cognition different (impaired?)**
- **communication/language difficulty in many cases**
- **stereotyped, repetitive movements**<sup>50</sup>

## Autistic Group

## Control Group

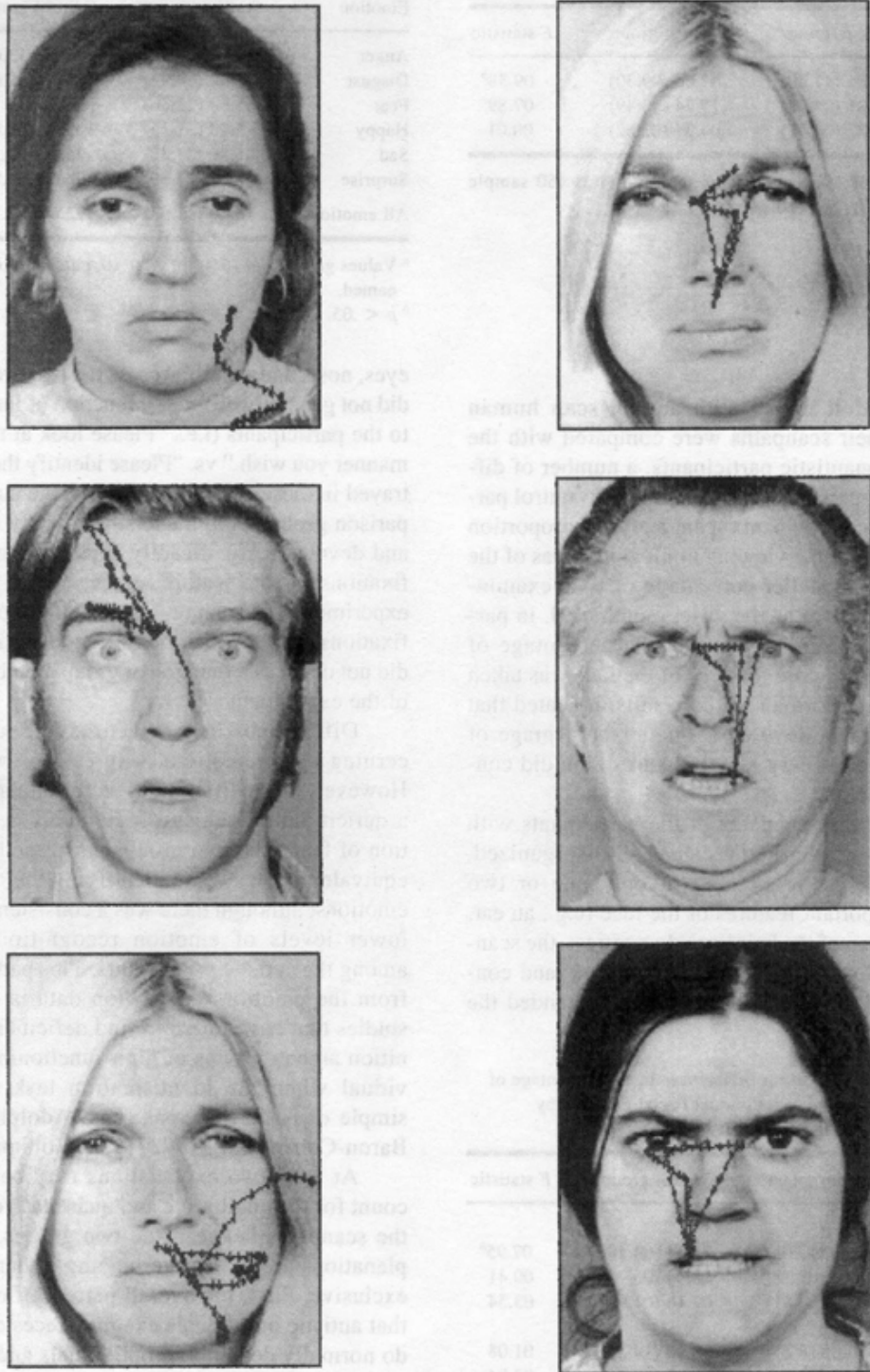


**Fig 1.** Sample scanpaths from phase I of the experiment. Participants were instructed to examine the faces in any manner they selected.

Source: Pelphrey, K., N. Sasson, et al. "Visual Scanning of Faces in Autism." *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* 32, no. 4 (2002). © Springer. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/fairuse>.

## Autistic Group

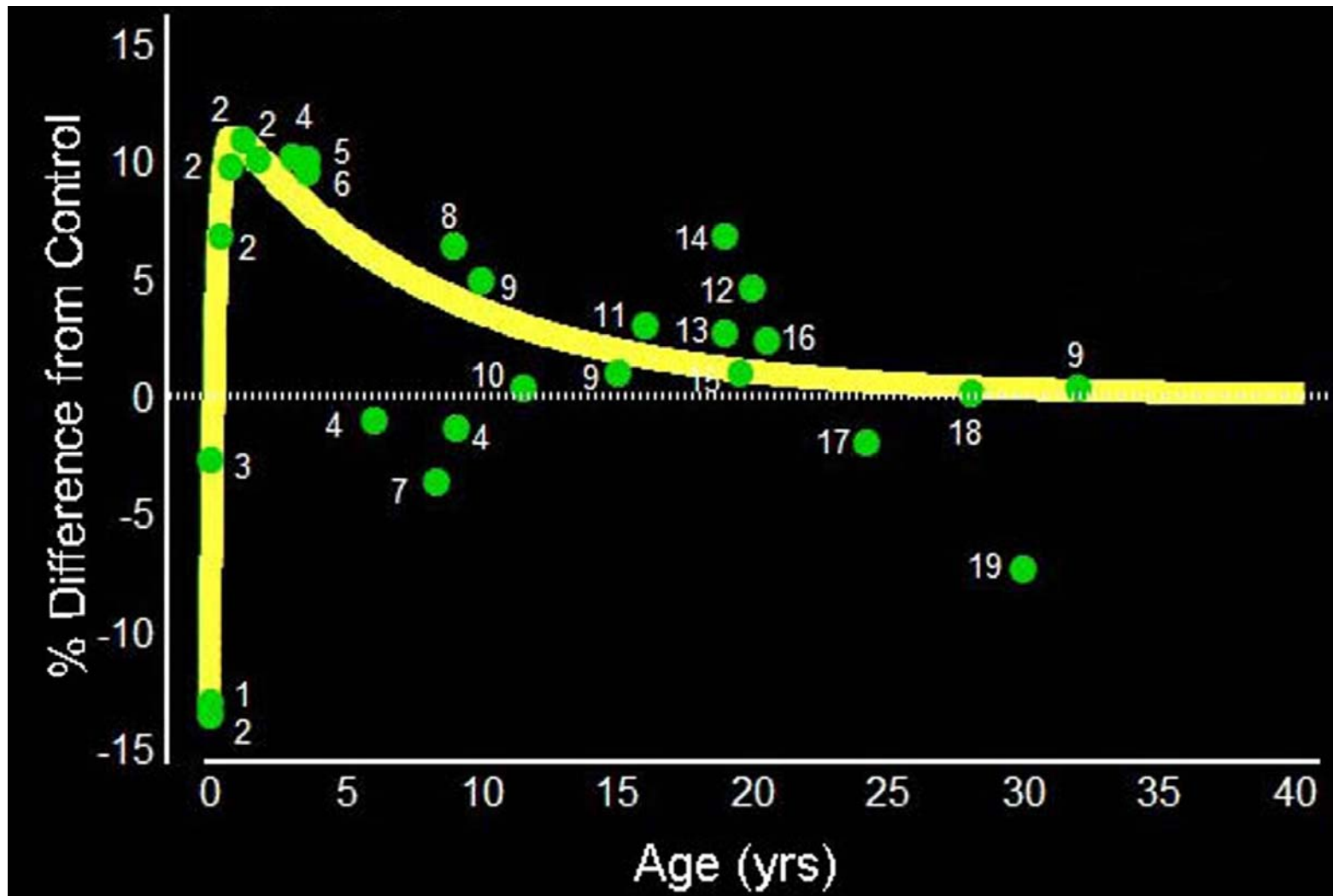
## Control Group



**Fig 3.** Sample scanpaths from phase II of the experiment. Participants were instructed to identify the emotion portrayed in each face.

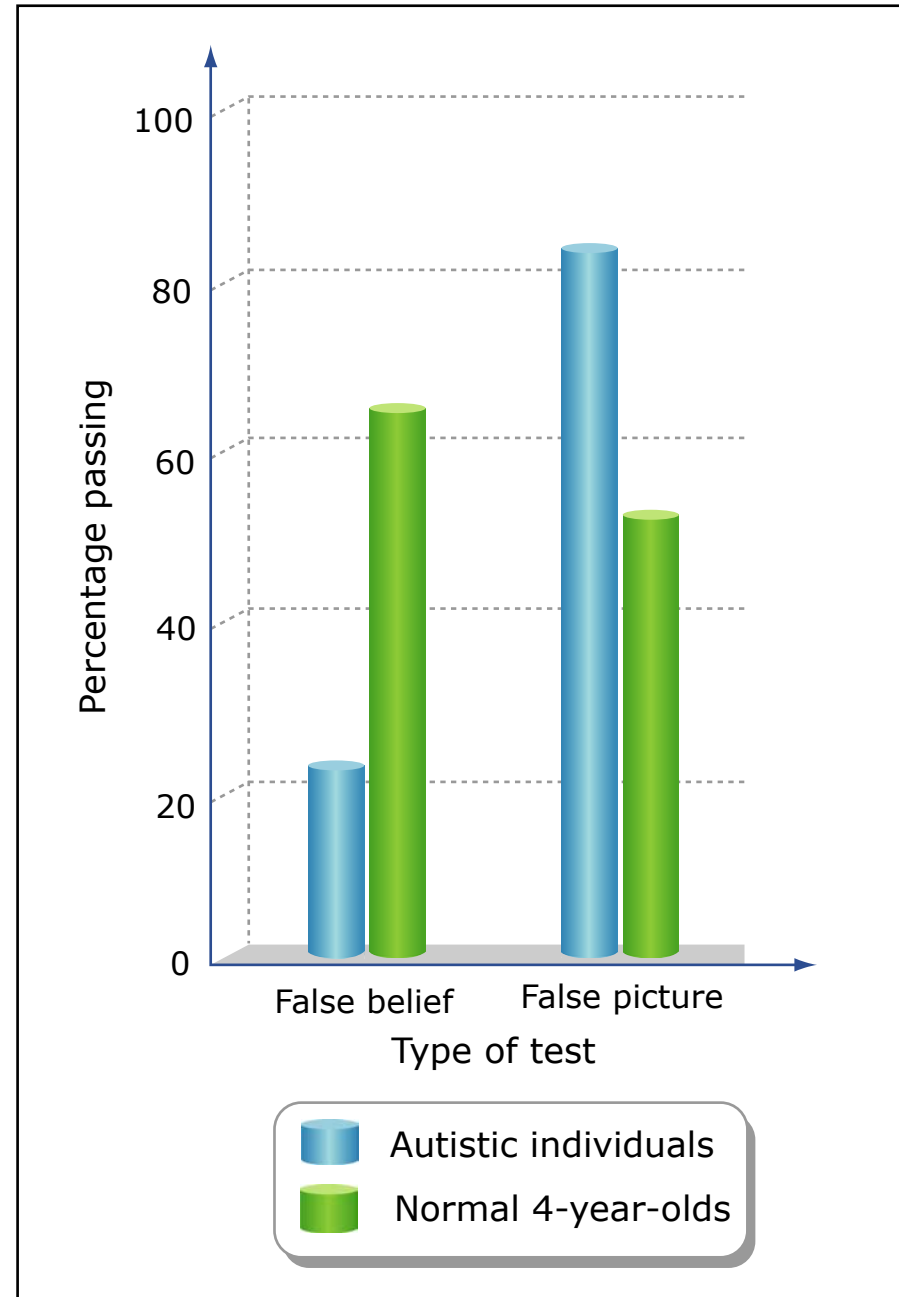
Source: Pelphrey, K., N. Sasson, et al. "Visual Scanning of Faces in Autism." *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* 32, no. 4 (2002). © Springer. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/fairuse>.

# Brain Size Differences are Maximal in First Few Years of Life in Autism

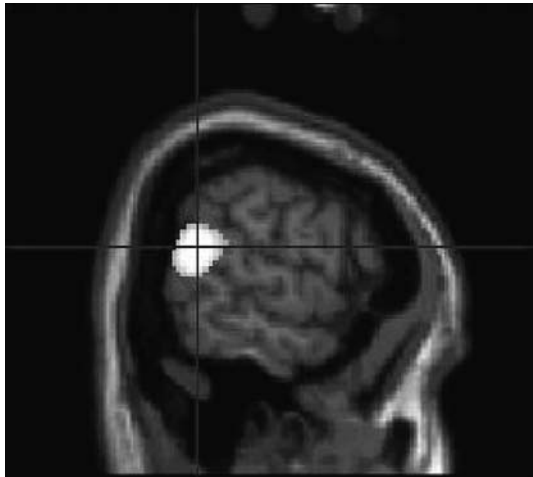


# Autism: Theory of Mind Deficit

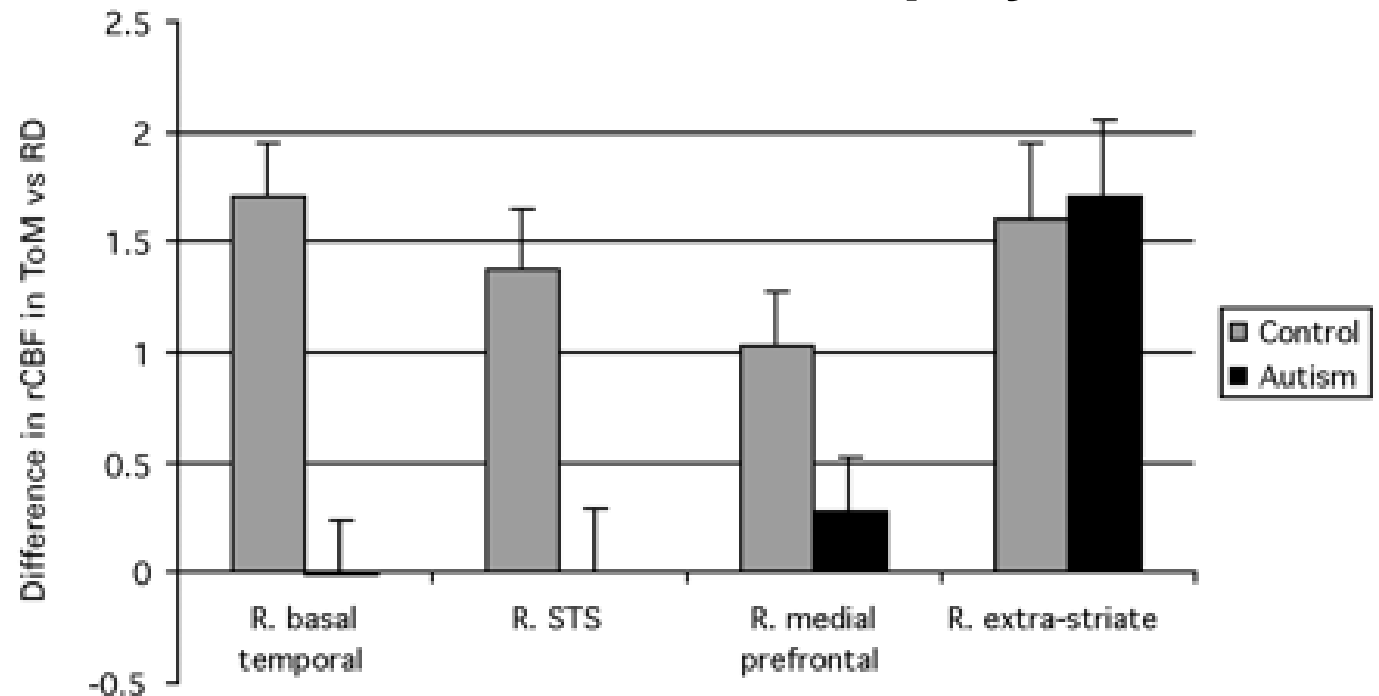
- typical 4 year olds
- IQ matched 6-12 year olds with autism
- false picture control (photo of object in a location, object moved, still in picture?)



# Reduced social brain activation during theory of mind attribution in ASD



## TOM > Random Displays



Regions with significant increase in cerebral blood flow during mentalizing

Source: Castelli, F., C. Frith, et al. "Autism, Asperger Syndrome and Brain Mechanisms for the Attribution of Mental States to Animated Shapes." *Brain* (2002). © Springer. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/fairuse>.

Congruent

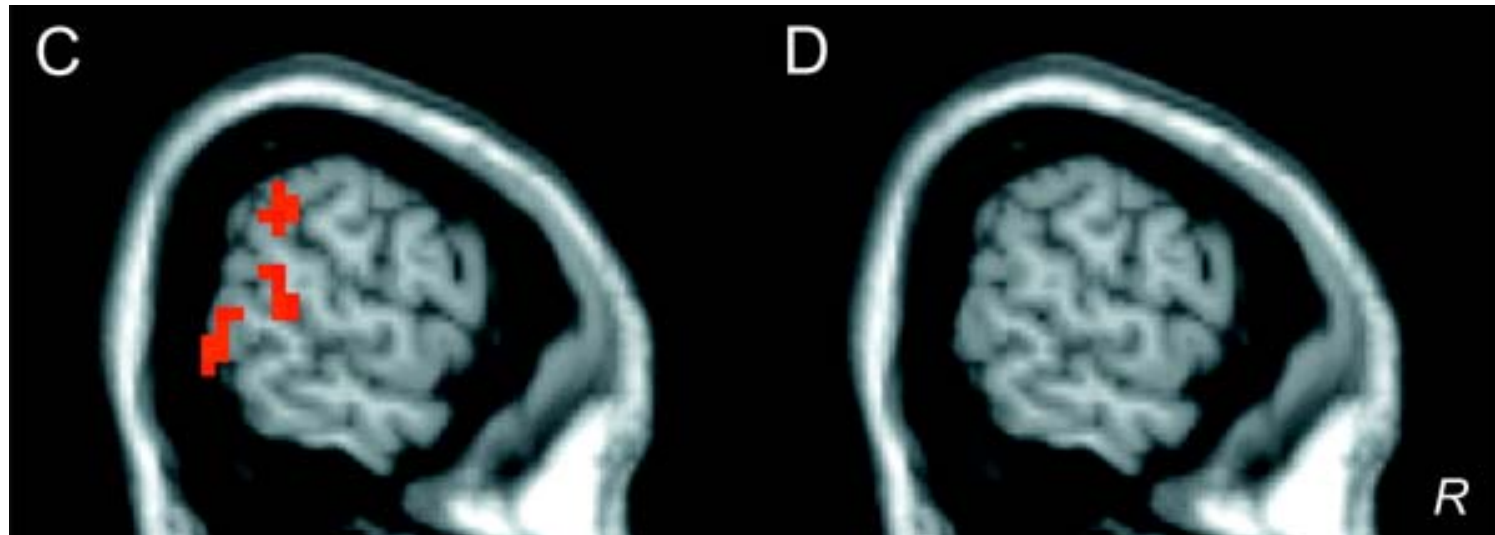


Incongruent





# INCONGRUENT > CONGRUENT



**TYPICAL**

**AUTISM**

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