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Review of Patihis & Carter (2026)

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This report comprises a brief pilot study and a larger experiment dedicated to the test of the idea that memory prompts not only affect episodic but also affective recall about first dates. The two critical conditions are called “appraisal up” and “appraisal down.” In the former, respondents were asked to recall kind behavior; in the latter, they were asked to recall unkind behavior. Results show that these elicited memories affected how respondents recalled they felt after that first date.

The findings, simple and straightforward as they are, fit with decades of research on suggestion and also with decades of research on demand effects. If the results stem from the latter, nothing can be concluded; if they stem from the former, a better case should be made for why this work constitutes a theoretical and/or an empirical advance.

Alas, I cannot say that I am impressed by this work. I suppose – and hope – it might be the beginning of a fruitful line of work, but at the present time, there is not much to hang a hat on.