

## Introduction

- Prior research on humor perception suggests that infants aged 5 months start recognizing teasing and clowning behaviors as humorous while engaging with people. <sup>2</sup>
- This implies that humor can serve multiple purposes during **social interactions**, and rarely occurs when alone. <sup>1</sup>
- Infants' creation of humor via clowning increased with age, starting with simple shrieks at 3 months to imitating absurd actions by 5 months. <sup>5</sup>
- It was seen that caregivers used a higher frequency of clowning, regardless of infants' age than the gross motor and social games, tickling, or toys, songs, and other miscellaneous strategies <sup>5</sup>
- Sex differences in older child-sibling pairs in particular play a role in humor perception; females display stronger neural activity when exposed to humorous stimuli<sup>4</sup>

## Research Questions

- **RQ1:** Will the presence of **social interaction** affect infant attention to a humorous situation?
- **RQ2:** Will the sex of the infant contribute to them engaging more or less attentively to social and non-social stimuli?

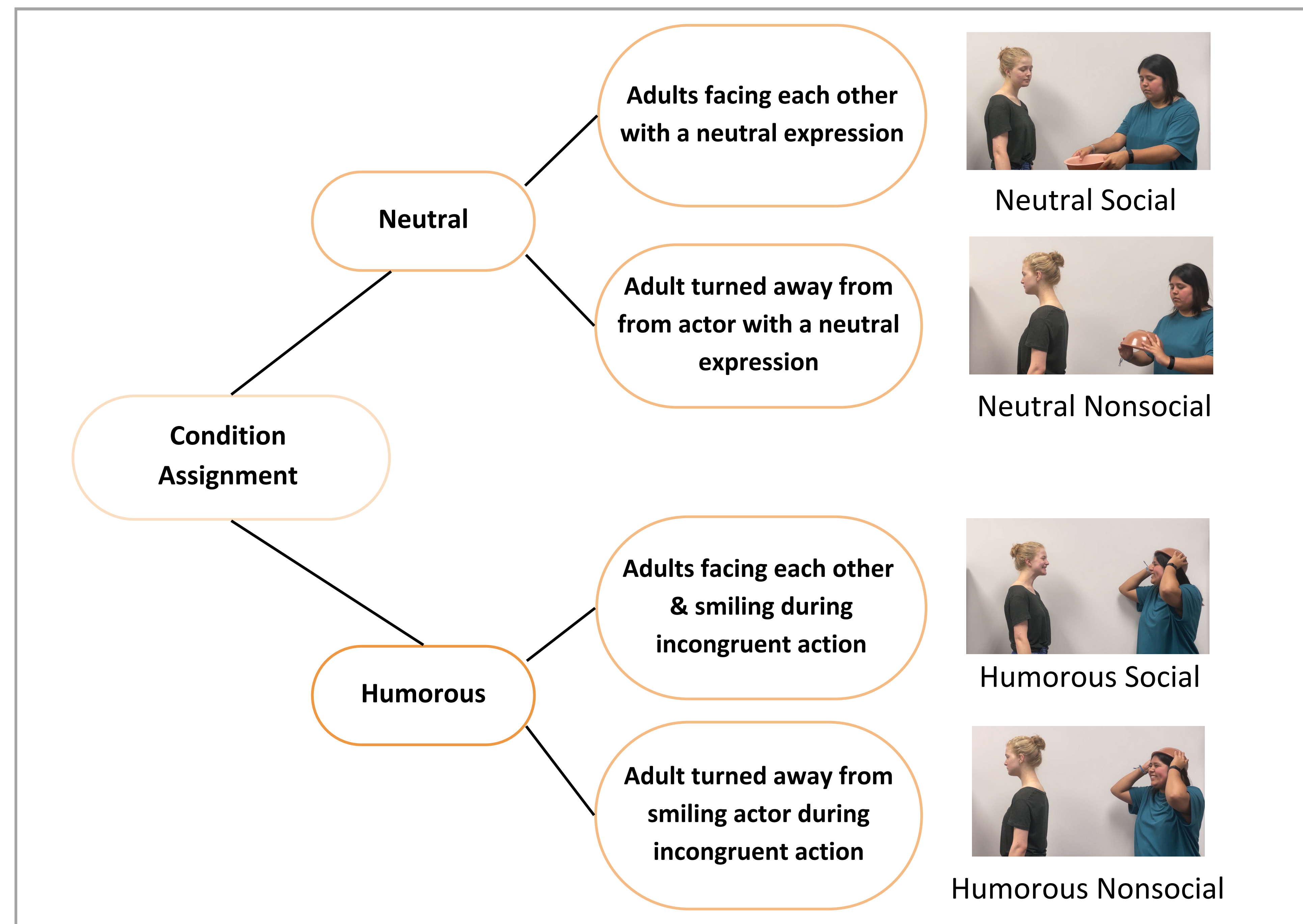
## References

1. Mireault, G. C., Crockenberg, S. C., Sparrow, J. E., Pettinato, C. A., Woodard, K. C., & Malzac, K. (2014).
2. Reddy, V., & Mireault, G. (2015).
3. Scott, K., & Schulz, L. (2017).
4. Vrticka, P., Neely, M., Walter Shelly, E., Black, J. M., & Reiss, A. L. (2013).
5. Mireault, G., Poutre, M., Sargent-Hier, M., Dias, C., Perdue, B., & Allison Myrick.

## Methods

- The study will evaluate infants aged 5-10 months of age.
- It will be conducted remotely via a computer webcam using the MIT *Lookit* online testing platform.
  - *Lookit* will record videos of each infant via a webcam as the condition is presented; researchers will code each infant's videos to determine the length of looking time during each condition.
  - **Dependent variable:** Infants' fixation on the screen, or looking time, to each stimulus, will be used to measure infant attention.
- There are two conditions - **neutral and humorous**:
  - Two types of videos in each condition :
  - One video portrays a typical action within **social interaction**.
  - The other video portrays an incongruent action within **non-Social interaction**.
    - The two videos will be shown to infants two times each in random order.

## Procedure



## Planned Analysis

- A two-way mixed analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be conducted.
  - **Between-subjects variables:**
    - condition presented (humorous or neutral)
    - Infants' sex (male or female)
  - **Within-subjects variable:** **Social interaction** (social vs. non-social).
  - **Dependent variable:** Infant-looking time to each stimulus type.

## Projected Results

- **RQ1:** We predict differences in looking time between the humorous and neutral stimuli due to social interaction.
- **RQ2:** Gender differences are also anticipated based on former findings.

## Discussion

- We propose to measure if babies will spend more time paying attention to videos with humor in them and to determine if they prefer videos with social interaction, versus videos with none.
- It would be beneficial to understand if sex plays a role as prior studies suggest that females are more interactive than males.
- It is vital to study social interaction as it plays an important role in learning. Interacting with other people has proven to be quite effective for children to organize their thoughts and reflect on their understanding of others.