

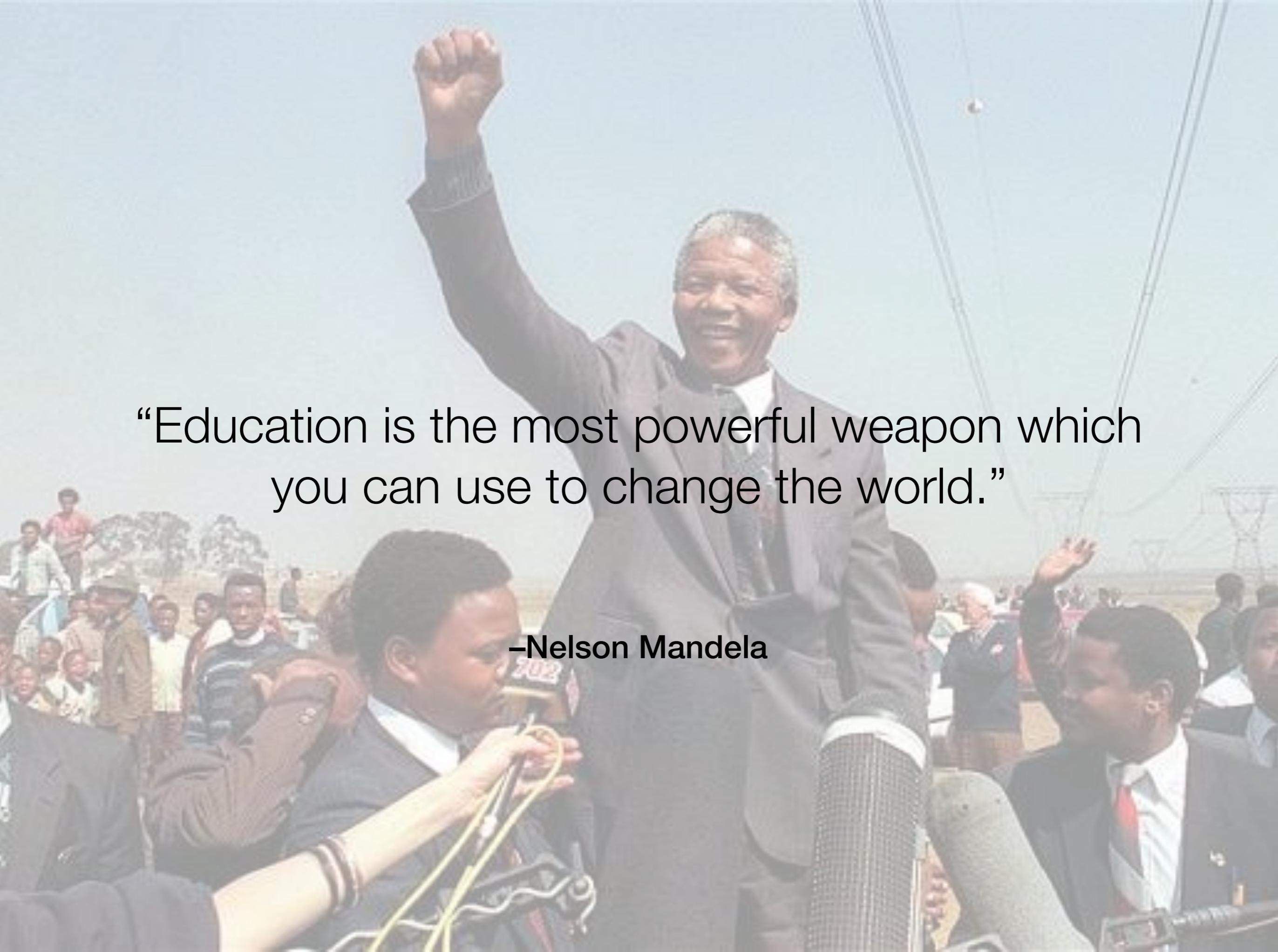


**Pedagogy of the Empowered:**  
Fostering Everyday Activism in  
Introductory Psychology

Leslie Berntsen, Ph.D.

 @leslie\_bern | [leslie-bern.com](http://leslie-bern.com)

What Does “Activism” Mean to You?



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

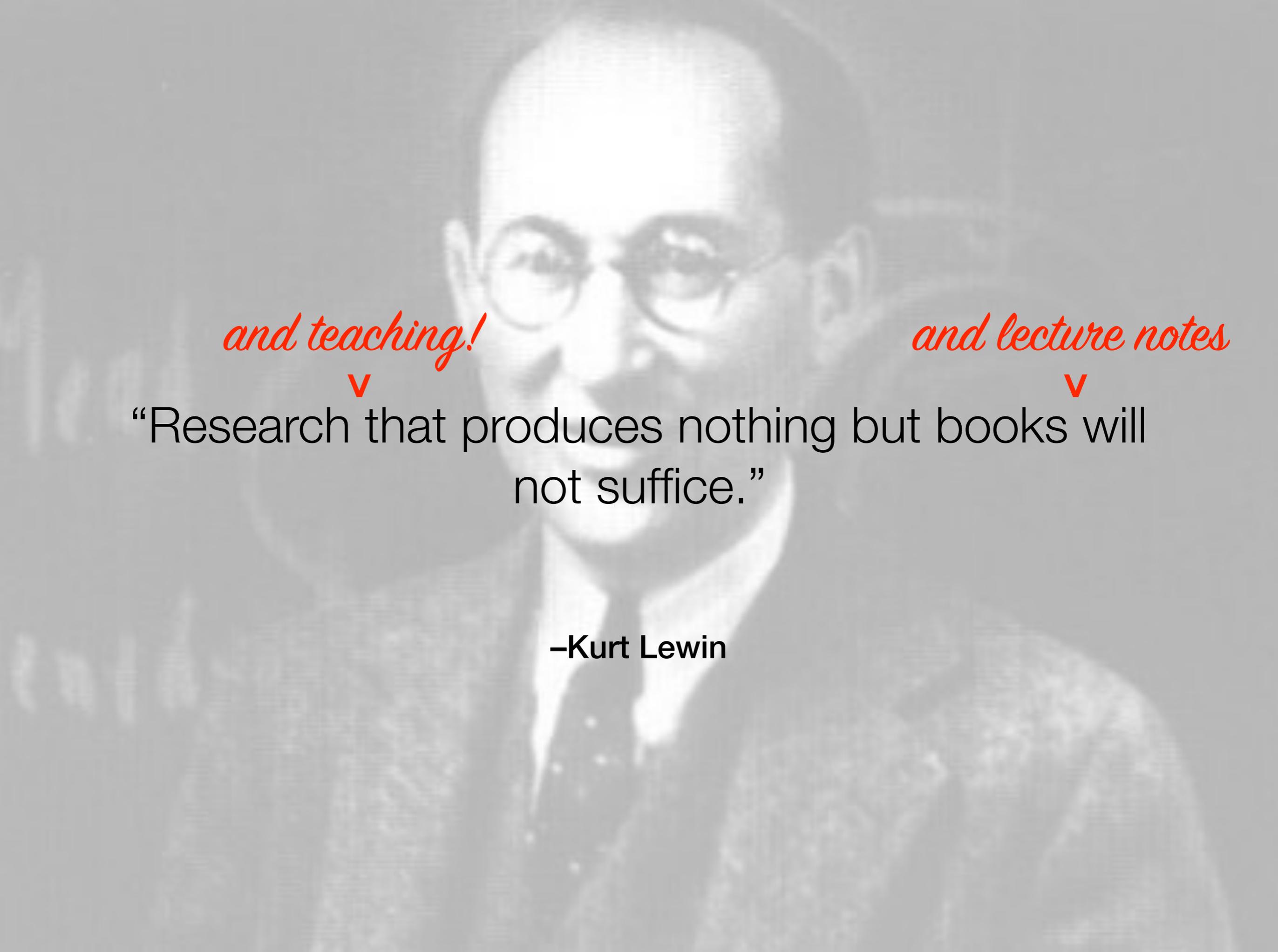
–Nelson Mandela

# Action Teaching

---

“...a style of instruction that contributes to peace, social justice, and sustainable living at the same time as it educates students”

**–Scott Plous, *Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology***



*and teaching!*

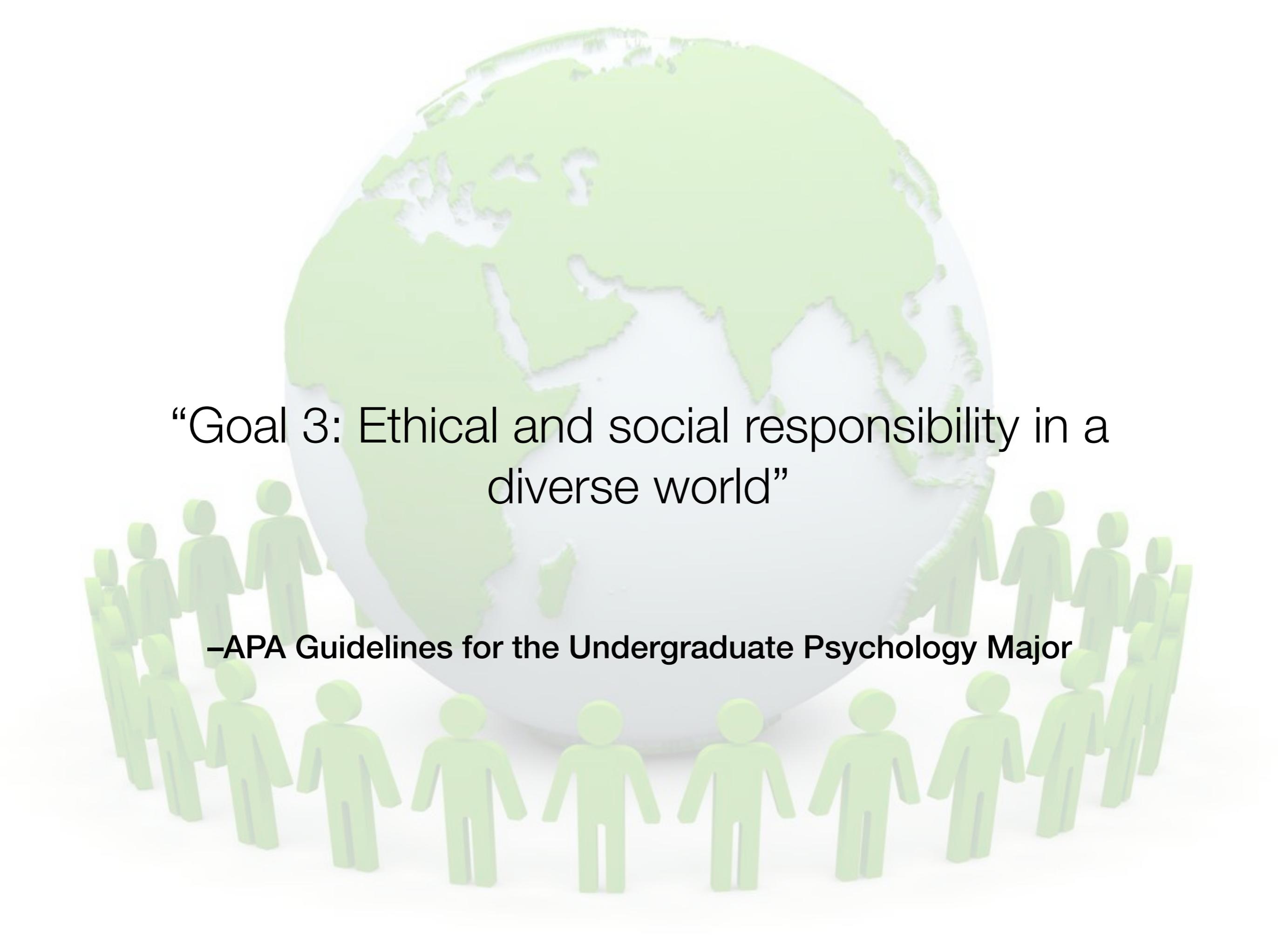


*and lecture notes*



“Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice.”

–Kurt Lewin



“Goal 3: Ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world”

**–APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major**

What Do You Think Of When You Hear “Intro  
Psych?”

# Intro Psych: A Balancing Act of Epic Proportions

---

- Students (possibly 200+) from a wide variety of majors...
- ...from first-years to seniors...
- ...with a wide variety of motivations for taking the course...
- ...and ALL. THAT. MATERIAL.



# Low Effort/High Impact Techniques for Intro Psych

---

- Integrating activism into your existing curriculum
  - Applied examples of course content
  - Sharing formal opportunities for extracurricular and co-curricular advocacy
- Employing modeling and storytelling as pedagogy
- Inclusive/equitable course design



Let's Get into Some Applied Examples!

# Operant Conditioning

---

	<b>Reinforcement (PROMOTES BEHAVIOR)</b>	<b>Punishment (DISCOURAGES BEHAVIOR)</b>
<b>Positive (GIVING SOMETHING)</b>		
<b>Negative (TAKING SOMETHING)</b>		

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# What Is Operant Conditioning? (and How Does It Explain Driving Dogs?)

By Jason G. Goldman on December 13, 2012



# Dogs sniff out ovarian cancer in new study

BY KATHY MATHESON



Jonathan Ball rewards Tsunami with play in the first round of training for a study that will eventually involve detecting cancerous tissue at Penn Vet Working Dog Center in Philadelphia. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

# Dogs Sniff Out Prostate Cancer

BY MAGGIE FOX



Dogs can be trained to sniff out organic compounds tied to prostate cancer, according to a new study that finds they're 98 percent accurate.

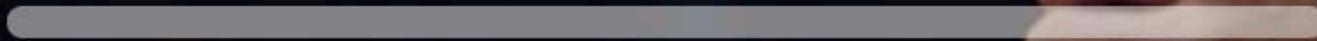
SURVIVAL

# Giant Rats Sniff Out Land Mines

FEB 27, 2013 06:03 PM ET // BY PAUL HELTZEL



In Mozambique, a crack troop of Mine Detection Rats (MDRs) has cleared more than 6 million square miles of hidden explosives.



11:56



**608,892**

Views



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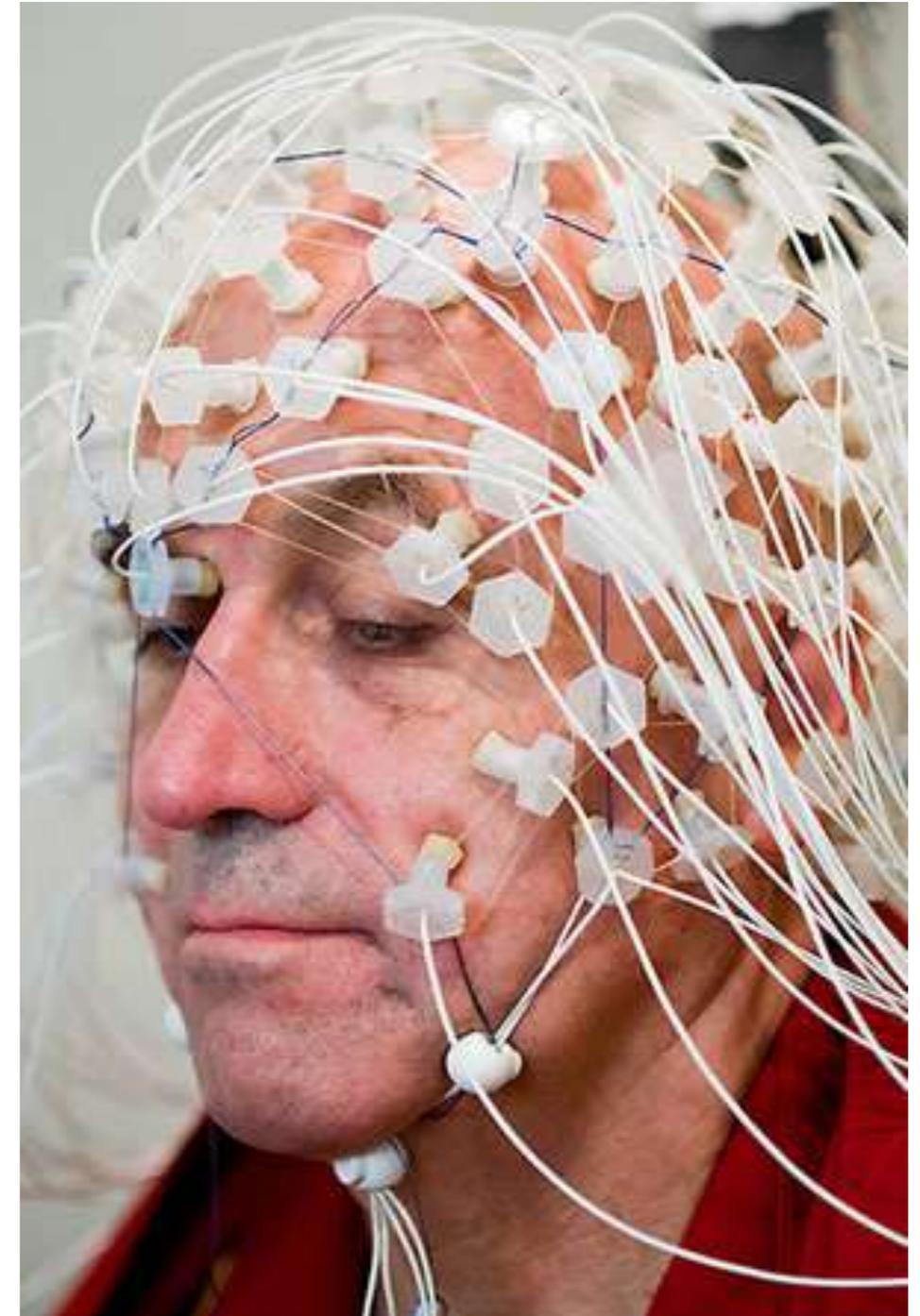
Bart Weetjens · TEDxRotterdam 2010

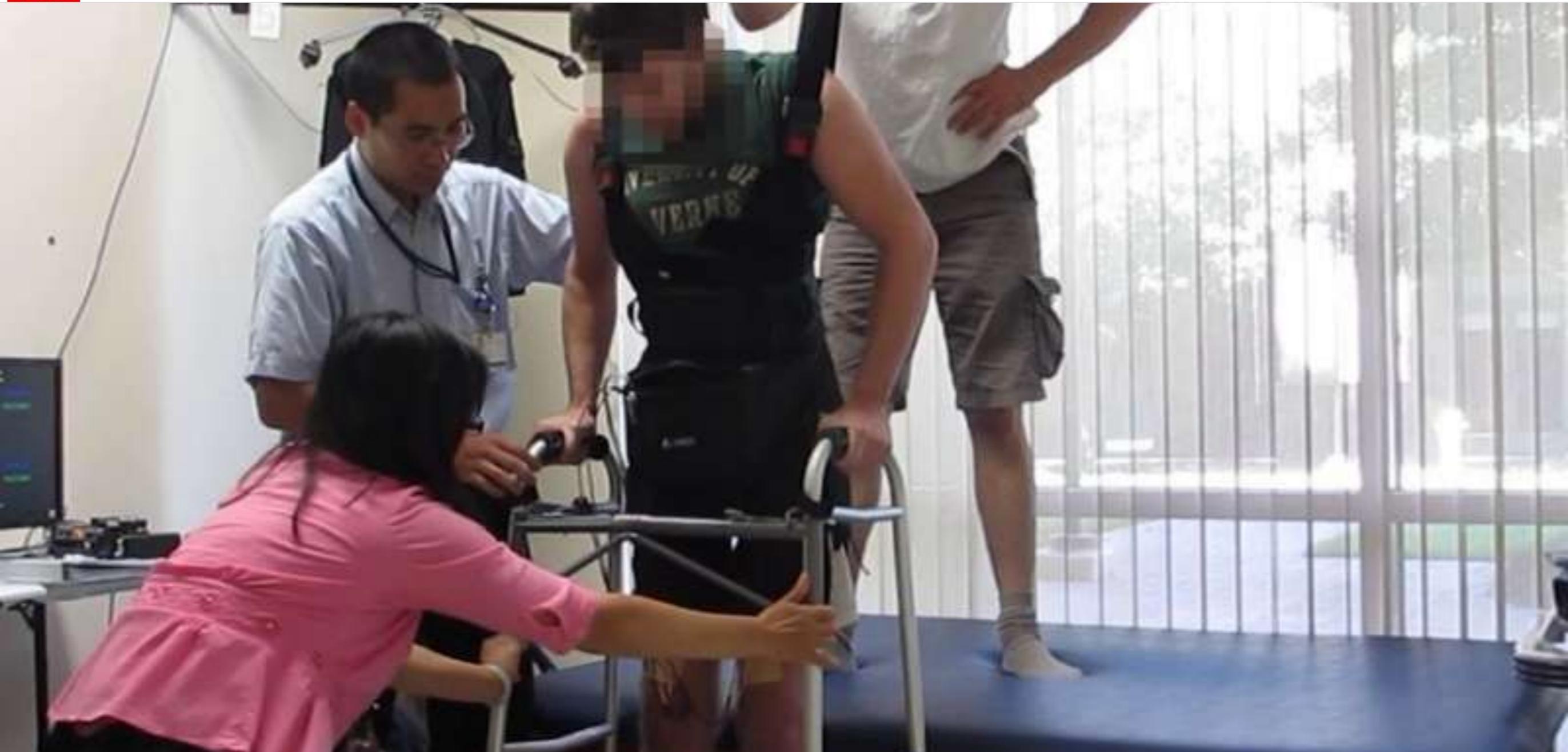
# How I taught rats to sniff out land mines

# Measuring Electrical Currents

---

- **EEG:** Records the waves of electrical activity via scalp electrodes
  - Electroencephalography
- **MEG:** Records the magnetic fields produced by the brain's electrical currents
  - Magnetoencephalography





**INCREDIBLE** 09.23.15 7:10 PM ET



CHARLOTTE  
LYTTON



# Paralyzed Man Walks Using Brain Power

Using an EEG, virtual reality, and physical therapy, researchers at UC Irvine helped a paraplegic man walk again.



## Coming Soon: Artificial Limbs Controlled by Thoughts

The idea that paralyzed people might one day control their limbs just by thinking is no longer a Hollywood-style fantasy

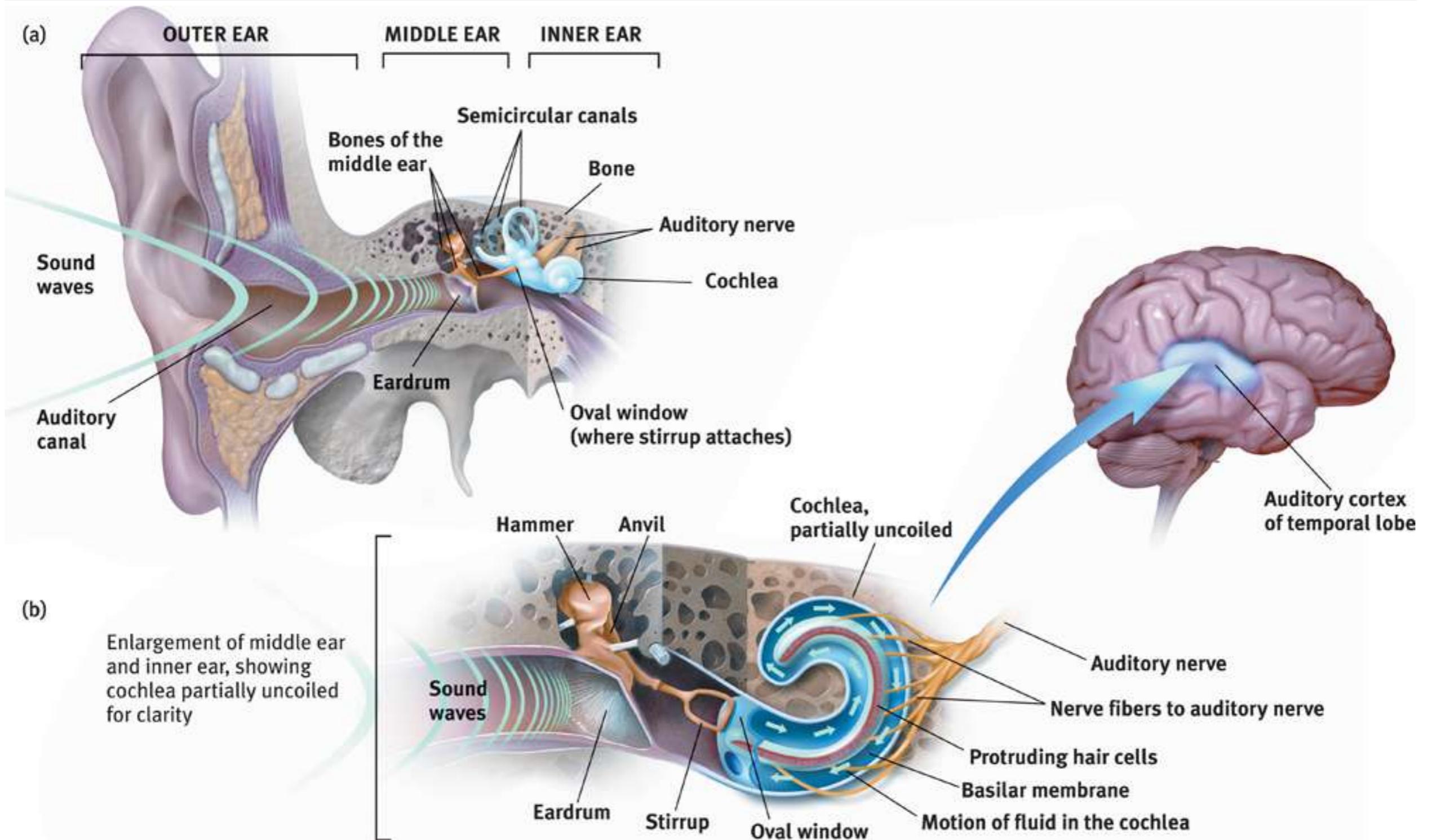
By Miguel A. L. Nicolelis

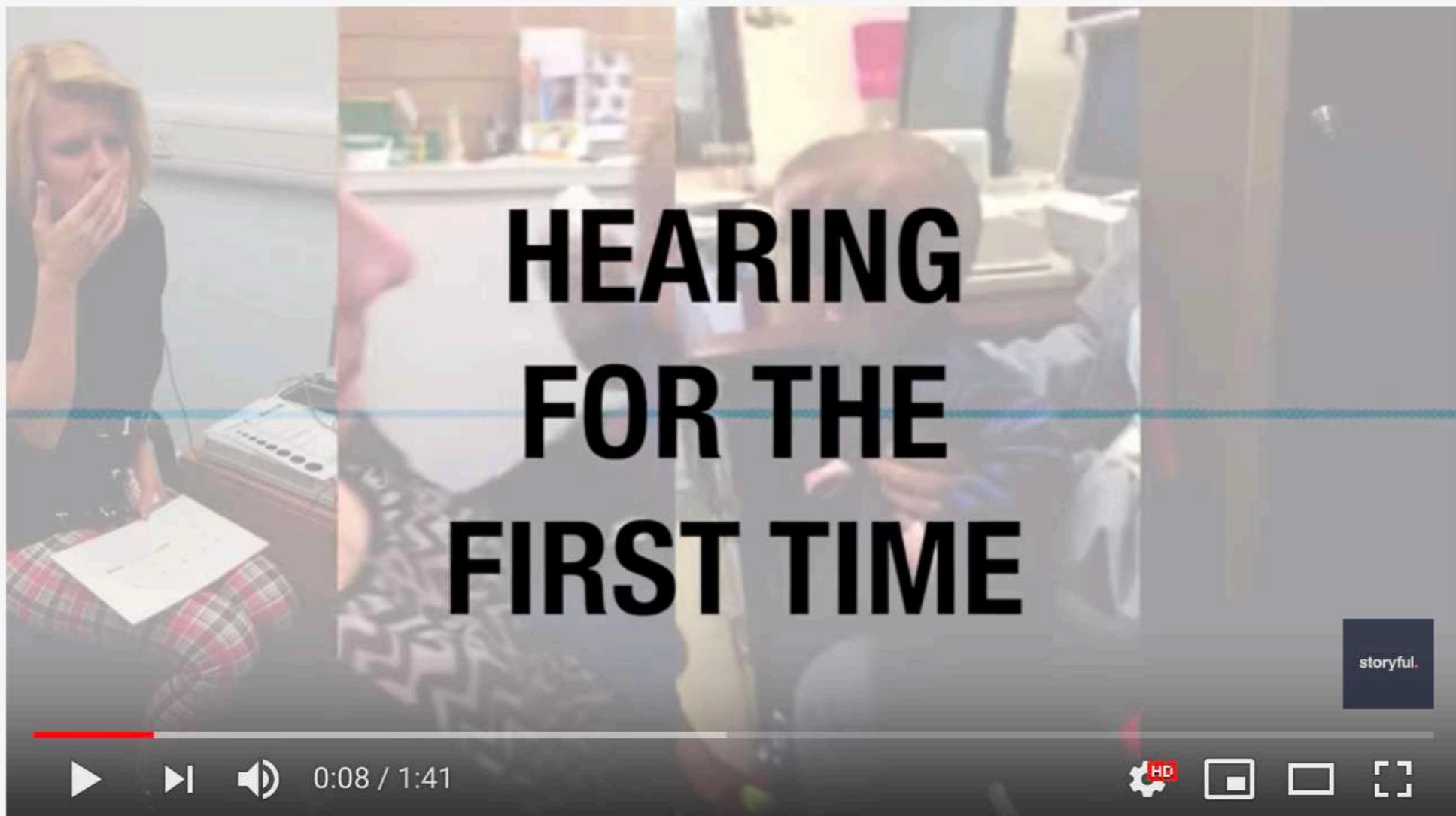
In 2014 billions of viewers worldwide may remember the opening game of the World Cup in Brazil for more than just the goals scored by the Brazilian national team and the red cards given to its adversary. On that day my laboratory at Duke University, which specializes in developing technologies that allow electrical signals from the brain to control robotic limbs, plans to mark a milestone in overcoming paralysis.

If we succeed in meeting still formidable challenges, the first ceremonial kick of the World Cup game may be made by a paralyzed teenager, who, flanked by the two contending soccer teams, will saunter onto the pitch clad in a robotic body suit.

[Pin it](#)

# The Ear





## Deaf People Hearing For the First Time

24,539 views • Jul 4, 2018

👍 257

💬 9

➦ SHARE

≡+ SAVE



**Storyful** ✓  
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**SUBSCRIBE**

MAR 28, 2014 6:18PM ET / POLITICS

# Why You Shouldn't Share Those Emotional 'Deaf Person Hears for the First Time' Videos

LILIT MARCUS

336,313 VIEWS



## Understanding Deafness: Not Everyone Wants to Be 'Fixed'

Hearing people often assume that Deaf people would naturally want to take advantage of any method that could lead them to the hearing world – especially cochlear implants, the most advanced hearing technology we have. In reality, that assumption is far from true.

ALLEGRA RINGO | AUG 9 2013, 10:16 AM ET

809

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bjornknetsch/flickr

## IS WALKING OVERRATED?

by [Lisa Wade, PhD](#), Jun 16, 2014, at 09:00 am

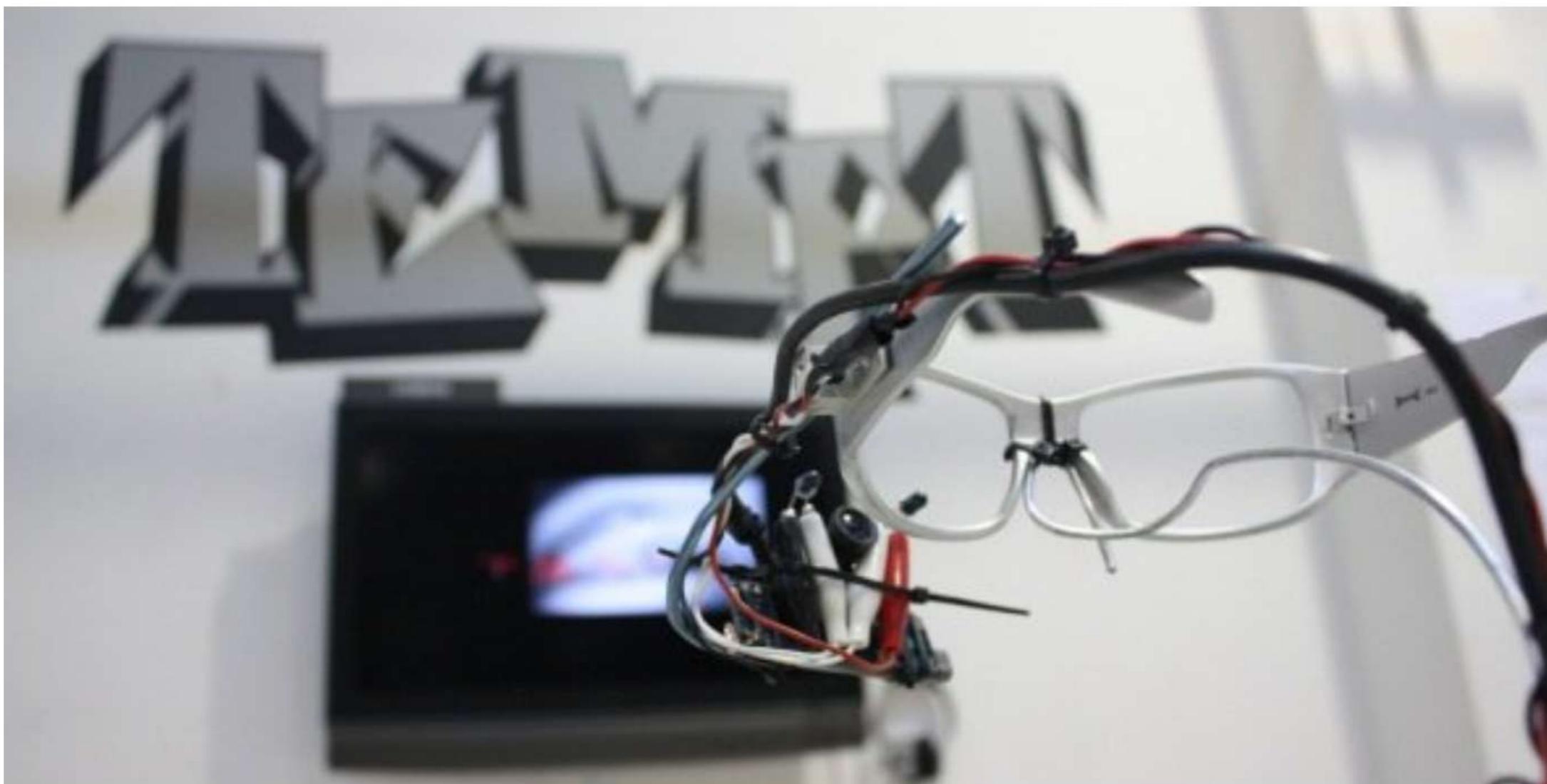
A few days ago, Juliano Pinto [kicked off](#) the World Cup with a first kick. It was a media stunt designed to make us verklempt. Pinto is a paraplegic who wore a mind-controlled robotic exoskeleton to make his move.



We were to be awed by the technology, too, of course, which is being developed by the [Walk Again Project](#), a scientific consortium. [Says](#) the leading scientist on the project, "With enough political will and investment, we could make wheelchairs obsolete."

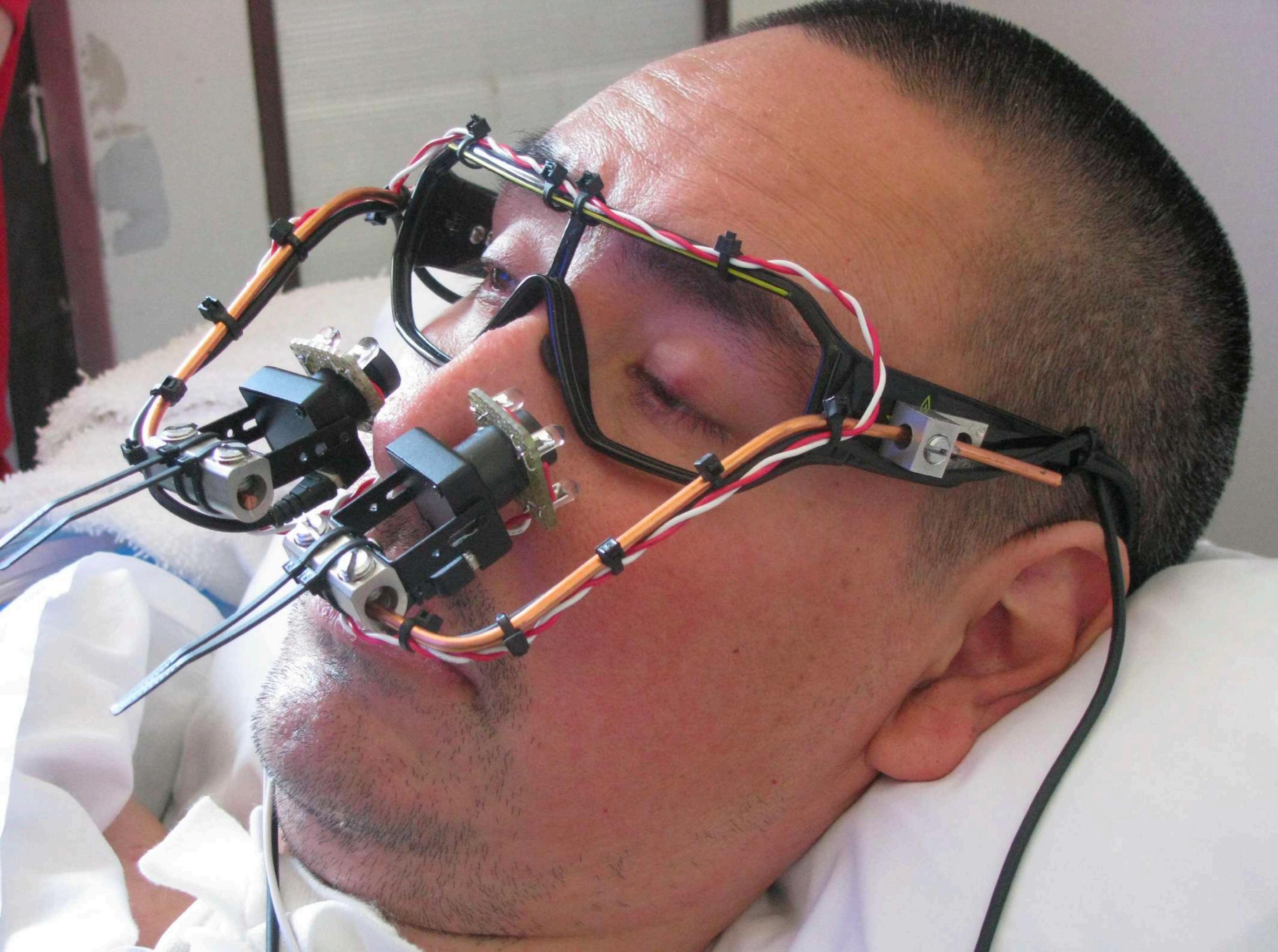
[Red Nicholson](#) [isn't having it](#).

# EyeWriter: Eyetracking Device Empowers Paralyzed Graffiti Artist



## MARIA POPOVA

Maria Popova is a reader and a writer, and writes about what she reads on *Brain Pickings* ([brainpickings.org](http://brainpickings.org)), which is included in the Library of Congress archive of culturally valuable materials. She has also written for *The New York Times*, *Wired UK*, and *The Atlantic*, among others, and is an MIT Fellow. She is on Twitter [@brainpicker](https://twitter.com/brainpicker).





**1,037,583**  
Views

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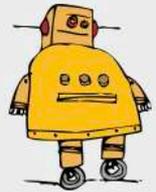
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Mick Ebeling · TEDActive 2011

# The invention that unlocked a locked-in artist





# The EyeWriter 2.0

By thesystemis in Workshop > Science 432,539 616 253 Featured



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3 More Images

The EyeWriter is a low-cost eye-tracking apparatus + custom software that allows graffiti writers and artists with paralysis resulting from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis to draw using only their eyes.



**3,091,845**  
Views

- Add
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Stella Young · TEDxSydney

## **I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much**

## PRO-TIP

Don't tell students what or how to think.

Instead, invite them to consider issues, perspectives, etc. that they might not have been exposed to beforehand.

# Belief in a Just World

---

- The world is a fundamentally good and just place
- People get what they deserve and deserve what they get
- Good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people
- If a bad thing happens to you, then...



# Belief in a Just World

---

- How do people cope with threats to their belief in a just world?
- Derogate and/or blame the victim
- Make excuses for and/or humanize the perpetrator



“He was no angel, with public records and interviews with friends and family revealing both problems and promise in his young life. He lived in a community that had rough patches, and he dabbled in drugs and alcohol. He had taken to rapping in recent months, producing lyrics that were by turns contemplative and vulgar. He got into at least one scuffle with a neighbor.”

**—*The New York Times***



“People familiar with his early years say he was a Boy Scout, a B-plus college student; he loved children, read poetry, and was a rising figure in Republican politics in Seattle... He was the assistant director of the Seattle Crime Prevention Advisory Commission and wrote a pamphlet for women on rape prevention.”

**—*The New York Times***

# WANTED BY THE FBI

INTERSTATE FLIGHT - MURDER



**THEODORE ROBERT BUNDY**

## DESCRIPTION

Member of the FBI, Burlington, Vermont (not reported by birth records). Height 5'11" to  
weight, 145 to 155 pounds; Build, slender, athletic; Hair, dark brown, collar length; Eyes, blue-  
green, pale yellow; Skin, white; Nationality, American; Occupations, lobbyist, lobbyist,  
a lawyer, debater, writer, law school student, office worker, political campaign worker,  
editor, travel worker, salesman, security guard. Served in Korea, 1952-54, 1955-56, 1957-58.



**THEODORE ROBERT BUNDY**

# PRO-TIPS

The content comes first  
(both literally and figuratively).

Make the connection airtight.

Keep the lede buried for as  
long as possible.



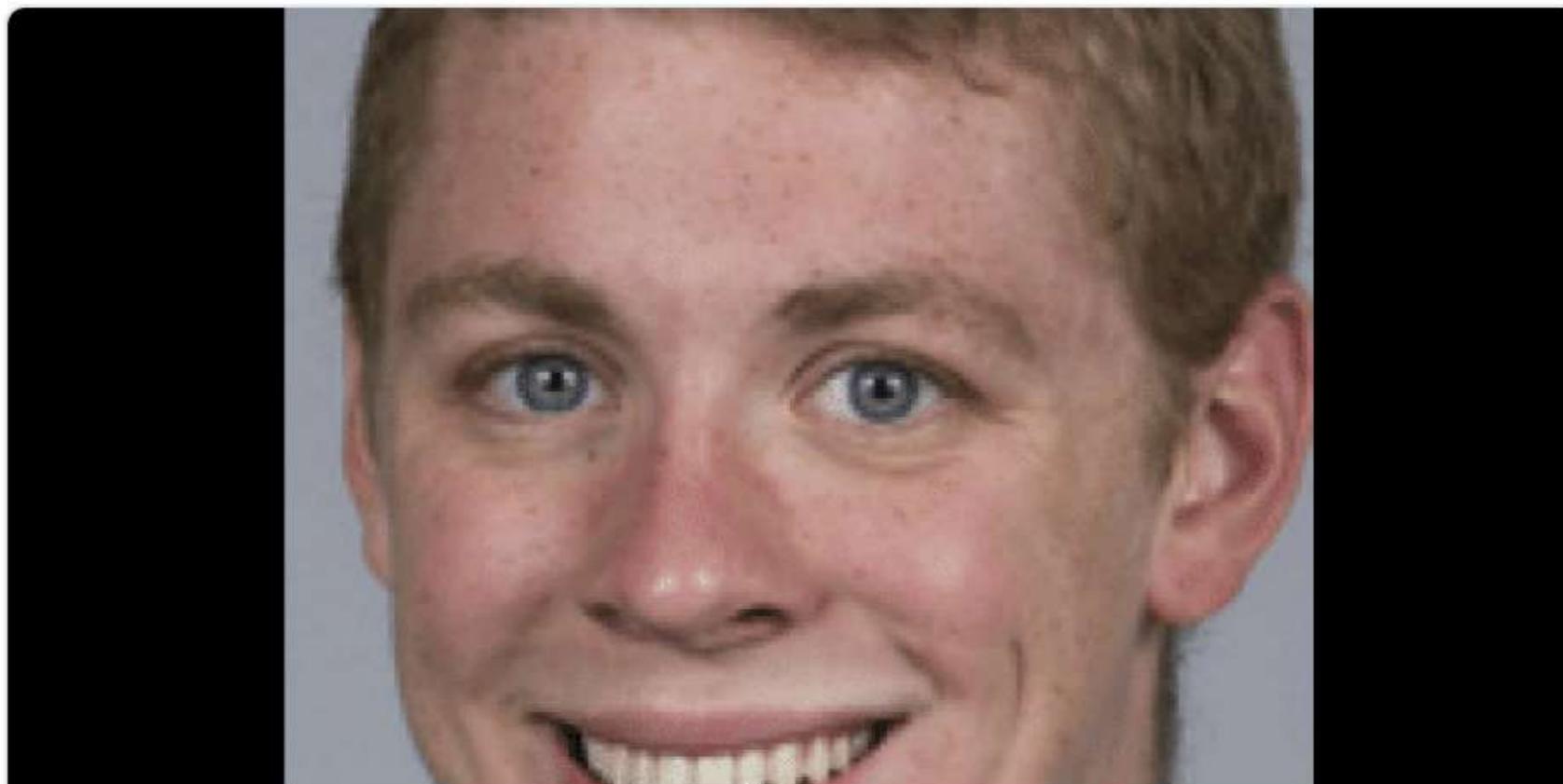
Washington Post 

@washingtonpost

 Follow

All-American swimmer found guilty of sexually assaulting unconscious woman on Stanford campus [wapo.st/1RN06FM](https://wapo.st/1RN06FM)

10:03 AM - 31 Mar 2016



**All-American swimmer found guilty of sexually assaulting unc...**

Prosecutors called Brock Turner a "predator" and the "face of campus sexual assault." But his defense attorney said Turner was

[washingtonpost.com](https://washingtonpost.com)

  103  68



**Lauren** 🎃 🍁 🍂 🕸 🕷 👻 ✓  
@LaurenDeStefano



 **Follow**

if someone's a rapist and an athlete, they're not an athlete who made a mistake, they're a criminal who can also swim.

RETWEETS  
**42,527**

LIKES  
**56,025**



1:40 PM - 5 Jun 2016



 43K

 56K



How old are you? · How much do you weigh? · What did you eat that day? · Well what did you have for dinner? · Who made dinner? · Did you drink with dinner? · No, not even water? · When did you drink? · How much did you drink? · What container did you drink out of? · Who gave you the drink? · How much do you usually drink? · Who dropped you off at this party? · At what time? · But where exactly? · What were you wearing? · Why were you going to this party? · What'd you do when you got there? · Are you sure you did that? · But what time did you do that? · What does this text mean? · Who were you texting? · When did you urinate? · Where did you urinate? · With whom did you urinate outside? · Was your phone on silent when your sister called? · Do you remember silencing it? · Really because on page 53 I'd like to point out that you said it was set to ring. · Did you drink in college? · You said you were a party animal? · How many times did you black out? · Did you party at frats? · Are you serious with your boyfriend? · Are you sexually active with him? · When did you start dating? · Would you ever cheat? · Do you have a history of cheating? · What do you mean when you said you wanted to reward him? · Do you remember what time you woke up? · Were you wearing your cardigan? · What color was your cardigan? · Do you remember any more from that night? · No? · Okay, well, we'll let Brock fill it in.



# PRO-TIPS

When talking about heavier issues, end on a “positive” note whenever possible.

Recognize that many of your students have been personally affected by these issues.



Grade Point

# What a massive sexual assault survey found at 27 top U.S. universities

By [Nick Anderson](#) and [Susan Svrluga](#) September 21, 2015





**Sam Shepard**

@SamLShep



5 yrs ago, I asked my prof if I could reschedule my final exam. I explained to her I was getting a restraining order against my abuser who was stalking me and he knew where/when my class was.

She still said no 🙄 I guess my point is... please have empathy for undergraduates.

7:45 PM · Dec 20, 2019 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

---

**11.1K** Retweets   **84.1K** Likes



**Jacob Slichter**

@portablephiloso



Replying to [@SamLShep](#)

Thank you for this (and so sorry this happened)! I never cease to be amazed by how some profs think their job is to prepare students for the world by replicating all of the world's cruelty. Might our job be something else: to help them build a less cruel world?

11:48 AM · Dec 21, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)

# PRO-TIPS

Design your course with flexibility in mind. Include built-in “life happens” policies.

Know your school’s student support resources and make 🙌 those 🙌 referrals 🙌

## LATE/MISSED WORK POLICY

---

Because dropped grades are built into the design of this course and because all due dates are provided at the beginning of the semester, extensions and makeup exams will only be granted under specific circumstances. Just come talk to me if any of these apply to you.

### MISSING WORK FOR THESE REASONS?

Medical, personal, or family emergencies  
USC-sponsored extracurricular activities  
Religious holidays or other days of conscience

**Just come talk to me!**

If you know you will have an excused absence on the day of an exam, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make alternate arrangements. If unforeseen circumstances preclude you from attending class on an exam day, please email once you are able. Makeup exams should be taken as soon as possible so that everyone will be able to review their exams during lab sessions in a timely manner. If you know you will be absent on the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for completing and submitting it on time.

Unexcused absences on exam days will result in no credit for the exam. (Remember you get one free drop out of the four exams.) Late assignments (that have not been granted an extension for one of the reasons listed above) will incur a penalty of 20% off of the maximum score for every day (or portion thereof) late, including non-class days and weekends.

**THE MORE YOU KNOW:** If life happens in such a way that you find yourself struggling to stay afloat in all of your classes, you can reach out to [Campus Support & Intervention](#) at (213) 821-4710. Among other services, they can send official notifications to your professors informing us (very broadly) that you're in need of support and flexibility.

## ACADEMIC RESOURCES

---

CAMPUS OFFICE	SERVICES	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL
<u>Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity</u>	General help with college coursework, including study skill tips, test-taking strategies, and stress management	STU 311	(213) 740-7884	kortschakcenter@usc.edu
<u>The Writing Center</u>	Specific help with writing, including free one-on-one consultations	THH 216	(213) 740-3691	writing@usc.edu
<u>American Language Institute</u>	Credit-granting courses, one-on-one tutoring, and free informal conversation groups for English language learners	PSD 106	(213) 740-0079	askali@usc.edu
<u>Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice</u>	Lifestyle Redesign program to help foster time management, decrease procrastination, manage stress and anxiety, etc.	ESHC 452	(323) 442-3340	otfp@med.usc.edu



**Leslie Berntsen, Contributor**

Ph.D. Candidate, Science Educator, Intersectional Feminist

# The Science Of Victim Blaming

03/20/2017 08:49 pm ET | Updated Mar 21, 2017

How can we effectively begin to convince people that victim blaming is wrong? One answer may lie in understanding why they might victim-blame in the first place.



# ARTICLES EXPLORE →

New science stories every week, written by scientists themselves



## Meet mathematician Emmy Noether, mother of the most beautiful theorem in the world [READ NOW →](#)

She worked out a kink in general relativity and kickstarted the field of abstract algebra



**Brittney Borowiec**  
Environmental Physiology  
McMaster University



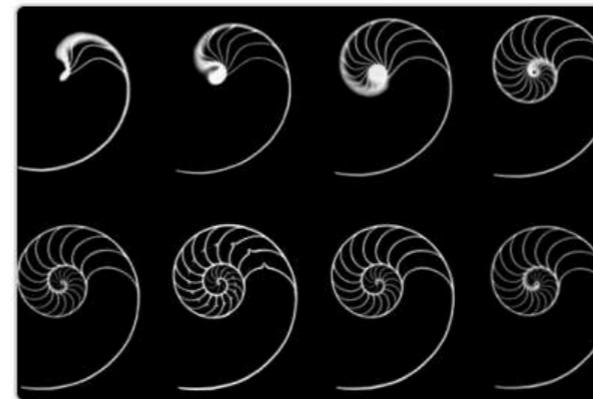
## Humans are two developmental stages away from monkeys [READ NOW →](#)

James R. Howe VI, UC San Diego



## Meet Maria Mitchell, the first American to discover a comet [READ NOW →](#)

Laetitia Meyrueix, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill



## The secret code of sea shells [READ NOW →](#)

Harini Chakravarthy, Biochemistry



## Robyn Metcalfe hits dead ends in her quest to rethink agriculture [READ NOW →](#)

Kevin Pels, The Scripps Research Institute

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Discourse](#)[Certification and  
Payment](#)

## ▼ LEARNING STORYTELLING

[Why We Teach Science  
Storytelling](#)[Storytelling 101](#)[Storytelling formats](#)

# Why We Teach Science Storytelling

Last updated  
April 5, 2019

A significant portion of the American public trusts scientists, and have consistently across the decades. But this trust isn't translating into actual understanding. There are huge gaps in how scientists and non-scientists in the country understand major scientific topics like GMOs and climate change.

Part of the problem is that most people get their information, including science information, from reading or watching news stories – increasingly online. They consume news this way even though they don't trust journalists.

When they do hear from scientists, it's usually in the form of logical-scientific argumentation, because that's how scientists are trained to communicate. Unfortunately, most people aren't used to thinking this way. Most of the public receives most of their information as stories. This makes sense, because narratives have a larger impact on our brains than rote information-sharing and are better at transmitting information and persuading, particularly online.

## ▼ QUICK LINKS

-  [Discourse Forum](#)
-  [GatherContent](#)
-  [Kalo](#)

## ▼ JOINING THE COMMUNITY

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Community Engagement Guidelines](#)
-  [Getting started with Discourse](#)
-  [Certification and Payment](#)

## ▼ LEARNING STORYTELLING

- [Why We Teach Science Storytelling](#)
-  [Storytelling 101](#)

[Storytelling formats](#)

# Storytelling formats

Last updated  
February 14, 2018

Here are an array of different formats that your work may potentially take. If you have an idea or a story but are feeling stumped about the best way to tell it, have a look through this list. You may even want to include a proposed format with [your pitch](#).

## The list:

### Research paper translation article

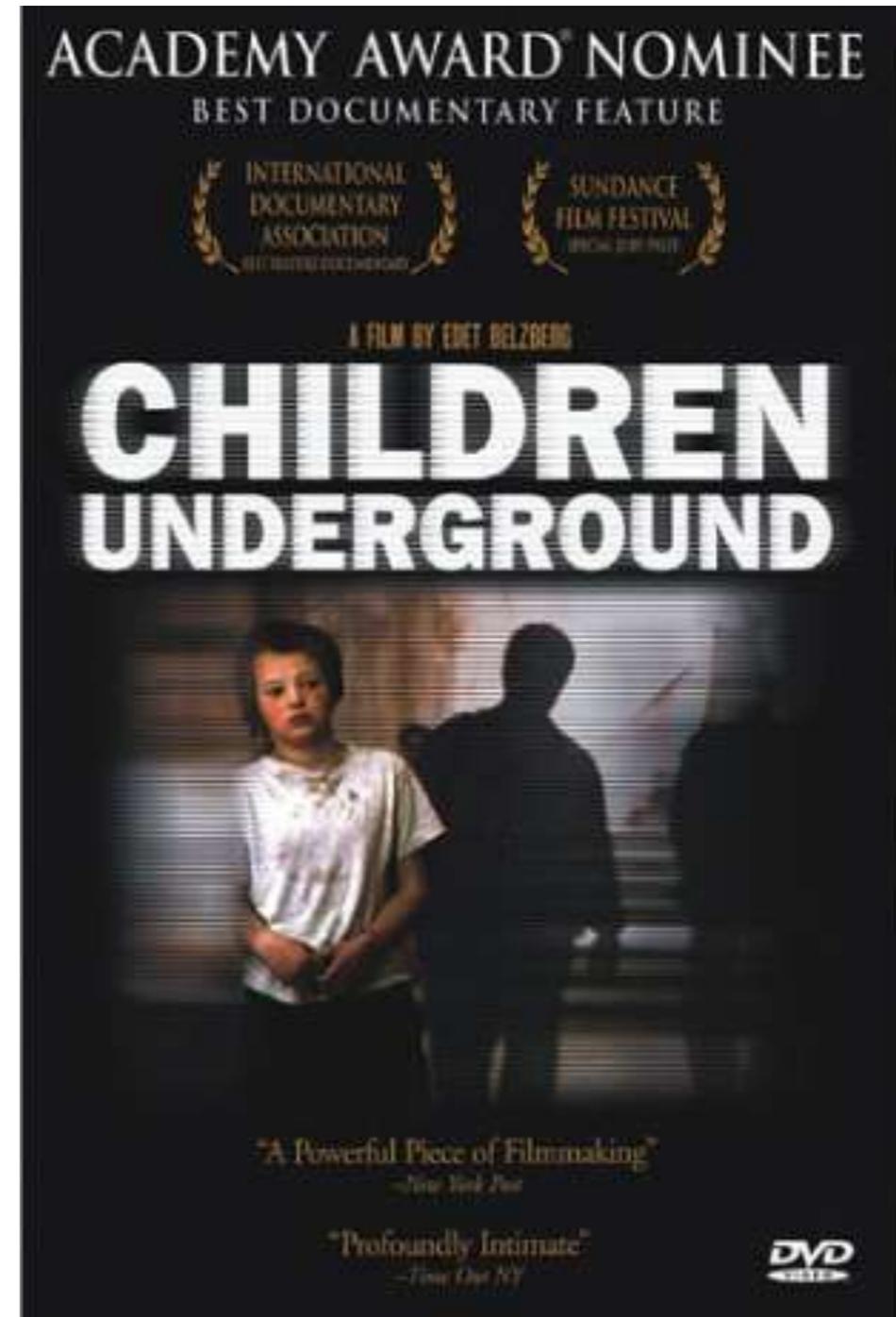
This is the foundation of Massive's writing training. The template you'd use is [here](#), and here are a [few great examples](#) of pieces.

### Op-Ed

This is step two for those participating in a Massive training group. The template you'd use is [here](#), and here are [some fabulous examples](#).

# Lack of Attachment

---



# Immigrant Children Who Are Forcibly Separated From Their Parents Face Long-Term Trauma

"This is an extremely high price for these children to pay who have done nothing wrong," said a child health expert.



**Dan Vergano**  
BuzzFeed News Reporter



Reporting From  
**Washington, DC**

Posted on June 15, 2018, at 6:14 p.m. ET





SCIENCE OF US | JUNE 7, 2018

# The Psychological Effects of Being Separated From Your Child

By Cari Romm





WHAT WE DO WHO WE ARE HOW TO HELP VOLUNTEER

**DONATE**

# Volunteer



**Make a difference in the life of an unaccompanied immigrant child by volunteering to serve as a Child Advocate in Chicago, Houston, San Antonio, Harlingen, Phoenix, Los Angeles, New York, or Washington, D.C.**

# PRO-TIPS

Draw distinctions between data-driven conclusions and value judgments.

Help your students develop this (very valuable) skill.

# Quiz: How well can you tell factual from opinion statements?



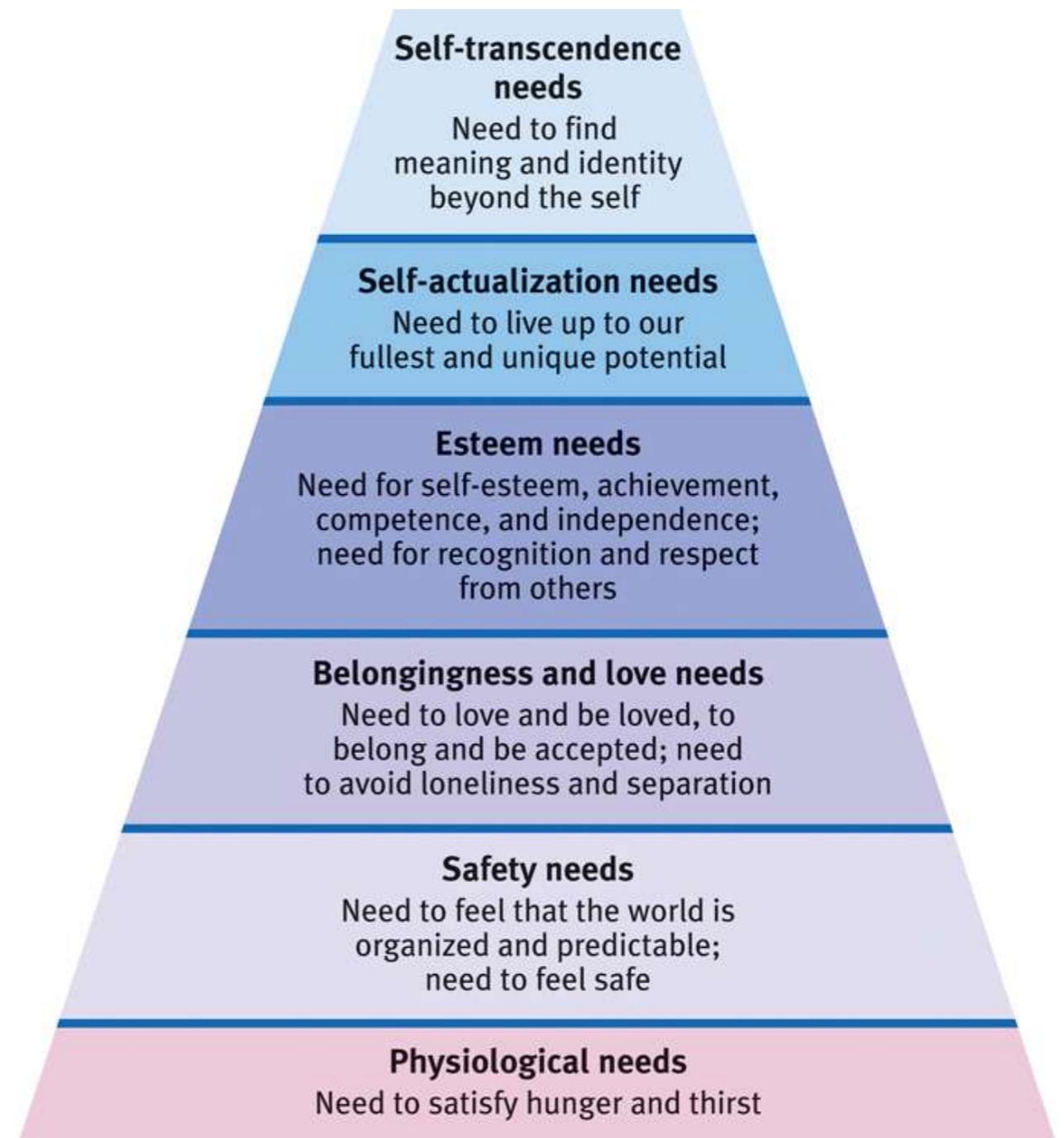
**Can you tell the difference between factual and opinion news statements?**

NEXT

# The Need to Belong

---

- Social support is associated with more positive health outcomes (both “physical” and “mental”), including a longer life expectancy
- Social ostracism (whether real or virtual) takes a notable toll
  - Activates the same brain regions that process physical pain



## DAY OF SILENCE

[About](#) [Register](#) [How to Participate](#) [Break the Silence](#) [Shop](#) [FAQ](#) [Legal Help](#) [Endorsers](#)

GLSEN<sup>®</sup>  
DAY of SILENCE<sup>™</sup>

# How will you break the silence?



GLSEN's Day of Silence, on April 12th 2019, is a student-led national event where folks take a vow of silence to highlight the silencing and erasure of LGBTQ people at school.

To start, K-12 students and educators should register their participation.

[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

OR

Cell Number

[REGISTER VIA TEXT](#)

# Assignment Logistics

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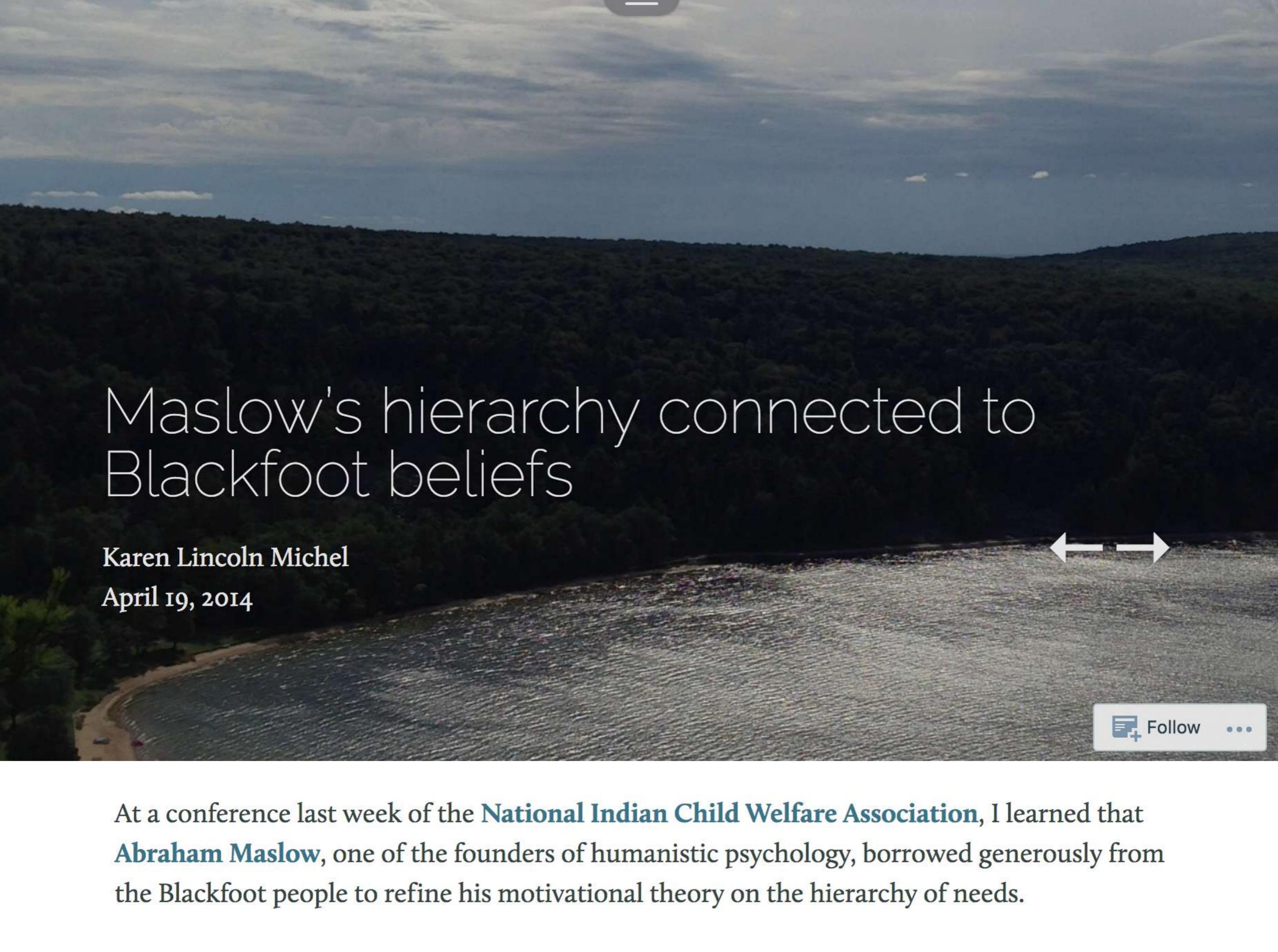
- **Task:** Refrain from speaking (and posting on social media) for an entire day
- **Prompt:** Reflect in any way that's meaningful for you.
  - What did you do over the course of the day?
  - How did you feel while not speaking?
  - How did other people react?
  - How did you feel when you starting speaking again?
  - Do you think people in your life (past or present) may experience this kind of alienation? Has this activity changed your perspective?

“What I lost in normal conversations with my friends I gained in perspective... I’m gratified that I was given the opportunity... and would never hesitate to recommend this exercise to [anyone].”

**–Occidental College undergraduate, Fall 2018**

“[This activity] changed my perspective because to a certain extent I was left without a voice and I have always taken my speech for granted... We must speak up for those around us and be more aware of these situations [and] take a closer look at how we treat those around us and change [our attitudes and habits] for the better.”

**–Summer@USC pre-college student, Summer 2016**



# Maslow's hierarchy connected to Blackfoot beliefs

Karen Lincoln Michel

April 19, 2014



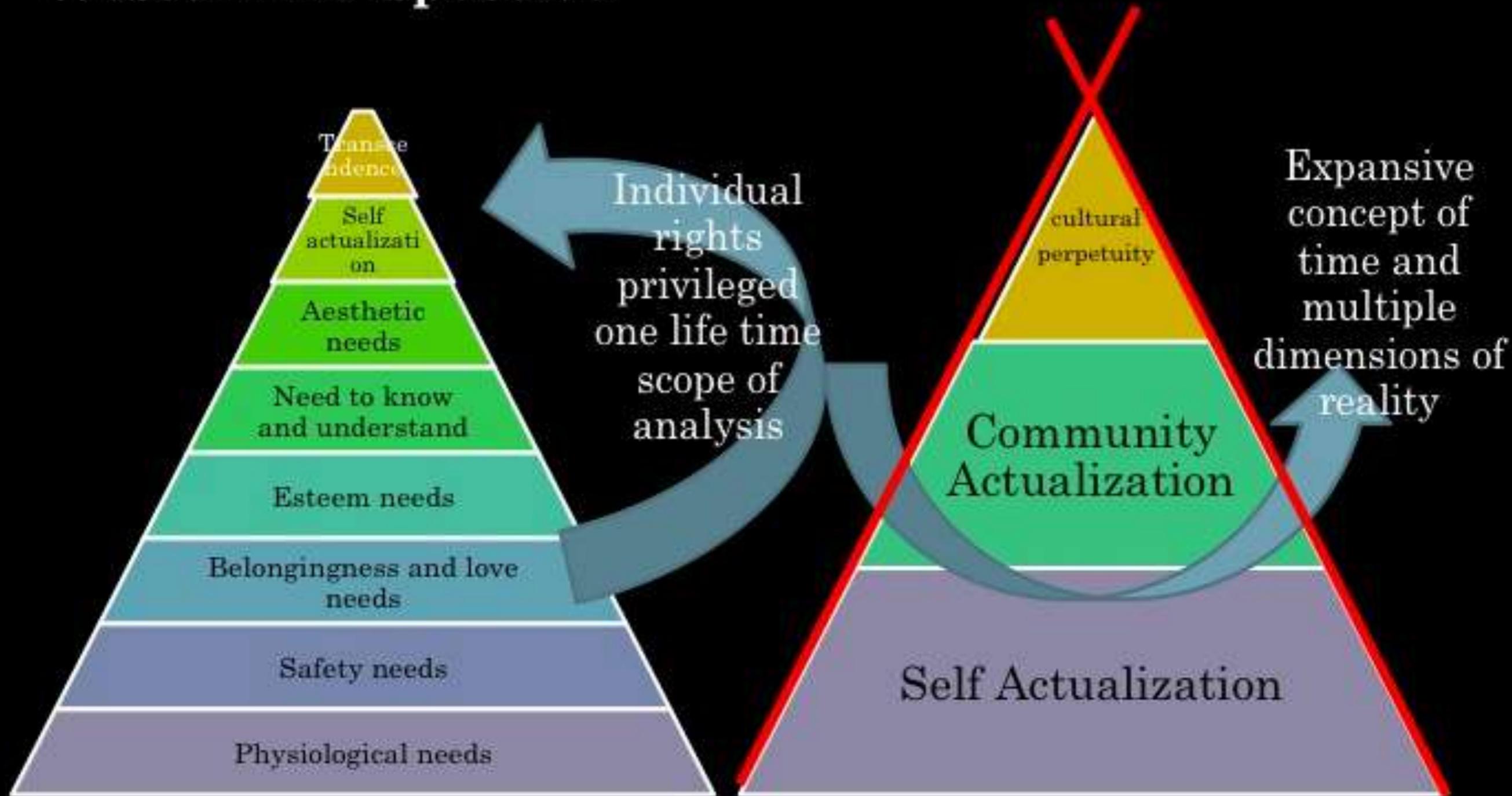
 Follow ...

At a conference last week of the **National Indian Child Welfare Association**, I learned that **Abraham Maslow**, one of the founders of humanistic psychology, borrowed generously from the Blackfoot people to refine his motivational theory on the hierarchy of needs.

# MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (INFORMED BY BLACKFOOT NATION (ALTA))

## Western Perspective

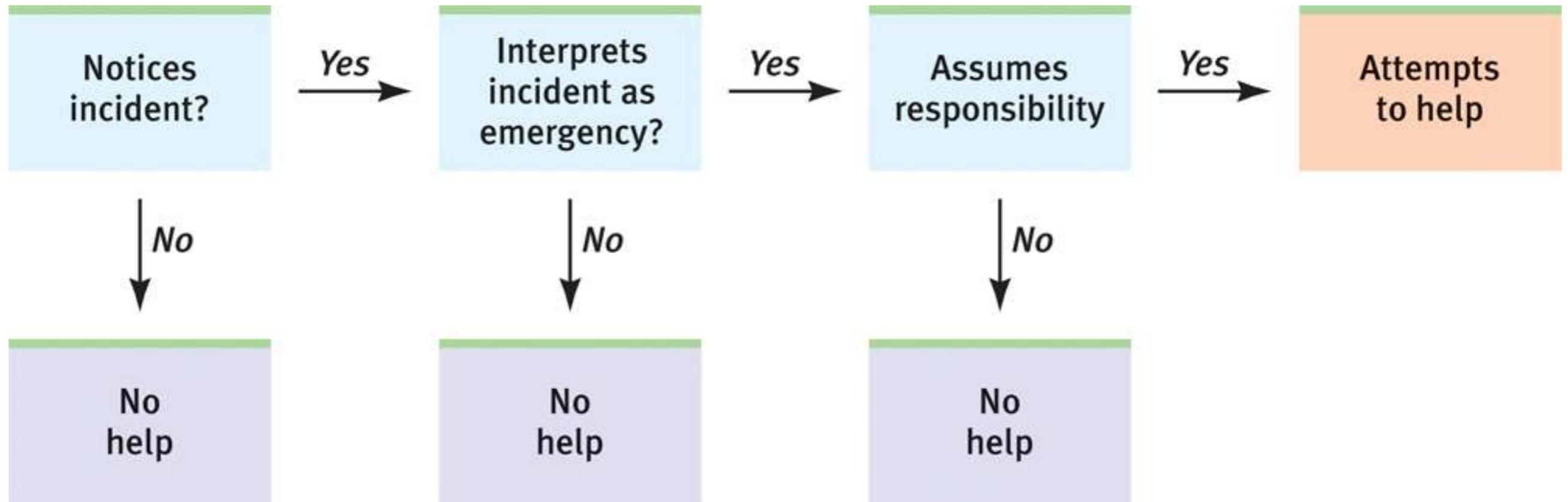
## First Nations Perspective





# Bystander Intervention Decision Tree

---



Pluralistic  
ignorance

Diffusion of  
responsibility

Direct or  
indirect

# BYSTANDER TIPS & SCENARIOS



## + You're at a party or out drinking. Someone nearby has had a lot to drink and is being harassed or manipulated by someone you think may do something physically harmful to them. What do you do?

**Identify why you're worried:** If you see something that makes you uneasy, identify the behavior that worries you. Is the person you are concerned about drinking too much, and are you afraid they might not be able to say no? Are you afraid that they won't really be capable of giving consent?

**Consider whether to intervene:** A situation doesn't have to be dangerous for you to step in. Ask yourself: How might the situation affect the people who are involved? What's the possible outcome?

**Enlist allies:** This is key. There's comfort in numbers. Enlisting allies, like a mutual friend, the bartender, party host or a bouncer can be much more productive and safer than trying to go it alone. Some ways you might handle the situation:

- Consider asking if the potential victim needs help.
- Don't leave. By remaining present as a witness, the potential perpetrator is less likely to act.
- If you know the potential perpetrator, ask the him/her to leave the potential victim alone.

**IMPORTANT: If you think intervening will put you in danger at any time, call 911 instead.**

## What to do

# if you are witnessing Islamophobic harassment

A bystander's guide to help the person who's being targeted



- 1 Engage conversation.**  
Go to them, sit beside them and say hello.  
Try to appear calm, collected and welcoming.  
**IGNORE THE ATTACKER.**



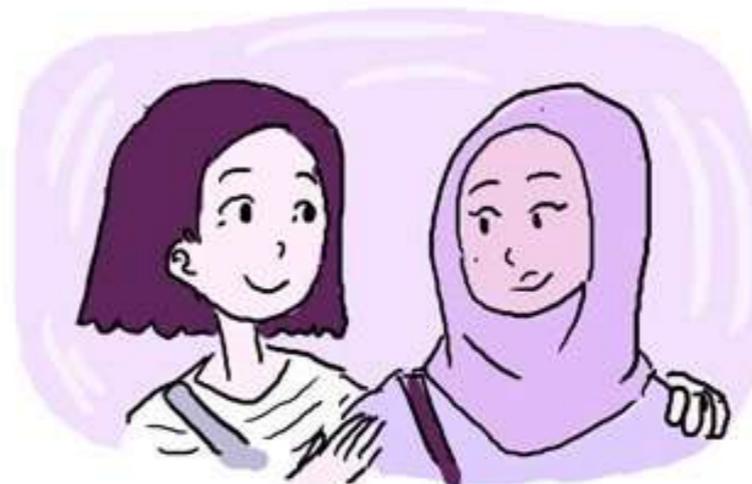
- 2 Pick a random subject and start discussing it.**  
It can be anything: a movie you liked, the weather, saying you like something they wear and asking where they got it...



- 3 Keep building the safe space.**  
Keep eye contact with them and don't acknowledge the attacker's presence: the absence of response from you two will push them to leave the area shortly.

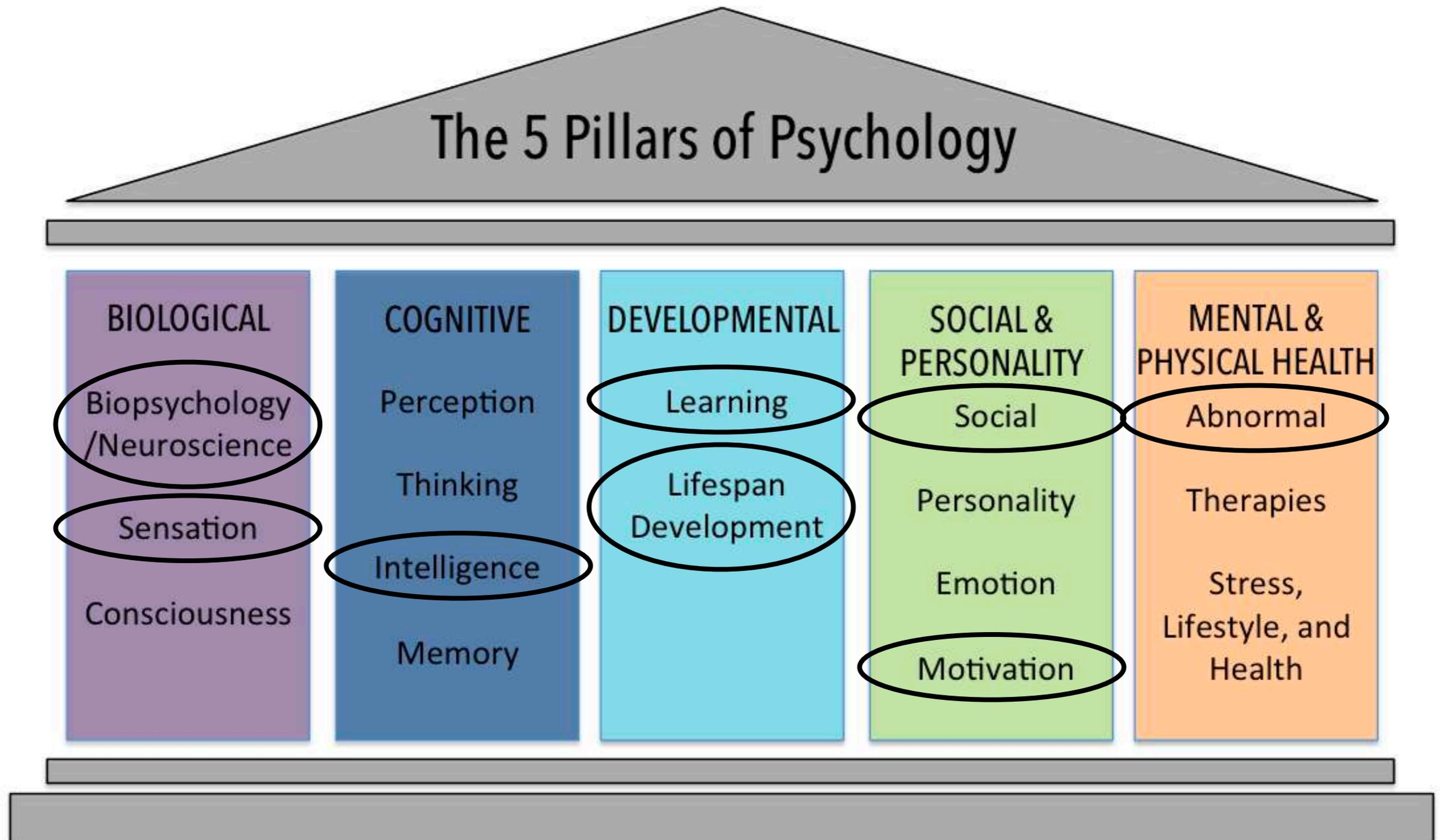


- 4 Continue the conversation until the attacker leaves & escort them to a safe place if necessary.**  
Bring them to a neutral area where they can recollect themselves; respect their wishes if they tell you they're ok and just want to go.



# Integration Across the Curriculum

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How Do People Respond?

“She brought out and openly talked about sensitive yet very real concepts like suicide, racism, sexism, and so much more. An open atmosphere allowed important discussions to be held, comfortably and insightfully.”

**–Psychological Science & Society, Summer 2017**

“I think Leslie's most outstanding strength was the respect she clearly held for not only students, but, as a lot of the material covered in this course is heavy, made certain that all of us students were respectful and informed re: these more sensitive topics.”

-Introduction to Psychology, Fall 2014

“She's easy to talk to, allows students to discuss, encourages opposing viewpoints, and incorporated pop culture and really hilarious little tidbits into discussion. I think her discussion is the only one I've ever looked forward to going to.”

**-Introduction to Psychology, Fall 2014**

“[Leslie’s strengths include]: Her interactive teaching methods. Her ability to hold an unbiased view, but still letting us know what she believes. Her ability to provide help to anyone who asks of it.”

–Psychological Science & Society, Summer 2017

# Get Involved with SPSSI: Annual Conference

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- Abstract submissions due January 5th (😬 😬 😬)
- Sign up as a reviewer through the abstract submission portal (accessible through [spssi.org](https://spssi.org))

# Get Involved with SPSSI: Teaching Awards

<b>Award</b>	<b>What's Being Recognized?</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Special Criteria</b>
NITOP Speaker Award	A person (and their talk proposal)	January 15th, 2020	
Outstanding Teaching & Mentoring Award	A person	February 15th, 2020	Need at least five years teaching experience post-Ph.D.
Teaching Grants	An event or initiative that requires funding	February 15th, 2020	
Innovative Teaching Award	A specific course, assignment, or class activity	March 1st, 2020	
Teaching Resources Prize	An assignment or class activity	September 2020	
Two-Year College Teaching & Mentoring Excellence Award	A person	November 2020	Must teach at a two-year college

# Get Involved with SPSSI: Science Policy

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- DC-based science policy fellowships for early-career scientists and graduate students
- Policy workshops and advocacy days
  - Writing op-eds, using social media to leverage social change, etc.
  - Lobbying on Capitol Hill
- Online policy webinars—no travel required!

