

Dancing By Definition

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**Dancers always dance by definition.
For every call. Every time.**

Introduction

- References
 - Thinking Fast and Slow - Daniel Kahneman
 - Blink – Malcolm Gladwell
 - Great Expectations – <http://clasper.ca/articles>

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- [System 1 / System 2](#)
 - System 1: Unconscious, always active, rapid, pattern matcher, associated memories, recommendations/warnings/conclusions surfaced to System 2
 - System 2: Our conscious selves, step-wise reasoning, conscious decision making

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- System 1 / System 2
- What this means for Square Dancing

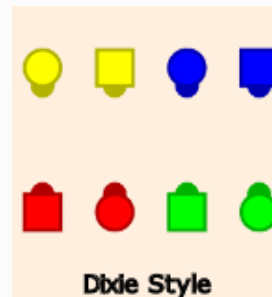
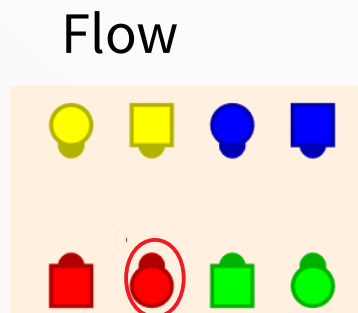
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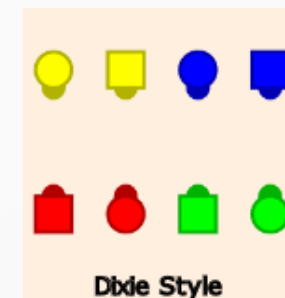
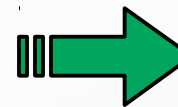


Dixie Style
to a Wave

System 1



System 2



Introduction

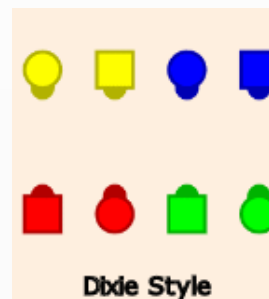
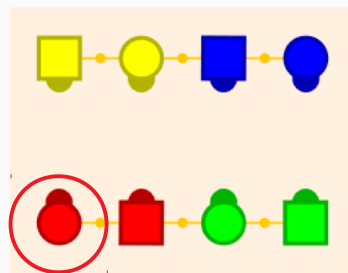
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Dixie Style
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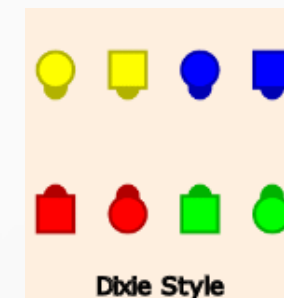
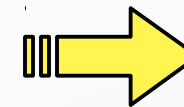
System 1

Flow



System 2

??



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- Mental Models / Definitions

Building Mental Models

- Teaching
- Practicing / Drilling
- Unconscious absorption

Building MMs: Teaching

- Learning Styles:
 - Visual
 - Auditory
 - Kinesthetic
 - Reading

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- Learning Styles:

- Visual
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- Optimal Information:

- Call name
- Minimum group / Formation
- Parts
- Roles
- Actions
- Beats
- Outcomes
- Defaults

Building MMs: Teaching – cont'd

- Call name
- Minimum group / Formation
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Call Description to Dancers

- The name of the call is Spin The Top
- It is done by 4 dancers in an Ocean Wave formation.
- The first part of the call is Ends and adjacent Centers Arm Turn Half.
- The last part is New Centers Cast $\frac{3}{4}$ while the New Ends walk forward in a $\frac{1}{4}$ Circle to re-form an Ocean Wave with the New Centers.
- The whole call requires 8 beats of music.
- (Note that this description provides all the information outlined in the eight points above, with the exception of the applicability of the Facing Couples Rule.)

Dancing Tips

Building MMs: Teaching – cont'd

Order Of Exposure:

- [Heads/Sides Pass The Ocean and Swing Thru; Heads/Sides Spin The Top](#)
 (“standard” position, having the Heads do it in the center emphasizes it is a 4-person call and allows the Sides to watch).
Repeat with Sides.
- [Heads Pass The Ocean; Heads Spin The Top](#)
 (“sashayed” position, doing this early prevents formation of the idea there is a “boys” part and a “girls” part).
Repeat with Sides
- [Repeat both positions in parallel waves and tidal waves](#)
- [Add Facing Couples Rule](#)
(work from boxes and lines, mixed arrangements)
- [Add left handed variations.](#)

Building MMs: Practice / Drill

- Teaching provides initial framework, subsequent exposures add / subtract things
- Rule-based vs Case-based
 - Rule-based dancers develop mental models that are algorithms. As they see new situations, they try to understand how the rules in the algorithm worked.
 - Case-based dancers develop mental models that are look-up tables: each position, arrangement, formation, etc. is a new entry.
- Trick is to show case-based all the situations they need without boring rule-based
- Smooth dancing happens in System 1
 - Pattern may correspond to an algorithm or a case instance
 - All dancers operate with a mixture of the two

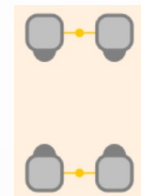
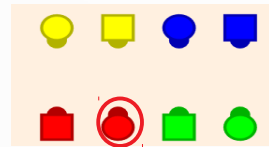
Building MMs: Unconscious Absorption

- Mental models are updated with each exposure:
 - Reinforced
 - Extended
 - Refined
 - Contradicted

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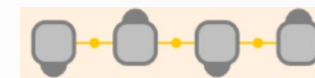
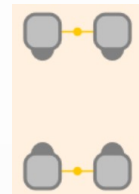
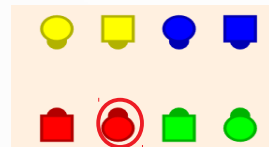
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Building MMs: Unconscious Absorption

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- Much more info than “definition”:

- Combos, frequency of use, CL program, starting formations/arrangements, expected results (as opposed to possible results), caller preferences, recent exposures, etc.

Working With Mental Models

- Adjust your choreo to their mental models
 - Suss out the floor
(See CALLERLAB Square Dance KnowledgeBase at <http://knowledge.callerlab.org>)
 - Call reinforcing material with a smattering of extension. Extensions should not require workshopping, just cuing.
- Adjust their mental models to your choreo
 - More significant extensions may require brief halts or explanations
 - Explore infrequently used calls.

Summary

- Dancers use the mental models (i.e. “definitions”) they build up in their heads over repeated exposures to the call.
- Teaching builds a skeleton, repetition adds/removes flesh.
- Every exposure does something to the mental model:
 - Reinforce, Extend, Refine, Contradict
- Smooth dancing is System 1. Learning starts in System 2 and is complete when mental model is mostly System 1.

Questions?

