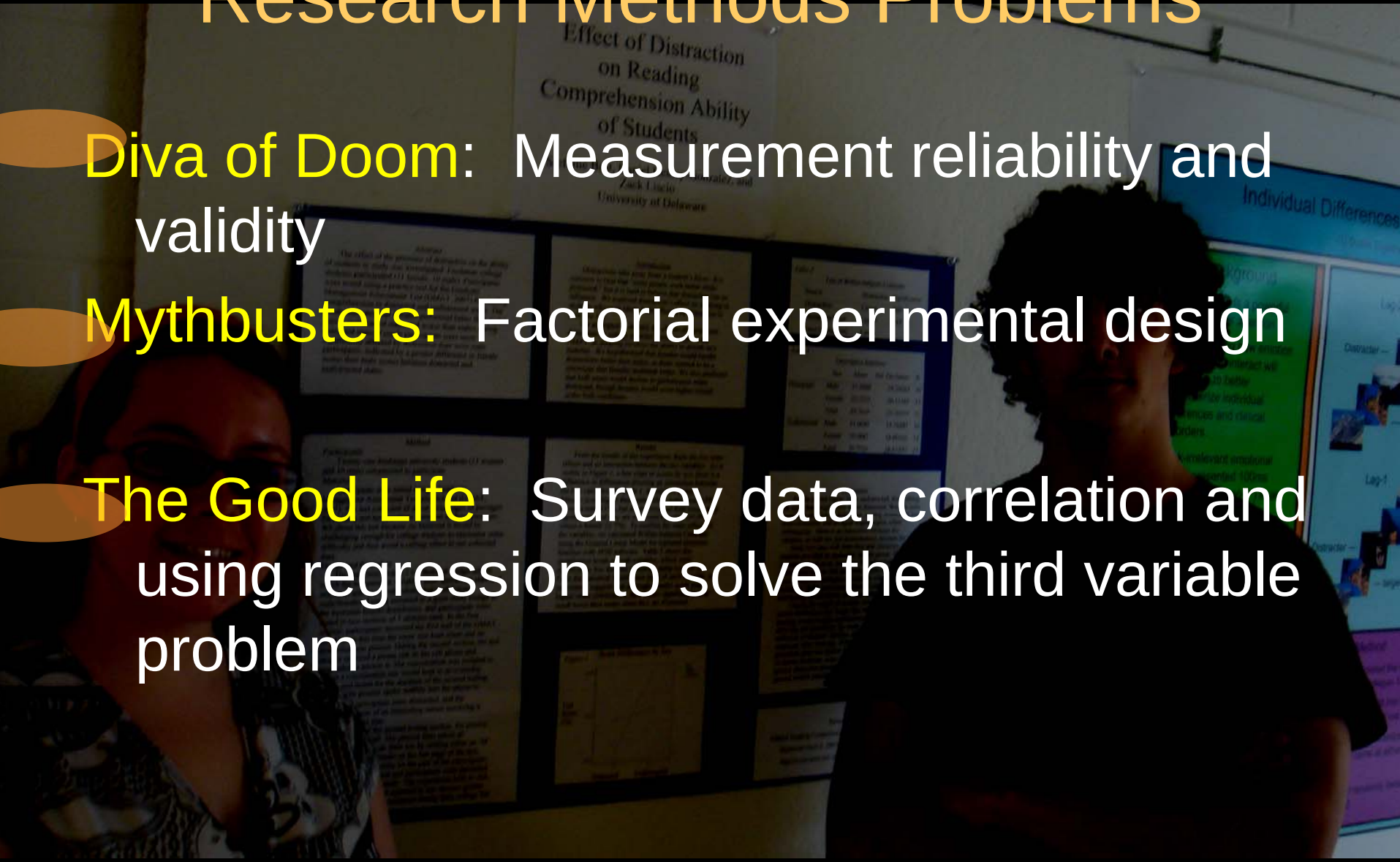
My Psychological Problems

Beth Morling
University of Delaware

Research Methods Problems



Diva of Doom: Measurement reliability and validity

Mythbusters: Factorial experimental design

The Good Life: Survey data, correlation and using regression to solve the third variable problem

Diva of Doom

Your good friend Melissa ….took a Cosmo Quiz called, "Do you have a positive outlook?" Now she's in your dorm room, a little upset. Turns out the quiz she took has told her that she's a "Diva of Doom!"

She reads you a portion of the feedback from her quiz results:

"Could you be a bigger buzz-kill? You have the astounding ability to see the weakness in any plan. In fact, your cynicism is so contagious that after just a short time in your company, people feel as icky about life as you do."

She implores, "am I a buzz kill, really? Do you feel icky around me?" You try to cheer her up, but she interrupts you:

"This even has quotes from a psychologist!" She reads….

Mythbusters!

Sarah says, "you know, what I like about that Mythbusters show is that they actually test things that 'everybody knows.' People are so clueless about science, and they go around believing these magical things. That show really shows how gullible people in this country are."

Ashley, "No kidding! People don't think about stuff hard enough. Like they always say, the average person uses only 10% of their brain."

Dan retorts, "Listen to you guys! That '10% of your brain' stuff that everybody always says—I learned in Brain and Behavior that it's totally bogus."

Sarah says, "looks like Ashley's the one who needs a Mythbuster!"

2. In your group, come up with some myths that are psychological in nature. (Hint: I have given clues to two psychological myths in the first stage's story.)

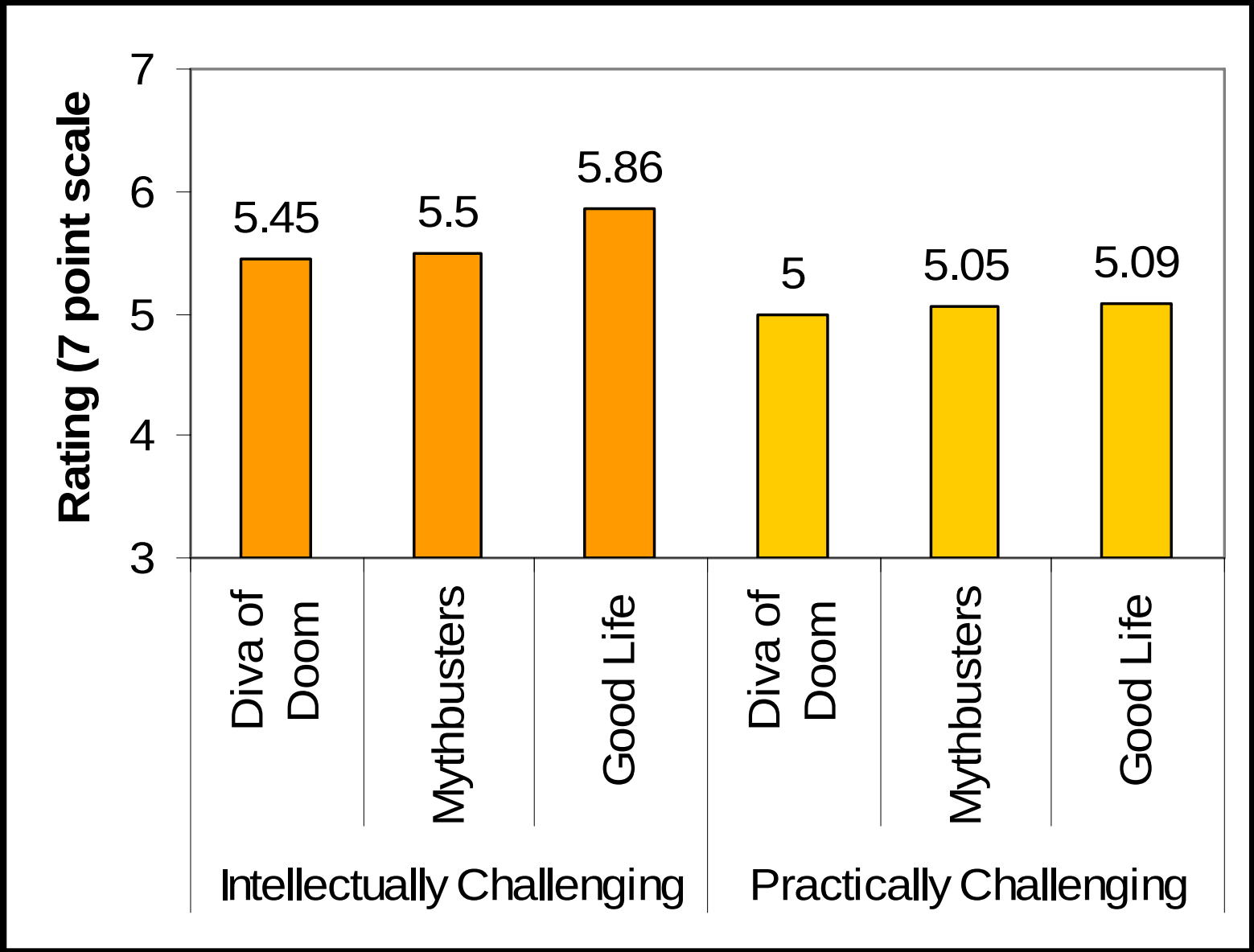
The Good Life

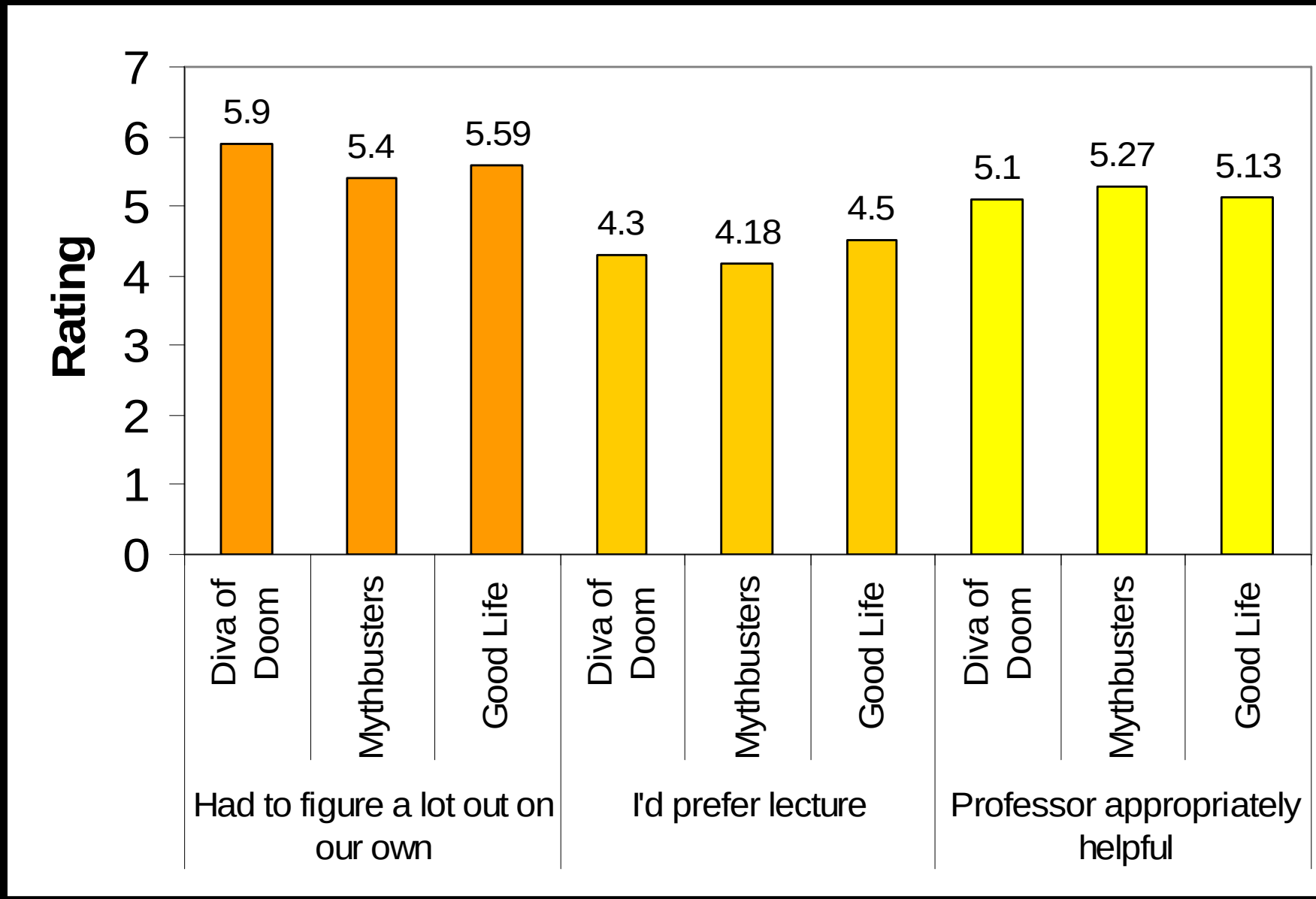
Activities and goals	
Objectives considered to be essential or very important	
Top five	
Raising a family	75.5%
Being very well off financially	73.4%
Helping others who are in difficulty	66.7%
Becoming an authority in my field	58.2%
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field	53.8%
Bottom five	
Participating in an organization like the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps/VISTA	11.3%
Becoming accomplished in one of the performing arts (acting, dancing, etc.)	15.7%

Professor Kim, referring to the survey, remarked, “No wonder my students aren’t interested in working hard for my literature class. All they care about, apparently, is making money.” Professor Gorman agreed. “When I was in college, we put money last. These students list helping others below making money…how depressing.”

Professor David, an economics professor, stopped by and scanned the data table. “I see nothing to be alarmed at here—money is a perfectly legitimate object to strive for.”

Data on these problems

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5.13
Diva of Doom
Mythbusters
Good Life
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Good Life
Had to figure a lot out on our own
I'd prefer lecture
Professor appropriately helpful

Data from course evals

Because of activities in this course, I have learned how to conduct the practical steps in the psychological research process: 4.39

Because of activities in this course, I have learned how to turn an interesting real-world problem into a testable research question: 4.52

I feel that I gained some new skills in cooperative learning or group work, because of my experiences in this class: 4.13

Data from course evals

This course emphasized understanding of the material, rather than memorization: 4.62

Because of activities in this course, I have learned how to use data to support a conclusion: 4.26

Because of activities in this course, I have learned how to find information on my own: 4.09

Compared to other instructors with this many students, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of the instructor's work in this course: 4.00

Comments from course evals

- Problem-based learning was beneficial in that we could see how the things we were learning would be used in the real world, although it sometimes led to lower levels of productivity and a sense that we weren't learning a lot
- It was helpful to see the "terms in action" by applying them to a problem, but it might have been helpful if there was a little more guided learning as far as reviewing the different terms in more depth, maybe by having a few more lectures.

Comments from course evals

- The projects really forced me to actually understand the material and how to apply it instead of just memorizing it for a test. I was able to see first hand how the techniques and tools we were learning about actually are used. I think the problem-based format has really great potential, but that perhaps we should have switched groups for each project.
- I think that it was fun- better than an all-lecture class because it really emphasized the majority of the material. I think a few small homework assignments or projects to address the smaller terms and concepts not covered in the three major projects would be beneficial in understanding them as well.

Comments from course evals

- This format helped me learn by making me figure out how to do things on my own with my group (conduct studies, analyze data, etc.). It also forced me to learn information because everyone within a group needs to be responsible for knowing the information. It can be changed by incorporating more lecture time to reinforce information learned in the group work.
- It helped me learn because we had to discuss a lot of the problems we were having by ourselves. When we talked through the problems or I explained it to another group member, those were the things that stuck with me the most. It was difficult though because we didn't always know in what direction we were headed with the projects.

I also asked….

What helped you learn?

What are some pitfalls?

Practical issues…

"I like that these were open-ended questions…that is, as open-ended as they could be. In another class, the problems are more closed, and we just kind of go through the steps and don't think so much about it. "

"I actually could have done more work outside of class"

"I like that we stayed in the same groups all semester."

"In the early stages of this 3rd problem, I felt a little lost because the information was kind of vague. I wish I'd gotten the assignment part sooner because that's when we were able to get really focused."

About the learning…

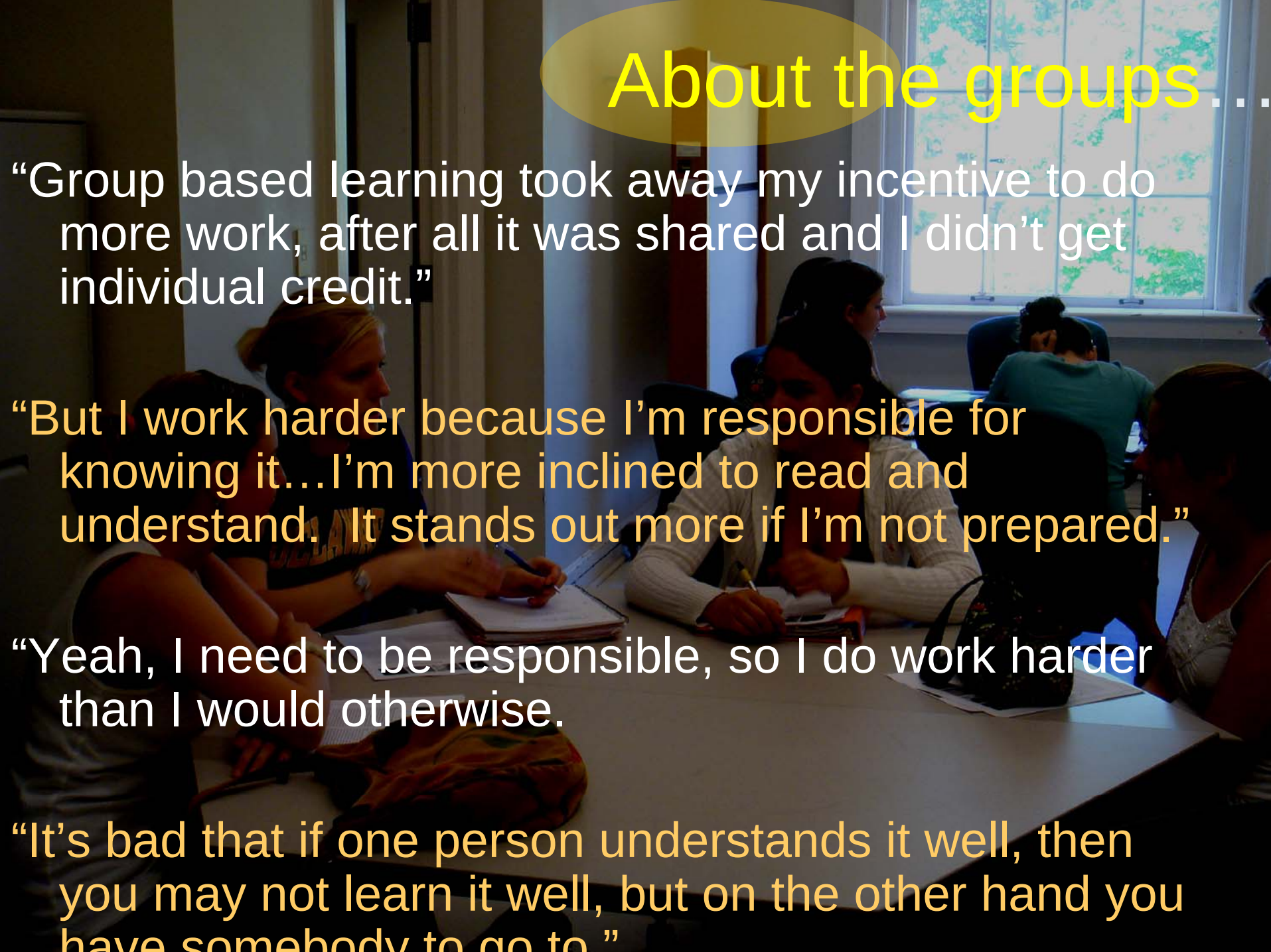
"The stuff directly relevant to the problem, you learn really well—like, I feel like I'll never forget internal validity. But the stuff you don't use for the problem, is harder to remember (like, matched pairs designs for example)"

"I actually had to understand what I was saying in order to apply what I was saying."

"Unlike lecture, with this method, you're learning, without realizing that you're learning. It's not memorization"

"This makes it easier to study for tests—I don't have to cram, because I just know it. I might go over a few problems but I just know it."

"I don't feel like I learned anything to the right depth"



About the groups…

"Group based learning took away my incentive to do more work, after all it was shared and I didn't get individual credit."

"But I work harder because I'm responsible for knowing it…I'm more inclined to read and understand. It stands out more if I'm not prepared."

"Yeah, I need to be responsible, so I do work harder than I would otherwise.

"It's bad that if one person understands it well, then you may not learn it well, but on the other hand you have somebody to go to."