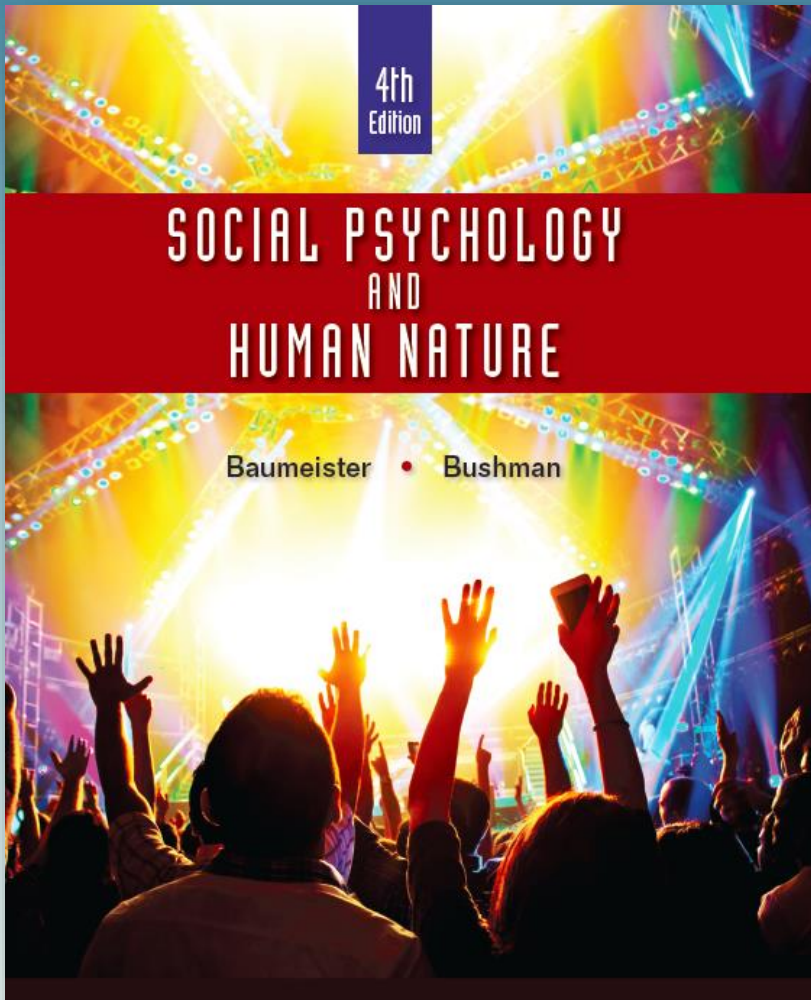


Social Psychology: Global Perspectives



Social Psychology
Across Cultures and
Nations

Topics

Social Psychology
across Cultures
and Nations

Social Cognition

The Self

Culture and
Nature

Choices and
Actions

Prejudice and
Intergroup
Relations

Groups

Social
Representations
Theory

Interpersonal
Attraction and
Rejection

What makes us
Human?

WORLD MAP



This module...

- 10 weeks
 - 1 hour recorded lecture
 - 2 hours seminar
 - 1 hour office hour prior to the seminar
 - Lecture focus on topic area, seminars focus on discussion
 - Preparation: core text reading for lectures, articles for seminars
 - Core text: Baumeister, R. F., & Bushman, B. J. (2017). *Social psychology and human nature*. Boston, MA: Cengage.
 - Available from university online library

Module Content

1. Social Psychology Across Cultures and Nations
2. The Self
3. Social Cognition
4. Culture and Nature
5. Choices and Actions
6. Prejudice and Intergroup Relations
7. Groups
8. Guest Lecture
9. Attraction and Exclusion
10. What Makes Us Human?

Assessment 1: Essay (2,500 words)

**With reference to the content of the essay transcript provided:
'Critically discuss the need for social psychology to be 'culturally informed'**

Assessment 2: Research report (2,000 words)

- Research project examining cross-group perception
 - a) Feminism, or b) Veganism****
- T-test**

Learning Objectives

- Define social psychology
- Name the early influences and key ideas that had a lasting influence on the field
- Describe the ABC triad of social psychology
- Explain how social psychology relates to other fields of study
- Assess the different methods of data collection in social psychology

Introduction

- Social psychology: study of how people affect and are affected by others
 - Helps make sense of social world
- Consider all options for every decision
 - Example: coffee shop choices
 - Type of milk, flavourings, sweetener, bean, etc.

A Brief History of Social Psychology

- Late 1800s: two experiments point in opposite directions
 - Norman Triplett: competition enhances performance
 - Max Ringelmann: as group size increases, individual effort decreases
- 1908: publication of social psychology textbooks
 - Edward Ross, William McDougall
 - <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/>
 - <http://www.yorku.ca/christo/podcasts/>

A Brief History of Social Psychology (cont'd.)

- Twentieth century: rapid changes and world events lead to new ideas
 - Gordon Allport: importance of attitudes
 - Kurt Lewin: behaviour is a function of the person and situation
 - Stanley Milgram: role of obedience (in light of World War II)

A Brief History of Social Psychology (cont'd.)

- 1950s and 1960s: psychology divided into two camps
 - Behaviourism: learning principles (e.g., rewards and punishments)
 - Freudian psychoanalysis: individual experiences
- Social psychology: combines methods
 - Uses scientific approaches to measure behaviour, thoughts, feelings, and inner states

A Brief History of Social Psychology (cont'd.)

- Recent history
 - Study of cognitive processes - e.g. Attribution theory
 - Biological and evolutionary processes - e.g. Social neuroscience
 - The 'Self' - Self-concept, self-esteem, self-presentation, identity
 - Group conflict – e.g. Political, racial, and ethnic
 - Emotion – Affective, behavioural and cognitive components
 - Communication – Language, non-verbal

Social Psychology's Place in the World

- Involved in the social sciences
 - Anthropology
 - Economics
 - History
 - Political science
 - Sociology

Subdisciplines of Psychology

TABLE 1.1

Descriptions of Psychology Subdisciplines

Psychology Subdiscipline	Description
Biological psychology	Biological psychologists focus on what happens in the brain, nervous system, and other aspects of the body.
Clinical psychology	Clinical psychologists focus on “abnormal” behavior.
Cognitive psychology	Cognitive psychologists focus on thought processes, such as how memory works and what people notice.
Developmental psychology	Developmental psychologists study how people change across their lives, from conception and birth to old age and death.
Personality psychology	Personality psychologists focus on important differences between individuals, as well as inner processes.
Social psychology	Social psychologists focus on how human beings think, act, and feel. Thoughts, actions, and feelings are a joint function of personal and situational influences.

Why Do People Study Social Psychology?

Curiosity about people

- Why people act the way they do

Exploring how lives are lived

- How the past, present and future intersect

Interest in experimental philosophy

- Combines profound questions and the scientific method

Making the world better

- Pursuit of truth put above all other goals

Social psychology is fun

- Fascinating and enjoyable

How Do Social Psychologists Answer Their Own Questions?

- Accumulated common wisdom
 - Adages are often contradictory
 - Intuition is a poor method of discovering truth
 - Common sense may be a starting point for questions

But whose common sense?

Cacioppo “Common Sense, Intuition, and Theory in Personality and Social Psychology”

Food for Thought

- Does chicken soup reduce cold symptoms?
- Common sense: It seems to make people feel better
 - Hypothesis: chicken soup reduces upper respiratory inflammation
 - Experiment: samples of chicken soup were fed to participants
 - Result: chicken soup reduced neutrophil counts
 - Report: published in Chest

Scientific Theories (cont'd.)

- Construct validity of the cause
 - Independent variable: theoretical stimulus
- Construct validity of the effect
 - Dependent variable: theoretical response
- Scientific theories must be testable
 - Define constructs operationally

Research Design

- Experiment
 - Researcher controls procedures
 - Participants are randomly assigned
- Quasi-experiment
 - No random assignment
- Internal validity
 - Confidence that independent variable caused change in dependent variable

Trade Offs

- Potential harm on participants and potential benefits to society must be considered
 - Institutional Review Board (SREC)
 - Consent forms
 - Demand characteristics
 - Debriefing

Confounding Variables

		Violent	
		No	Yes
Frustrating	No	Control group	
	Yes		Experimental group

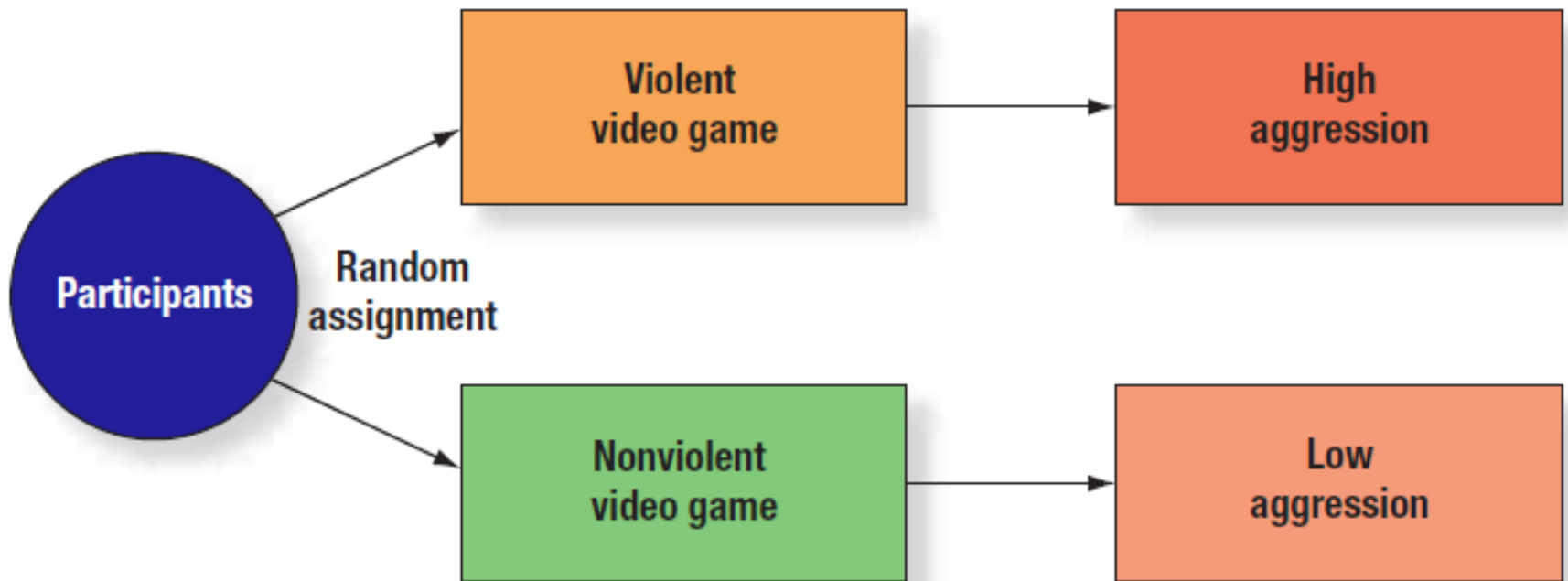
(a)

		Violent	
		No	Yes
Exciting	No	Control group	
	Yes		Experimental group

(b)

Mistake: frustration as a confounding variable

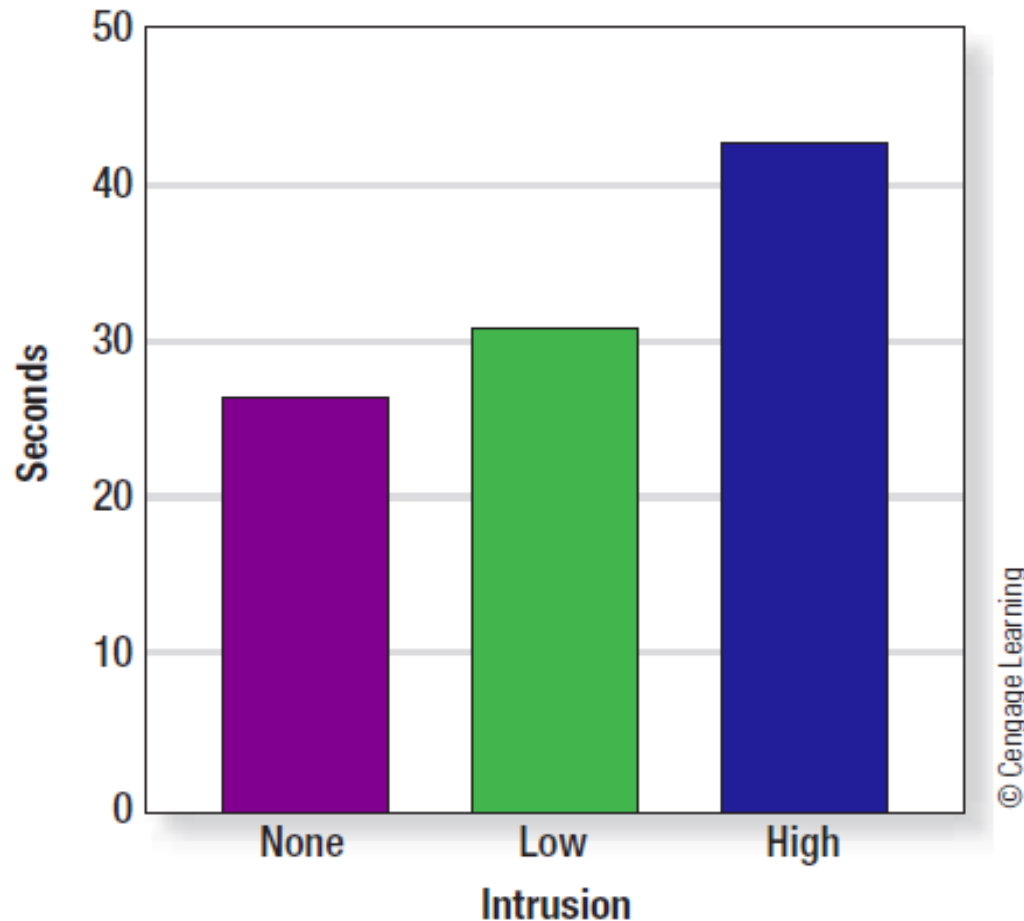
Experimental Studies



Research Design (cont'd.)

- Laboratory and field experiments
 - Laboratory experiments: high control level
 - Field experiments: real-world settings
 - Experimental realism: participants forget they are in an experiment
 - Mundane realism: settings resemble the world
 - External validity: findings generalise to other people and other settings

Field Experiments

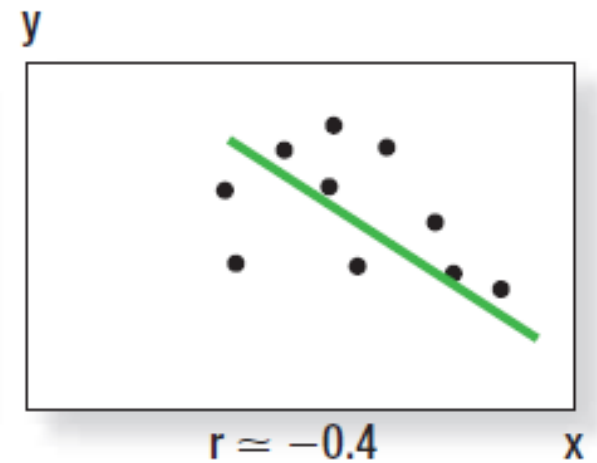
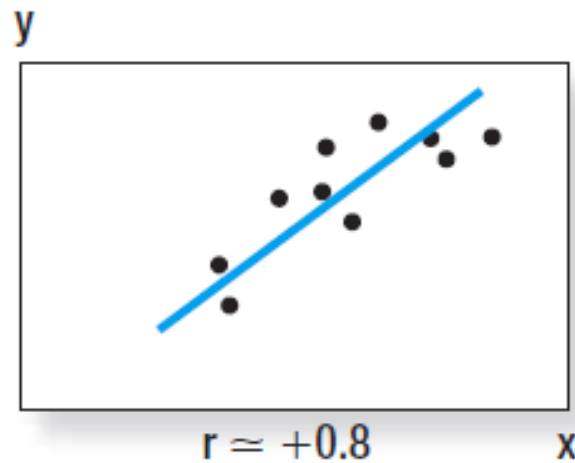
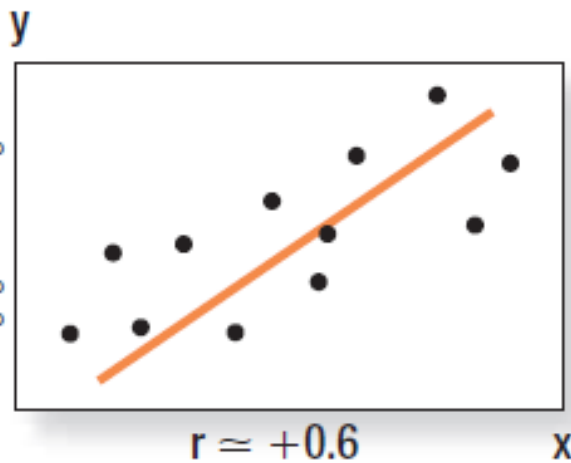
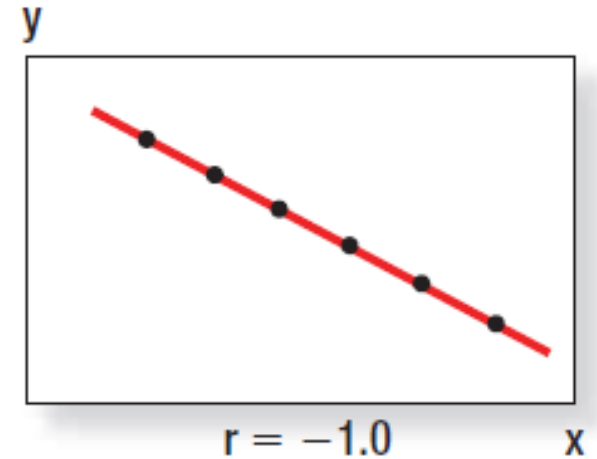
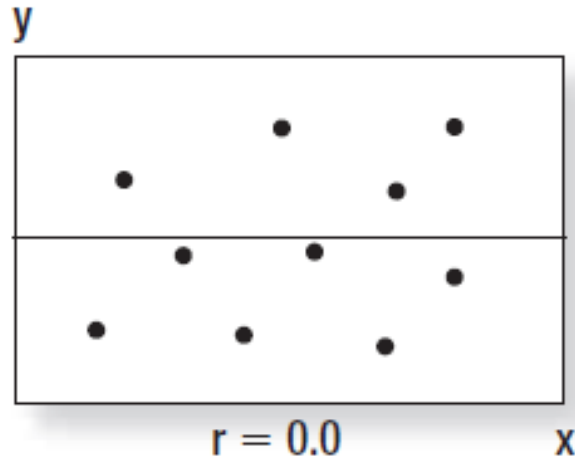
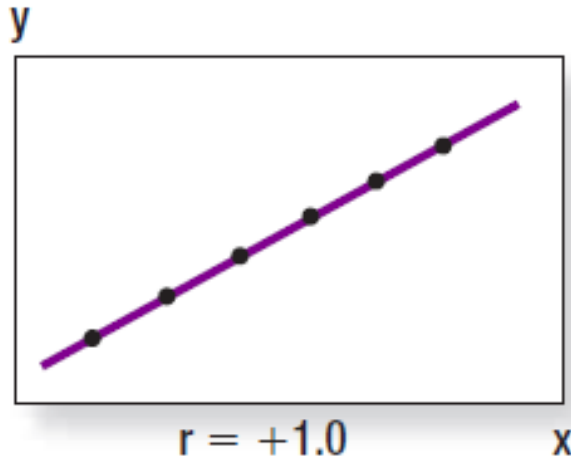


Experimenters timed how long it took for drivers to leave parking spot when someone flashed his turn signal and honked horn (high intrusion), waited patiently (low intrusion), or when no one waited (control/no intrusion; Ruback & Juieng, 1997)

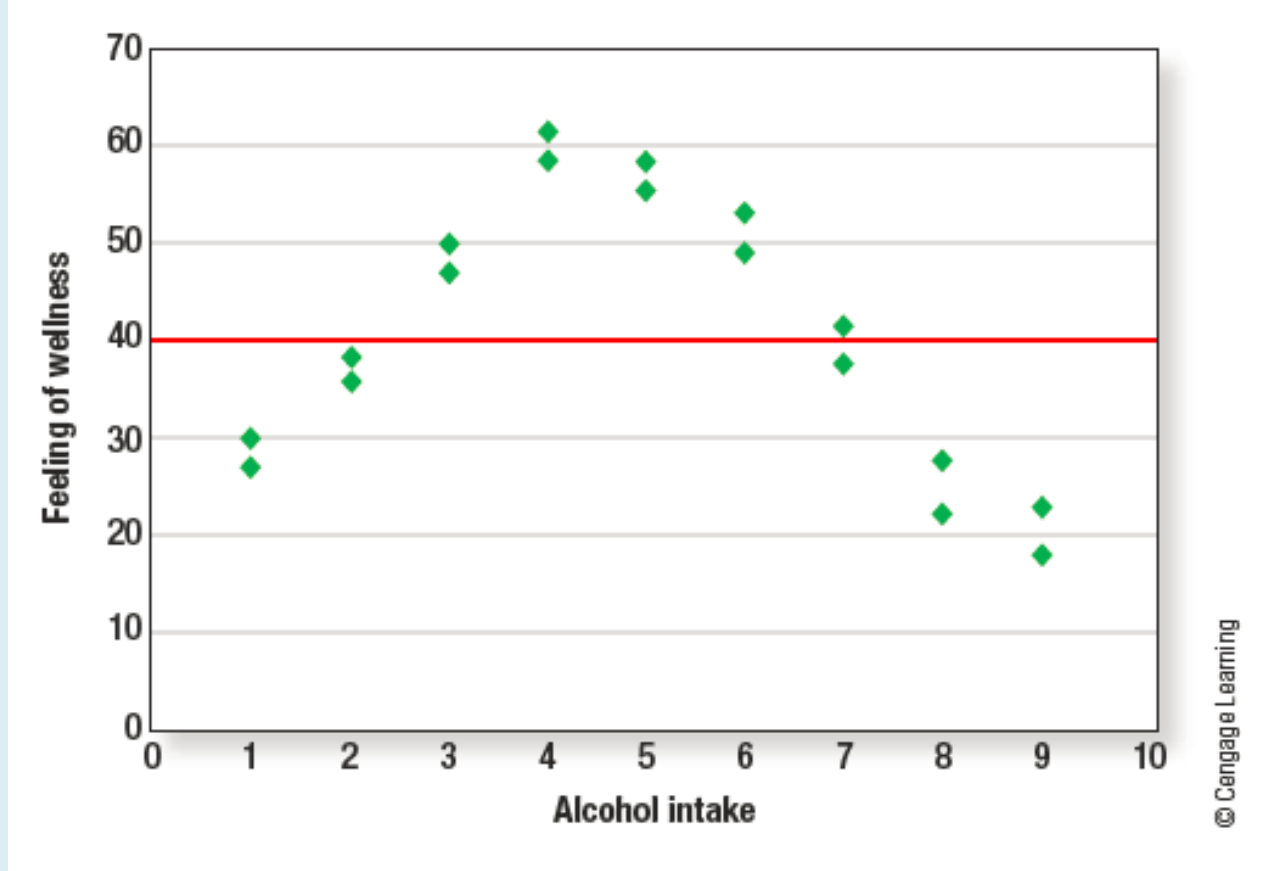
Nonexperimental Studies

- Correlational approach: researcher does not control variables or random assignment
 - Weakness of approach: does not prove causation
- Correlation: relationship between two variables
 - Positive, negative, or no correlation
 - Computed by correlation coefficient
 - <http://cnx.org/content/m11212/latest/>
 - http://jfmueeller.faculty.noctrl.edu/100/correlation_or_causation.htm

Correlation Coefficients



Nonlinear Relationships



Even though the correlation in this graph is zero (denoted by the flat red line), there is a strong relationship between alcohol intake and feelings of well-being. As alcohol consumption increases to about four drinks, mood also increases. As the number of drinks increases beyond four, peoples' mood decreases.

Faulty Conclusions



Calvin and Hobbes © 1995 Watterson. Dist. By Universal Press Syndicate. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

Even Calvin knows that correlation does not equal causation.

Nonexperimental Studies (cont'd.)

- Survey research
 - Random sample: each person has an equal chance of being selected
 - Population: total number of people
 - Reliability: gives consistent results
 - Validity: measures what it purports to measure
- Landon was predicted to beat Roosevelt in a landslide in 1936, but Roosevelt won. What went wrong?
 - Some factors: Was random sampling used? Who responded vs. who was given the survey? How were the questions posed? Was the survey reliable and valid?

How Much of Social Psychology Is True?

- Self-correcting nature of science
 - Replication: repeating studies corrects false theories over time
- Some issues:
 - Reliance on student samples
 - Time specific research – does this apply now?
 - Cultural specificity – does this apply to us/them?
 - Cultural relativity: Western cultures dominate research
- Cultural differences may be substantial and important

What about qualitative psychological enquiry?

- The lived experience
- Giving people 'voice'
- Why?, how? etc.
- Narratives: episodic, life stories – 'rich' data
- Forging, negotiating, defending identities
- How do people make sense of their worlds, their lives, other people...

Qualitative Social Psychology

- How do people in Port Talbot negotiate the loss of the steel industry?
- How do people interpret party political broadcasts and make judgements?
- What is it like being a black youth living in Brixton or in rural Wales?
- How does wearing a hijab influence women's life experiences in the UK?
- How does gender identification impact education journeys?

BUT: The questions we ask are still the questions that are important to us – Western researchers.

What questions should we be asking?

Issue of Western culture in research lies at the heart of this module

- We will look at this every week
- We will still only be able to scratch the surface
- More than many psychology programmes do
- This perhaps says more about our institutions and societies than it does just about social psychology
- How much do we think as a society about anything other than our own society?



QUESTIONS?

