Personality judgment

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

Outline

- Consequences of Judgment

- Accuracy
  - How do we judge it?
  - Moderators of Accuracy

- Realistic Accuracy Model

- Self-Judgments

Personality judgment

- *"Our minds are forever sealed off from each other. We can only know each other from watching what we do."* ---David Funder

Consequences of Judgment

- Starting Point: We have reputations.

- "Don't judge me!" or "Don't judge me inaccurately!"

- Several reasons why judgments of personality matter:
 - Opportunities
  - Expectancies

Opportunities

- Judgments affect our opportunities.

- Self-perceptions of shyness are common.
  - Acting like an extravert?
    - Happiness (Wilt, Noftle, & Fleeson, 2012)
    - Authenticity (Fleeson & Wilt, 2010)

- A big problem is that shy people are NOT perceived as shy. They are perceived as cold and aloof. Often they give off these signals.

- This perception can reinforce shyness.
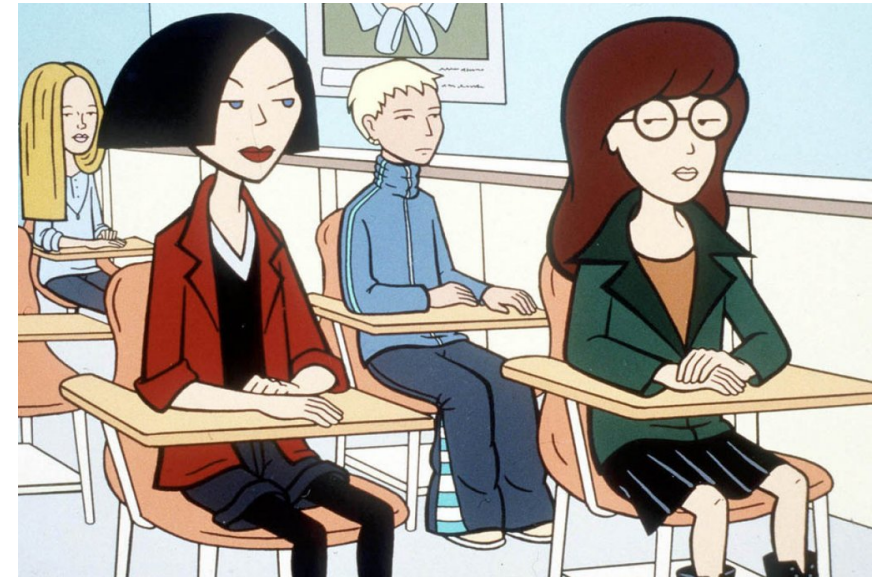
Expectancies

- Self-fulfilling prophecies or the tendency to become the kind of person others expect you to be
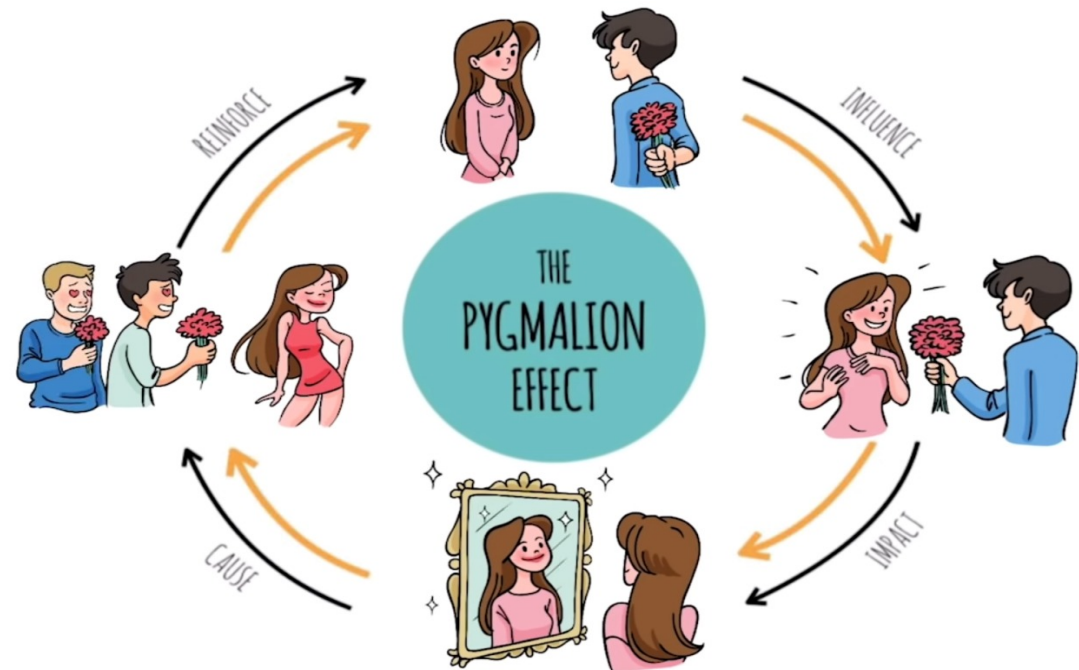
Expectancies

- Self-fulfilling prophecies or the tendency to become the kind of person others expect you to be

- Pygmalion in the classroom (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968)

- The Four Process Model (Harris & Rosenthal, 1985)
  - Climate: Teachers are nicer.
  - Feedback: Better or more helpful feedback.
  - Input: Teachers teach more.
  - Output: Teachers give more opportunities to demonstrate learning.

Figure 1
GAINS IN TOTAL IQ IN SIX GRADES
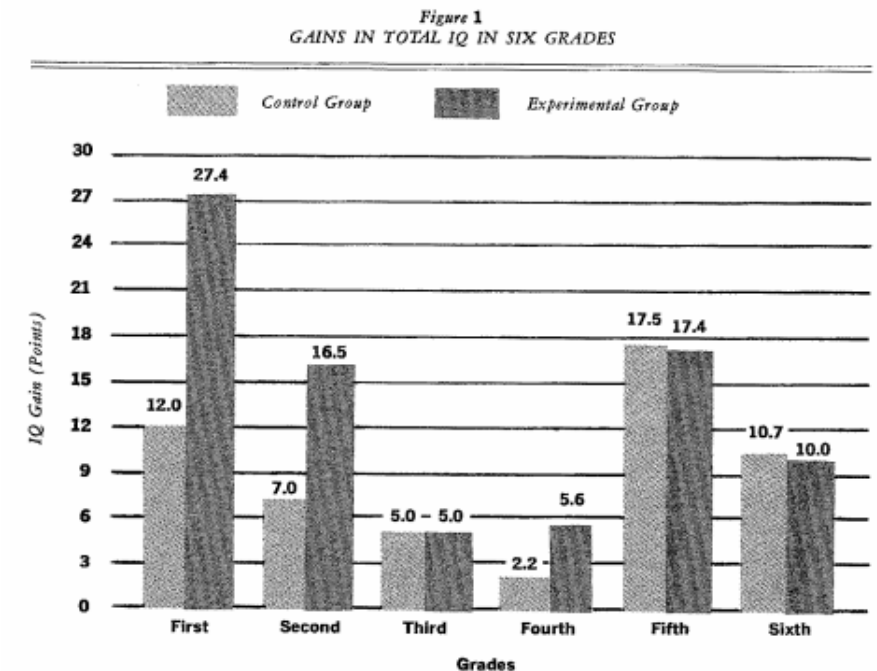
Where do Expectancies Come From in Real Life?

- In labs, some expectancies are clearly FALSE by design.

- In real life, certain expectancies might be based on potentially accurate judgments.

- Thus, self-fulfilling prophecies might magnify and accentuate existing behavioral tendencies.

How Can We Judge Accuracy?

- Constructivism: "We can't because a concrete reality does not exist. Everything is a mental construction."
  - Movie the "Matrix"
- However, some interpretations of reality are just WRONG.
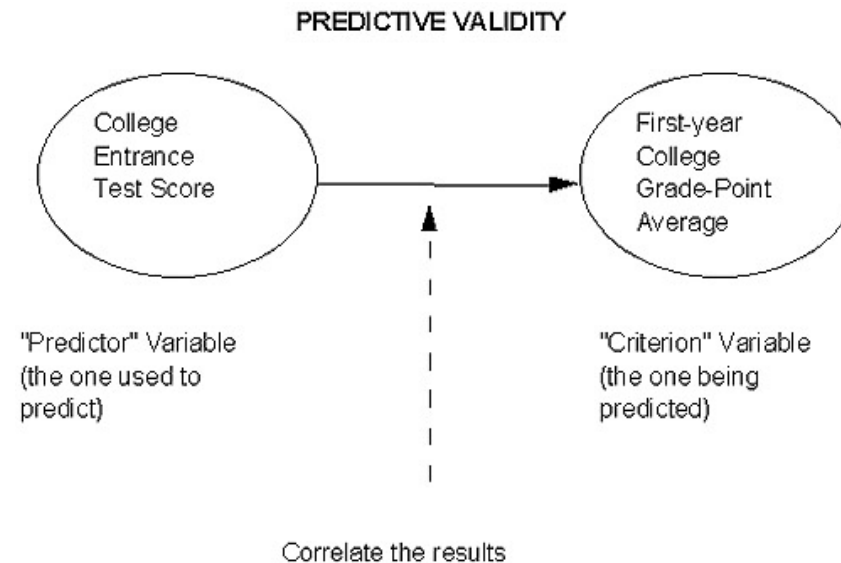
How Can We Judge Accuracy?

- Constructivism: "We can't because a concrete reality does not exist. Everything is a mental construction."
    - Movie the "Matrix"
- However, some interpretations of reality are are just WRONG.
- Funder's Answer: Critical Realism
    - the philosophical view that the absence of perfect, infallible criteria for truth does not imply that all interpretations of reality are equally valid
    - "Accuracy is difficult to determine. Even so, we can be reasonable about it."
    - We gave meaning frameworks (e.g., how does a duck walk and sound?)

How Can We Judge Accuracy?

- People share some meaning frameworks that are universal (e.g., water falls)

- However, they differ in other meaning frameworks that are more social, political, and cultural (e.g., liberals vs. conservatives)

Criteria for Accuracy in Personality Judgment

- Two primary concerns:
  - Inter-judge agreement (self-other consistency or other-other consistency)
  - Behavioral prediction (predictive validity)
    - Can observer reports predict criteria that we care about?
    - Example: Work performance
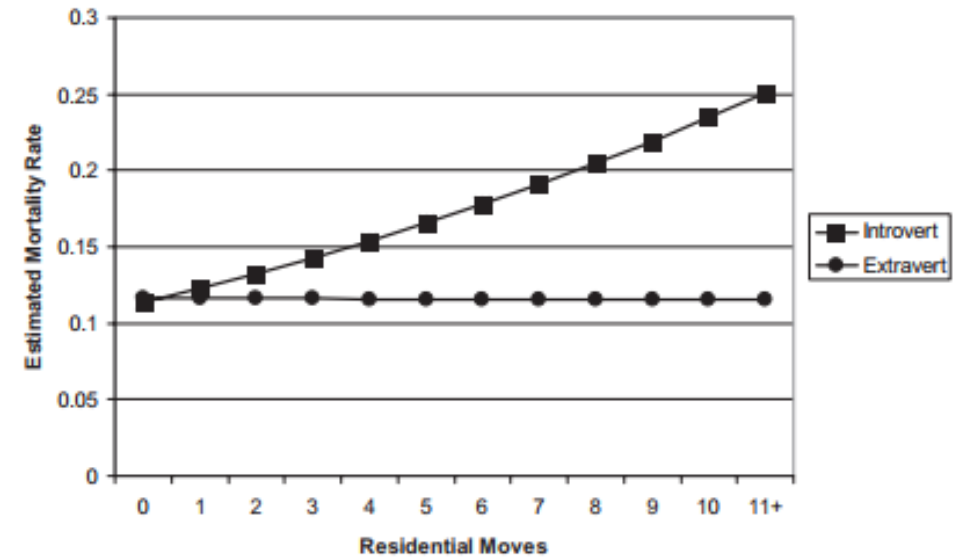
Moderators of Accuracy

- What makes certain judgments more or less accurate?

A Moderator Variable

- Statistical Term
  - Something that changes the relation between two other variables
  - A variable that affects the correlation between X and Y
  - The moderator variable can make a connection stronger or weaker
- In this context – a moderator of accuracy is something that...
  - either improves or diminishes the accuracy of a personality judgment

Moderators of Accuracy
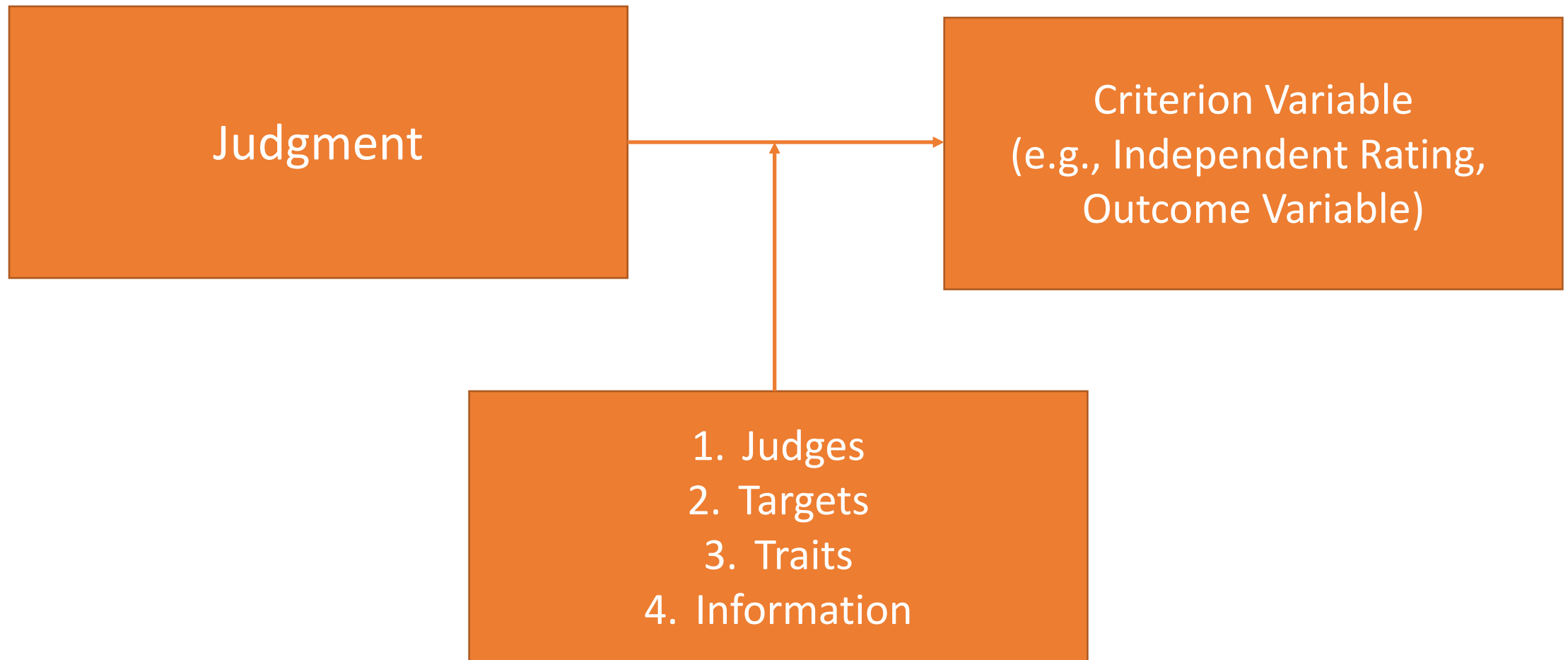
The Good Judge

- Are some people more accurate judges than others? Are there certain traits that improve accuracy in judges?

- Preliminary Answer: Intelligence and Conscientiousness

- However, these kinds of people are good at most everything…

- Research has found:
    - For males: extraverted, well-adjusted, unconcerned with what others think of them
    - For females: open, wide range of interests, value independence
    - High in communion; socially skilled, agreeable, adjusted; judge others favorably

The Good Target

- Are some people easier to judge than other people?
    - Are there more "judgeable" people?
    - Are there people for which agreement between judges is particularly high?
- Answer: People who are more coherent and consistent. People where "what you see is what you get."
- Classic Ideas on Mental Health: Be authentic; Have a transparent self.
    - Caveats

From Jack Block:

- [A person without an integrated self] is an *"interpersonal chameleon, with no inner core of identity, fitfully reacting in all ways to all people. This kind of person is … plagued by self-doubts and despairs for he has no internal reference which can affirm his continuity and self-integrity."*

Coherence: Good or Bad?

- Carl Rogers emphasized the importance of having a stable, core sense of self that you carry from one role to the next

- Postmodern approaches (e.g., Gergen): Emphasize the importance of having identities tailored to the particular social context associated with each role ("The healthy, happy human wears many masks")

Culture, Identity Consistency, and Well-Being
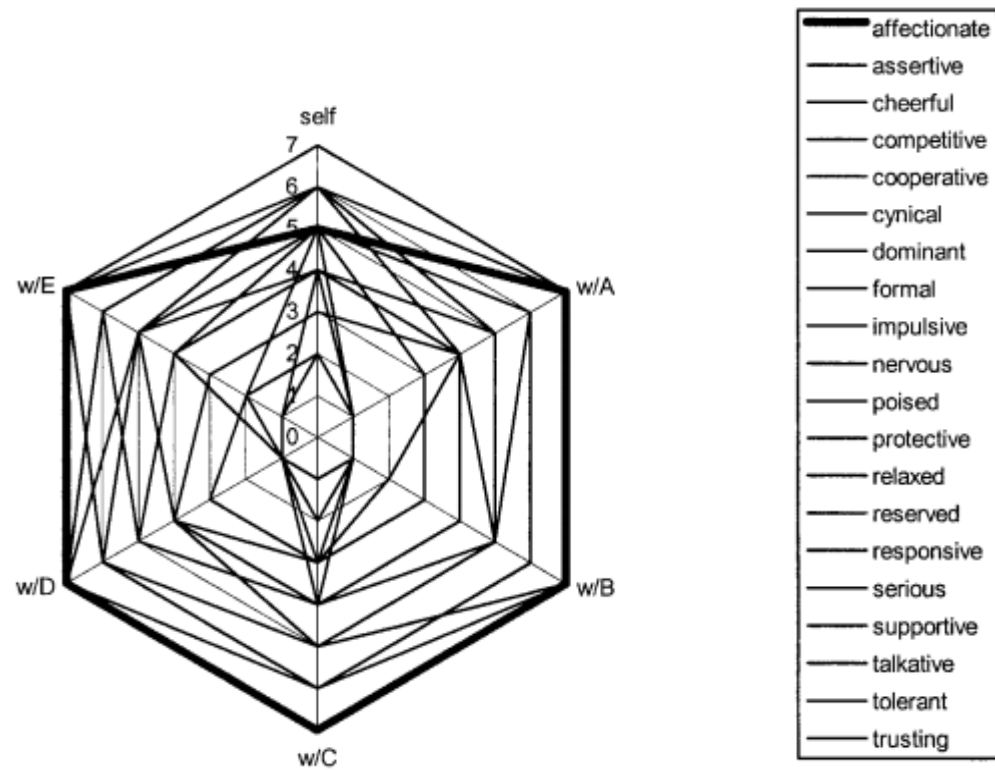
(Suh, 2002)

Figure 1. Personality ratings of Leonard (identity consistency = 87.4%). w/A = with Person A, w/B = with Person B, and so on.
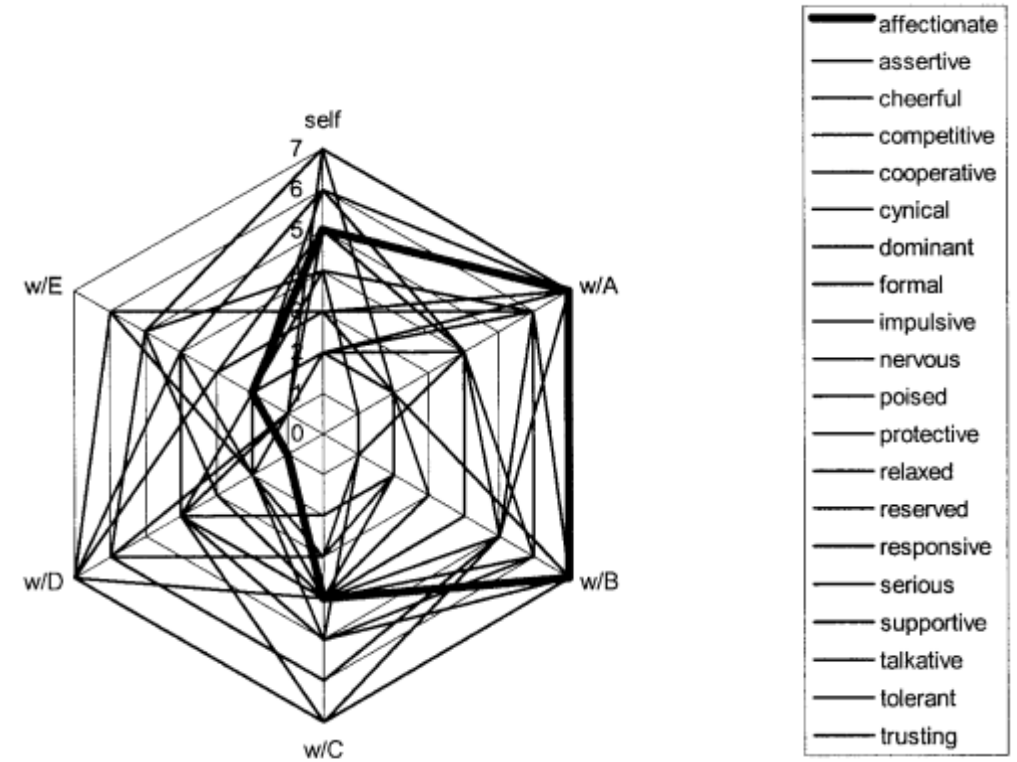
Figure 2. Personality ratings of Zelig (identity consistency = 26.6%). w/A = with Person A, w/B = with Person B, and so on.

The Good Trait

- Are some traits easier to judge than others?

- Answer: More visible traits are easier to judge with accuracy.

- Extraversion is easier to judge than Neuroticism.

Self-Peer Correlations

- Watson (1989) – "Hello, my name is…"
  - Extraversion: r = .41
  - Conscientiousness: r = .16
  - Openness: r = .10
  - Agreeableness: r = .08
  - Neuroticism: r = -.01

The Good Trait

- Are some traits easier to judge than others?

- Answer: More visible traits are easier to judge with accuracy.

- Extraversion is easier to judge than Neuroticism.

- Classic social psychological idea: Inter-judge agreement was the result of conversations judges have about targets (reputation).
 - This Idea is NOT consistent with the data.

Stranger-Stranger Agreement

- Funder & Colvin (1988) – viewed a videotaped target
    - Physically attractive: r = .39 (.36)
    - Talkative: r = .40 (.45)
    - Compares self to others: r = .02 (.03)
    - Generally fearful: r = .09 (.15)
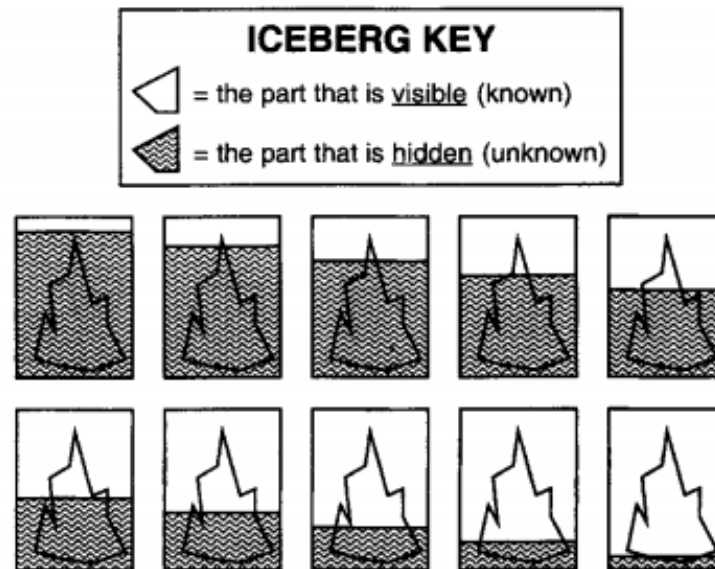   - * Parenthetical numbers indicate inter-informant correlations

Then, who is more accurate? Self vs. Others?

WHEN SELF-PERCEPTION AND EXTERNAL PERCECPTION DO NOT MATCH

SELF-PERCEPTION

EXTERNAL PERCEPTION
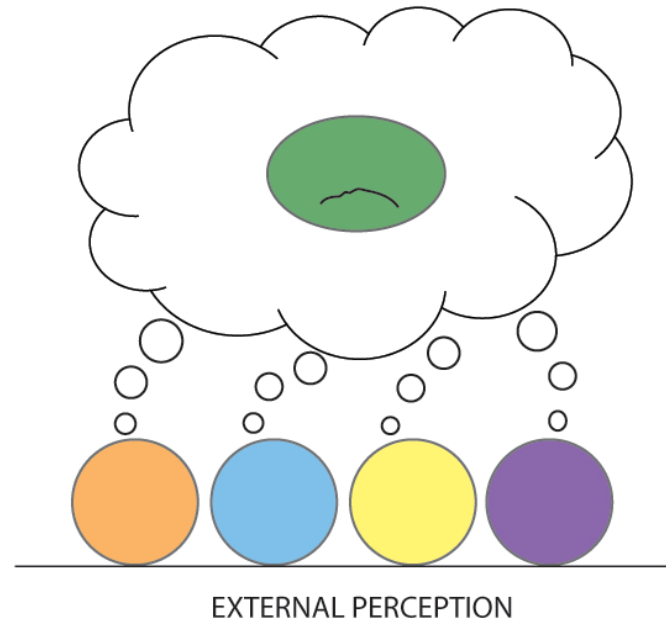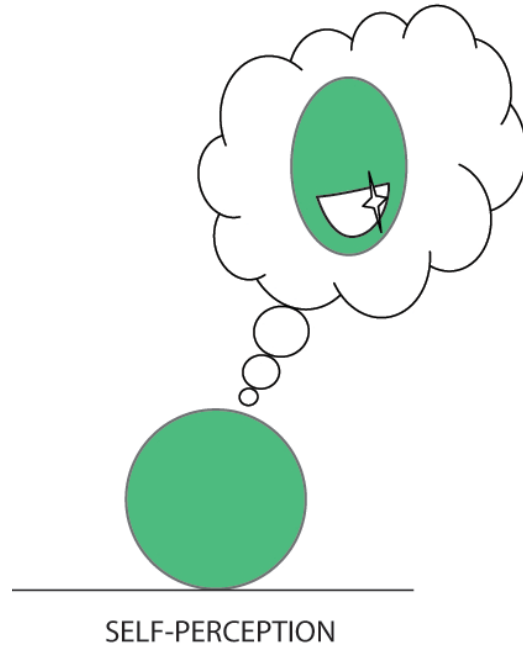
Introspection Illusion

- You don't know me, but I know you (Pronin, Kruger, Savitsky, & Ross, 2001)

Figure A1. Participants were asked to circle the iceberg that best represented how much of their friend was "visible" to them, and how much of them was "visible" to their friend (Study 1).

Self-Other Asymmetry (SOKA) Model (Vazire, 2010)

- The self should be more accurate than others for traits low in observability (e.g., neuroticism), whereas others should be more accurate than the self for traits high in evaluativeness (e.g., intellect).
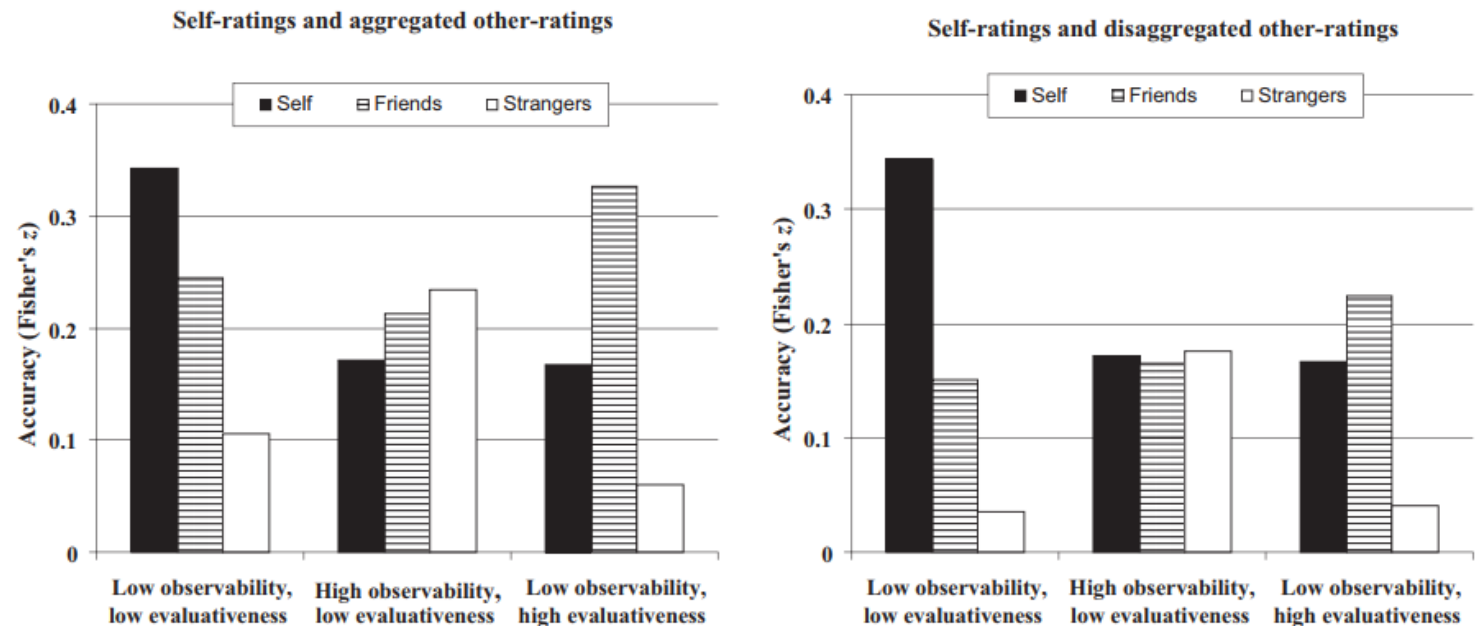

Figure 1. Average accuracy correlations (transformed to Fisher's z scores for easier comparison) for each perspective in the three different domains. The left panel shows the averages when friend- and stranger-ratings are aggregated; the right panel shows the averages when the friend- and stranger-ratings are disaggregated. The low observability, low evaluativeness domain consists of the traits self-esteem and anxiety. The high observability, low evaluativeness domain consists of the traits talkativeness, dominance, and leadership. The low observability, high evaluativeness domain consists of the traits creativity and intelligence.

Good Information - Quantity

- Does accuracy depend on the amount of information?

- "Acquaintanceship Effect": The more information then the more accurate the judgment.

- Two friends will agree more about your personality than 2 judges who each watched a 5 minute video-tape.

- Change criterion to behavior in a situation similar to the 5-minute video-tape and the "acquaintanceship effect" disappears.

- Example: Predicting my behavior in lecture.

Good Information - Quantity
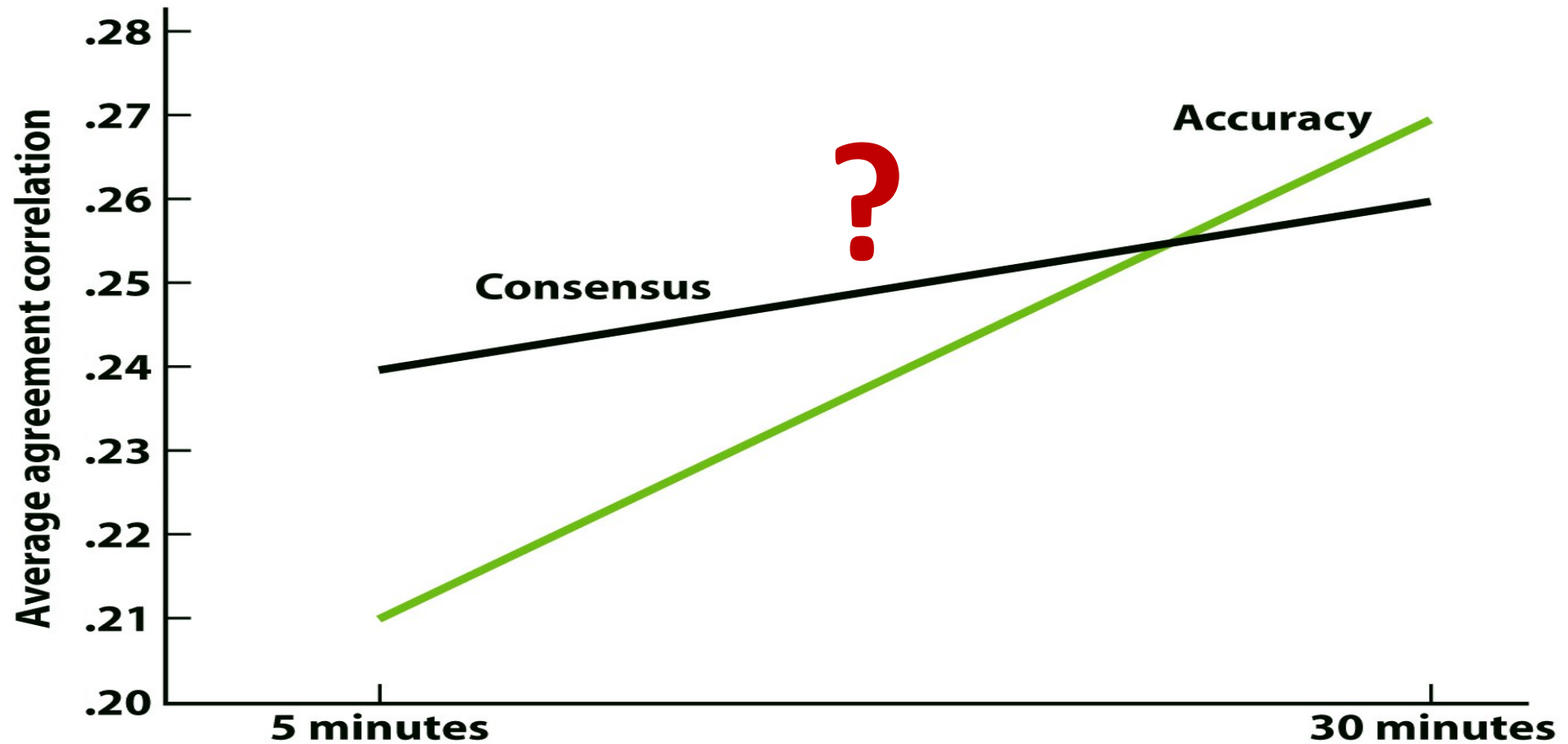
Good Information - Quality

- Does accuracy depend on the type of information?

- Ideal is to have information from so-called weak situations. Observations from a party are better than observations from riding the elevator (think about Stanley Milgram's obedience study).

- It would be helpful to observe people in stressful or emotionally arousing situations (now think again about Stanley Milgram's obedience study).

- Ideal situation: Brings out the trait you want to judge.

A Model of Accurate Personality Judgment

- The Realistic Accuracy Model (RAM)
  - Relevance: Target must do something related to the trait being judged.
  - Availability: This information must be accessible to the Judge.
  - Detection: The Judge has to pay attention to the information.
  - Utilization: The Judge has to use this information correctly.

Target   **Judge**

Relevance → Availability → Detection → Utilization
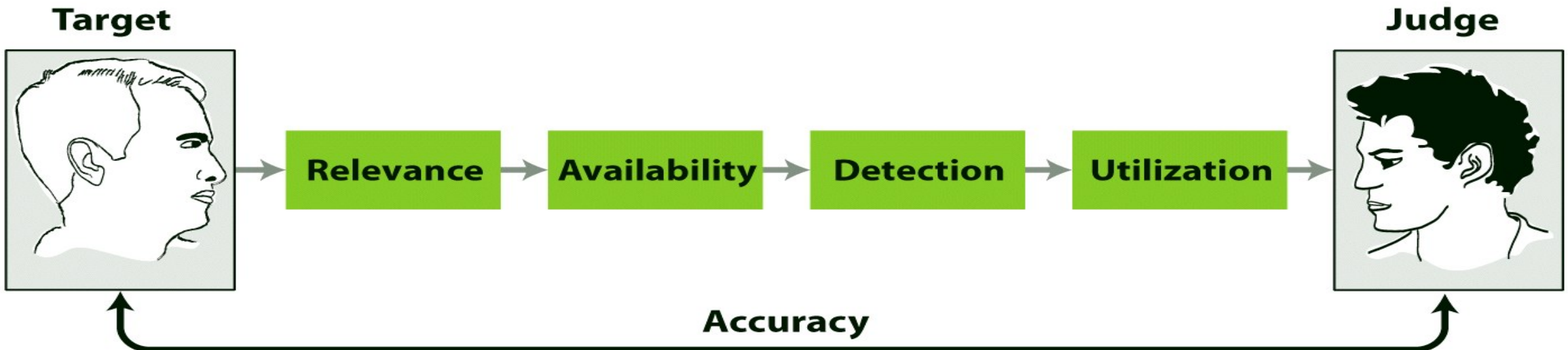
Accuracy

Implications

- Accurate judgments are difficult.

- Accurate judgments are the result of a multi-step process.

- Basic advice to judges: Just think harder (Utilization stage).

- Better: Create interpersonal environments where people can be themselves so you can carefully observe their behavior.

Self-Alienation

- ____1. I feel as if I don't know myself very well.

- ____2. I feel out of touch with the "real me."

- ____3. I feel alienated from myself.

- ____4. I don't know how I really feel inside.

Reasons for Difficulties

- Our personality is always there ("Fish and Water Effect"): Fish don't know they are wet because they are always surrounded by water.

- People show a "false consensus" effect. They believe their own behavior is more common than it really is.

- People believe their behavior was a natural response to the situation. "What else could I do?"

- Suggestion:
  - Place yourself in novel situations and pay attention to what happens.

Realistic Accuracy Model

- How do we get accurate self-judgments?
  - Relevance: Target must do something trait-relevant
  - Availability: Observer has to be able to see it
  - Detection: Observer has to actually see it
  - Utilization: Observer must remember the action and interpret that piece of information correctly

SOKA Model

- A cliché "Do not hear what other people say about you" is not helpful
  - Listen to other people close to you for traits high in evaluativeness (e.g., intellect)
  - Focus on your own judgement for traits low in observability (e.g., self-esteem)
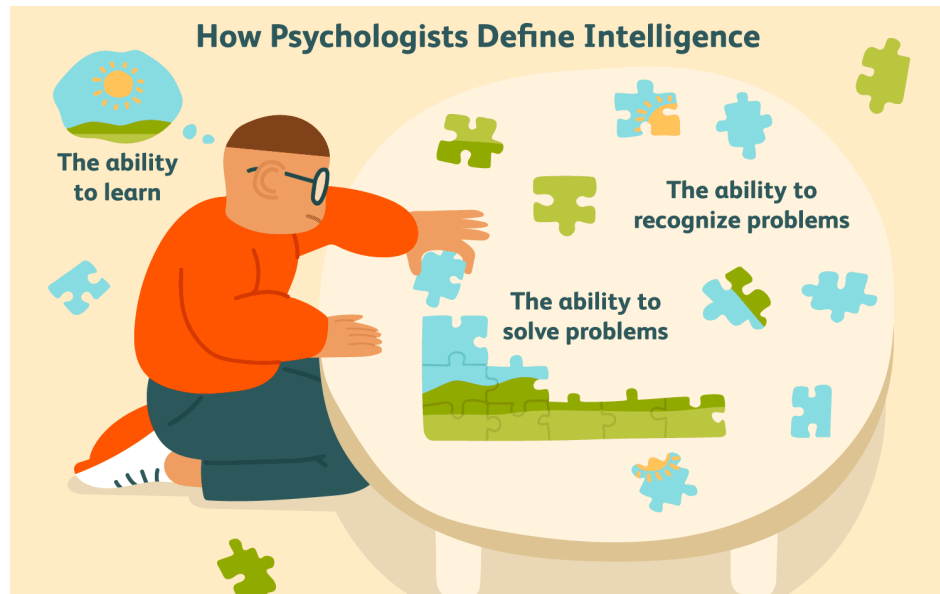
next class

- Read Chapter 6 of the textbook
  - The Big Five and Beyond