

Inside the Psychologist's Studio: Mahzarin Banaji

June 08, 2011

Like its quasi-namesake (that would be Inside the Actor's Studio), the Inside the Psychologist's Studio series traditionally has focused on more senior luminaries who look back at their accomplishments. In a departure from that format, we bring you a fascinating, wide-ranging forward-looking, intergenerational conversation that promises to leave you even more confident about the future of psychological science.

Rebecca Saxe is a scientist at MIT, where she got her PhD in 2003. Already, she has made exciting contributions to our understanding of how infants become social beings, what goes wrong in brain development to produce autism, and how we make moral decisions.

Mahzarin Banaji is scientist at Harvard, and APS's President this year. She got her PhD in 1986. She studies how our minds unconsciously think about self and other, us and them. People like Rebecca inspired her to extend her work to include the study of young children.

In their laboratories, Banaji and Saxe share an interest in understanding how children and adults navigate the social world. But they also share an interest in speaking about what science has taught us about ourselves to non-academic audiences in the hope that we can create more just and peaceful worlds for the future.

In this session of "Inside the Psychologist's Studio" Banaji and Saxe talked and quizzed each other about how they run their labs, what drives them these days, and why young people starting out in psychological science should be excited about the research they're doing.