

*SOCIOLOGY 201:  
Social Research Design*



**3. Theory and Research**

# Preview

- Key concepts we'll cover today
  - Attributes and variables
  - Idiographic and nomothetic
  - Deduction and induction

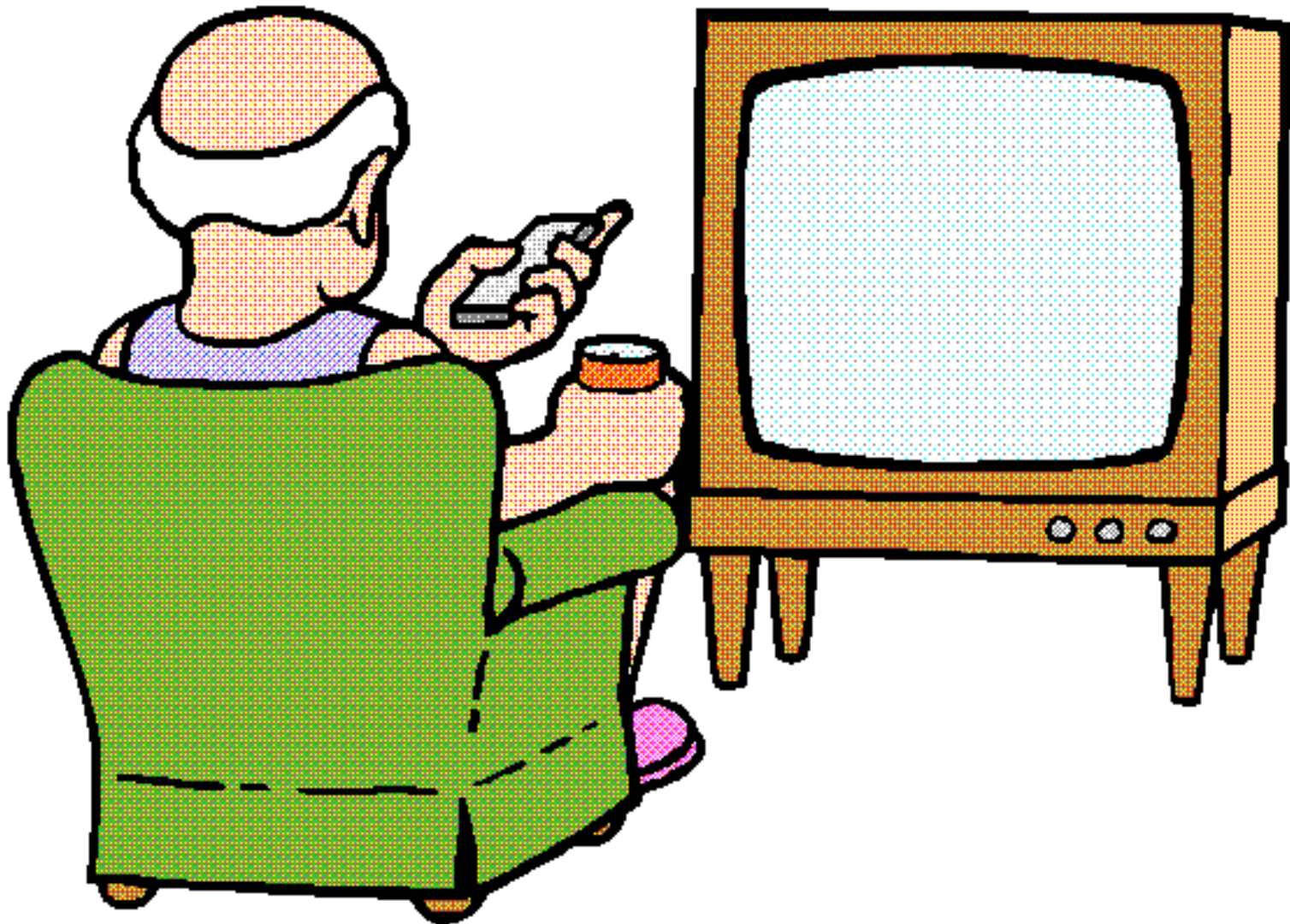


# But first. . .

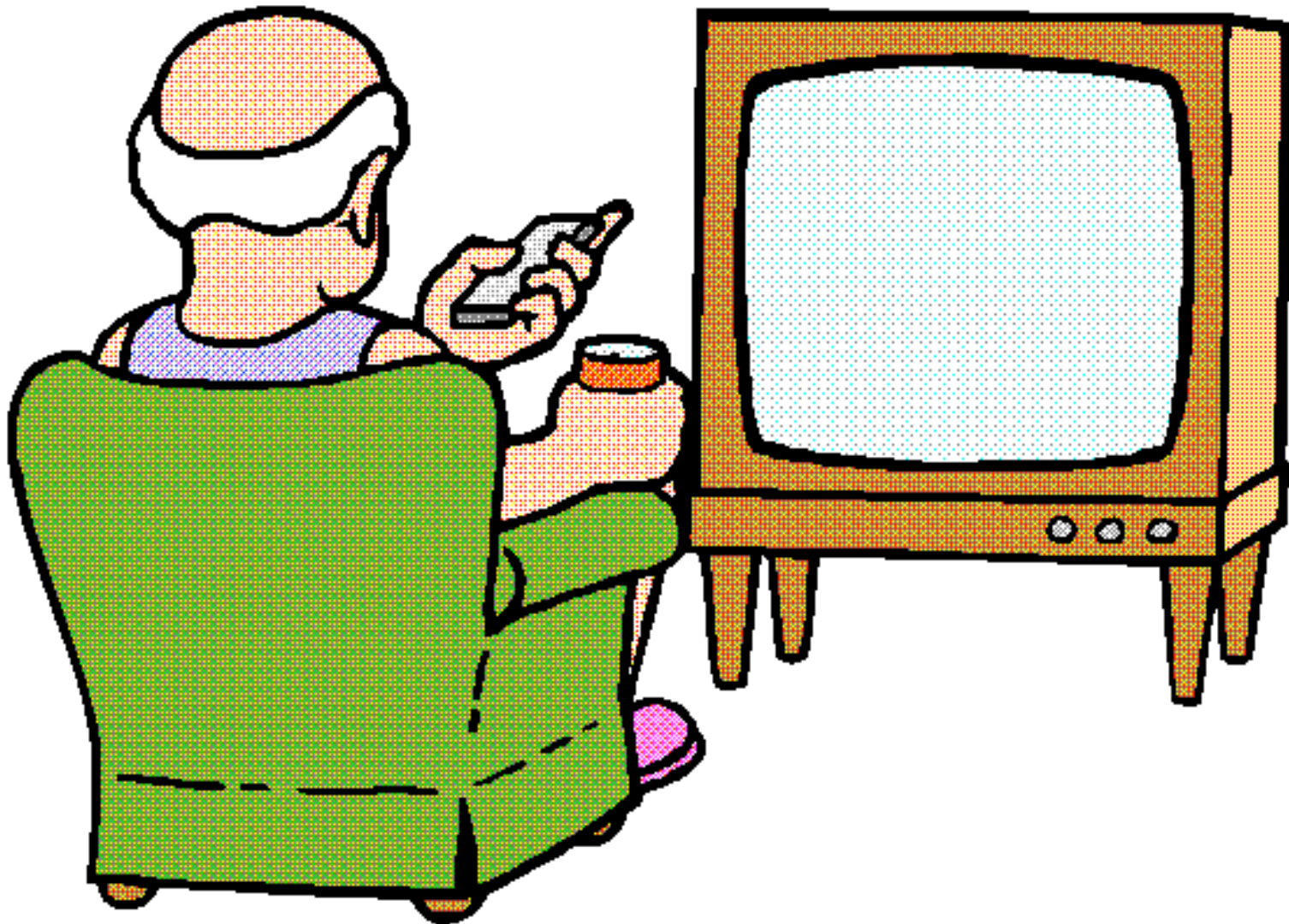


Total = 15 slides

# *It's Showtime*



# *It's Showtime*



*Now let's play:*

## *Attributes and Variables*



- Get lots of examples of attributes/characteristics
- Identify their variables
- Two qualities when measuring variables:
  - Mutually exclusive
  - Exhaustive

# Group work: Creating slippery variables

- Create an interesting variable and its attributes
- Don't be boring: i.e., don't use gender
- Write it down
- I'll take any missing pictures



## *Step Two: Measurement*

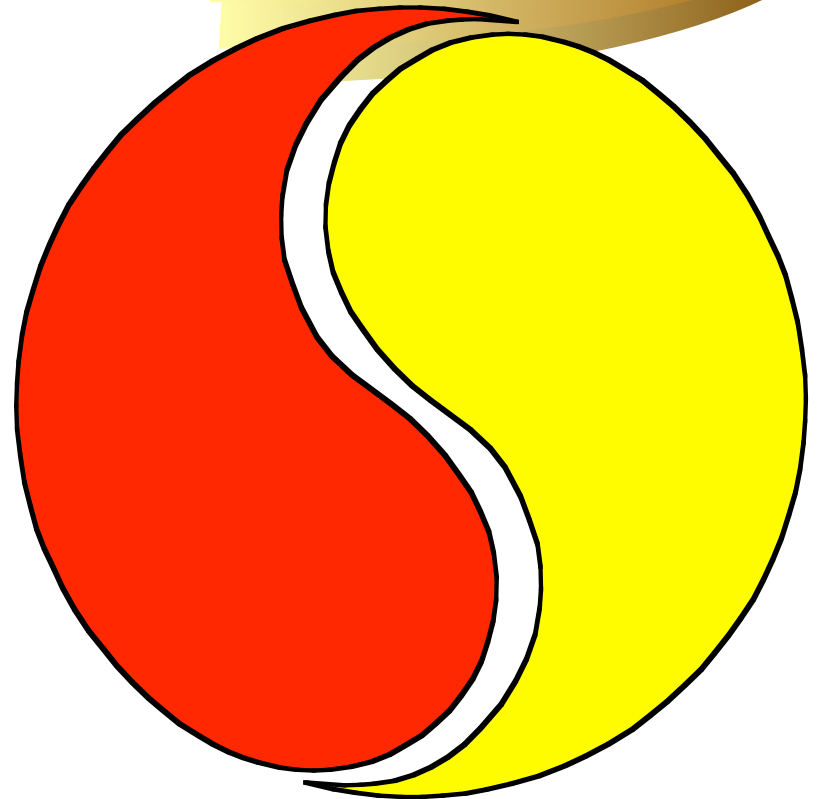


- Trade variables with another group
- Devise a way of measuring the variable you received
- What are the attributes for your variable?
- How could you



# Two Modes of Explanation

- **Idiographic**
  - One case
  - Full explanation
- **Nomothetic**
  - Cases in general
  - Partial explanation



# *Idiographic* Explanation

- Why did *you* come to Chapman?
- Why else?
- What are some more reasons?
- Name so many reasons that anyone with all those reasons would have come to Chapman



# *Nomothetic* Explanation

- What's the *main* reason students choose Chapman over, say, Fullerton?
- What would be the two or three variables that would let us predict whether students will go to Chapman or

Notice we couldn't predict perfectly

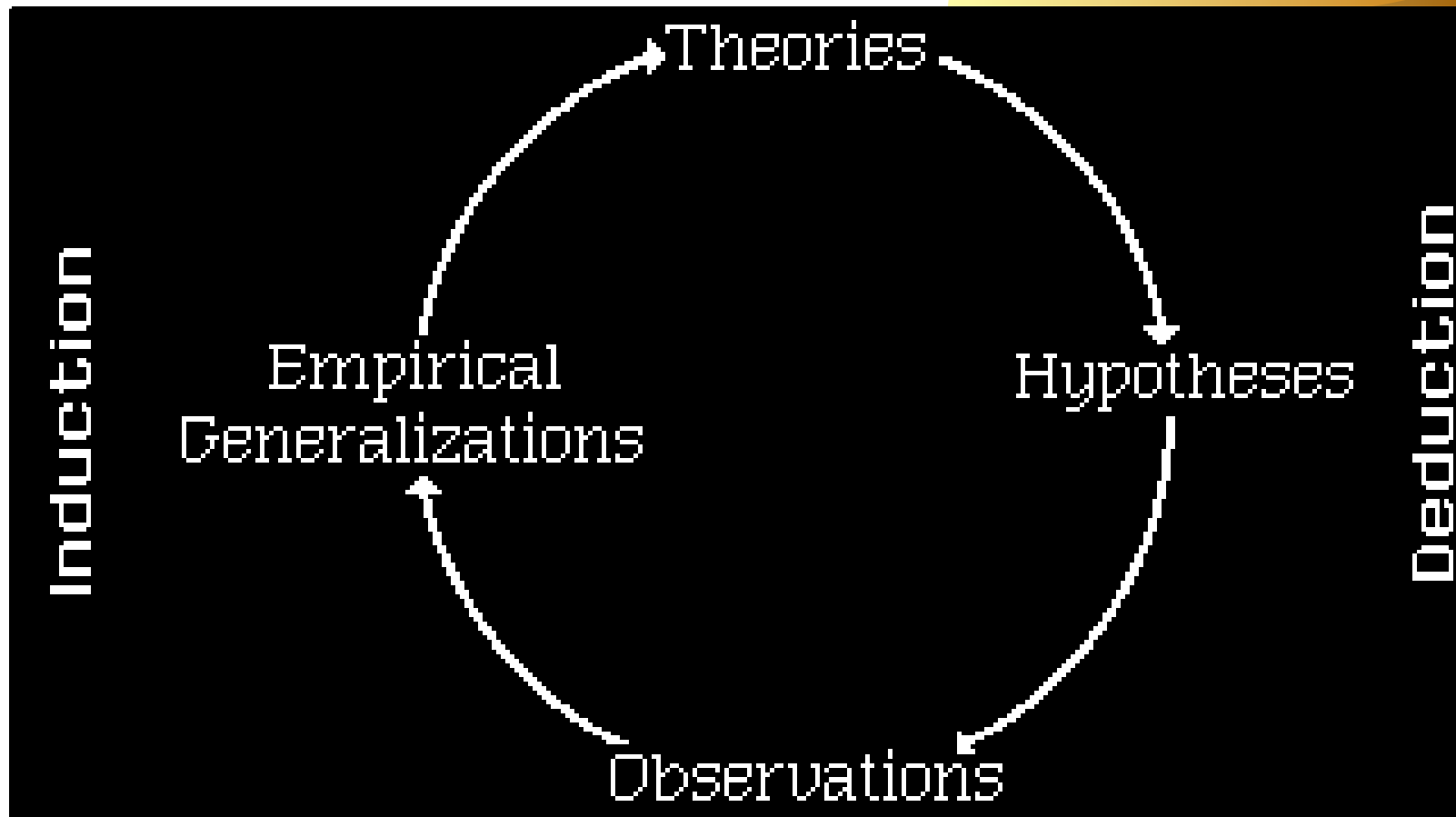


# Two Logical Systems



- **Deductive:** from general to specific
  - Theory
  - Hypothesis
  - Observations
- **Inductive:** from specific to general
  - Observations
  - Find regular patterns
  - Generalized explanations

# The circle of science



# *“Lateral Thinking”*

Paul Sloane and Des MacHale, *Challenging Lateral Thinking Puzzles*, NY: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 1993

- A farmer had 17 sheep. All but 9 died. How many did he have left?
- How many animals of each species did Moses take into the Ark?
- What do Kermit the Frog and Attila the Hun have in common?
- What do you sit on, sleep on, and brush your teeth with?
- A man parked his car outside a bank and rushed in. He help up twenty-five people and ran out with \$200. A policeman who saw the whole incident stopped the man. He told him off and then let him go. Why?

## *Next Time*



- “Objectivity and Reality”
- Get real
- Review Chapter 2