

Goals of this assignment:

1. To practice developing an experiment to test a hypothesis
2. To consider the use of random assignment to increase the validity of the design
3. To examine the design in terms of impact and control
4. To consider the ethics of the research, including cover stories and debriefing
5. To focus on writing about methods

Part of the first lab was spent discussing the research studies of Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996). In class, we brainstormed some ways to extend that research. This first mini-lab gives you the opportunity to formally design a study that extends this research in some way. You can approach this mini-lab in any one of the following ways:

1. Design a conceptual replication of the study to examine the effect of priming on behavior with a novel procedure, independent variable, and dependent variable.
2. Examine an alternative hypothesis/explanation for any of the results they obtained.
3. Design a study to support conclusions that they come to in their discussion.

For the actual assignment, you will need to do the following (1-3 should conform to APA style):

1. Prepare a title page in APA style to reflect the focus of your research design.
2. Write a short introduction to your research design. This introduction should cite the Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996) article, and should include a short summary of their research (or at least the parts that relate to your design), but does not need to include any other references. The introduction should also include the logic that led up to the design you are proposing and your hypotheses about your study. You can probably do this adequately in less than two pages. The goal of this part of the paper is to describe to me (in scientific language) the rationale that led up to the design you are proposing, not to provide an extensive introduction to the topic.
3. Then you will prepare a Method section, in similar style to that in the Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996) paper, that describes what would actually take place in your study. It should clearly lay out how you will operationalize your independent and dependent variables, the procedure you would follow in the actual study, any cover story that might be necessary, and a general description of the materials you would use (you don't need to actually create materials, like the scrambled sentence task, but you should describe them in way that makes it clear to me what you would have participants do—much like they do in the article). I encourage you to be creative with this—Bargh and colleagues clearly utilized their creativity!
4. In a separate section (you can call this section the “Reflections” section), I'd like you write a few paragraphs that describe any design decisions you made and your rationale for those decisions (why did you decide what you did?). In this section, you should address the following aspects of your study: impact (experimental and mundane realism), control, random assignment, and ethics. Essentially, I want you to make transparent to me how you took these factors into consideration in your design. If you had to make any decisions (for example, to trade off impact for control, or vice versa), explain to me why you made the decision that you did. This section should reflect your thought and conscientiousness about the basic facets of design.
5. Relevant references in a reference section

I consider writing as a psychologist to be developmental—in other words, I expect you to have questions about how to write and that you may need practice in how to write well. Feel free to ask questions, and I will aim to

provide feedback that you can use to continue to improve your writing, no matter how well you write at the beginning of the semester.

The written assignment is to be completed individually. It is due in hard copy to my office on or before noon on Friday, February 2.