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Supplementary Materials for

The End of History Illusion

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Supplementary Materials

1. "Leurs Secrets du Bonheur" ("Their Secrets of Happiness") is a French television show that aired on the channel *France 2* from October 2011 to January 2012. It invited viewers to participate in social science studies at the show's website. We received permission to place a link to our studies on that website. Participants who clicked that link were assigned to one of our studies. Participants were given no financial compensation but were told before participating that they would receive feedback about their levels of wellbeing when the study was complete. Participants in Study 1, the follow-ups to Study 1, Study 2, and Study 3 were recruited via this method. Participants in Study 4 were recruited through the Amazon Mechanical Turk website.
2. During a first wave of data collection in November, 2011, participants who clicked our link were randomly assigned to participate in Study 1, a follow-up to Study 1, or Study 3. During a second wave of data collection in January, 2012, participants who clicked our link were randomly assigned to participate in a follow-up to Study 1 or Study 2.
3. In addition to the measures described in the manuscript, participants in Study 1, the follow-ups to Study 1, Study 2, and Study 3 completed numerous other questionnaires for other research projects (e.g., measures of satisfaction with life, depression, political orientation, income, etc.).
4. For clarity of presentation, we applied a Gaussian filter to smooth short-term fluctuations and highlight longer-term trends in Figure 1. A Gaussian filter replaces each value with the weighted average of neighboring values, and those weights are defined by a Gaussian function. We set the standard deviation of the Gaussian function to 4 years—with repetition of the values at both extremities to avoid edge effects—meaning that all low-frequency fluctuations within a four-year period were smoothed. Figure S1 shows the unfiltered data.

To allow visual comparison of the results across studies, change scores in each study were transformed into percentages of change. So a score of 100% means the highest possible change score—that is, going from one extreme of the rating scale to the other for *all* the personality traits (Study 1), all the values (Study 2), or indicating that all of one's preferences will be different (Study 3). Scores of 0% indicates no change.

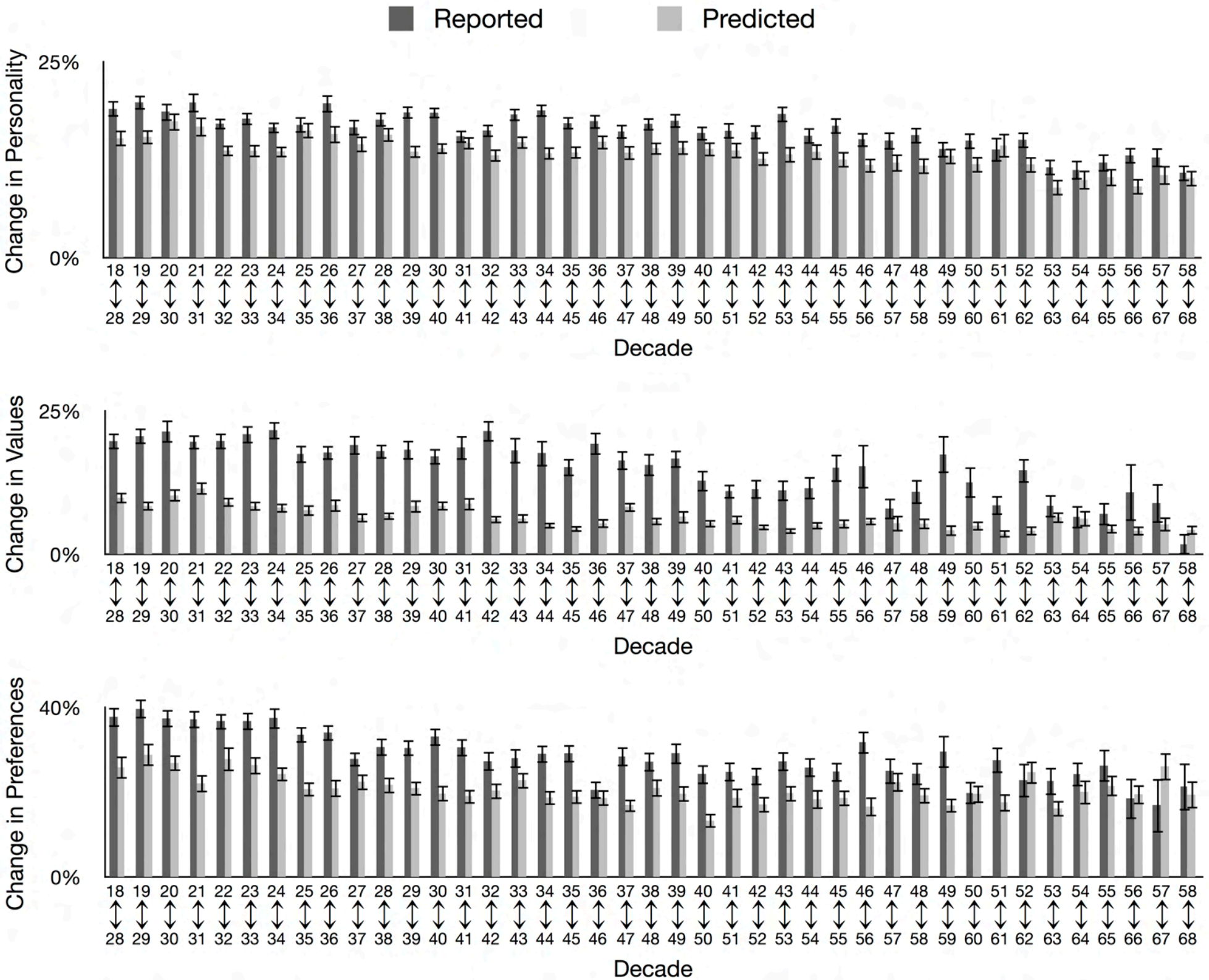
5. In Studies 2 and 3—but not in Study 1—the magnitude of the end of history illusion was larger among younger than older participants. Did the illusion merely diminish among older participants or did it actually disappear? In all three studies, the illusion was evident when we analyzed the data from our oldest participants as a group (i.e., predictors who were 50 years and older and reporters who were 60 years and older). Unfortunately, our samples did not contain a sufficient number of older participants to allow us to conduct meaningful analyses on participants at every age (see Table S1). More research will be needed to determine whether the illusion does or does not disappear at the very upper end of the age continuum.
6. In Study 3, the five preferences questions were originally scored on a 4-point scale from 1 (*Certainly the same*) to 4 (*Certainly different*). Although results using this continuous measure were significant (β condition = -.06, $p < .001$), we dichotomized the response scale for the sake of clarity. Also, in addition to asking participants about music, vacations, food, hobbies, and best friends, we also asked about their favorite movie. We eliminated this item from the analyses reported in the manuscript because more than 200 participants failed to complete it, suggesting that people do not find it easy to remember their favorite movie from a decade ago. In comparison, every participant completed every other item. Including this item in the analyses reported in the manuscript does not change the significance of the result (β condition = -.12, $p < .001$).
7. More than 80% of the participants in Study 1, Study 2, and Study 3 were women, so we also

performed regression analyses on men and women separately to ensure that the results were not limited to a single gender. These analyses revealed an end of history illusion for both genders. Specifically, analyses of men revealed an effect of condition in Study 1, Study 2, and Study 3 ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .001$, $\beta = -.39$, $p < .001$, and $\beta = -.14$, $p < .001$, respectively), and analyses of women revealed an effect of condition in Study 1, Study 2, and Study 3 ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .001$, $\beta = -.48$, $p < .001$, and $\beta = -.20$, $p < .001$, respectively).

Table S1. Number of participants (N) by age and condition.

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3		Study 4	
Age	Reporters N	Predictor N	Reporters N	Predictor N	Reporters N	Predictor N	Reporters N	Predictor N
18		66		82		33		1
19		71		94		27		3
20		96		91		42		4
21		79		109		33		4
22		65		85		44		4
23		91		104		54		11
24		116		95		43		7
25		108		116		55		3
26		90		89		29		3
27		98		79		40		4
28	98	104	105	105	55	54	4	3
29	115	103	101	101	58	38	4	5
30	116	134	141	141	55	56	3	5
31	107	111	123	123	48	63	6	3
32	119	105	123	123	52	52	4	2
33	119	112	127	127	53	59	2	5
34	87	112	122	122	52	57	2	2
35	128	113	97	97	48	48	6	3
36	108	121	120	120	51	49	2	1
37	122	120	110	110	45	51	2	2
38	118	102	136	136	56	54	1	2
39	115	111	126	126	53	51	3	3
40	111	104	109	109	60	47	5	2
41	89	103	110	110	39	45	1	1
42	88	104	103	103	38	58	4	2
43	85	99	101	101	30	31	1	0
44	93	82	96	96	28	41	0	2
45	98	121	97	97	35	34	2	1
46	82	87	105	105	49	39	2	1
47	93	86	87	87	29	30	0	1
48	111	108	83	83	38	32	0	2
49	85	102	87	87	27	27	1	1
50	80	99	86	86	39	34	2	0
51	76	73	75	75	30	23	3	1
52	79	81	71	71	30	33	0	2
53	83	66	84	84	32	26	0	1
54	80	69	76	76	20	20	3	1
55	75	72	66	66	23	20	3	0

56	60	68	58	58	12	19	0	0
57	46	54	70	70	14	17	0	0
58	66	50	49	49	17	20	1	1
59	43		44		18		1	
60	67		66		16		0	
61	44		51		20		1	
62	33		55		15		1	
63	42		34		8		0	
64	36		52		6		1	
65	34		33		4		0	
66	16		20		4		0	
67	14		18		8		0	
68	13		15		2		0	


Reported
Predicted
Change in Personality
25%
0%
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58
28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68
Decade
Change in Values
25%
0%
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58
28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68
Decade
Change in Preferences
40%
0%
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58
28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68
Decade