PERSONALITY STABILITY AND CHANGE

SOGANG UNIVERSITY, FALL 2023

WEEK 8-9, 10/30/2023

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Class Hours: Mon 01:30-04:15 PM

OUTLINE

- Personality development
  - Personality stability and change
- Rank-ordering and mean-level of personality
  - College sample, middle-aged people, across the life span
  - Big 5, narcissism, happiness

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

- Personality stability or continuity
  - Amount a trait stays about the same

- Personality change
  - Amount a trait is different from what it used to be

TWO DIFFERENT QUESTIONS

- Rank-ordering of personality traits over time

  - Are individuals who are relatively high (or low) in conscientiousness at one time also relatively high (or low) in conscientiousness at a second time point?

  - Through conducting longitudinal studies

    - Fallowing people across their lives

- Mean-levels of personality over time or across age groups

  - On average, are "older" people lower in extraversion than adolescents?

  - Do people "mature" as they get older?

  - Through conducting cross-sectional studies

    - Data collected at one time that compares people of different ages

Longitudinal study
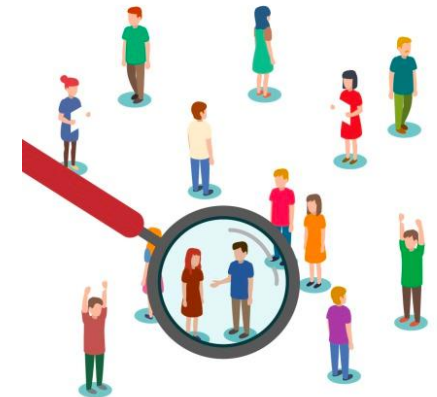
Cross-sectional study

RANK-ORDERING OF PERSONALITY TRAITS OVER TIME

RANK-ORDER STABILITY IN YOUNG ADULTS (ROBINS ET AL., 2001)

- 270 Students completed a Big Five measure during their first week of school AND four years later

- Correlate Big Five scores at Time 1 and Time 2

  - Extraversion: .63

  - Agreeableness: .60

 - Conscientiousness: .59

  - Neuroticism: .53

  - Openness: .70

Extraversion Score T1	Extraversion Score T2	Extraversion Rank T1	Extraversion Rank T1
3.2	3.4	3	3
6.1	6.7	6	7
6.8	6.3	7	6
2.5	2.1	2	1
1.8	2.2	1	2
5.5	5.3	5	5
4.6	4.1	4	4

RANK-ORDER STABILITY AT MIDLIFE (COSTA ET AL., 2000)

- Stability in the Big Five at Midlife (in their 40s; retested across a 6-9 year interval)

- Sample Size: 2,274

  - Extraversion: .83

  - Agreeableness: .80

  - Conscientiousness: .83

  - Neuroticism: .76

  - Openness: .84

RANK-ORDER STABILITY ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN (ROBERTS & DELVECCHIO, 2000)

- Meta-analysis of the stability of personality traits across the life span

  - General finding: Stability increases with age but it never reaches a perfect 1.

    - Around .40 in Adolescence

    - Around .60 in Young Adulthood

    - Around .70 after age 50

  - Found little evidence for differences between traits

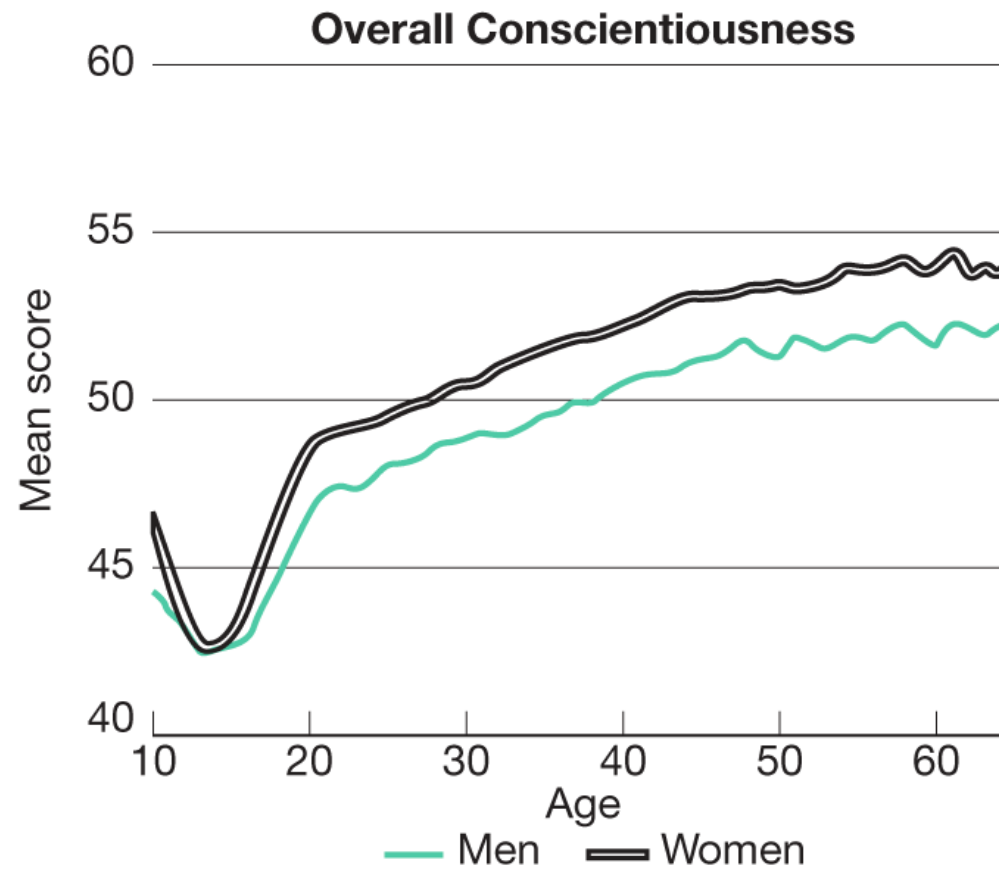 - Found little evidence for gender differences
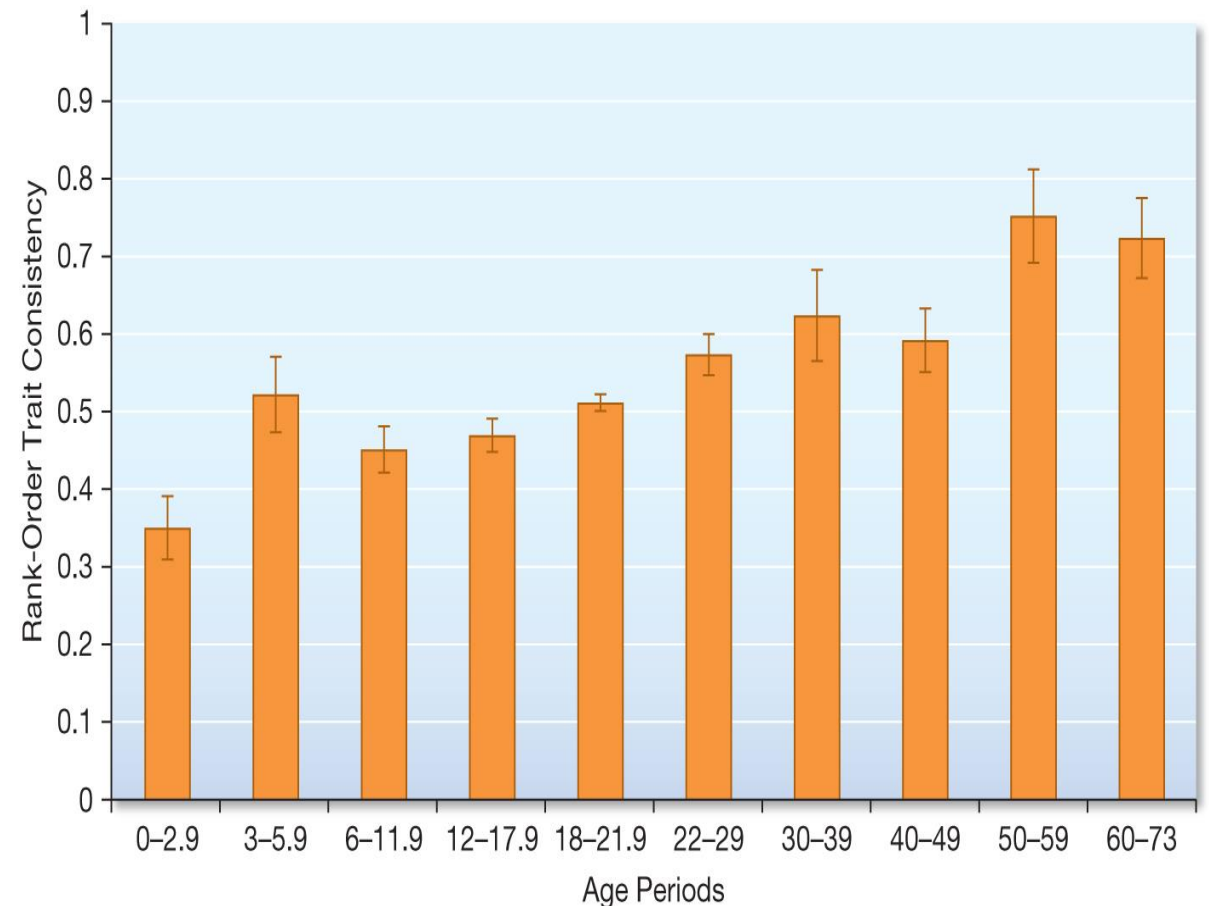
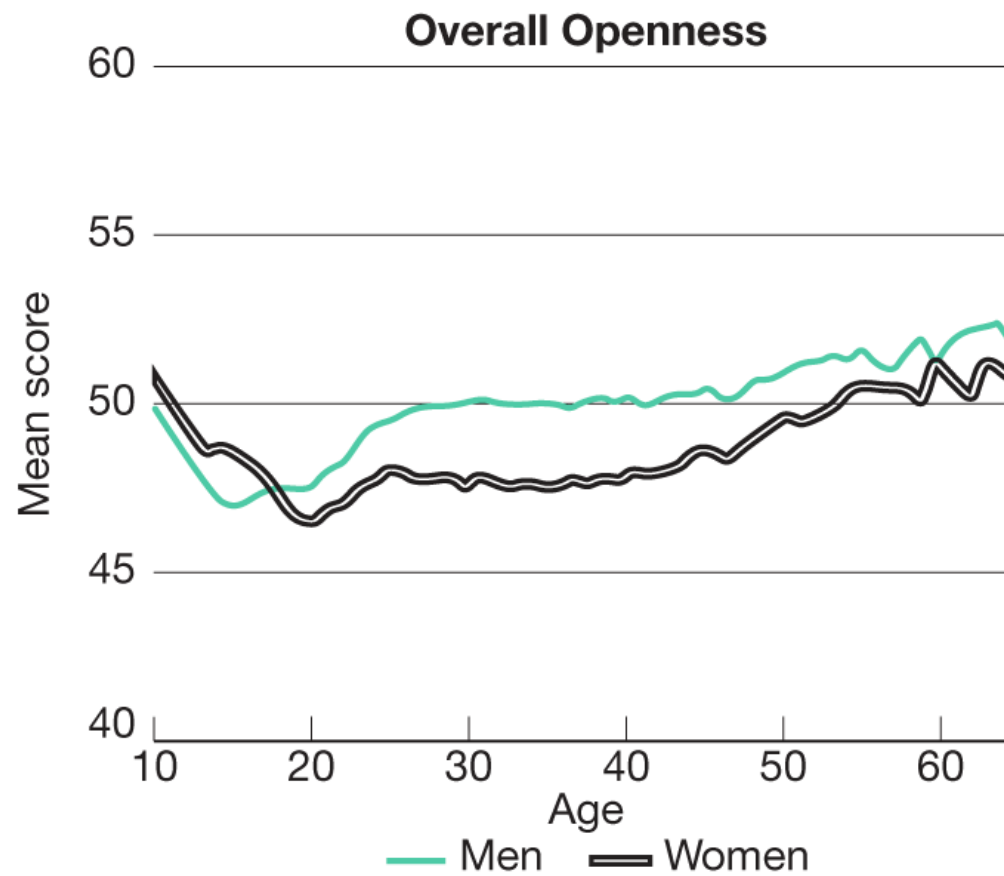# RANK-ORDER STABILITY ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN (FERGUSON, 2010)
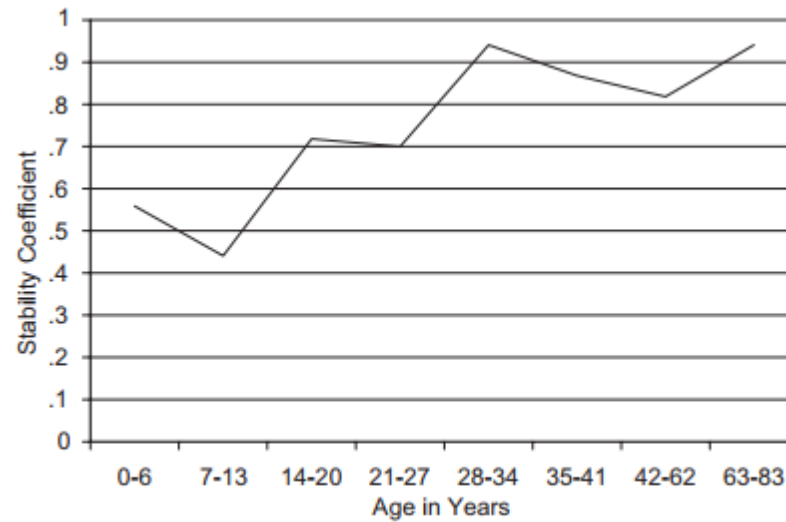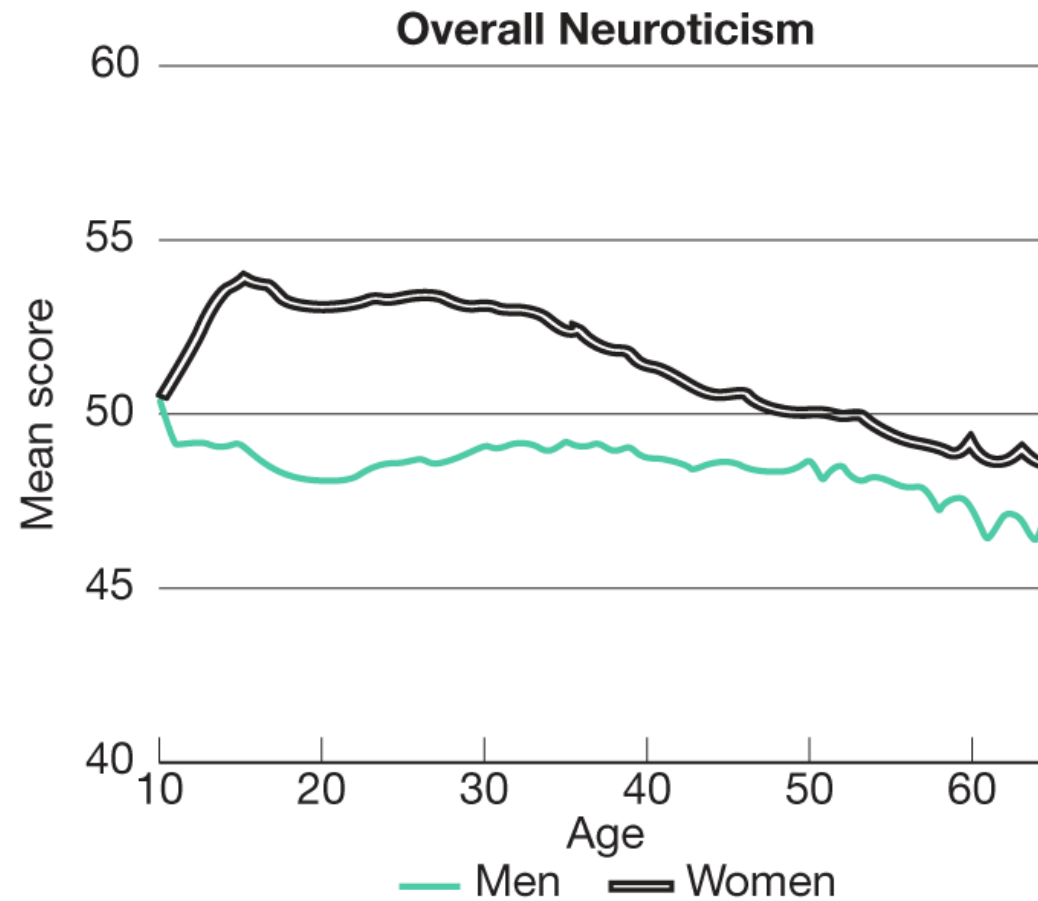
MEAN-LEVELS OF PERSONALITY ACROSS AGE GROUPS
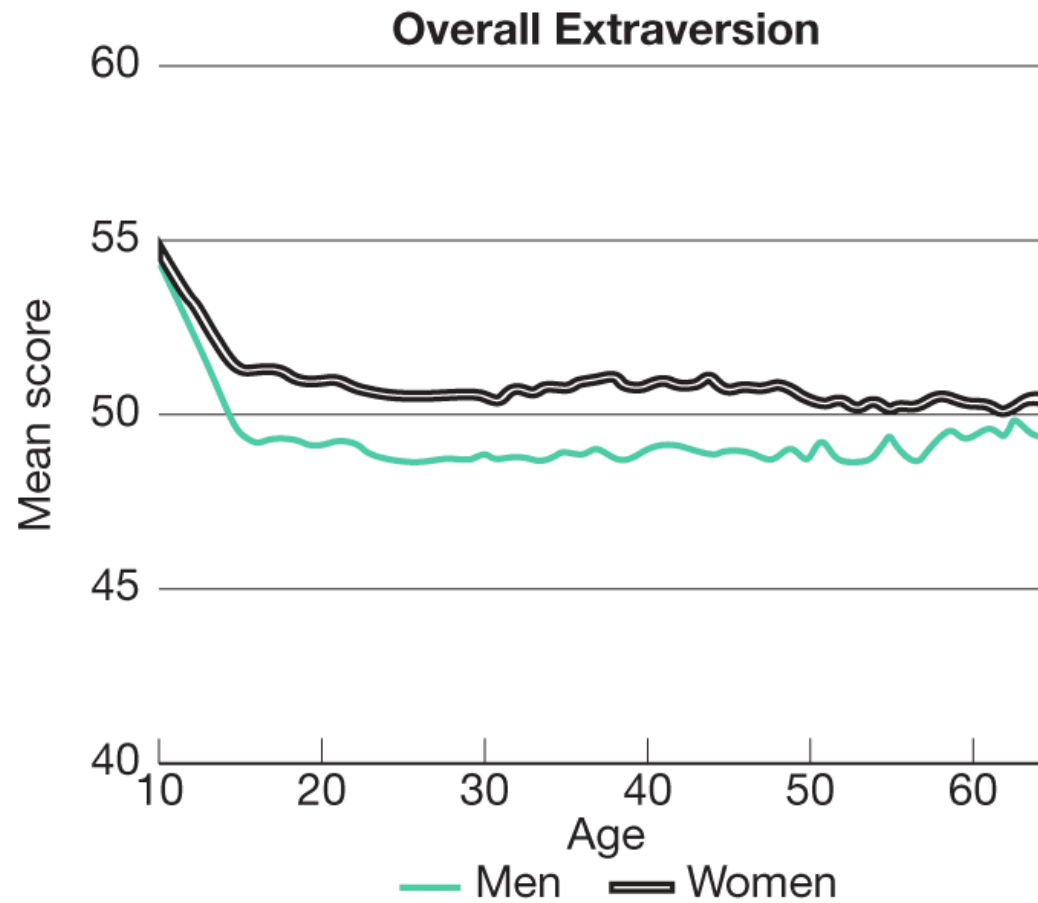
MEAN-LEVEL FINDINGS IN BIG 5 (SOTO ET AL., 2011)

Overall Conscientiousness

MEAN-LEVEL FINDINGS IN BIG 5 (SOTO ET AL., 2011)

Overall Openness

MEAN-LEVEL FINDINGS IN BIG 5 (SOTO ET AL., 2011)

Overall Neuroticism

MEAN-LEVEL FINDINGS IN BIG 5 (SOTO ET AL., 2011)

Overall Extraversion

Men — Women

MEAN-LEVEL FINDINGS IN BIG 5 (SOTO ET AL., 2011)

Overall Agreeableness
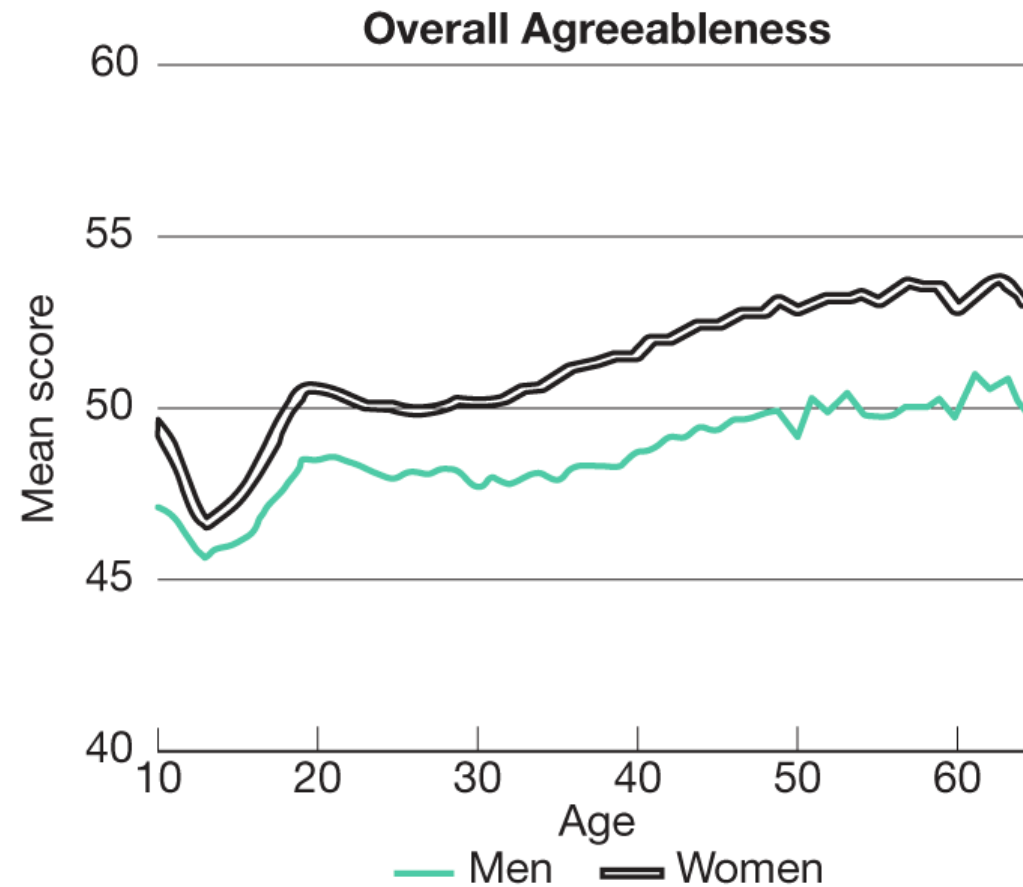
RISE IN NARCISSISM? (TWENGE & FOSTER, 2010)
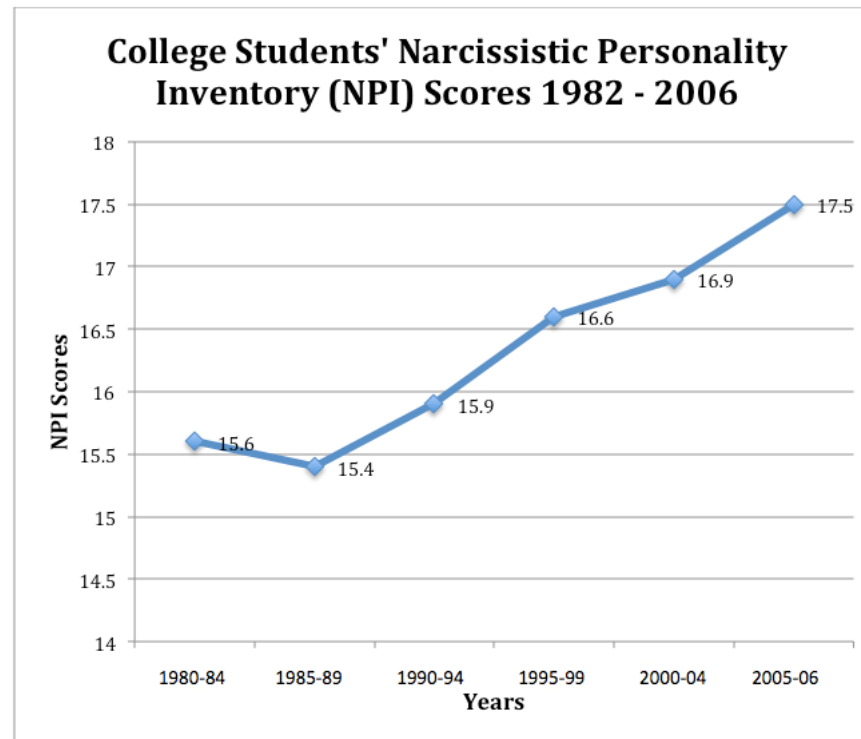
College Students' Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) Scores 1982 - 2006

RISE IN NARCISSISM? (TWENGE ET AL., 2013)

Legend: - - - I, me, my, mine, my self　　······· we, us, our, ours, our selves　　——— you, your, yours, your self, yourselves
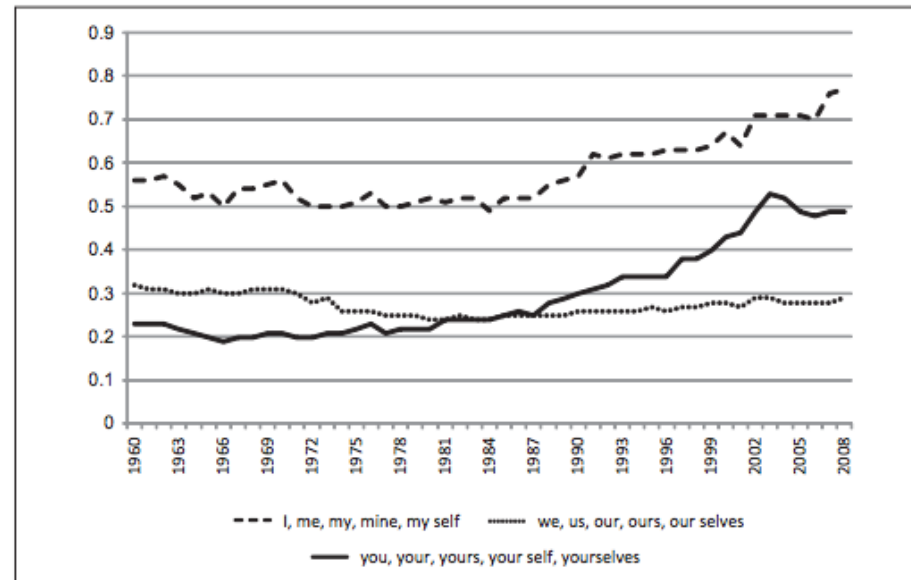
Figure 1. Changes in First Person Singular, First Person Plural, and Second Person Pronoun Use in American Books, 1960-2008
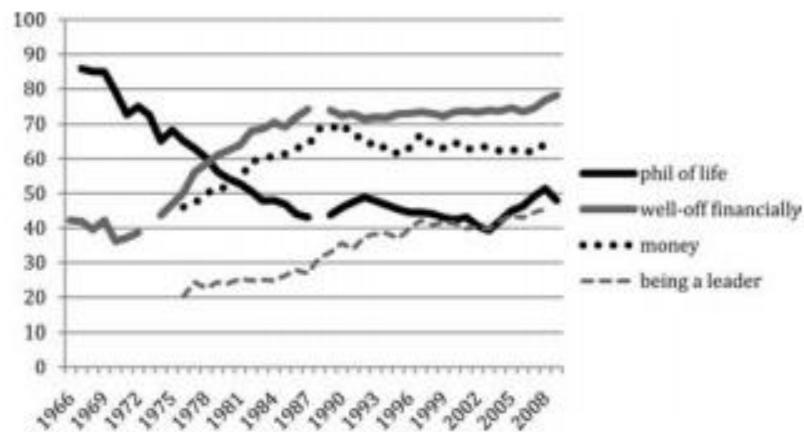
RISE IN NARCISSISM? (TWENGE ET AL., 2012)

Figure 1. Importance of certain life goals, American high school and college students, 1966–2009. The y-axis shows the percentage agreeing the goal is important, uncorrected for relative centrality. "Developing a meaningful philosophy of life" and "becoming very well-off financially" are from the American Freshman dataset of college students; the importance of "having a great deal of money" and "being a leader in my community" are from the Monitoring the Future dataset of high school students.
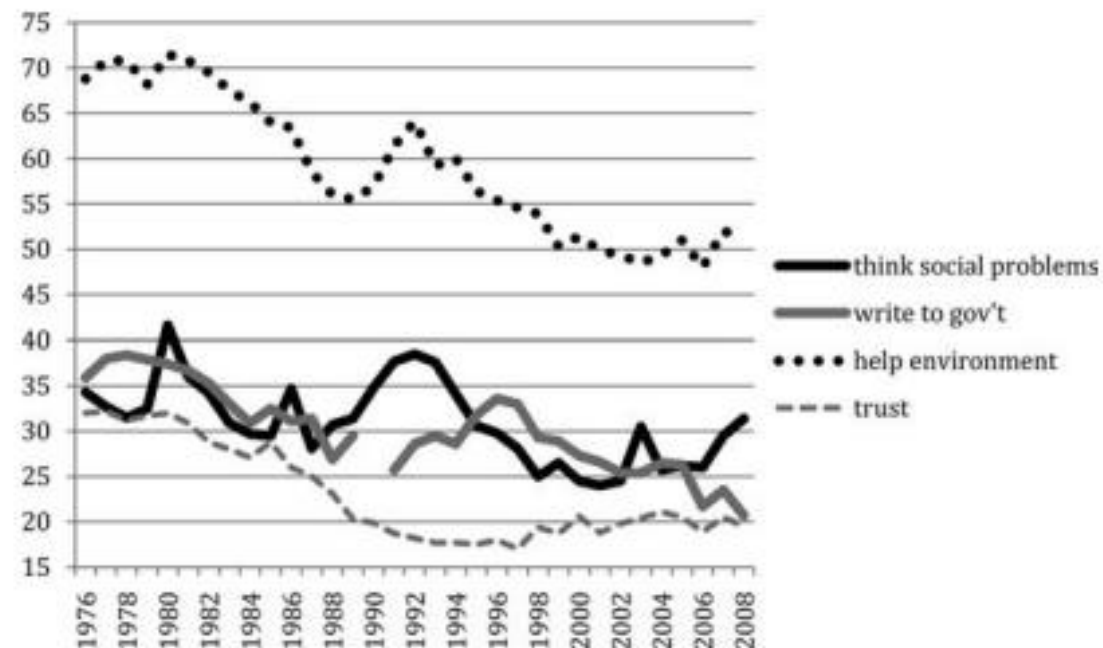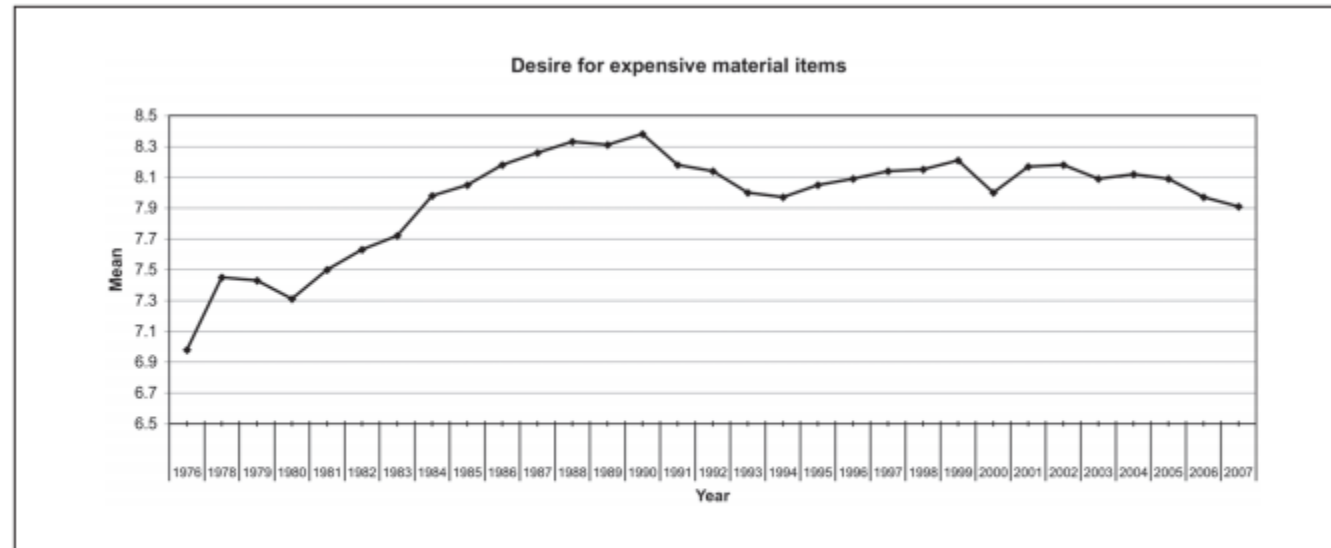
Figure 4. Civic orientation and social capital, American high school students, 1976–2008.

RISE IN NARCISSISM? (TWENGE & KASSER, 2013)

Desire for expensive material items

Figure 1. Generational change in the desire for expensive material items (single-family house, vacation house, recreational vehicle, a new car every 2 or 3 years) among high school seniors, 1976-2007.

Note: The y-axis uses the total of four expensive material items, each rated on a 1 to 4 scale, and thus has a potential range of 4 to 16.

RISE IN NARCISSISM? (WETZEL ET AL., 2017)
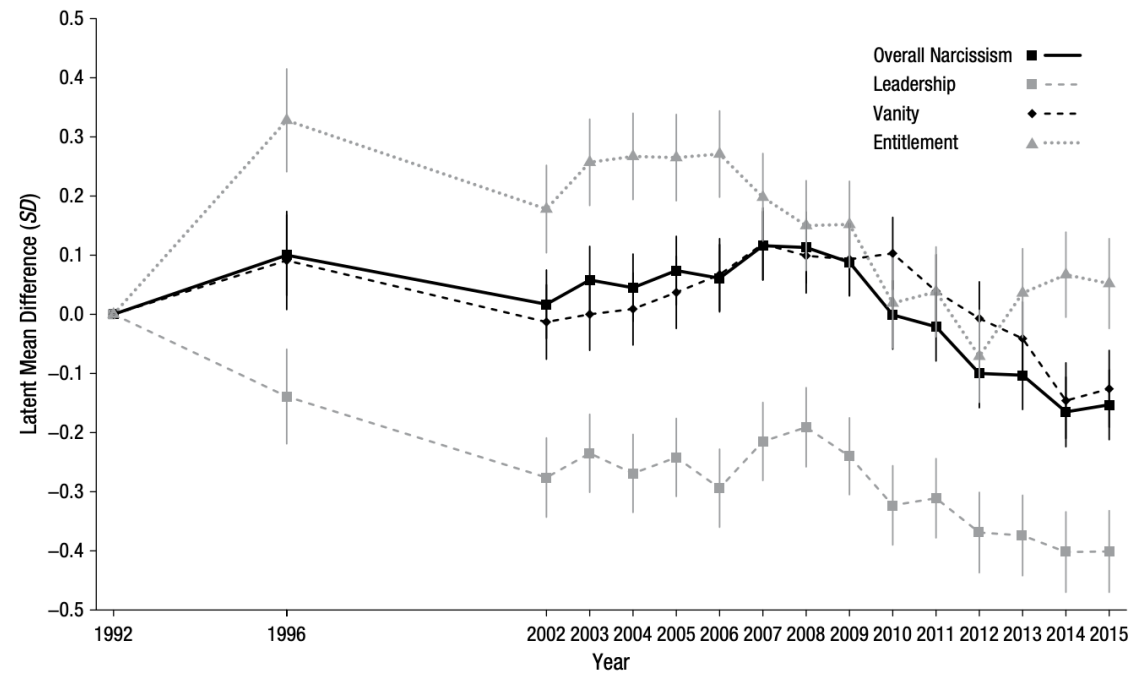
Fig. 2. Difference between latent means estimated in partial-invariance models as a function of year and trait. The means of the 1992 group were constrained to 0 for model identification. Mean differences between the 1992 group and other year groups can be interpreted as standard deviations. Error bars show ±1 *SE* of the estimated mean difference.

CHANGE IN HAPPINESS?

- Traditional view
  - Hedonic treadmill
    - Winning a lottery or becoming a paraplegic from accidents (Brickman, Coates, & Janoff-Bulman, 1978)
  - Happiness set point theory
    - Adaptation
    - Life satisfaction as a trait

CHANGE IN HAPPINESS? (LUCAS ET AL., 2003; LUCAS, 2005)
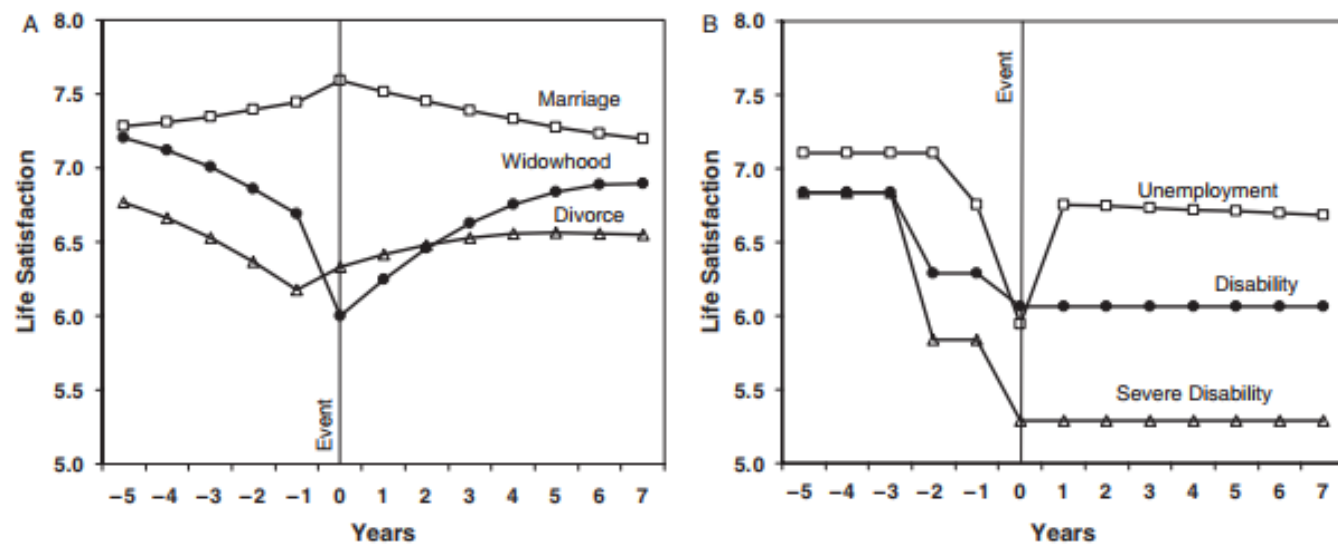
Fig. 1. Average within-person trajectories for life satisfaction before and after various life events. Panel A shows reaction and adaptation to marriage, death of a spouse, and divorce. Panel B shows reaction and adaptation to unemployment and the onset of varying degrees of disability. Adapted from Lucas (2005), Lucas (in press-a), Lucas, Clark, Georgellis, and Diener (2003), and Lucas, Clark, Georgellis, and Diener (2004).
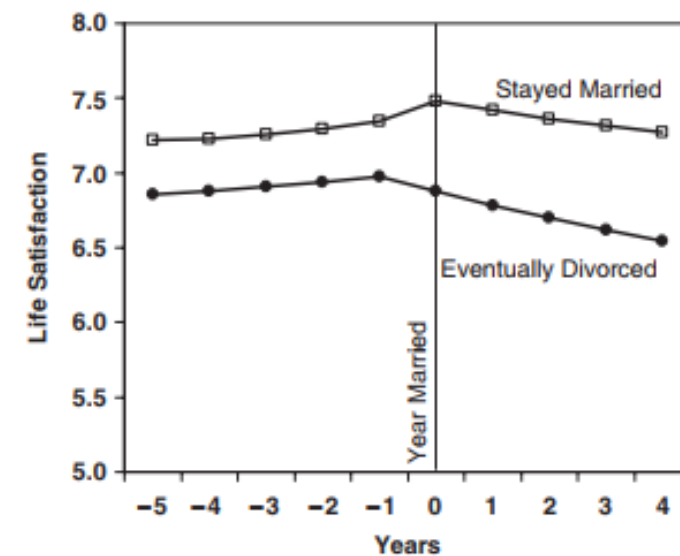
Fig. 2. Trajectories of life satisfaction before and after marriage for individuals who remain married and those who eventually divorce. Adapted from Lucas (2005).

ANY QUESTIONS?

NEXT CLASS

- Humanistic Approaches
  - Read Chapter 12