

E-411 PRMA

LECTURE 18 ASSESSMENTS IN PERSONALITY

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PERSONALITY IS ...

An individual's unique assemblage of psychological traits
over time

Just like intelligence, there is no consensus

Personality is defined by the particular empirical concepts which are a part of the theory of personality employed by the observer

SO ... WHAT IS A TRAIT?

PERSONALITY TRAIT

- Any **distinguishable, relatively enduring** way in which one individual varies from another
- Tend to be stable
- Traits are **relative**
- A characteristic of someone

PERSONALITY TYPES

- A type is a similar pattern of traits to a pre-existing suite of personalities
- These are descriptions of someone
- These test consist of subtests that results in a personality profile

TYPE A VS. TYPE B PERSONALITY: WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

[CLICK THE ABOVE]

PERSONALITY STATE

Refers to a short-term, ephemeral trait

How do you feel during a test? At the doctor's?

ISSUE #1: WHO IS REPORTING

SELF-REPORTING

Often the person supplies information about their personality (**self-reporting**)

From a diary or interview and can elicit very private information

Self-report measures self-concept (e.g. Beck Self-Concept Test)

What are some measurement issues with this?

ANOTHER PERSON

- May want/need a spouse, parent, teacher, boss, friend, or trained observer as the informant
- Informant may know the subject being studied very well, perhaps better than themselves
- **Lots of measurement issues though!!!**
 - Biased leading to be too generous or severe
 - May want to rate person as "normal"
 - Something may overshadow (the halo effect)
 - Context important

ISSUE #2: WHAT IS BEING MEASURED

ASSESSMENTS AND RESPONSE STYLES

May measure thoughts, feelings, behaviors

Can also measure **response style** (characteristic response pattern independent of the content)

Are they being honest?

Are they responding in a socially desirable way?

These are **validity issues**

Attempts to measure this within a test - **validity scale**

ISSUE #3: WHERE IS IT BEING MEASURED

ISSUE #4: HOW IS IT BEING MEASURED

HOW ASSESSMENTS ARE DEVELOPED

- Logic and reason
 - Is the content covered logical?
 - Based on a literature review
 - **face validity**
- Theoretical framework
- Factor or cluster analysis
 - **cluster analysis** - factor analysis on the subjects not the items

FACTOR ANALYTIC APPROACH

Cattell in the 1940's - 16 primary factors

Are these distinct?

The Big Five

Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Openness, Agreeableness,
Conscientiousness

The Big Five Inventory

CRITERION GROUPS

Recall, a **criterion** is a standard or benchmark used for decisions

A **criterion group** is a homogeneous, reference group that serves as the basis for deciding whether items should be included on a final version of an instrument

This process is known as **empirical criterion keying**

USING EMPIRICAL CRITERION KEYING

Let's measure extraversion

1. Create large pool of items that measure extraversion
2. Administer test to a group that are extremely extraverted (**criterion group**) and a group that is just a random sample
3. Conduct item analysis to determine items that predict criterion group membership
4. Obtain standardization sample

HOW ASSESSMENTS ARE SCORED

Range from simple summing of responses to complex algorithms requiring experts

Depends on test makers approach to personality

Is it a **nomothetic** vs. **idiographic** approach?

Is scoring **normative** or **ipsative**?

MMPI

Many different scales and very long, see Table 12-3

Lots and lots of supplementary scales

Includes three [validity scale](#)

1. L scale, need to a certain score to determine whether you are willing to speak negatively
2. F scale, items that typically only a psychiatric population would endorse
3. K scale, defensiveness, giving a favorable impression

MMPI-2

Needed a more representative sample

Rewrote and write lots of new items

Added items about drugs, suicide, marriage, work, Type A behaviors

Even more validity scales

MMPI-2-RF AND MMPI-A

MMPI-2-RF Need to added the **demoralization factor**

Need to reduce overlap in items on multiple scales
(discriminant validity)

Also added higher-order scales (e.g. Internalizing dysfunction) (Table 12-4)

MMPI-A, adolescent version

A moving target!

CULTURE

One's culture shapes their world view and identity
(acculturation)

As do ones values and identity

Presents unique and difficult situation for constructing tests

METHODS IN PERSONALITY

OBJECTIVE METHODS
PROJECTIVE METHODS
BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS

OBJECTIVE METHODS

Items that can be scored "objectively"

Multiple-choice, true-false, matching

Number endorsed may represent strength of trait

Intricately tied to theoretical slant and reporter's honesty

Number endorsed may represent strength of trait

What might be some practical and psychometric benefits of this approach?

PROJECTIVE METHODS



What did you see in that toast?

What, if anything, does it say about you?

We put our own meaning into toast consistent with our personality (**projective hypothesis**)

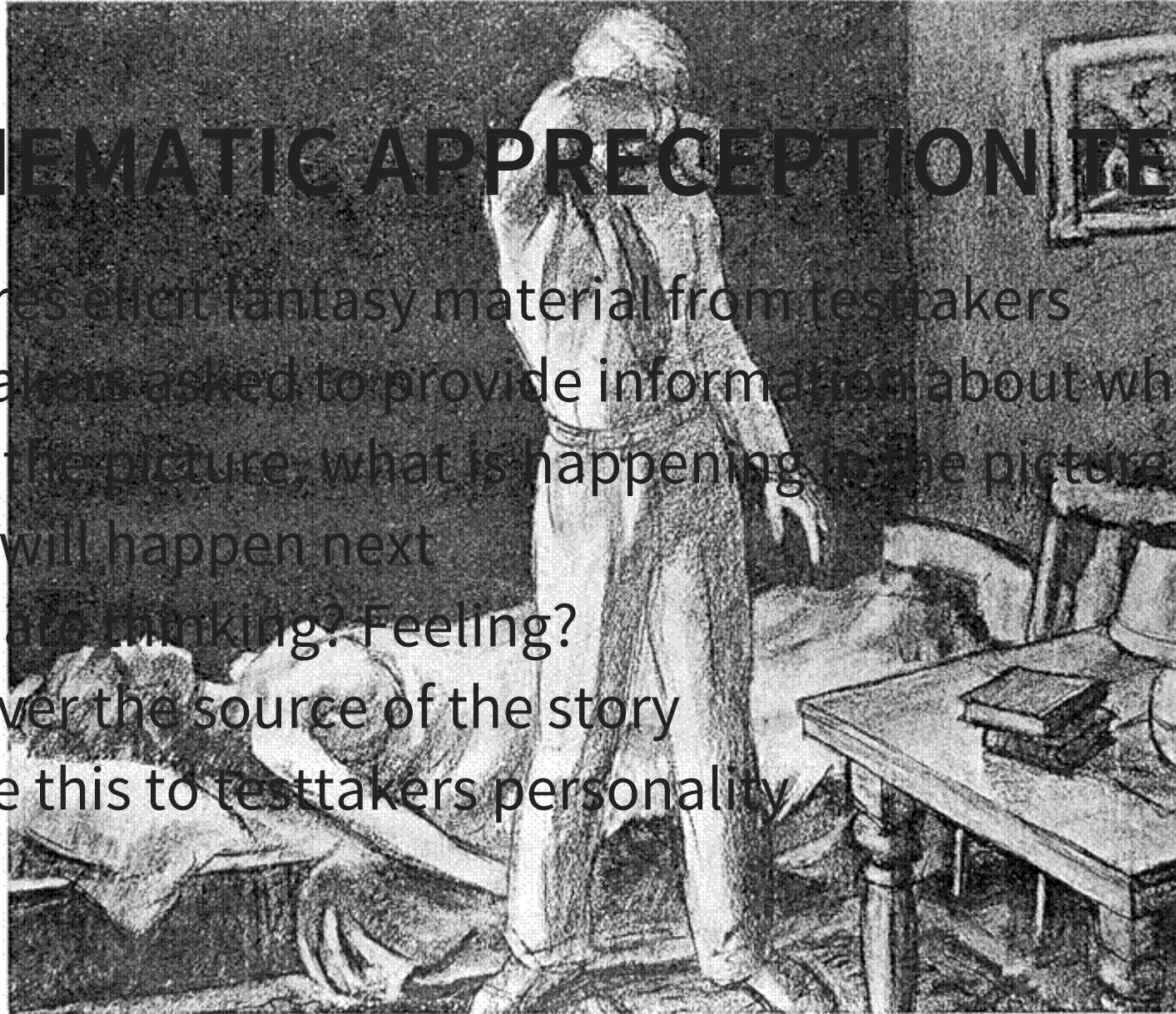
Projective methods - judgments and inferences about our personality based on how we view the toast

Any unstructured stimulus could be used (e.g. words, pictures, drawings)

Indirectly soliciting information from a responder

THEMATIC APPRECEPTION TEST

- Pictures elicit fantasy material from testtakers
- Testtakers asked to provide information about what led up to the picture, what is happening in the picture, and what will happen next
- What are thinking? Feeling?
- Discover the source of the story
- Relate this to testtakers personality



WORD ASSOCIATION AND SENTENCE COMPLETION

Word association - testtakers responds to a stimulus word with the first word that comes to mind

Response and time to response are noted

Sentence completion - testtaker completes a sentence or phrase

SOUNDS AND PICTURES

Early, though largely unused, attempts to elicit response to sound

Several figure drawing tests exists where testtakers are instructed to draw a picture

Various (unusual?) attributes of the picture are analyzed

Like the other methods, these are psychometric soundness questionable

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE
PSYCHOMETRIC SOUNDNESS OF
THESE METHODS?

BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

- Alternative perspective is to focus on **behavior** not on unobservable trait
- Make inferences about what a testtaker does and has done
- **More psychometrically sound?**

WHY DO A BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT?

- Provide behavioral baseline data to compare other behavioral data to later
- Examine testtakers behavioral responses to different conditions
- Understand environment cues that trigger behavior
- To modify behavior and create treatments

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS AND RATING SCALES





SELF-MONITORING (REACTIVITY?)

ANALOGUE STUDIES AND SITUATIONAL PERFORMANCE

analogue study - investigate related variables to the variable of actual interest

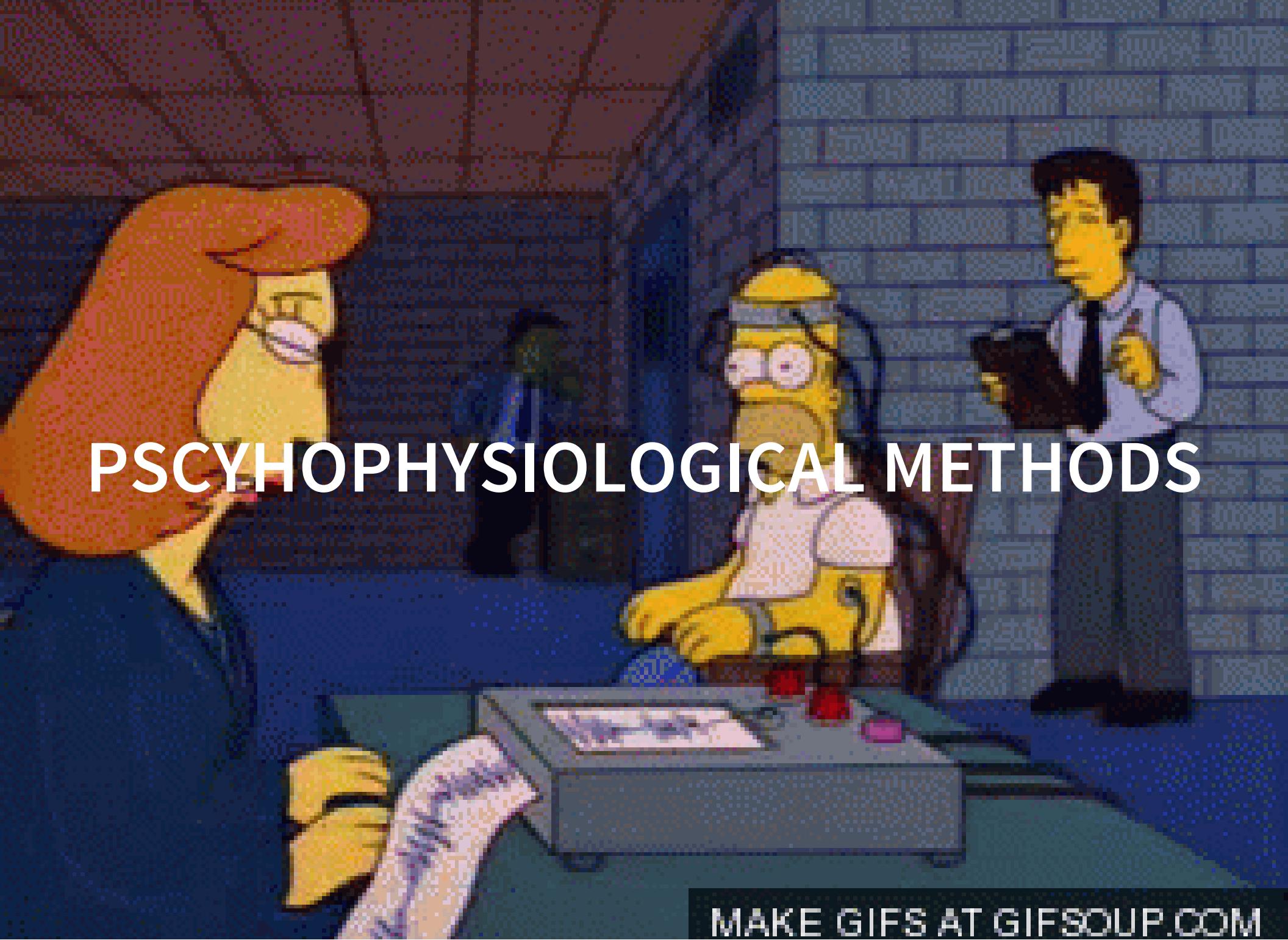
How might we access fear of falling using an analogue study? And how can we be sure that this is effective?

examine how people perform under particular situations

What might be some situations we would want to investigate?

A dynamic scene of a medieval-style battle reenactment. In the foreground, a man in a white tunic and brown breeches is crouching low to the ground, holding a long wooden pole weapon. Behind him, another man in a black tunic and blue sash is in a combat stance. To the right, a group of people in full armor, including a knight in silver armor and a person in a green tunic with a red cape, are engaged in combat. One knight has a large shield with a circular emblem. The background shows a dense forest. The word "ROLE PLAYING" is overlaid in large, bold, white capital letters.

ROLE PLAYING

A group of yellow cartoon characters in a laboratory setting. In the foreground, a character wearing a white lab coat and a pink headband with sensors is looking at a computer screen. Behind them, two other characters are standing and talking. One is wearing a blue shirt and the other is wearing a grey suit. The background shows shelves with various scientific equipment.

PSCYHOPHYSIOLOGICAL METHODS