

Pluralistic ignorance

Pluralistic ignorance I

- The widespread misperception of social attitudes and norms produced by the discrepancy between private attitudes and public behavior (often produced by a fear of embarrassment).
- Assume others' beliefs differ from yours even though behavior is identical.

Pluralistic ignorance II

- Examples: confusing lectures; political correctness; affirmative action (VanBoven, 1999); intervening in emergencies; alcohol consumption on campus (Miller & Prentice, 1994)
- Leads people to a) conform to imagined norms, or b) feel alienated.

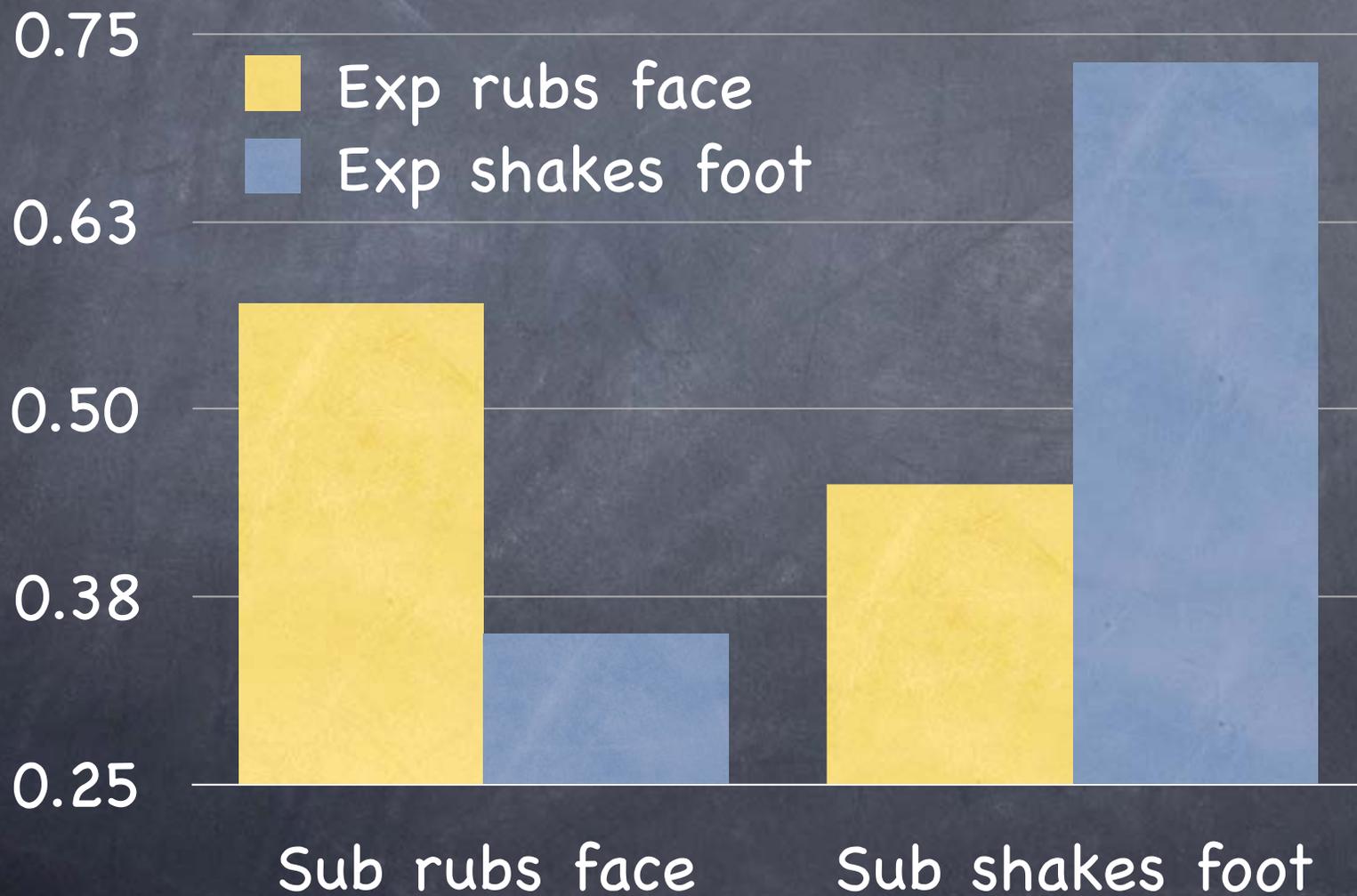
Conformity

“Do as most do, and most will speak
well of thee”

Thomas Fuller

Subtle Conformity

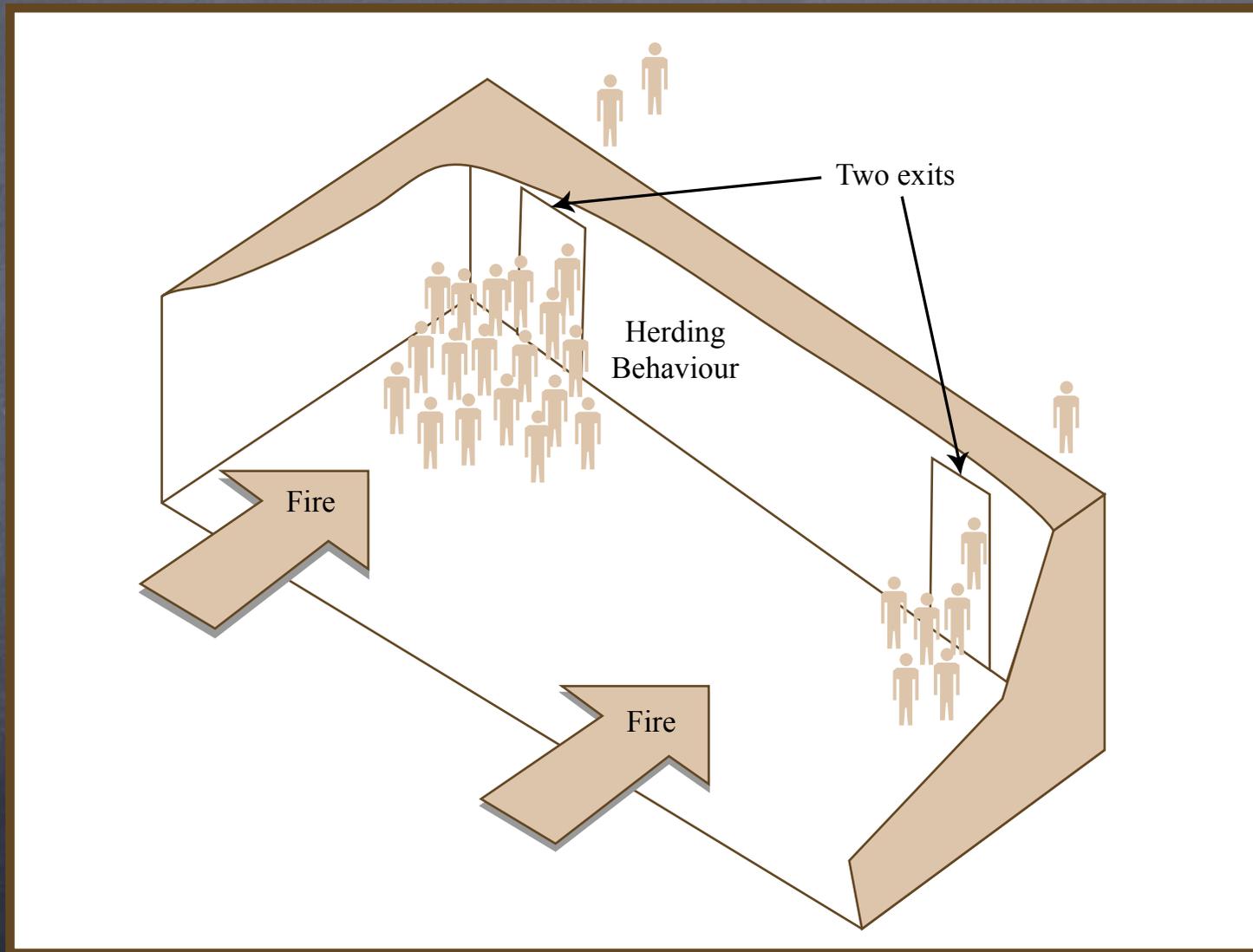
Behavioral mimicry (Chartrand & Bargh 1999)



“Rational conformity”

- Sometimes it make sense to follow others because they know more
- The problem is that many time we assume that others know more, when this is not the case

Conformity and fire exits



Asch famous experiment



Standard



a



b



c

Comparison

Instructions



Initial response



Asch results

- The amazing thing is that we all trust our vision so conformity is hard to achieve here
- 75% of people conformed at least once
- More conformity in larger groups
- More conformity in difficult tasks
- More conformity in high desirable groups

Conformity @ workplace

Conformity summary

- Conformity is a large force in determining human behavior
- It is one of the worse outcomes of groups
- Conformity leads to other problems (pluralistic ignorance, mob behavior, compliance, obedience etc.)

Obedience

Obedience

- After WW2 people were thinking that this could not take place in the US.
- What was it about the Germans that allowed them to obey in such a way?

A movie

Obedience summary

- The power to obey is within each of us
- Worrying and frightening, but common and each to achieve
- Diffusion of responsibility is a key

Groups summary

- Groups can be useful and good
- Groups can help get more information, view points etc
- Yet groups can also hinder the same processes that they are useful for

Categories of social influence

Explicit request

No

Yes

Authority

No

Conformity

Compliance

Yes

Conformity

Obedience

No	Conformity	Compliance
Yes	Conformity	Obedience

Group decision making

- People make worse decisions in groups but their confidence increases
- Important exceptions are “markets for decisions” such as the Iowa and Hollywood markets, and HP