

Personality

What makes us who we are?

Psychology 305A: Lecture 7

Contemporary Psychoanalytic Approaches Wrap up

Motives

Metamorphosis of Narcissus



NARCISSISM

- **DSM characteristics: grandiosity, dominance, entitlement, superiority**
- **In normal (non-clinical) populations, characterized by self-enhancement**
 - i.e., excessively positive view of self and negative view of others
 - bragging, egotism, superiority, derogation of others, entitlement

Classic Narcissist Armand Hammer

- **Wealthy tycoon**
- **Bought Leonardo DaVinci's book "Codex Leicester" and renamed it "Codex Hammer"**
- **"My ideas are beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals. The brilliance of my mind can only be described as dazzling. Even I am impressed by it..."**
 - After Hammer's death, Bill Gates bought back "Codex Hammer" and renamed it "Codex Leicester"

- **“Around the time of grammar school I had this incredible desire to be recognized... I didn’t care about the money, I thought about the fame, about just being the greatest. I was dreaming about being some dictator of a country or some savior like Jesus. Just to be recognized.”**

- Arnold Schwarzenegger,
1976



What Causes Narcissism?

- **Parents over-idealize child, set up unrealistic standards**
- **Simultaneously, they excessively criticize child for failing to meet unrealistic standards**
- **“Narcissistic wound” – early humiliation experience**
- **Narcissists overcompensate for insecurities by self-aggrandizing**

Measuring Narcissism

Circle the choice that most accurately describes you:

- A. I am much like everyone else
- B. I am an extraordinary person

- A. I like to look at myself in the mirror
- B. I am not particularly interested in looking at myself in the mirror

Measuring Narcissism

- **Unrealistically positive beliefs about abilities and achievements**
 - “I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.”
 - 37% agree
- **Preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, and beauty**
 - “If I ruled the world it would be a much better place.”
 - 45% agree
- **Strong sense of entitlement**
 - “I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve.”
 - 26% agree
- **Grandiose sense of self-importance**
 - “I am an extraordinary person.”
 - 55% agree

Narcissism and Therapy

- **Narcissists typically go to therapy for external life problems**
 - Work
 - Repeated failures
 - Not living up to their own career expectations
 - Love
 - Idealization and devaluation of romantic partners
 - Always need to be center of attention
- **Narcissistic Personality Disorder is very difficult to treat in therapy**
 - Why?

Research Findings on Normal-Range Narcissism

- **More first person pronoun usage**
 - I, me
- **Look in the mirror more frequently**
- **Take credit for their accomplishments but blame others for their failures**

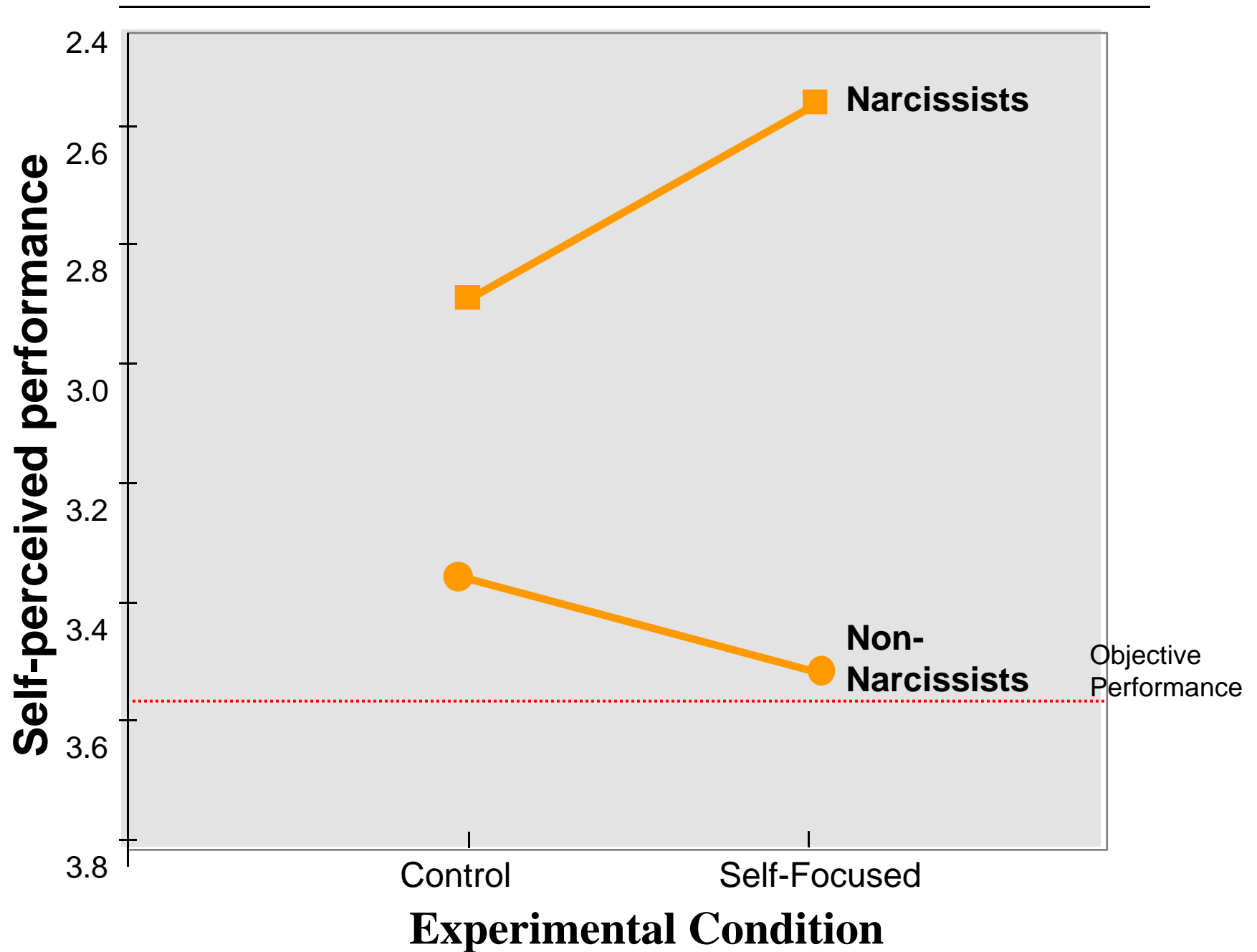
Research Study: How Deep-Seated Are Narcissistic Illusions?

- Do narcissists become less grandiose when they have the opportunity to see how others see them?
- Experiment: Manipulate visual perspective via video
 - *Show* narcissists how others see them

Method

- 1) Self-Evaluation
 - Rate self's performance relative to other group members
- 2) Objective Evaluation
 - 12 psychologists
 - 5 other group members ("peers")
 - Objective task outcome (success vs. failure)
- DV: Self-Enhancement Bias = **degree to which self-evaluation is more positive than objective evaluation**
- IV: Manipulation of Self-Focused Attention
 - Control Condition:
 - Evaluate performance immediately after group discussion
 - Self-Focused Condition:
 - Evaluate performance after viewing videotape of self participating in discussion

How will people rate their performance in each condition?



Comments After Watching Self on Video

- Narcissistic Individual
 - "I came across more or less the way I would want to: stern but compassionate, matter of fact, business like and effective. I liked watching myself very much. Not too many surprises."
- Non-Narcissistic Individual
 - "I don't think I performed as well as I thought I did. The only impressions I got from watching myself on videotape were the bad ones. It was quite a sobering experience."

Narcissism as Pathology

- **2 types**
 - Grandiose/Malignant Narcissist
 - Fragile narcissist

Grandiose/malignant narcissist

- **Has an exaggerated sense of self-importance**
- **Appears to feel privileged and entitled**
- **Has little empathy**
- **Tends to blame own failures or shortcomings on other people or circumstances**
- **Tends to be critical of others**
- **Tends to be controlling**
- **Has little psychological insight into own motives, behavior, etc.**

Fragile narcissist

- **Tends to feel unhappy, depressed, or despondent**
- **Tends to be critical of others**
- **Has an exaggerated sense of self-importance**
- **Tends to feel anxious**
- **Tends to feel envious**
- **Is prone to painful feelings of emptiness**
- **Appears to feel privileged and entitled**
- **Tends to feel s/he is inadequate, inferior, or a failure**

A Real Clinical Case

- **40 year-old, college educated single male**
- **Socially isolated, impaired intimacy**
- **“Empty” depression, anhedonia, self-criticality**
- **Chronically suicidal**
- **3 hospitalizations in the last year:
ECT, Medication did not help**
- **Pursuing Disability**
- **Living w/ parents after most recent hospitalization**
- *Overt Presentation: Vulnerable, Low Self-Esteem*

More information about this case

- Can't play guitar b/c no one pays to hear him play
- Feels that daily responsibilities are a "hassle" and he should not have to do them (e.g., groceries, finding a job, balancing his checkbook, filling out forms, paying taxes).
- Lived off a trust fund (recently depleted).
- Resents parents for aging and having decreasing resources.
- Can't hold a job because he resents lack of control over his schedule and accommodation to others' schedules.
- Can't tolerate listening to "other people's crap."
- Everything becomes "flawed."
- Often withheld information in treatment
- *Covert Presentation: Grandiose Narcissism?*

What
matters most
is how you see
yourself



5. Object Relations Theory

**Modern research on influence
of childhood on adulthood
relationships**

Object Relations Theory

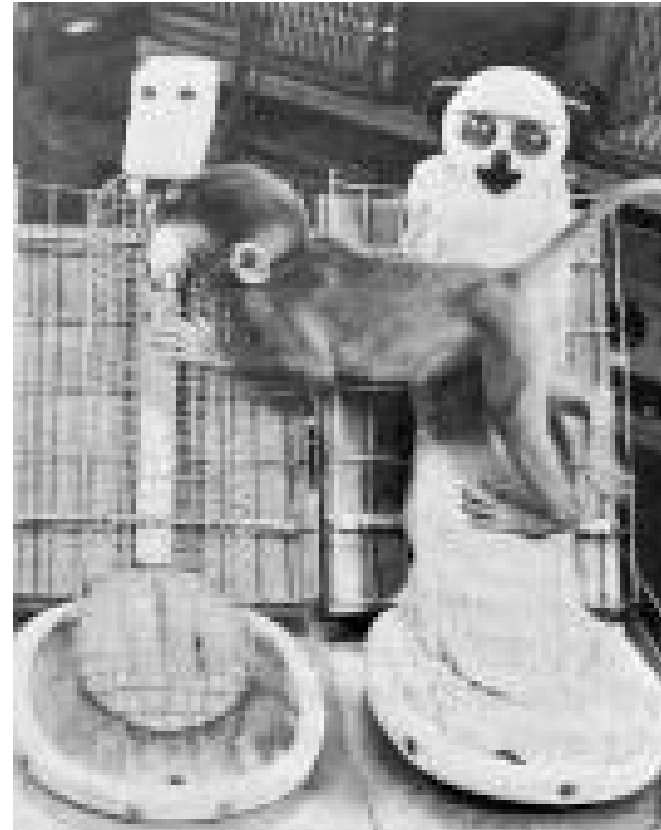
- **Emphasis on social relations**
- **Origins of adult relationships in childhood**
- **Internalized representations (i.e., unconscious) of parents become basis for relating to others**

Early Childhood Attachment

- **Early bond with parents influences child's personality**
- **Harlow (1958)**
 - Raised monkeys apart from mother
 - Provided surrogate “wire” mom or surrogate “cloth mom”
 - Surrogate wire mom provided food and water
 - Which surrogate did monkeys spend most time with?

Early Attachment

Even when wire mom provided food, infant monkeys stayed close to cloth mom



Importance of physical contact between infant and caregiver.

Early Attachment

- **Infant monkeys deprived of real mothers became anxious, insecure, abnormal sexually**
- **Bowlby (1969) noticed a similar pattern in humans**
- **But, there are individual differences in kids' behaviors**
 - Some become anxious until mom returns (separation anxiety)
 - Some become depressed, and show anger and detachment when mom returns

Early Attachment

- **Ainsworth: Strange Situation Procedure**
 - How does a child respond to being left with a friendly stranger for a few minutes?
- **3 Responses**
 1. Continue exploration, play, happy to see mother upon return
 2. Unfazed when mother left, and avoidant upon return
 3. Very anxious throughout procedure, clingy *and* angry upon return
- **3 Attachment styles**
 - Secure, Avoidant, Anxious-Ambivalent

Early Attachment

- **Child's behaviors in Strange Situation predict**
 - Mother's behavior toward child
 - How responsive to child's needs?
 - “Internal working models” for later relationships
 - Unconscious expectations for how people will treat them
 - Adult attachment styles

Adult Attachment

- **Hazan and Shaver (1987)**
- **Found similar patterns of attachment in adult relationships**
 - Secure relationship style
 - Avoidant relationship style
 - Anxious-Ambivalent (Preoccupied) relationship style

What is your attachment style?

Read each of the three self-descriptions below and place a checkmark next to the single alternative that best describes how you feel in romantic relationships or is nearest to the way you feel.

_____A. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, others want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.

_____B. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

_____C. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to get very close to my partner, and this sometimes scares people away.

Attachment Styles

- **Important part of personality**
- **Related to relationship behaviors**
- **Many research findings on differences in relationship behaviors based on attachment style**
- **For example...**
 - *Preoccupied* have most sex, *Avoidant* least (except for *Avoidant* males)
 - *Preoccupied* feel greatest need for intimacy
 - *Avoidants* have worse memory for relationship-related concepts

Stress Test Study

- **Romantic couples brought into lab; told that male must participate in experiment involving the “machine”**
- **Experimenter leaves couple alone for 10 min. in waiting room**
 - Secretly videotaped
- **Male participant feels stressed**
- **How does female respond?**

Stress Test Study

- **Avoidant females least likely to show support**
 - If anything, show annoyance at partner's nervousness
- **Secure females most supportive**

Motives

Motives

- **Internal states that direct behavior**
- **Based on needs, or tension**
- **Can be unconscious**

Motives are part of personality

- **Individual differences in the strength of various motives**
 - achievement vs. affiliation
- **Contribute to major life outcomes**
 - career success, marriage, etc.
- **Motives are stable over time**
- **Motives tell us (part of) why people behave the way they do**

Motive Theories and Personality

1. Early Motive Theorists

- Murray, McClelland, McAdams

2. The Humanistic (a.k.a. Phenomenological) Perspective

- Maslow, Rogers
- The Self

The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)



Henry Murray



- **1930s-1960s**
- **First modern theory of motivation**
- **Began as a medical doctor**
- **Studied psychoanalysis with Jung**
 - Became a “reborn man”

Murray's Theory

- **Need**
 - Psychological force that guides behavior
 - Compulsion to reduce state of tension

Needs According to Murray

- **Achievement**
 - Success seeking
- **Exhibition**
 - Getting attention
- **Order**
- **Dominance**
 - Control others
- **Aggression**
- **Autonomy**
 - independence
- **Affiliation/ Intimacy**
 - Closeness to others
- **Nurturance**
 - Taking care of others
- **Abasement**
 - Lowering oneself
- **Blame-Avoidance**
- **Succor**
 - Desire to be taken care of

Murray's Theory

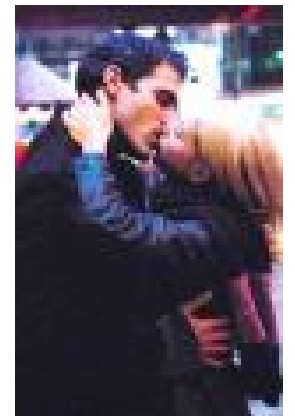
- **“Press”**
 - Importance of environment
 - Needs are only activated in certain contexts
- **“Apperception”**
 - Process through which we perceive the environment
 - Influenced by needs

David McClelland

- **Implicit vs. Self-attributed motives**
 - TAT reveals implicit (unconscious) motives
 - Implicit and explicit motives are not related
 - Implicit motives → Long-term outcomes
 - Career, marriage, health, stable beliefs
 - Explicit motives → Shorter term behaviors/attitudes
 - Performance on an experimental task

McClelland and the Big 3

- **Big 3 Motives**
 - **Achievement**
 - **Power**
 - **Affiliation
(and Intimacy)**





Achievement



- **Preference for moderate levels of challenge**
 - Need to feel it's tough, but still succeed
- **Desire for performance feedback**
- **Choose careers with some risk and much personal responsibility**

Next Class

- **Finish Motives, Humanistic Approach**
- **Begin Self**