



Lifelong  
LEARNING

# MBA *for* EXECUTIVES

REUNION 2017

WELCOME BACK ALUMNI!

Share Your Memories #WhartonReunion



Lifelong  
LEARNING

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

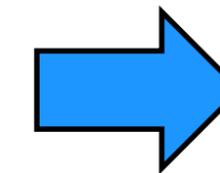
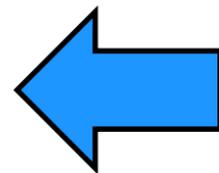
# The Mechanics of Comparisons

Maurice Schweitzer

# Tom Peterson & Steve Tazumi: Separated at Birth

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

**Owned a  
bodybuilding  
gym**



**Owned a  
bodybuilding  
gym**

**“We connected from the first time we met  
because we’re so much alike.”**

# Why do Expectant Fathers Gain Weight?



**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

# Making Sense of Our World

# Comparisons



**Inevitable**



**Up/Down**



**Social/Internal**



# When are comparisons most intense?

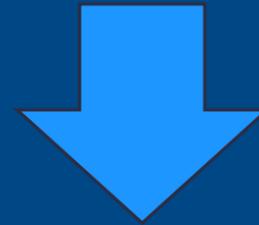
- **Similarity**
- **Proximity**
- **Self-Relevance**

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO

**REUNION**



# Social Comparisons



**Motivate**



**Compete**



**Retreat**



# Motivation

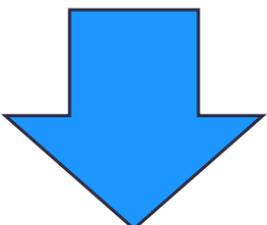
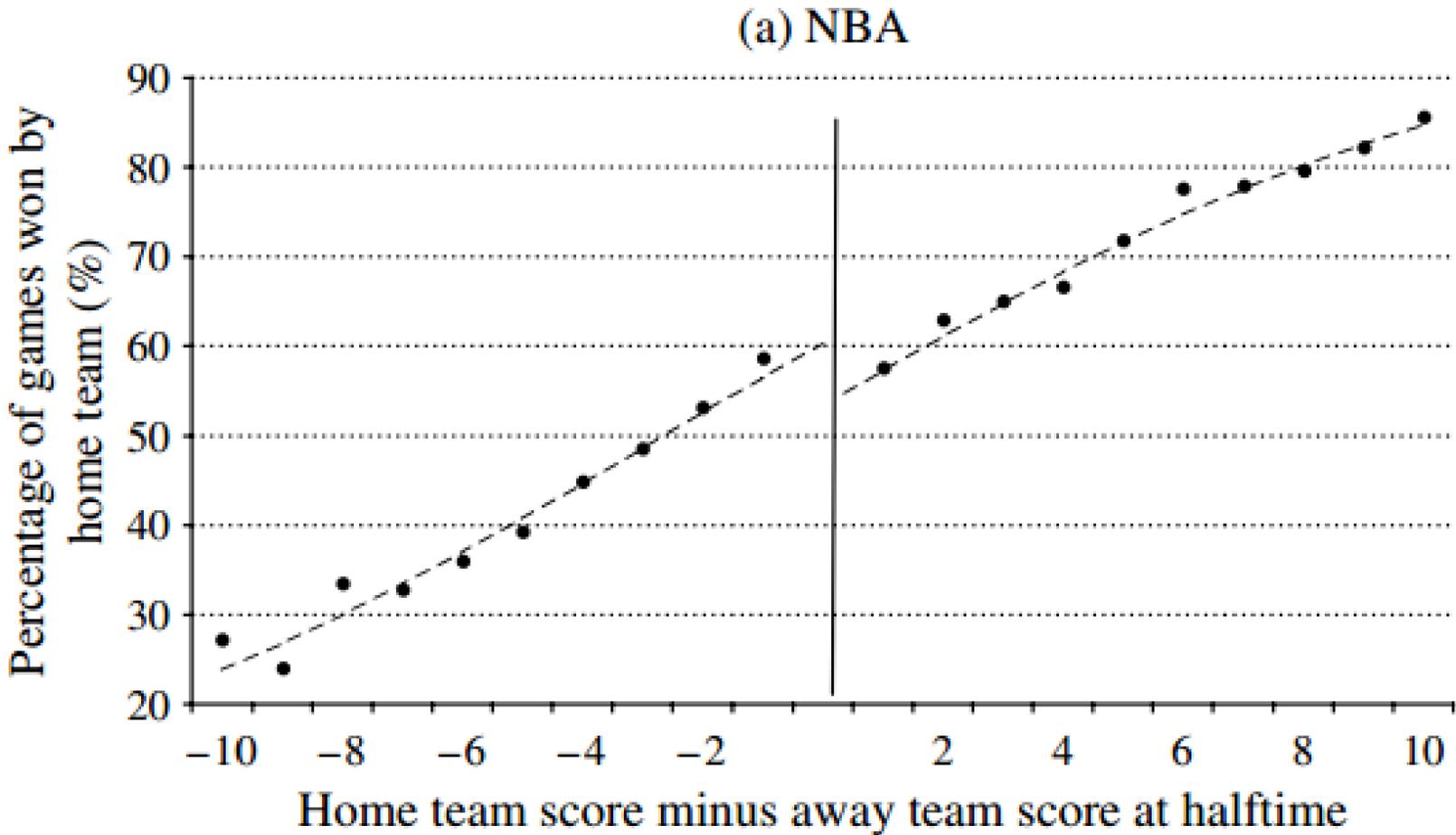
# Duke's Half-Time Blues



**MBA *for***  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

# Rallied to win 71-51

# 18,060 NBA games over 15 seasons



**Teams trailing by 1 point at halftime are *more likely* to win**

# Space Race

MBA *for*  
EXECUTIVES  
SAN FRANCISCO  
REUNION

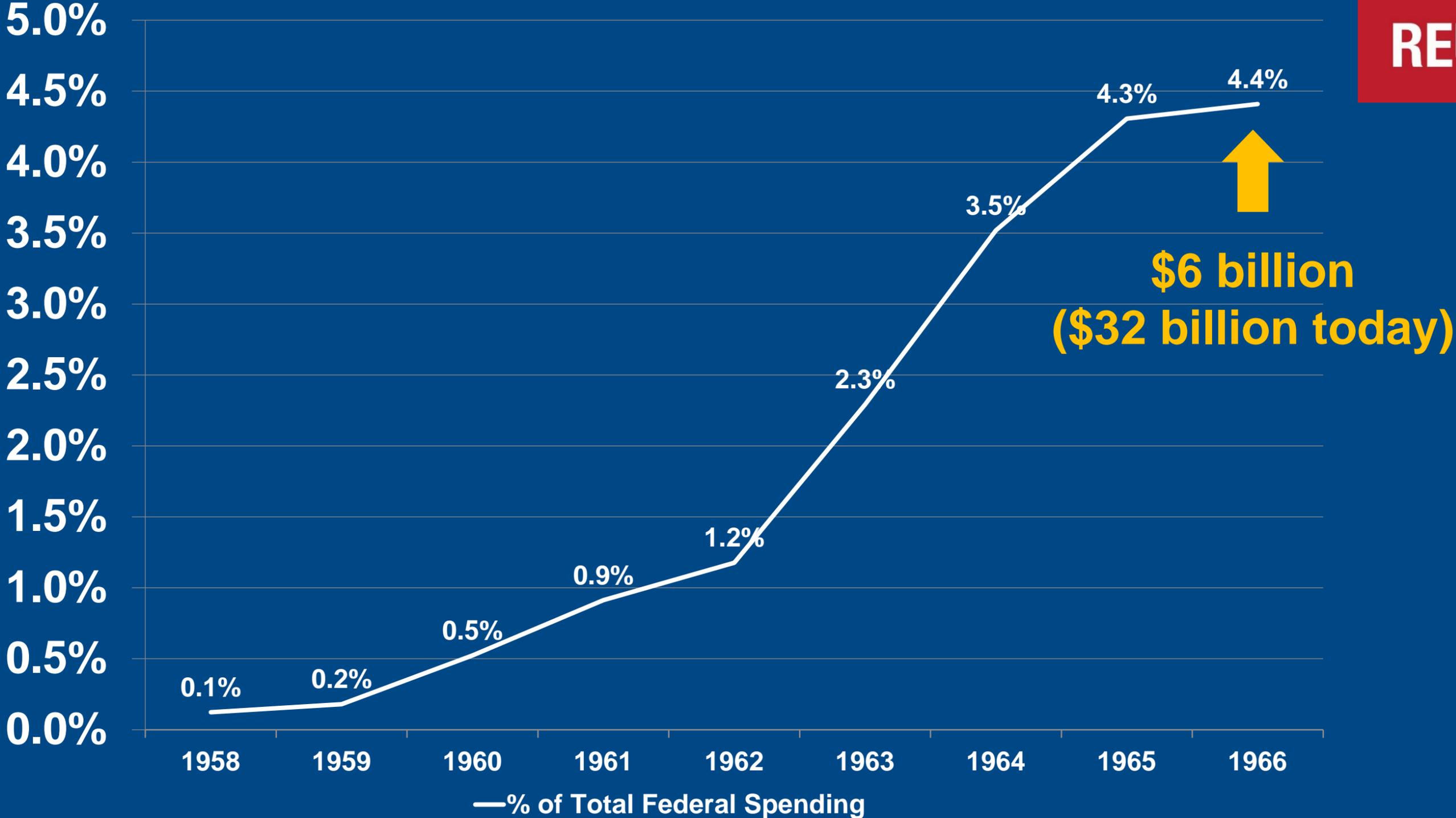


July 29, 1955.  
 “The United States will launch a science satellite to orbit Earth!”

“Sputnik Crisis”

National Defense Education Act  
 Scholarships, equipment, NARPA & NASA

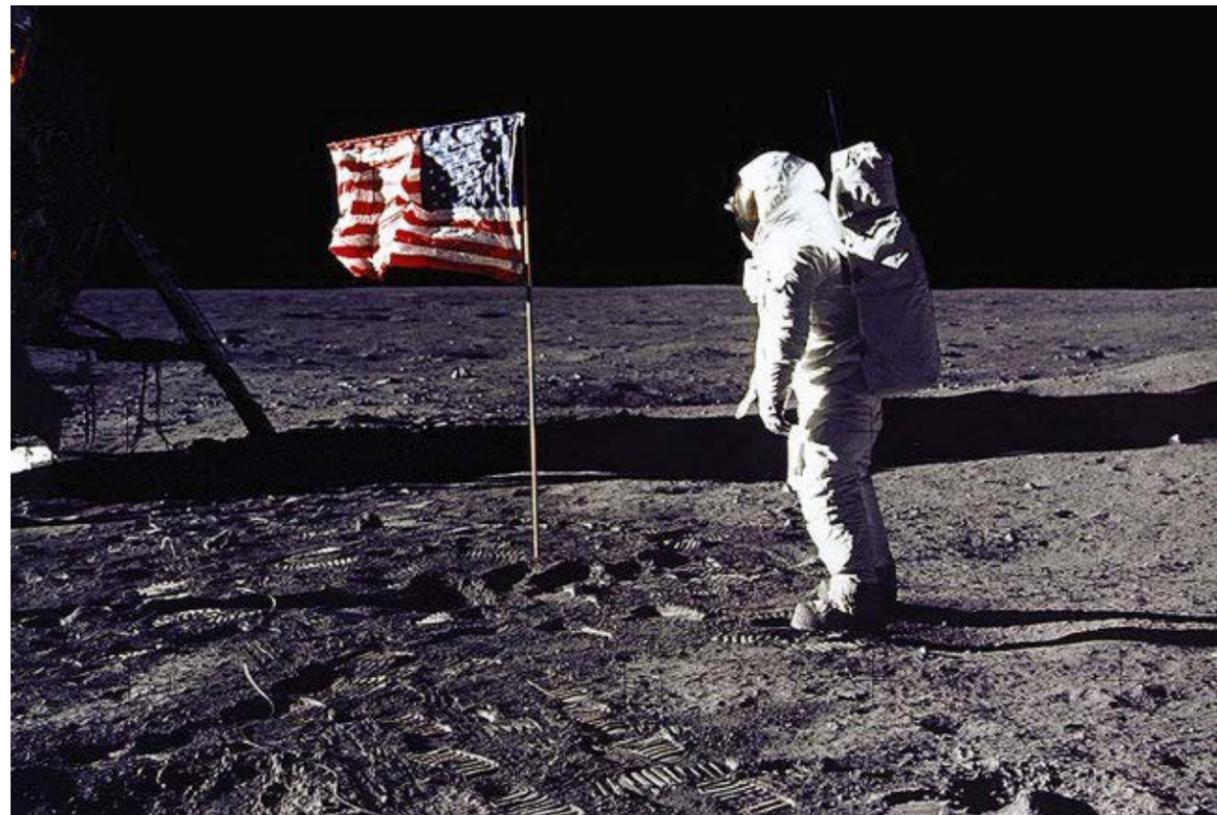
# NASA Budget



# Space Race

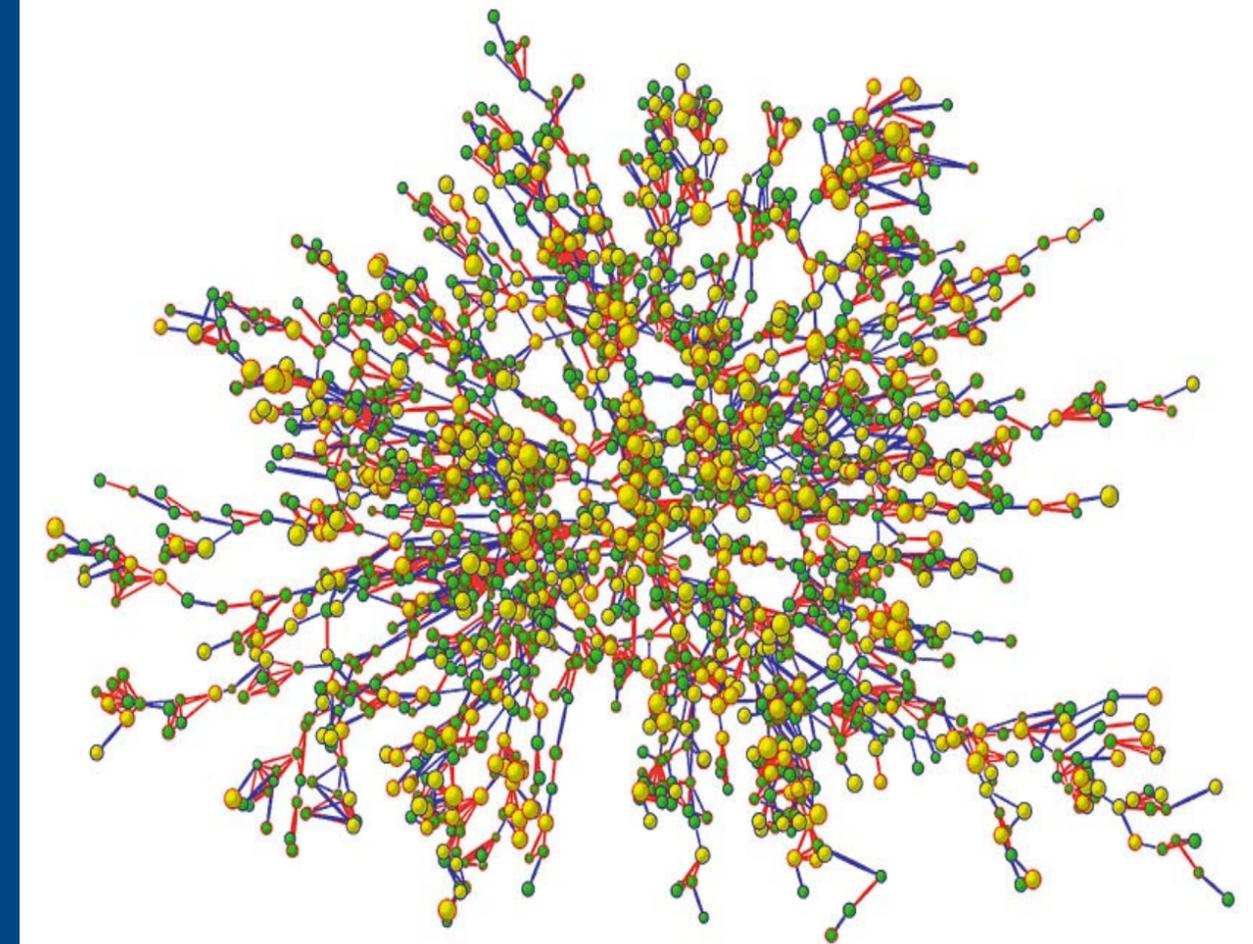
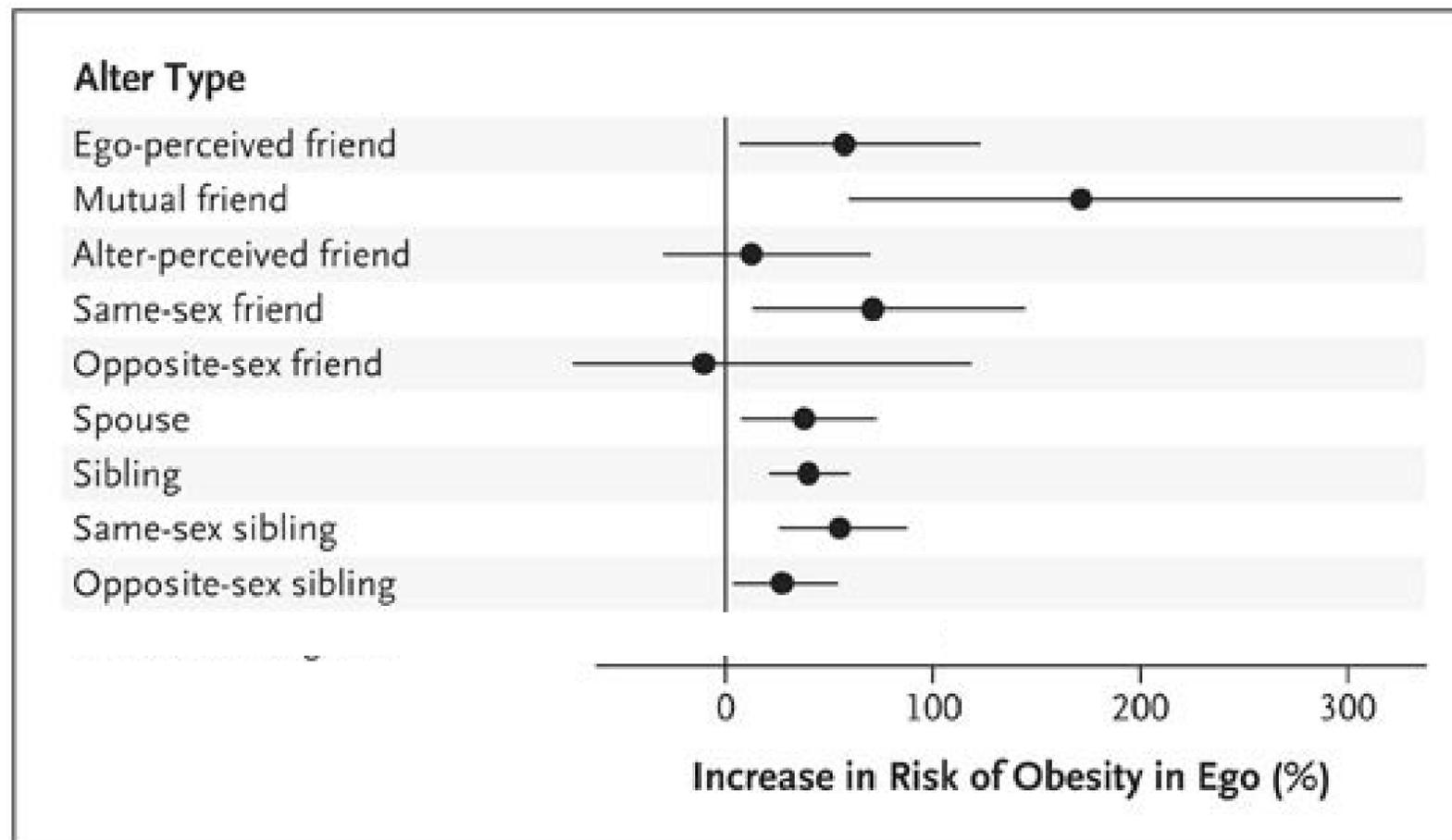


**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**



One small step for man  
One giant leap for  
America...over the Soviets

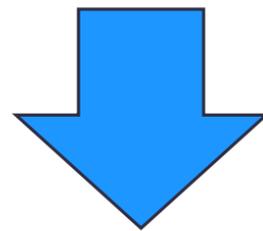
# The Spread of Obesity



# Special Social Comparisons- Rivals

Kilduff (2014) *SPPS*

In races against one's close rivals



**Run faster**



**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

# Bird & Johnson

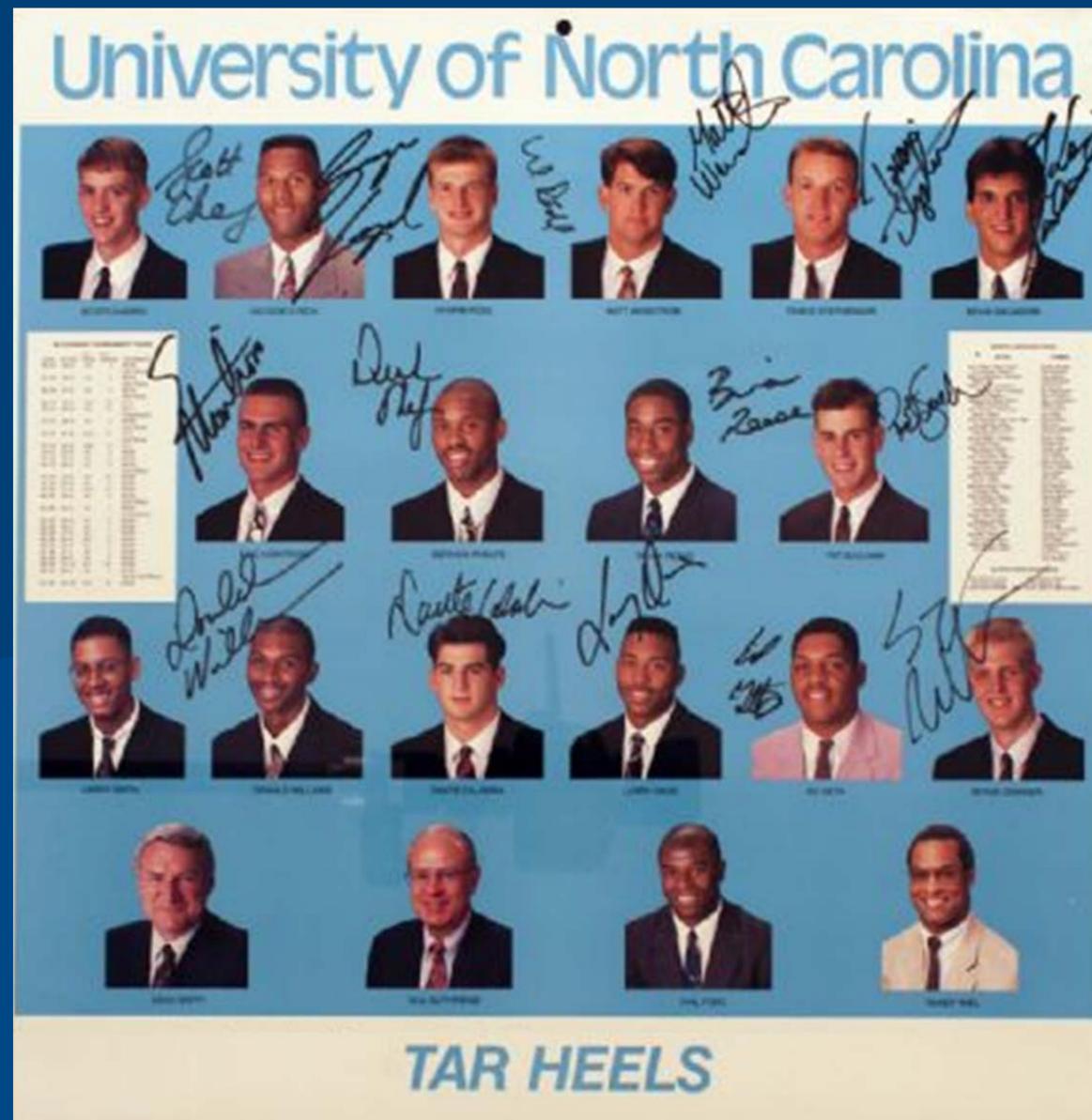
## MBA *for* EXECUTIVES SAN FRANCISCO REUNION



“The first thing I would do every morning was look at the box scores to see what Magic did. I didn’t care about anything else.”



# Tar Heels vs. Blue Devils



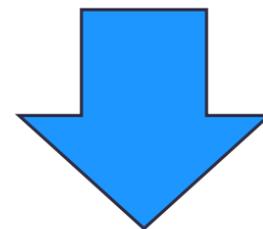
1993 NCAA Champions  
2009 NCAA Champions



1992 NCAA Champions  
2010 NCAA Champions

# Sisters

Neumark & Postlewaite (1998) *JPE*



**Work if husband earns less than sister's husband**

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

# The Good in Comparisons

Motivation

# The Bad in Comparisons

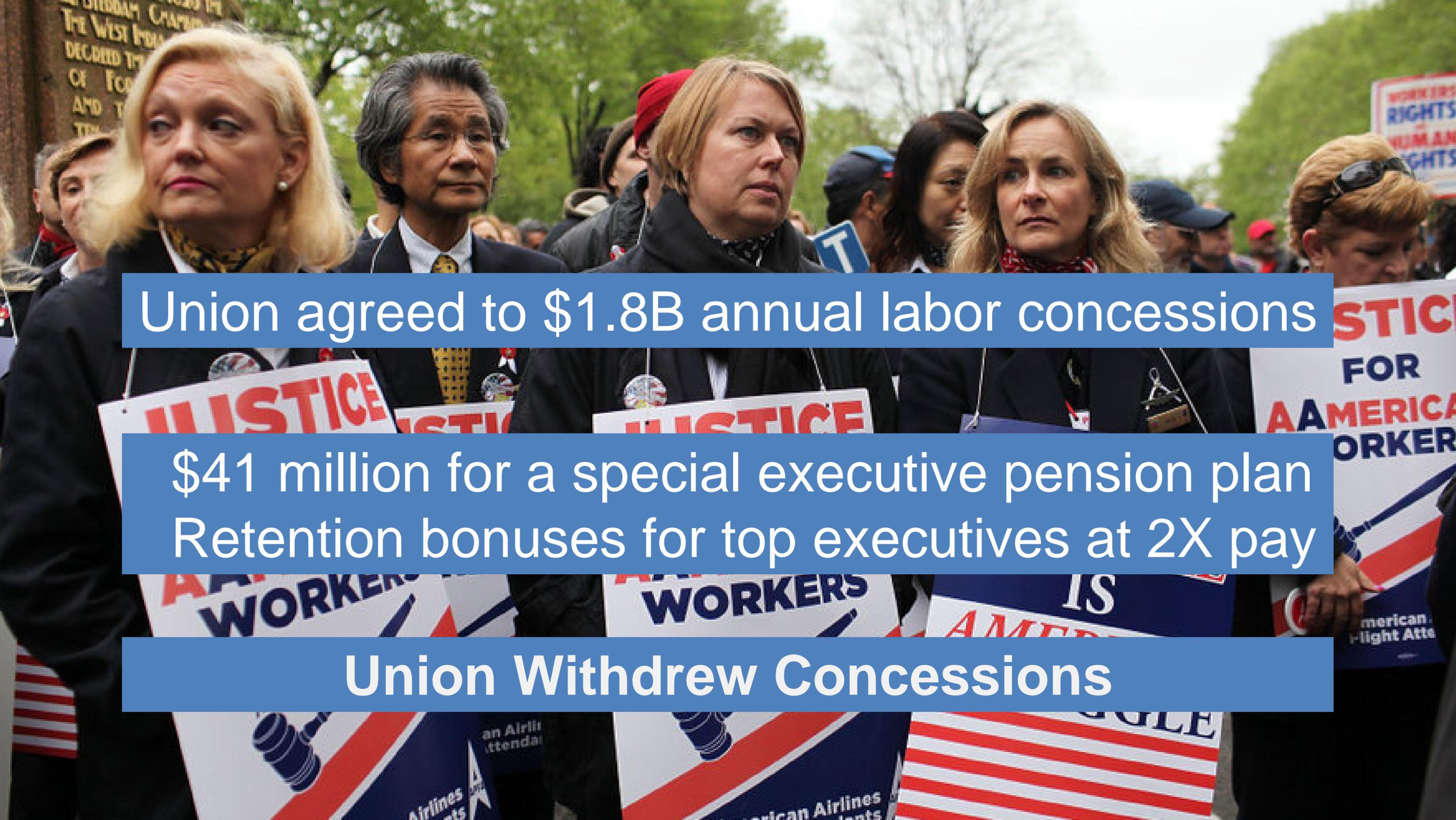


Scott Crabtree



**Chief Happiness Officer**

**MBA *for***  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**



Union agreed to \$1.8B annual labor concessions

\$41 million for a special executive pension plan  
Retention bonuses for top executives at 2X pay

**Union Withdrew Concessions**



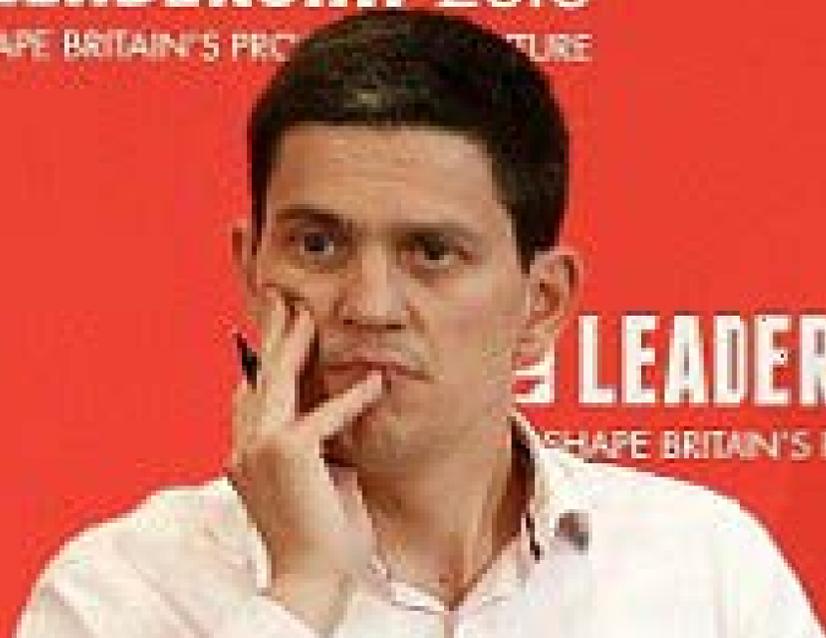
David & Ed Miliband, Labour Party

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**



	David	Ed
ROUND 1	37.78%	34.33%
ROUND 2	38.89%	37.47%
ROUND 3	42.72%	42.26%
ROUND 4	49.35%	50.65%

 **LEADERSHIP 2010**  
HELP SHAPE BRITAIN'S PROGRESSIVE FUTURE



 **LEADERSHIP 2010**  
HELP SHAPE BRITAIN'S PROGRESSIVE FUTURE

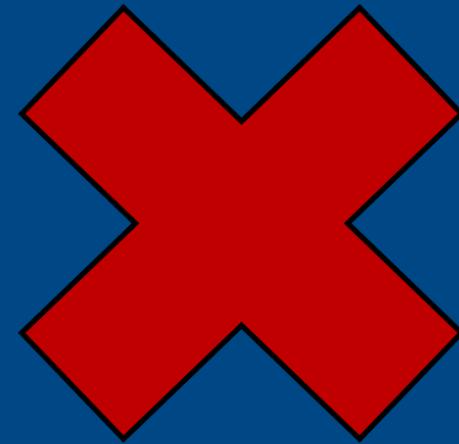


 **LEADERSHIP 2010**  
HELP SHAPE BRITAIN'S PROGRESSIVE FUTURE

**“The permanent invidious comparisons made professional life impossible.”**

# Adoption of Artificial Twins

Wojnilower (2013)



**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO

**REUNION**



**Corrosive Social  
Comparison!**



**Built-in Inequality &  
Economic Disparity of Scale**



# Doing Better & Feeling Worse

# CEO-to-Worker Compensation Ratio

## Top 350 U.S. Firms



Source: Economic Policy Institute

# Abel Kiviat, Silver Medalist (1912) 1/10 Second

MBA *for*  
EXECUTIVES  
SAN FRANCISCO

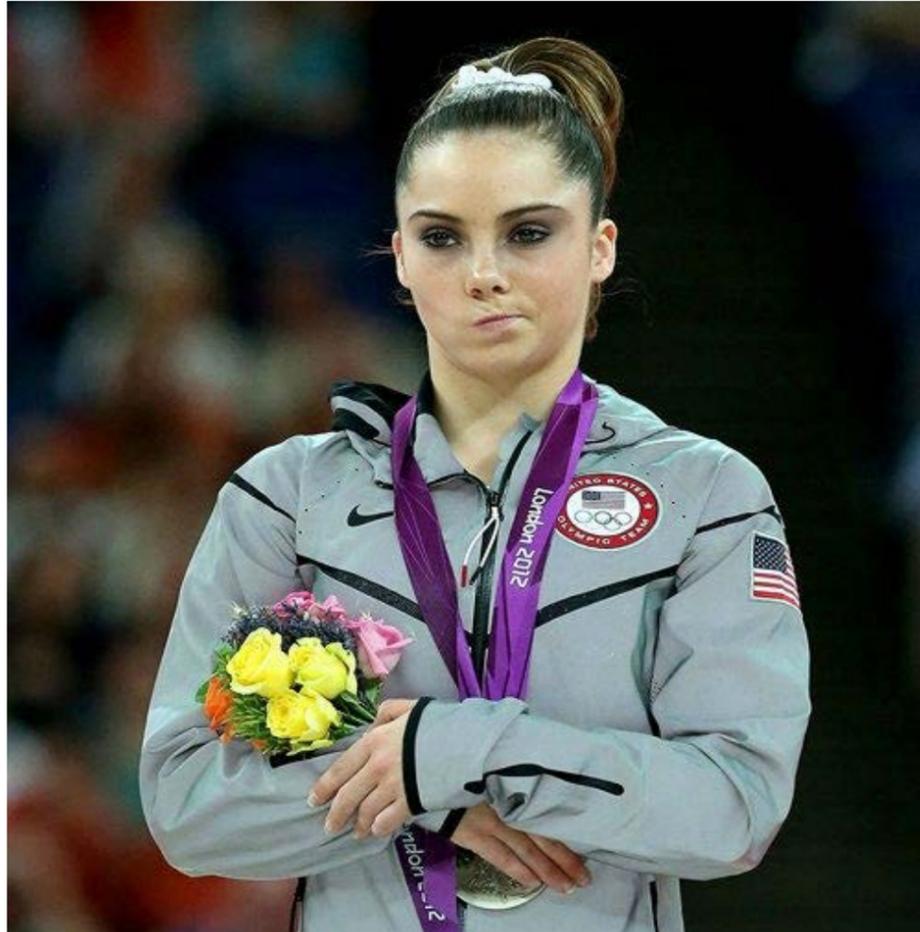
REUNION



“I wake up sometimes and say, ‘What the heck happened to me?’ It’s like a nightmare.” ~1990 Interview

**First time the Olympics used a photo  
finish to determine who won the medal**

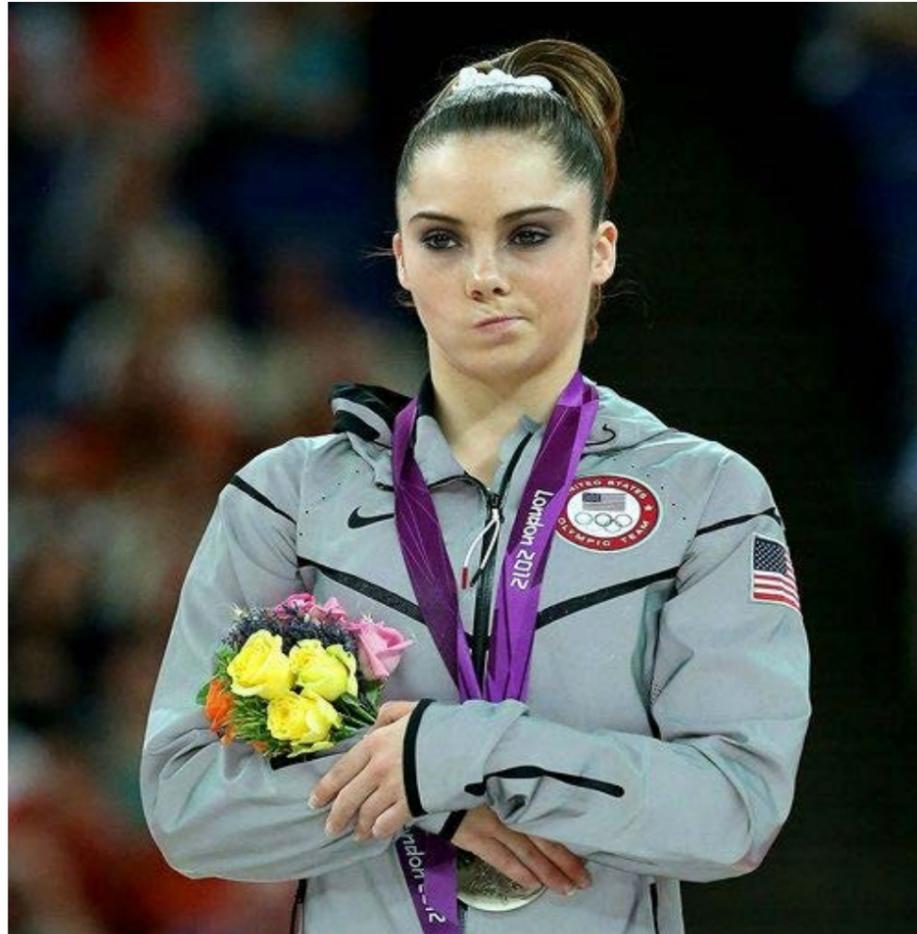
## Silver Medal Face



**93% of gold medalists smiled**  
**70% of bronze medalists smiled**  
**None of the silver medalists smiled**

**MBA *for***  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

## Silver Medal Face



**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

**Silver Medalists compare upward to gold medalists**  
**Bronze medalists compare downward to no medal**

# More Bad in Comparisons



**1992 Olympic  
Bronze Medal**



**Only American  
woman to ever  
land a triple axel**

A black and white photograph of a crowd of people, possibly at a public event or protest. The image is slightly blurred, suggesting movement. A blue banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "Whack Heard Around the World" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# Whack Heard Around the World



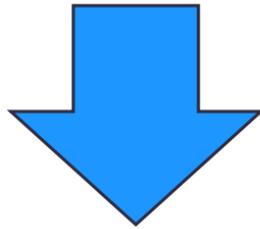
BA CAN'T  
GET IT UP!!



Virgin

Rhonda

**Took classes to develop computer skills**



**Socially ostracized from coworkers**

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO

**REUNION**

# The Bad in Comparisons

**Misery Increased Cheating**

# 3 Principles of Social Comparison

## Principles of Social Comparison

Assess if comparison is in/out order

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

# The Kennedys

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**



**1960:** John becomes U.S. President

**1961:** Robert becomes Attorney General

**1962:** Ted is elected to U.S. Senate



“The Williams Sisters’ rivalry is highly unusual and utterly remarkable...with all of their fiery competitiveness on the court, they’re still incredibly close off of it.”





21–1 record in women's doubles finals  
2000, 2008, and 2012 Olympic gold medals

# Principles of Social Comparison

Assess if comparison is in/out order

Provide new opportunities to compete

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**

# Principles of Social Comparison

**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO

**REUNION**

Assess if comparison is in/out order

Provide new opportunities to  
compete

Anticipate that success will upset others

# Russian Parable



For every wish  
your neighbor will  
get double!

I know what I  
want! I want you  
to poke out one  
of my eyes



**MBA** *for*  
**EXECUTIVES**  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**REUNION**



Lifelong  
LEARNING