

# New Research From Psychological Science

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Read about new and exciting research published in *Psychological Science* and *Clinical Psychological Science*.

## [Visual Context Processing in Schizophrenia](#)

*Eunice Yang, Duje Tadin, Davis M. Glasser, Sang Wook Hong, Randolph Blake, and Sohee Park*

Researchers know that people with schizophrenia exhibit visual abnormalities, but they are still not sure how these abnormalities relate to schizophrenia's symptoms and etiology. Healthy and schizophrenic participants were instructed to judge the appearance of a center stimulus by comparing it with a fixed-reference stimulus. Researchers varied the perceived luminance, size, contrast, orientation, and motion of the center stimulus by altering its surrounding visual context. Schizophrenic patients showed no abnormalities in perception of luminance and size, but showed weakened perception of contrast. Additionally, stronger orientation-repulsion and motion-repulsion illusions were related to greater psychiatric symptoms and worse social processing. These results suggest that rather than suffering from general visual processing deficits, people with schizophrenia show abnormalities in specific areas.

## [Quantifying Accuracy Improvement in Sets of Pooled Judgments: Does Dialectical Bootstrapping Work?](#)

*Chris M. White and John Antonakis*

Bootstrapping is a method used to estimate values. When people estimate a value (such as a weight, time, or date) at two different time points, the average of the two estimates is more accurate than the first estimate alone. In dialectical bootstrapping, participants are instructed to consider why their first estimate may be wrong before estimating again. In a previous study, Herzog and Hertwig (2009) found that dialectical bootstrapping led to more accurate estimates of the dates of historical events than did traditional bootstrapping. In this study, the researchers reanalyzed Herzog and Hertwig's data using measures of accuracy that were unrelated to the frequency of identical first and second estimations. When the data was reanalyzed, the researchers found no difference in accuracy between traditional and dialectical bootstrapping methods.

## [The Busy Social Brain: Evidence for Automaticity and Control in the Neural Systems Supporting Social Cognition and Action Understanding](#)

*Robert P. Spunt and Matthew D. Lieberman*

In this study, the researchers examined the automaticity of two brain systems thought to underlying social-cognitive processing: the mirror-neuron system and the mentalizing system. fMRI data was collected while participants watched a video of an actor performing various object-directed actions. Prior to watching the video, participants adopted one of four goals related to understanding the male actor's actions. During the video, participants also performed a high- or a low-load cognitive task. Researchers found that mirror-neuron system activation was not affected by goal type or cognitive load level, whereas mentalizing-system activation was modulated by cognitive load only when the goal was related to understanding the actor's mental state. This suggests that the mirror-neuron system supports automatic behavior identification, whereas the mentalizing system supports controlled social causal attribution.