Class 16: Experimental studies of contagion

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Sociology 204: Social Networks
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Pre-read video

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For some traits, selection dominates (e.g., gender). For other traits, all might be at work.

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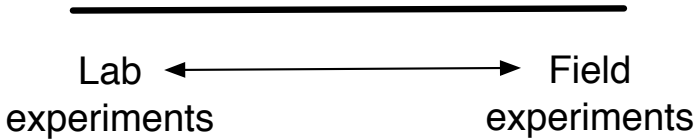
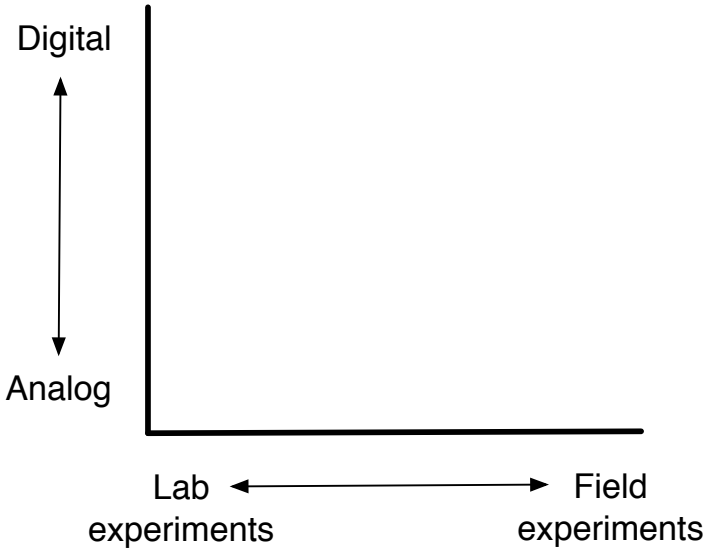
"It's like you don't harass women, you don't steal, and you've got to have a control group. This is one of the things that you can lose your job for at Harrah's not running a control group." Gary Loveman, CEO Harrah's

Notice how both papers describe that it is hard to make causal claims about contagion. Part of the contribution of each paper is to bring experimental evidence. You will see two *field* experiments.


Lab
experiments
Field
experiments


Digital
Analog
Lab
experiments
Field
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Experiments have four main ingredients:

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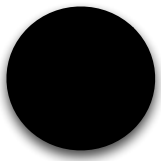
- randomization treatment
- delivering treatment and control
- measuring outcomes

Notice how both experiments put a lot of care into creating the control group.

A note on terminology:
Perturb and observe experiments vs randomized controlled experiments

These experiments move from the individual to the dyad.



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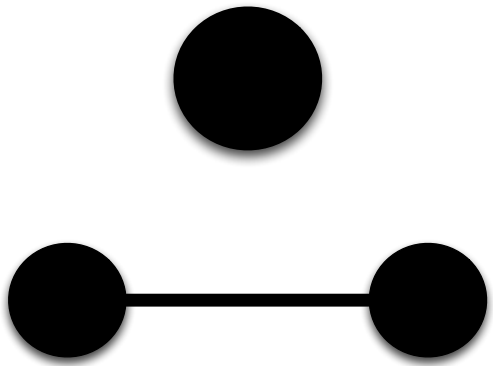

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- External validity: what does this experiment tell us about this phenomena more broadly?

For more information see Chapter 4 of Bit by Bit:
`https://www.bitbybitbook.com/en/1st-ed/running-experiments/`

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I hope that helps provide some context for the readings