

# So Just How Naive are Group Members?

How Naive are  
Group  
Members?

SESP  
Preconference

Portland  
October 14th  
2009

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# Acknowledgements

Thanks to:

Jennifer Ferrell  
Lindsey Cameron  
Joe Pelletier  
and  
Dave Langdale

all of whom contributed to the research in this presentation

# Overview

- Lay theories
- Formal theories about groups and intergroup processes
  - Subjective Group Dynamics Model (SGD)
- Evidence
- Conclusions

# Lay theories of individuals and society

- Entity vs Incremental theories
- Essentialism
- Entitativity
- Genetic theories
  
- Belief in a Just World
- Protestant Work Ethic
- System Justification Theory
- Social Dominance Orientation
- Social Representations

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# Group processes and intergroup relations: Theories and phenomena

# Intergroup Processes

e.g., Social identity

Motivation

e.g., Linguistic bias, divergence, accommodation

Language

e.g., Explicit/implicit/concealed

Prejudice

e.g., Collective action

# Changing Intergroup Relations

e.g., Collectivism vs individualism

Cultural Influence

e.g., Collective relative deprivation

Social Comparison

Social-cognitive Processes

e.g., Categorization effects, Warmth/competence

# Intragroup Processes

**Shared cognition**

e.g., Norm formation

**Decision processes**

e.g., Social decision scheme, monitoring, deindividuation

**Socialization**

e.g., Contagion

**Group emotion**

e.g., Phase and member status, Group development, roles

**Memory**

e.g., Process loss, social loafing, task/socioemotional

**Productivity**

**Influence**

e.g., Transactive memory, collective memory

e.g., Conformity, obedience, prototypicality



# Utility of a good theory (Lewin) for a person (*not Lewin*)

- Helps to anticipate situation
- No need to learn new norms
- Optimize personal outcomes
- Avoid catastrophic errors
- Coordinate social action
- **Better get one, quick!**



What do people 'know' about  
groups? (a snapshot)

**Imagine people in a small group were asked to judge the amount of sweets in a jar out loud. Joe privately thinks they have all over estimated the amount of sweets. What does he do?**

- a) Agree with the people who have guessed before him, even though he thinks they were wrong
- b) Disagree with them and give the correct answer
- c) Tell the person in charge privately that he disagrees
- d) Disagree with them and get angry at the other members for getting it wrong
- e) Other

- a) Agree with the people who have guessed before him, even though he thinks they were wrong 4
- b) Disagree with them and give the correct answer 4
- c) Tell the person in charge privately that he disagrees 2
- d) Disagree with them and get angry at the other members for getting it wrong 0
- e) Other

**In a group discussion about whether exams should be abolished or not, a final decision will be made through which of the following:**

- a) Generally the group will go with the majority's decision
- b) Generally people will go with the first opinion given by someone in the group
- c) Generally the group will ignore extreme ideas and take an average decision
- d) Generally the group will be unable to come to a final decision

- a) Generally the group will go with the majority's decision 5
- b) Generally people will go with the first opinion given by someone in the group 1
- c) Generally the group will ignore extreme ideas and take an average decision 4
- d) Generally the group will be unable to come to a final decision 2

## **The teacher divides the class into two teams- the 'Blue Team' and 'The Red Team.'**

- Act like they always do
- People will get to know others who they did not originally hang out with very much
- Stop talking to members of the opposite team and begin to develop close friendships to members of their own team
- Start wearing coloured lenses to class so they can be in the group that they want to be in
- Other

- Act like they always do 0
- People will get to know others who they did not originally hang out with very much 5
- Stop talking to members of the opposite team and begin to develop close friendships to members of their own team 5
- Start wearing coloured lenses to class so they can be in the group that they want to be in 0
- Other

**Who would a group approve of most? *Please select two***

- a) A person within the group who criticises the group
- b) A person outside the group who criticises the group
- c) A person within the group who praises the group
- d) A person outside the group who praises the group
- e) Other

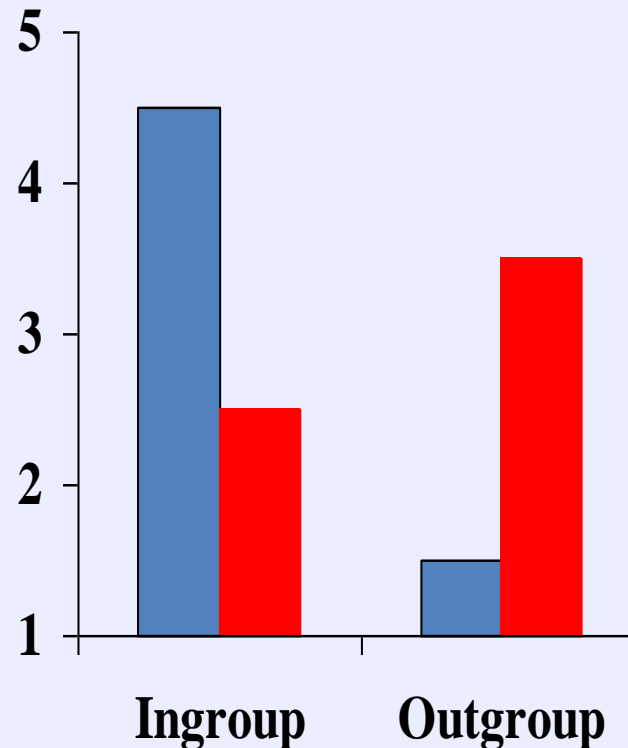


- a) A person within the group who criticises the group 2
- b) A person outside the group who criticises the group 1
- c) A person within the group who praises the group 8
- d) A person outside the group who praises the group 4
- e) Other

# The SGD pattern

(e.g. Black Sheep Effect, e.g., Marques, et al., 1988)

- Ingroup bias eliminated or even reversed when people evaluate *deviant* ingroup and outgroup members



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# Groups in (psychological) context: The subjective group dynamics model

Sustain social identity by:

Intergroup differentiation  
focused on categories as a whole

AND

Validation of ingroup norms  
(consensus)

VIA

intragroup differentiation  
focused on individuals within groups

# How do people know to do this?

- To recognize and uphold prescriptive norms requires
  - ability to understand different actors' motives
  - generalization from knowledge of such situations
  - Declarative and procedural knowledge
- Apply “theory” of group processes in context
- “Group Nous”

# Indirect evidence

- SGD pattern increases if group members are:
  - Accountable to ingroup
  - Reminded of prescriptive norms
  - In a competitive context
  - Focusing on loyalty rather than morality
- SGD pattern is moderated by
  - Marginal vs full status of deviant members
  - Leadership role of deviant members
- Relatedly
  - Leader stereotypicality/prototypicality effects
  - Expectancy that leaders can innovate
  - Expectancy that leaders may be ruthless for their group

# Developmental Model of SGD

Abrams, Rutland and Cameron, 2003

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- How children link *intragroup* with intergroup differentiation.
- Requires both cognitive capacity and social understanding

# Study 1: World Soccer Championships

(Abrams, Rutland, & Cameron, 2003)

- 509 English children (5 to 12 years)
- *Highly competitive intergroup context*

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<b>Group</b>	Ingroup: England	Outgroup: Germany
<p><b>Target</b></p> <p>Normative</p> <p>AND</p>	<p>I think England is the best team. Even if we lost to Germany, I'd still say England was the best team</p>	<p>I think Germany is the best team. Even if we lost to England, I'd still say Germany was the best team</p>
<p>Deviant</p>	<p>It's great when England play well, They're a fantastic team. But when Germany plays well, I always clap and cheer.</p>	<p>It's great when England play well, They're a fantastic team. But when Germany plays well, I always clap and cheer.</p>





- *Evaluations of*
  - *Groups >> Ingroup bias*
  - *Members >> Differential evaluation*
  
- *Inclusion Judgments*

How *others* from [ingroup/outgroup] would feel towards the member?

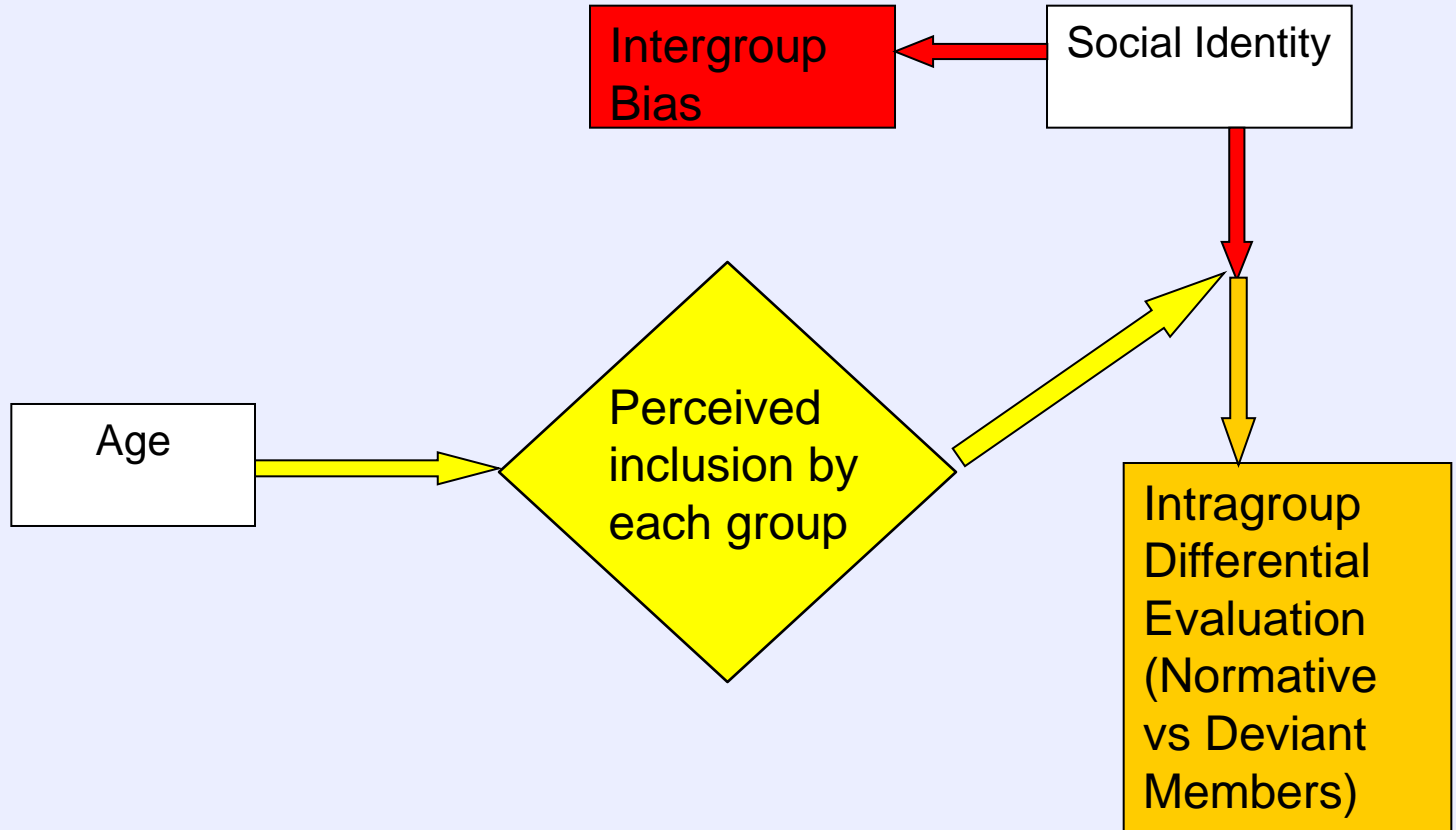
Reciprocated differential evaluation

**>> *Differential inclusion***

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# But how do we figure out inclusion norms?

- Cognitive development
- Perspective taking
- Social experience

# Study 2: European Soccer Championships

(Abrams, Rutland, Pelletier & Ferrell, 2009)

- 167 English children (6 to 11 years)
- *Highly competitive intergroup context*

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Group	Ingroup: England	Outgroup: France
<b>Target</b>  Normative   AND   Deviant	I think England is the best team. Even if we lost to France, I'd still say England was the best team	I think France is the best team. Even if we lost to England, I'd still say France was the best team
	It's great when England play well, They're a fantastic team. But when France plays well, I always clap and cheer.	It's great when England play well, They're a fantastic team. But when France plays well, I always clap and cheer.

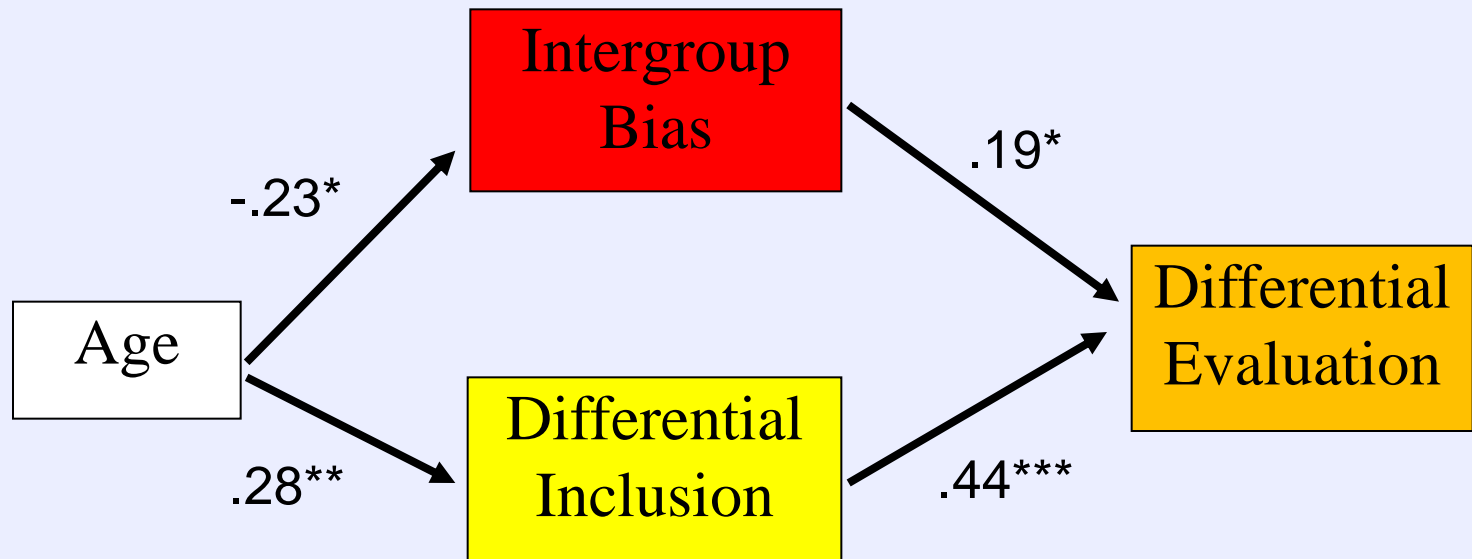
# Developmental SGD hypothesis:

With age, children should show more differential inclusion, which should relate to stronger differential evaluation

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# SOCIAL-COGNITIVE VARIABLES

Ageism and  
Stereotype  
Threat

- Cognitive development – Multiple classification ability

Equality and  
Human Rights  
Commission

- Perspective taking – Theory of social mind task

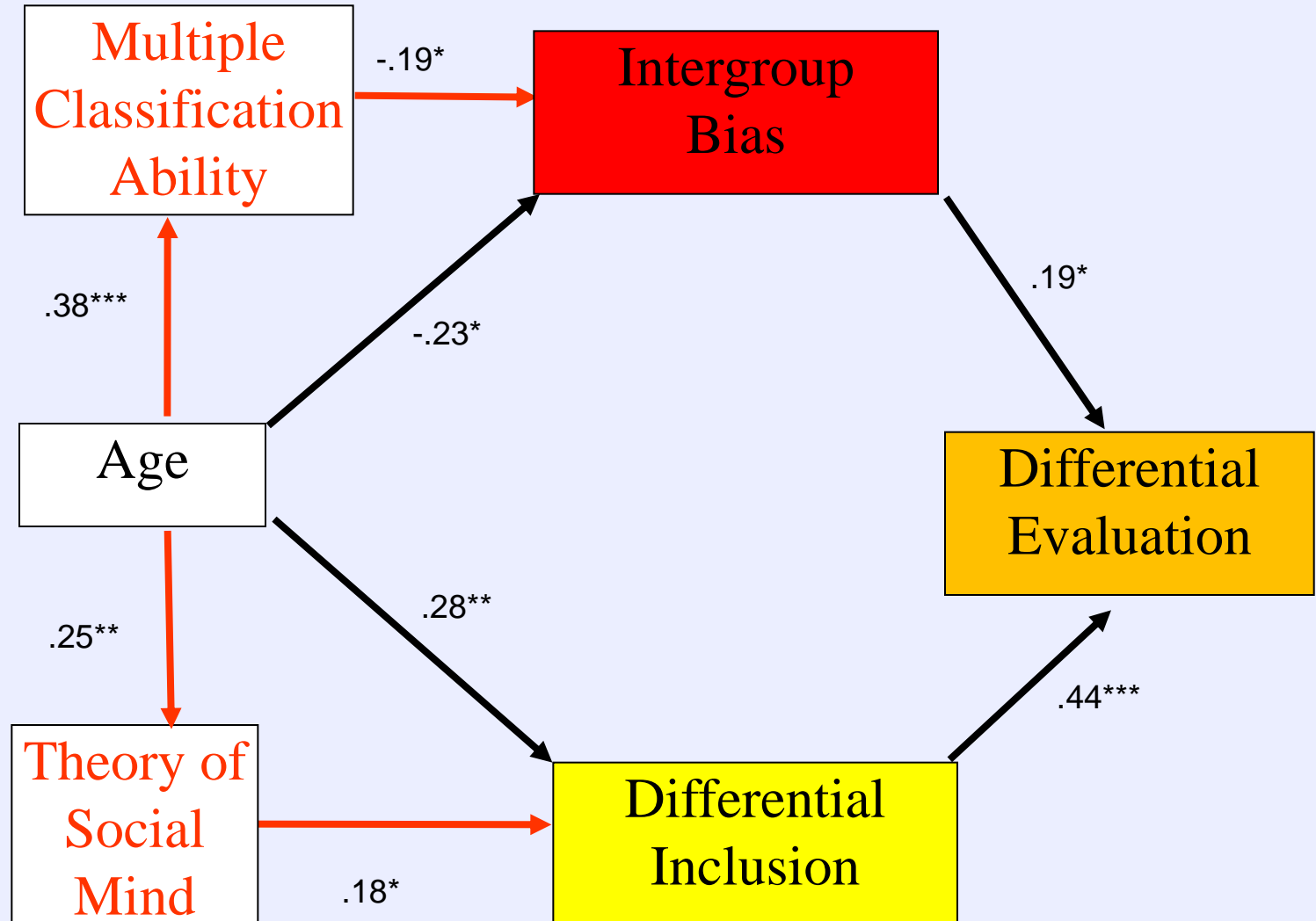
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# A fuller model

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# Does anticipated exclusion reflect reasoning about groups? Attributions to person, group, relationship (loyalty)?

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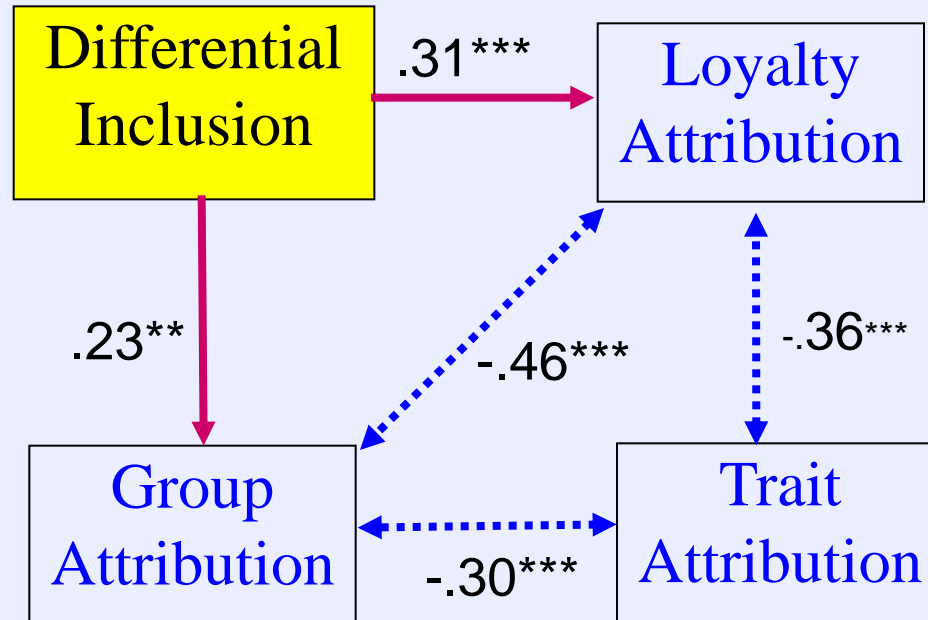


# Attributions to Person, Group, Loyalty

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# Study 3: How Does Group Norms Develop?

- Group norm understanding
  - tacit understanding, requires *generalization*, differential inclusion as neutral observer
- Age, ToSM, MC
- Social experience (group memberships)

# Group Norm Understanding

- Two groups – Red, Green

One member of each

Who does the Red group like most?

- Both members express liking for both groups

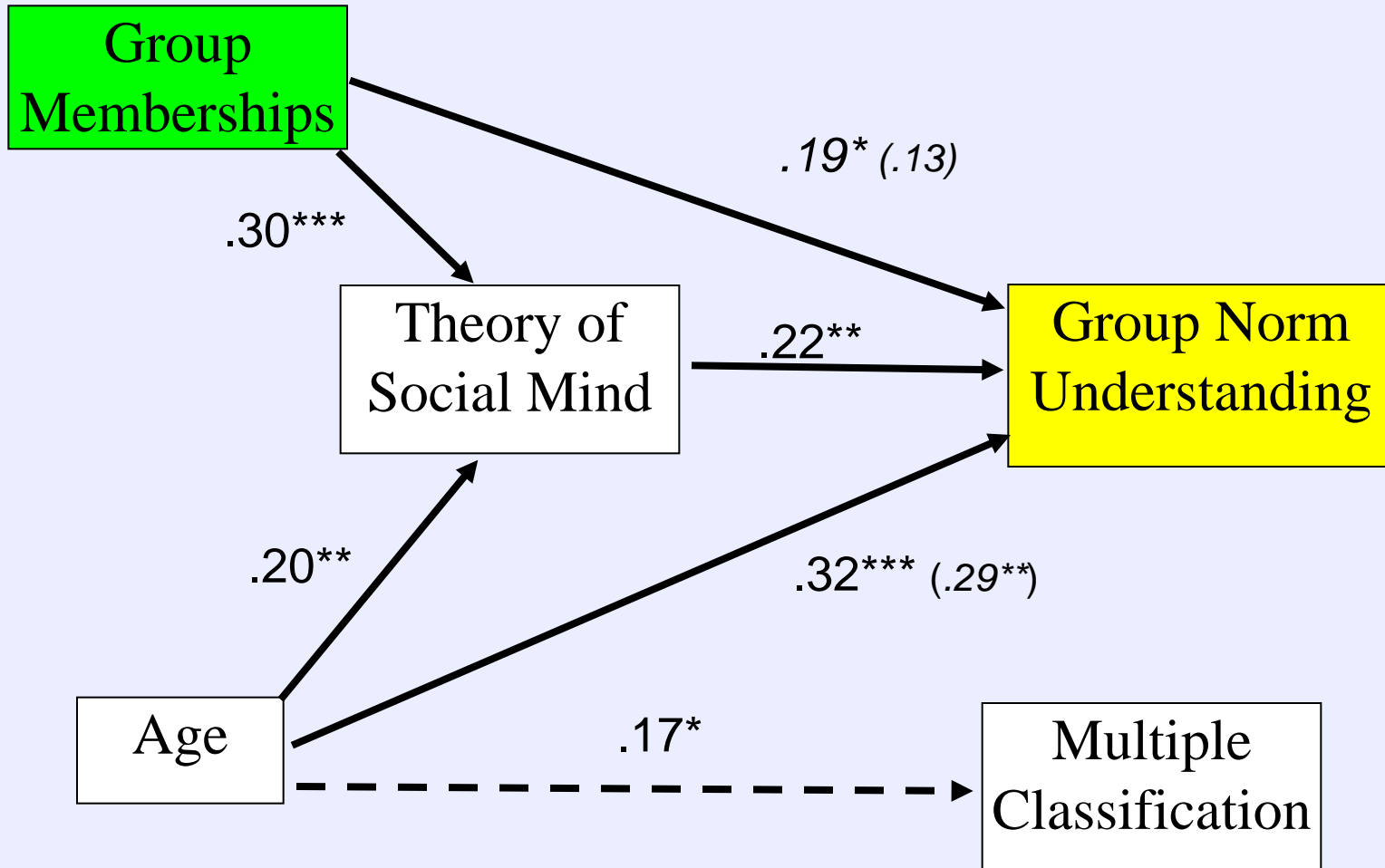
Who does the Green group like most,  
and why?

# How Does Group Noun (understanding) Develop?

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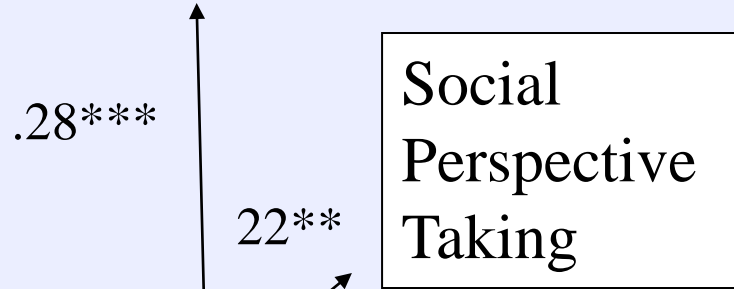
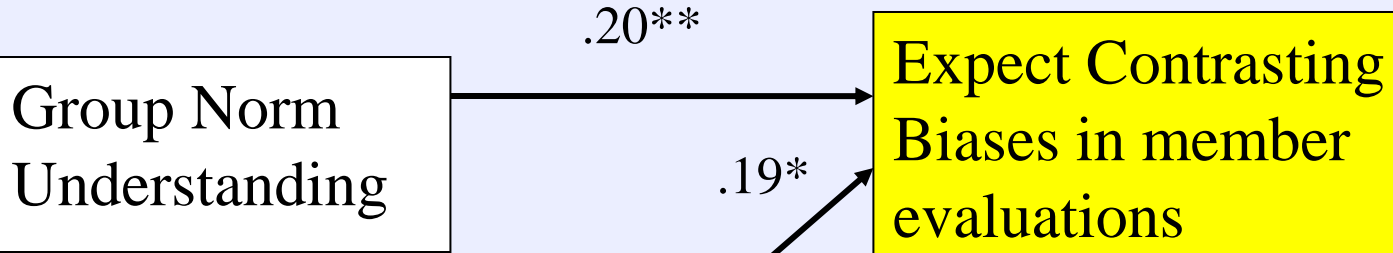
# Study 4: (minimal groups) Is Group Nouns About Groups?

- 157 6-11 year-olds
- Group norm understanding (about bias)
- ToSM
- Expected contrast between in-group vs out-group:
  - Biased evaluations of group members
  - Preferences for neutral items

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Age

.28\*\*\*

.22\*\*

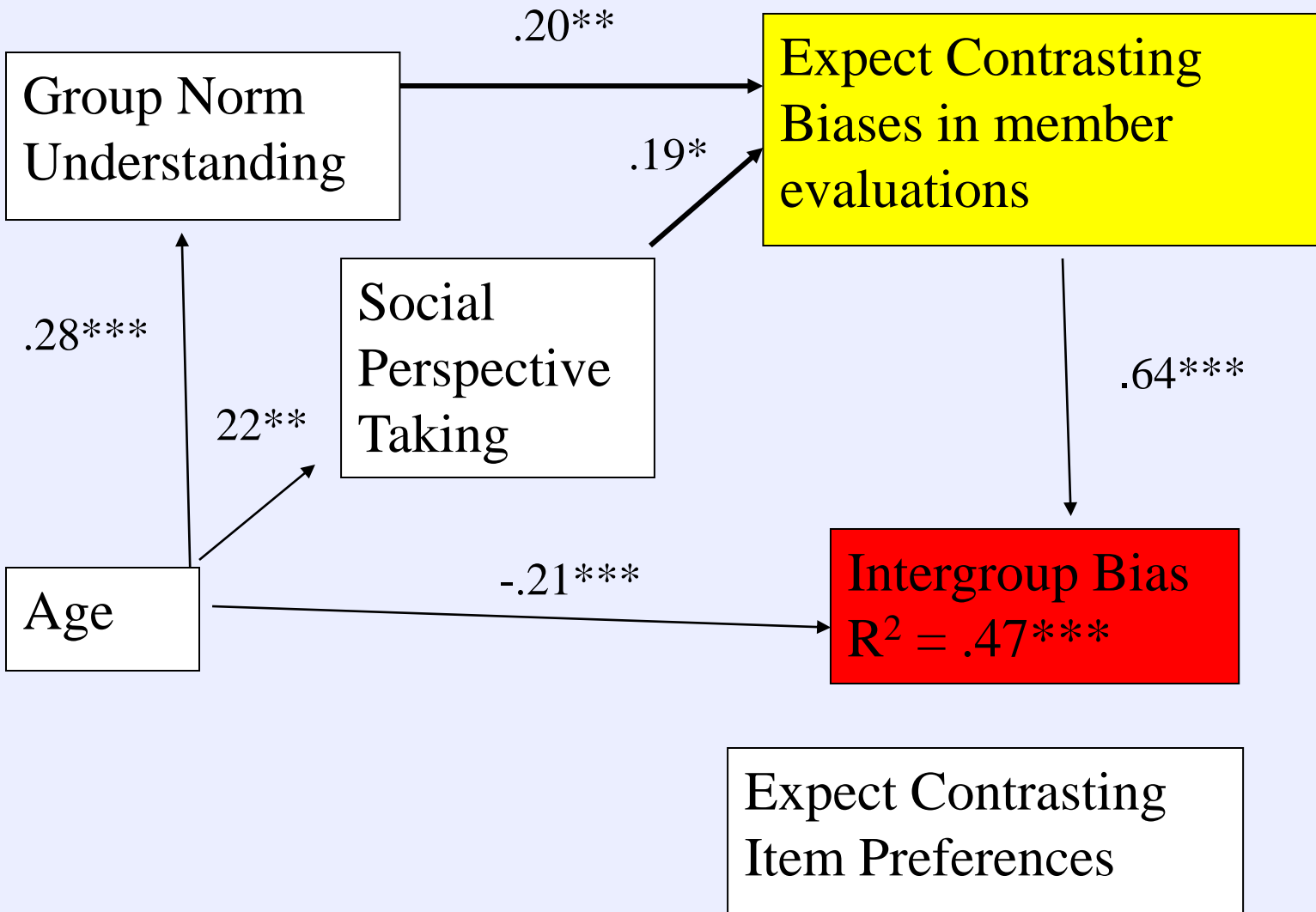
Intergroup Bias  
 $R^2 = .47***$

Expect Contrasting  
Item Preferences

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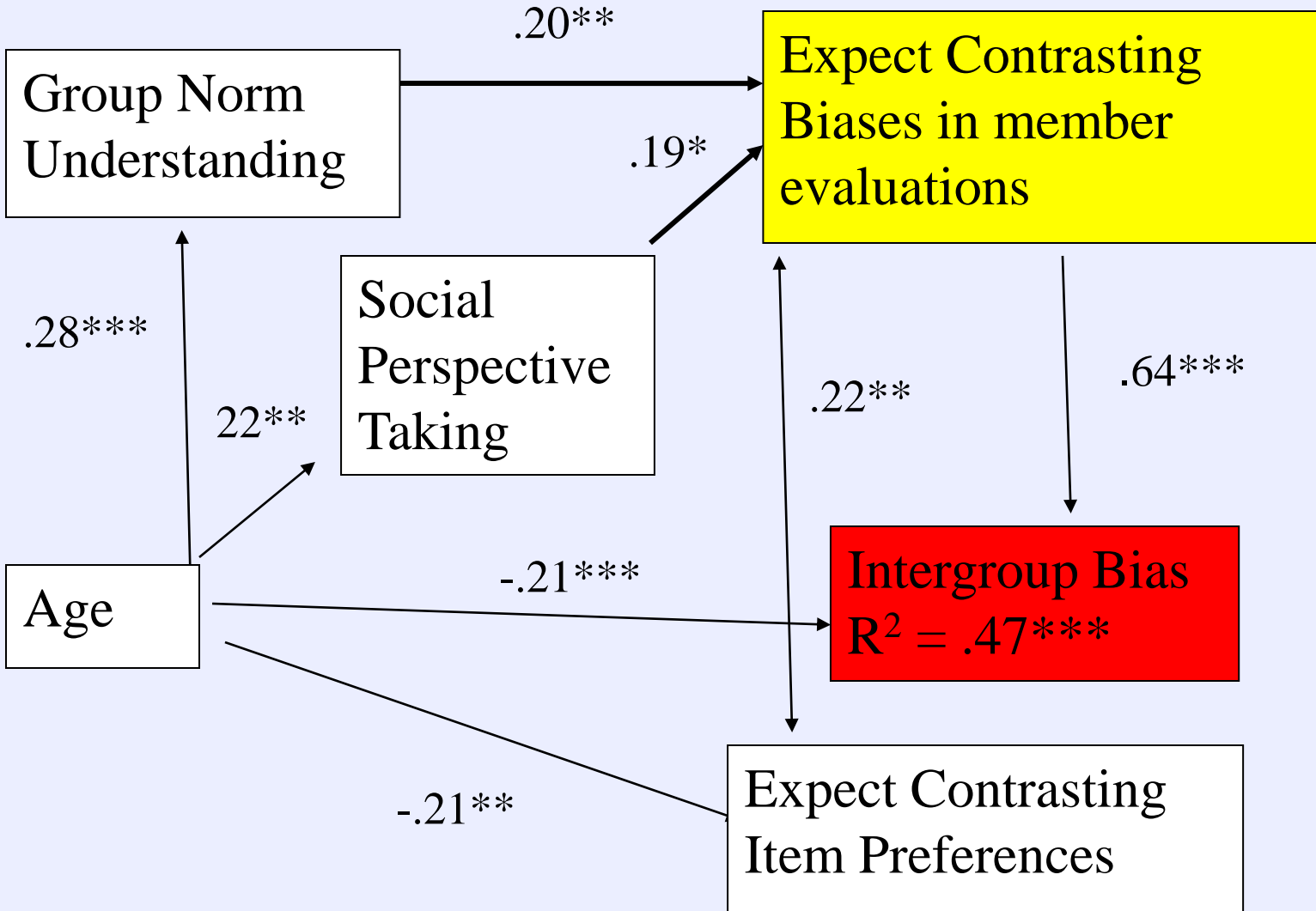
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# Conclusions

- Group nous involves knowing when and why groups treat their members in particular ways –
  - Requires awareness of norms, procedures, and group processes
  - Sensitivity to context and descriptive features of the groups
- Important, developmentally, and situationally, to thrive in a multi-group environment
- A form of **shared** cognition, but could be a skill, ability (cf. Role taking), or reflect training, knowledge, system clarity
  - Helps uncertainty reduction
  - to sustain valued group memberships
  - a vital survival skill!
- More work to be done!