SOCIAL COGNITION

Social identity and the self

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WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM LAST WEEK?

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TODAY: SOCIAL IDENTITY AND THE SELF

1. The self

a.   self-reference

b.   self-perception

c.   self-regulation

2. Social identity

THE SELF

- Knowledge about our physical and mental self
- And how it differs from others

SELF-REFERENCE

SELF-REFERENCE

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- Where were you born?

SELF-REFERENCE

- Where were you born?
- Where was Napoleon born?

SELF-REFERENCE

- Where were you born?

- Where was Napoleon born?

We recall information about ourselves better than about others.
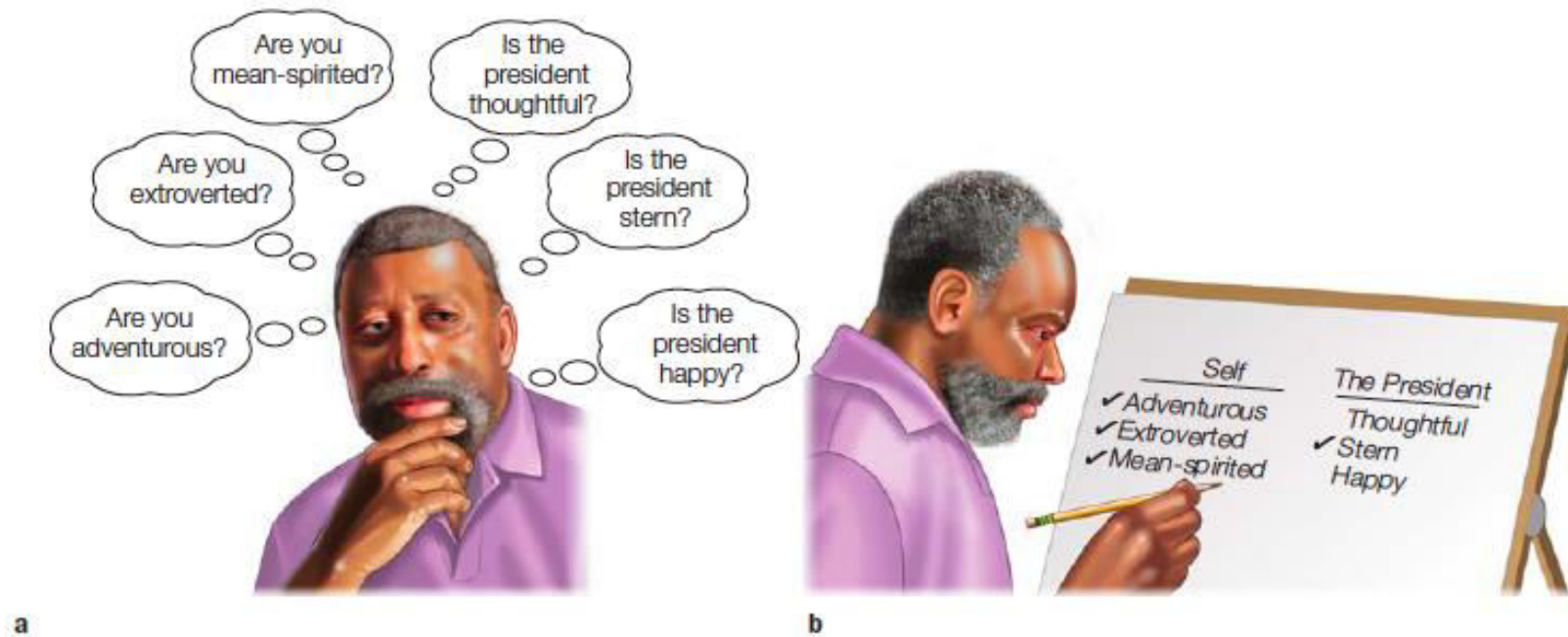
SELF-REFERENTIAL PROCESSING

FIGURE 13.2 A typical self-referential processing experiment.
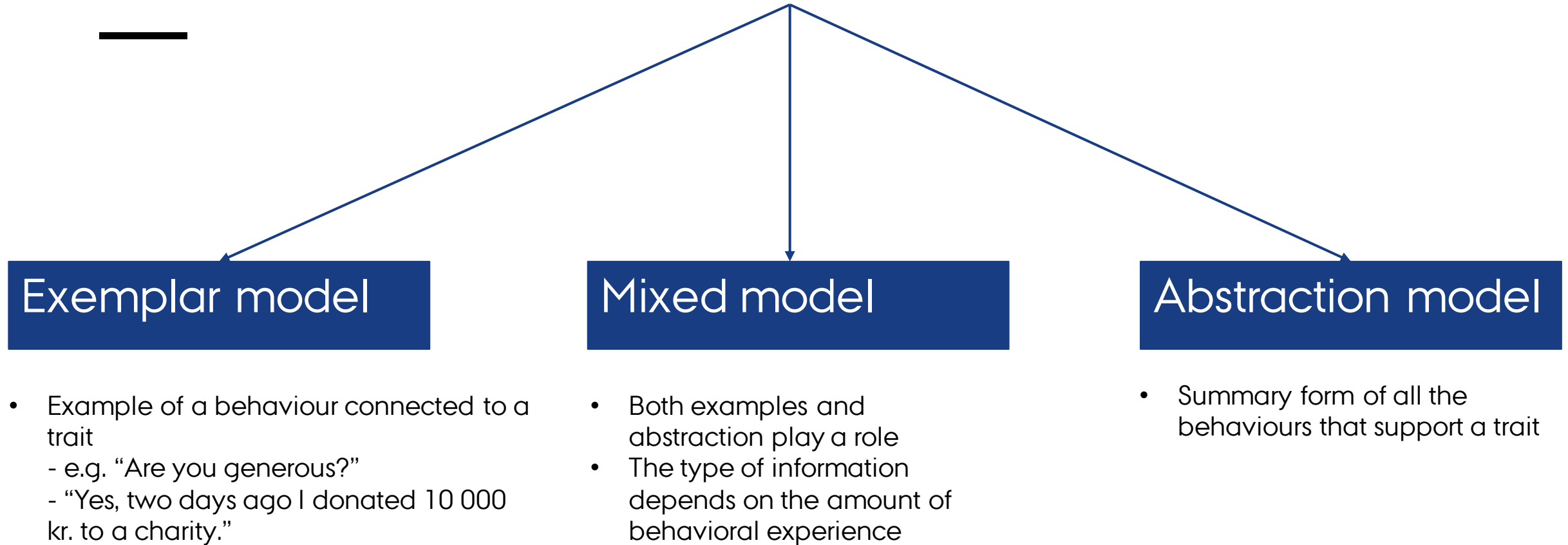
Gazzaniga et al.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE MODELS

Exemplar model

- Example of a behaviour connected to a trait
  - e.g. "Are you generous?"
  - "Yes, two days ago I donated 10 000 kr. to a charity."

Mixed model

- Both examples and abstraction play a role
- The type of information depends on the amount of behavioral experience

Abstraction model

- Summary form of all the behaviours that support a trait

EXERCISE

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- Discuss the Klein & Loftus paper with the person next to you. Focus on the interpretation of the findings:
  - Which model do the findings support?
  (not what the authors think but what you think about their findings)
  Go to menti.com and vote
  Code: 90263
  - How would you improve the study?

WHY DO WE REMEMBER SELF-REFERENCE BETTER?

- Self is a unique cognitive structure
- We have more knowledge about the self
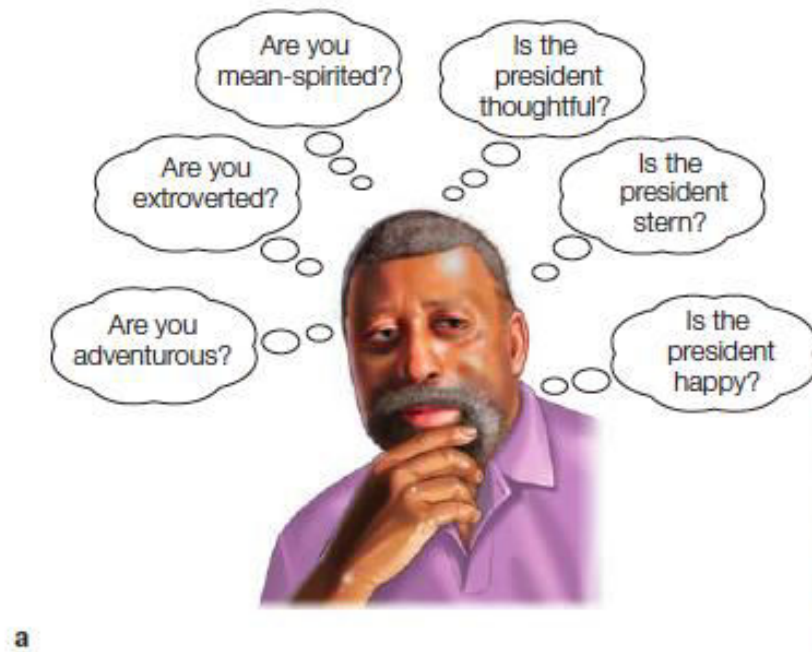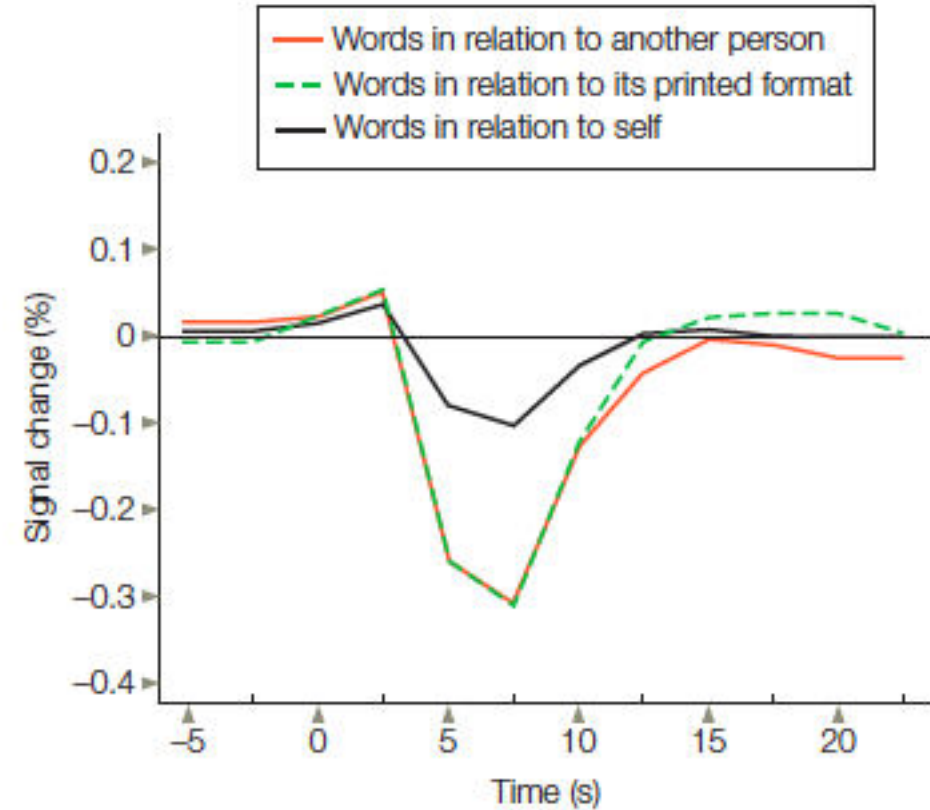
SELF-REFERENTIAL PROCESSING

FIGURE 13.2 A typical self-referential processing experiment.

Are you mean-spirited?

Is the president thoughtful?

Are you extroverted?

Is the president stern?

Are you adventurous?

Is the president happy?

a

MPFC activated during self-referential condition.

Words in relation to another person
Words in relation to its printed format
Words in relation to self

Signal change (%)
Time (s)

Gazzaniga et al.

SELF-PERCEPTION

SELF-PERCEPTION

FIGURE 13.6 Neural activity in relation to judging positive information about the self.
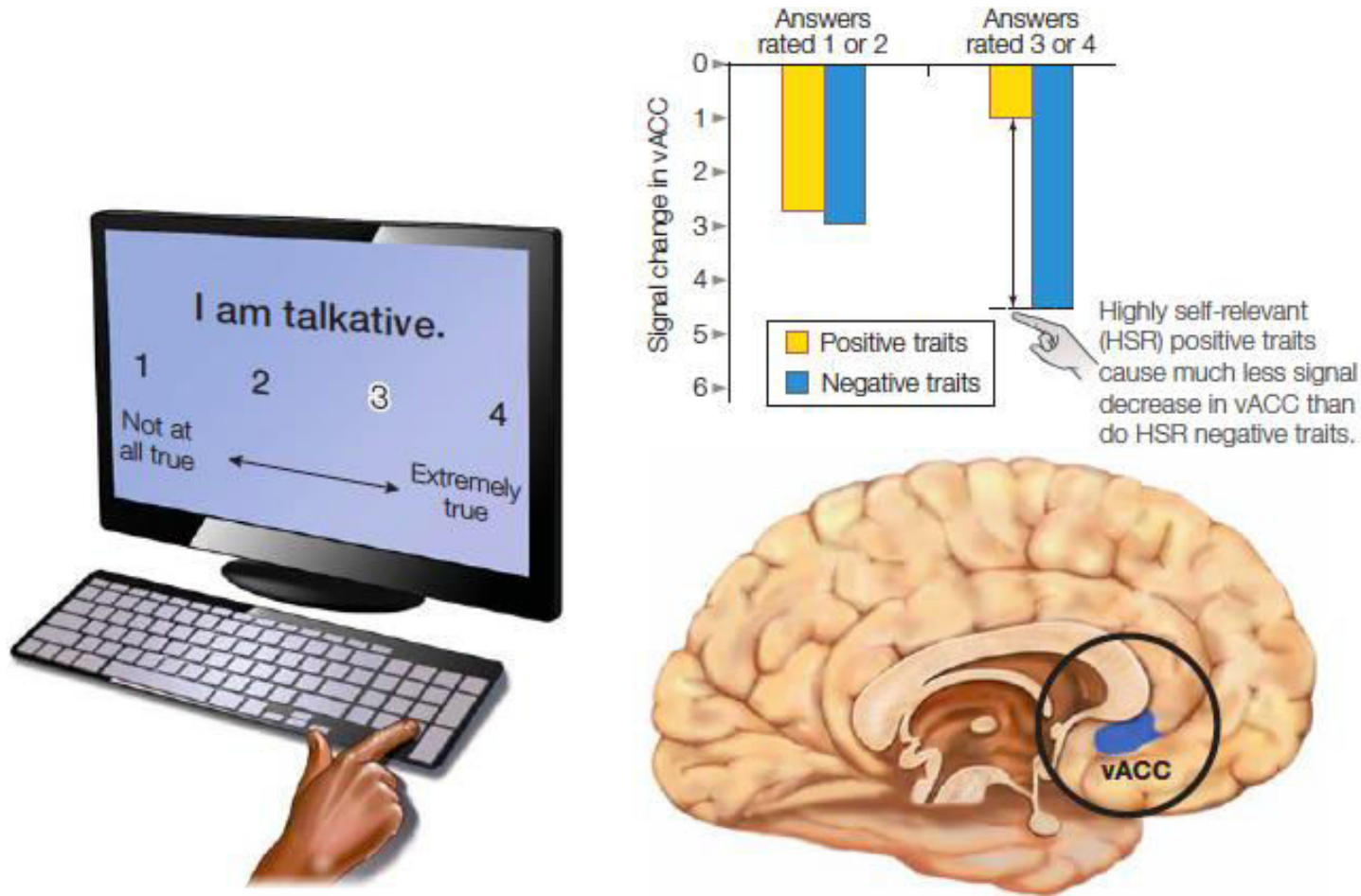
- We tend to see ourselves in a more positive light

- Self-perception is relatively accurate

- We're more accurate when things can be verified/feedback is expected

BYURAKN ISHKHANYAN
POSTDOC

Gazzaniga et al.

SELF-ESTEEM

Sociometer: general indicator of how we are doing in the eyes of others

- Explicit self-esteem
  - "I feel that I have a number of good qualities" (Rosenberg, 1965)

- Implicit self-esteem
  - linking a positive adjective to the self (Koole et al., 2001)

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF SELF PERCEPTION

Independent	Interdependent
Separate from social context	Connected with social context
Bounded, unitary, stable	Flexible, variable
Internal, private (abilities, thoughts, feelings)	External, public (statuses, roles, relationships)
Be unique, express yourself, realize internal attributes, promote own goals, be direct: say what's on your mind	Belong, fit in, occupy one's proper place, engage in appropriate action, promote other's goals, be indirect: read other's mind
Self-evaluation: others important for social comparison, reflected appraisal	Self-definition: self defined by relationships with others in specific contexts
Ability to express self, validate internal attributes	Ability to adjust, restrain self: maintain harmony with social context

Markus & Kitayama, 1991

INDEPENDENT VS. INTERDEPENDENT SELF

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- Turn to the person next to you and discuss the theory
  - Is there a problem here? Submit your answer to menti.com

SELF REGULATION
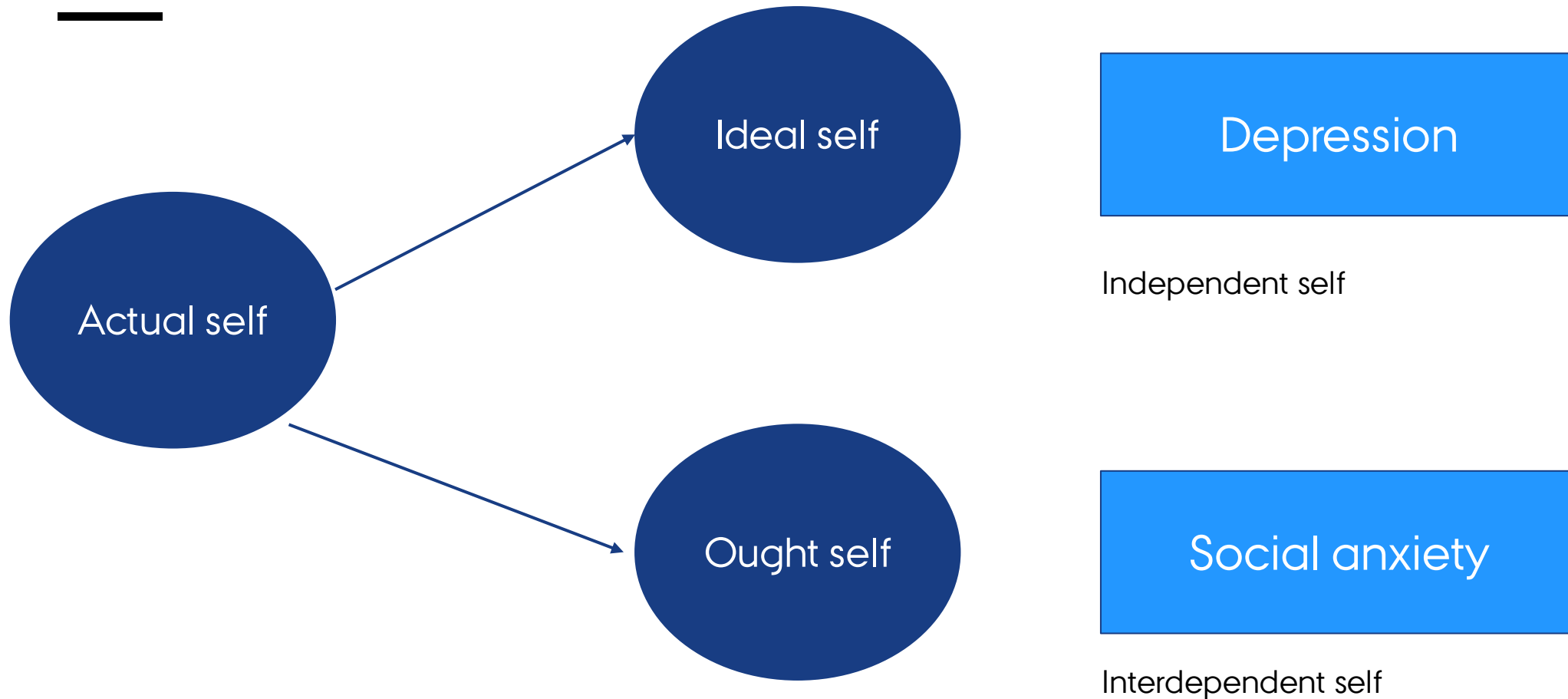
Behavioural activation system	Behavioural inhibition system
Excited by going after something wanted	Worry about mistakes
Good things affect strongly	Concern with criticism
Go all-out to get things	Frequently nervous
Do fun things for their own sake	Worked up over possible unpleasantness
Focus on reward	**Focus on punishment**

Fiske & Taylor, 2013

MOTIVATION AND SELF REGULATION

- Need for accuracy
  - we want to be accurate when assessing ourselves

- Need for consistency
  - we need a consistent self-concept

- Need for improvement
  - we need to set goals and we need upward social comparisons (e.g. mentors)

SOCIAL IDENTITY

SOCIAL PROJECTION

- We create our social world in our own image
- Assumption that others share our traits, emotions and motives (Holmes, 1978)

Selfish reasons ☺

- We judge about others in self-serving ways (Dunning et al., 1991)
- We make social comparisons in self-serving ways (Dunning & Hayes, 1996)
- We assume that others share our weaknesses but not strengths (e.g. Suls & Wan, 1987)

➢ Less social projection in depression

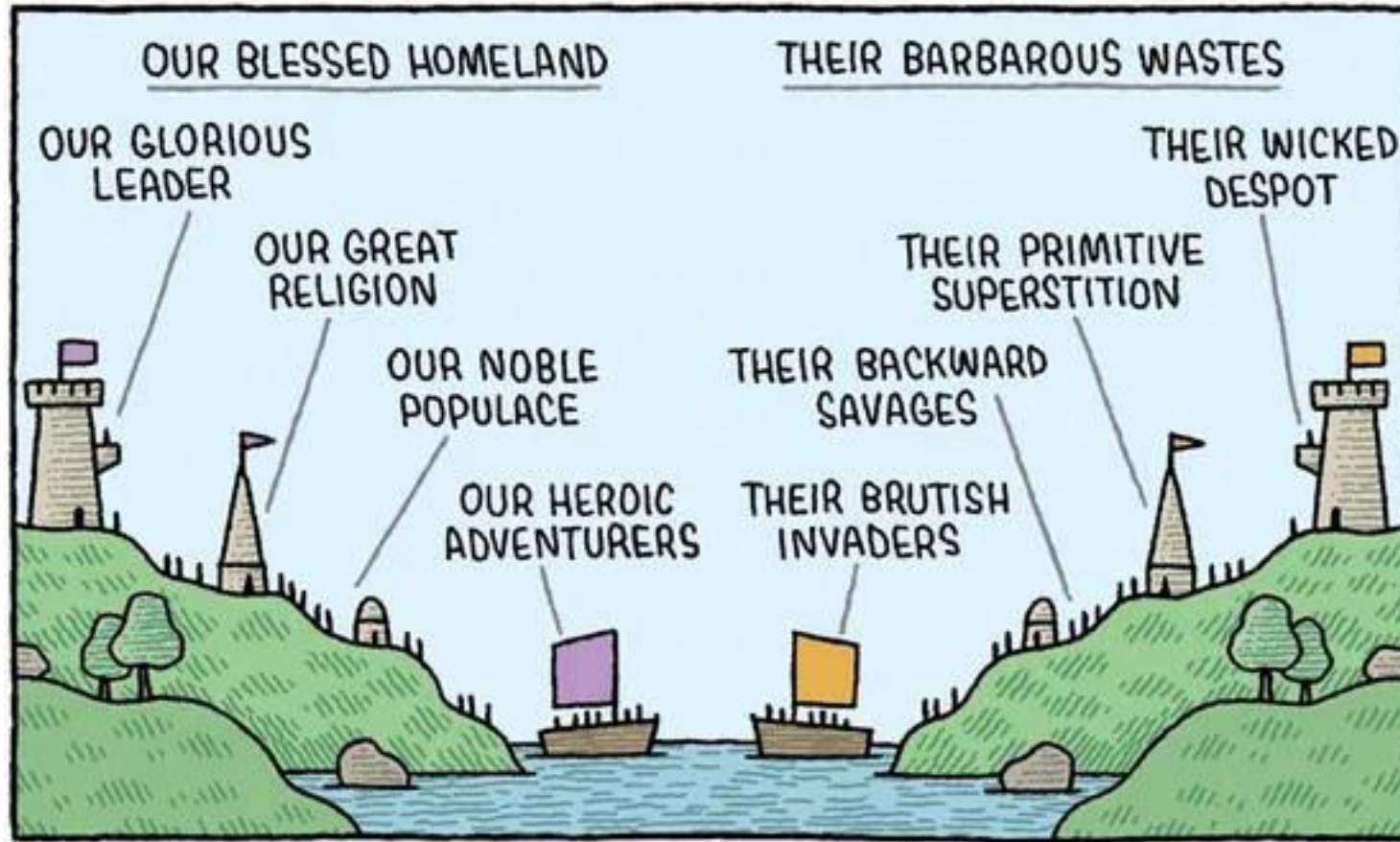# SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

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- Social identification

- Social categorization

- Social comparison

    Tajfel, 1979

- Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=asbfThj-f4Q

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

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IN-GROUP AND OUT-GROUP

OUR BLESSED HOMELAND

OUR GLORIOUS LEADER

OUR GREAT RELIGION

OUR NOBLE POPULACE

OUR HEROIC ADVENTURERS

THEIR BARBAROUS WASTES

THEIR WICKED DESPOT

THEIR PRIMITIVE SUPERSTITION

THEIR BACKWARD SAVAGES

THEIR BRUTISH INVADERS

TOM GAULD

- Seeking negative traits in the out-group to enhance self-image
- Extreme forms: racism

INTERPERSONAL-INTERGROUP CONTINUUM

Interpersonal
behaviour

Intergroup
behaviour

POSITIVE DISTINCTIVENESS STRATEGIES

- Individual mobility: permeable group boundaries
  - individuals goals overrule group goals

- Social creativity: impermeable group boundaries
  - e.g. finding new outgroups or new ways of comparing in- and outgroups

- Social competition: impermeable group boundaries
  - in-group favoritism

SELF-CATEGORIZATION THEORY

- Level of abstraction: "I" (personal identity) vs. "we" (social identity) vs. "we humans"
- Depersonalization (the loss of self, not to confuse with clinical depersonalization)
- Perceiver readiness (past experiences predict future categorization)
- Comparative fit (metacontrast: average similarity between outgroup/average similarity between ingroup)
- Normative fit

APPLICATIONS

- Leadership
  - How can we apply what we have learned in leadership?

- Communication
  - How can we apply what we have learned in communication?

Turn to the person next to you and discuss

SUMMARY

- We tend to remember stuff about ourselves better
- We tend to think about ourselves to be better than we actually are
- We tend to think about ourselves to be better than others
- Apart from our personal identity, we form a social identity
- We tend to think our in-group is better than the out-group

EXAM PAPER OUTLINE

- Form pairs
- Open peergrade on Blackboard and together read and give feedback to your peer

Note:

- the system allows each individual to give 3 feedbacks (6 as a pair)
- make sure to give at least 3 feedbacks as a pair (at least half of what the system allows)