Rivalry reduction hypothesis
• The more similar siblings are, the more they compete for resources
  – So parents try to amplify differences
• One mechanism that could amplify differences:
  – Gene-environment correlation

Gene-environment correlation
• Alice and Alicia are sisters close in age
• As children:
  – Alice slightly prefers books, Alicia slightly prefers sports
    • Possibly a random genetic difference
• Environmental factors will probably correlate with their interests
  – E.g., Alice gets books, Alicia gets sports lessons
  – Amplifying the initial differences

Birth order
(Sulloway, 1996)
• Historical study of scientists/intellectuals
  – Identified people on record with opinions on heliocentrism, evolution, other big new ideas
  – From the last 500 years of Western thought
• Later-borns were about 5 times as likely to support new ideas as first-borns
  – 5.4 to 1 for heliocentrism (Copernicus)
  – 4.6 to 1 for evolution (Darwin)

Social Psychology
• Focuses on behavior and mental processes of the individual in context of other people
• Outline for next four classes:
  – First impressions
    – Attributions and attitudes
      – Obedience to authority
      – The Stanford Prison Experiment

Forming impressions
• We form impressions of other people
  – How quickly?
  – Are they predictive?
• Other people form impressions of us
  – Do they see us how we think they see us?
Are first impressions predictive?

- Does Alice’s impression of Chris predict Bob’s impression of Chris?
  - A basic test of reliability
- Do first impressions predict later impressions?
  - After we’ve gotten to know someone?

**Correlation**

- Correlation is one way to measure whether one variable predicts another
  - No correlation: \( r = 0 \)
  - Perfect direct correlation: \( r = 1 \)
  - Perfect inverse correlation: \( r = -1 \)

**Hypothetical correlations**

- Fraternal twin’s IQ vs. Identical twin’s IQ
  - \( r = 0.6 \)
  - \( r = 0.8 \)

**First impressions**

(Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993)

- 13 teachers were videotaped
  - Teachers were graduate students in training
  - Picked to have a wide range of course evaluations
  - To avoid restriction of range

**Judges’ ratings**

- Judges were 9 undergraduates
  - Not from those teachers’ classes
- Each shown 3 10-sec clips from each video
  - Sound turned off
- Rated 15 traits including:
  - Competence, confidence, enthusiasm, likeability, supportiveness, warmth
  - Ratings were averaged over traits and judges to get 1 score per teacher

**Course evaluations**

- Administered at the end of term
- Each student rated two things:
  - The quality of the section overall
  - The instructor’s performance overall
- Ratings were averaged across aspects and students to get 1 score for each teacher
Results

• Correlation between judges’ ratings and course evaluations:
  \[ r = .76 \]

• With 2-sec clips instead of 10-sec clips:
  \[ r = .71 \]

Example correlation of .76

Implications

• Alice’s impression of Chris predicts Bob’s impression of Chris
  – Though imperfectly; correlation is less than 1

• First impressions form rapidly
  – In a few seconds
  – “Thin slices of behavior”

Implications

• First impressions predict later impressions

• Possible explanations:
  – A lot of information is communicated rapidly when we first see or meet someone
  – Once we form an impression, we stick to it
  • Confirmation bias may play a role

Meta-impressions

• Our impressions of other people’s impressions of us
  – Do others see us the way we think they do?

The spotlight effect

(Gilovich, Medvec, & Savitsky, 2000)

• Participant put on a tshirt, knocked on a door, and walked into the room
  – Six other participants were inside, working on something but facing the doorway
  – Tshirt had a large image of Barry Manilow
The spotlight effect

(Gilovich, Medvec, & Savitsky, 2000)

• Experimenter then “changed their mind”
  – Pulled tshirt wearer out of the room as he or she was about to sit
• Conditions:
  – Predicted, actual, control

Conditions

• Predicted:
  – Tshirt wearer was asked to predict how many people in the room noticed the tshirt
• Actual:
  – People in the room were asked whether they noticed the tshirt

Control condition

• Participants watched a video reenactment
• Then were asked to predict how many people in the room would notice the tshirt
  – The same prediction as the tshirt wearer, but not made while in the spotlight
  – Measures people’s general ability to predict what other people actually notice

The spotlight effect

• Other participants donned a better t-shirt
  – Chose from:
    Martin Luther King, Jr.
    Bob Marley
    Jerry Seinfeld

![Graph showing predicted, actual, and control conditions for the spotlight effect]