Response Durations: A Flexible, No-Cost Tool for Psychological Science
Roland Pfister, Bence Neszmélyi, and Wilfried Kunde

Data for the response durations of simple key presses are easy to collect, cost nothing to researchers and participants, and can provide valuable information about cognitive processes, Pfister and colleagues argue. Any study with standard keypress responses allows for the measurement of response durations in addition to the collection of response times. Moreover, response times and durations are decidedly independent, so response durations hold great promise for uncovering unique perspectives on cognitive processing. Pfister and colleagues showcase recent observations and corresponding theoretical frameworks to highlight that this measure deserves more attention than it has attracted so far.

Color-Evasive Cognition: The Unavoidable Impact of Scientific Racism in the Founding of a Field
Ayanna K. Thomas, Maxine McKinney de Royston, and Shameka Powell

Thomas and colleagues identify how scientific racism has influenced the study of cognition and offer perspectives on how researchers can reshape the field to become more aware of the roles of culture and context. The theoretical, epistemological, and methodological assumptions that support the field’s longtime focus on studying “cognitive universals” have resulted in a science of human cognition based on the performance and behavior of people who are predominantly White, English-speaking, normatively invisible, racially color-evasive, and socially dominant (WEIRD), Thomas and colleagues argue. They suggest that by embracing research traditions that consider context and culture, psychological scientists can reshape the field of cognitive psychology and move toward well-developed theories of cognition in context.

Historical Psychology
Mohammad Atari and Joseph Henrich

Psychology likely evolved over history, and the adaptation of recent computational methods could help
to extract psychological information from historical corpora. Atari and Henrich review the benefits of studying psychology as a historical science and present text-analytic techniques for historical psychological inquiry that can examine the record of people who are no longer alive. They also discuss the importance of going beyond English-centric analysis in historical psychology to foster a more generalizable and inclusive science of human behavior. And they propose that historical psychology should incorporate and further develop text-analytic approaches to quantify the historical processes that gave rise to contemporary social, political, and psychological phenomena.

**Emotional Disclosure and Social Judgment**
*Kent D. Harber and Valeria M. Vila*

Expressing negative emotions might increase fairness and forgiveness, enhancing social judgment. Harber and Vila review three studies that support this idea. Participants who disclosed emotions about a past betrayal, compared to those who suppressed, felt closer to their betrayers—the first step toward forgiveness. In a study where participants viewed an assault, disclosing the emotions evoked, compared with suppressing them, reduced victim blaming without reducing blaming of victimizers, indicating that disclosure addresses specific emotions rather than calms general arousal. The third study indicated that disclosing a personal travail of any kind promotes acceptance of COVID-19 facts among political conservatives.

**Why Recurrent Depression Should Be Reconceptualized and Redefined**
*Scott M. Monroe and Kate L. Harkness*

At present, no clinical or scientific evidence can predict who will develop major depressive disorder on an individual basis. Monroe and Harkness suggest two explanations for this. First, a widespread belief that major depression is primarily a highly recurrent disorder is incorrect and misleading. Second, this incorrect belief has biased concepts, definitions, and research practices, further reinforcing the idea that depression usually is highly recurrent. They explain how this belief and associated research practices stand in the way of progress and outline an agenda for discovering who is at greatest risk for recurrences following depression’s first onset.

**Explanation Is Effective Because It Is Selective**
*Tania Lombrozo and Emily G. Liquin*

Seeking and evaluating explanations—in the selective way humans do—can play an important role in learning, Lombrozo and Liquin suggest. They review research on selectivity in explanation-seeking curiosity and explanatory satisfaction, focusing on how this selectivity makes individuals effective learners. Findings indicate that individuals are more curious about the answer to “why” questions that they expect to yield useful learning, and they judge explanations as more satisfying when they perceive them to support useful learning. Thus, selectively asking “why” (and deriving satisfaction from good answers) might explain why explanation helps foster learning.

**Let Me Choose: The Role of Choice in the Development of Executive Function Skills**
*Stephanie M. Carlson*

Giving children a sense of choice appears to support their development of executive function skills,
including working memory, inhibition, and cognitive flexibility. These skills form the neurocognitive basis for conscious, goal-directed behavior and self-control and thus influence many important life outcomes. Executive functioning improves most rapidly in the preschool period, and caregivers play a key role in its development, particularly by supporting children’s autonomy. Carlson examines agency and discusses research supporting the notion that giving children a sense of choice in how to act, think, and feel is essential for healthy executive functioning development.

Deepfakes: Vehicles for Radicalization, Not Persuasion
Maja Nieweglowska, Cal Stellato, and Steven A. Sloman

Deepfakes—hyperrealistic digital falsifications of images, videos, and audio created through machine-learning—are an effective method of media manipulation. Nieweglowska and colleagues explain how deepfakes’ realism and vividness make them so effective at propagating fake information. However, people share deepfakes not necessarily because they believe them but because they want to create a reality that aligns with their desires, opinions, and values. Thus, deepfakes do not persuade people to change but can radicalize people by sowing confusion. Nieweglowska and colleagues suggest potential solutions to reduce deepfakes’ negative consequences, such as using collective action to change norms and expectations about media.

Everybody Hurts: Intersecting and Colliding Epidemics and the Need for Integrated Behavioral Treatment of Chronic Pain and Substance Use
Katie Witkiewitz and Kevin E. Vowles

The co-occurrence of chronic pain and substance use disorders (SUDs) appears to be increasing. Both are often invisible, stigmatized disorders, and persons with both regularly have difficulty accessing evidence-based treatments, Witkiewitz and Vowles write. But positive changes are happening: Research is unraveling the mechanisms of chronic pain, SUD, and their co-occurrence; integrated behavioral treatment options that use acceptance- and mindfulness-based approaches are increasingly being developed and tested; government agencies are devoting more funds and resources to research on chronic pain and SUD; and efforts are growing to train, disseminate, and implement evidence-based treatments.

Semantic Space Theory: Data-Driven Insights Into Basic Emotions
Dacher Keltner, Jeffrey A. Brooks, and Alan Cowen

By using semantic space theory and data-driven methods, Keltner and colleagues challenge some theories about emotions. After examining the largest studies to date of emotion-related experience, expression, and physiology, they found that emotion is defined by blends of 20 or more distinct kinds of emotions and not reducible to low-dimensional structures and conceptual processes, as constructivist accounts have assumed. They also found that specific emotions are not separated by sharp boundaries, contrary to basic emotion theory, and that emotion concepts such as “anger” are more central to emotional experience and recognition than affect processes of valence and arousal.

Active Learning in Language Development
Ruthe Foushee, Mahesh Srinivasan, and Fei Xu
The study of language development typically casts children as passive recipients of adult guidance. Foushee and colleagues argue that this approach overlooks language learning as a fruitful domain in which to explore children’s active, self-directed learning. Specifically, children seize language-learning opportunities and actively select the linguistic information they want to receive, thereby enhancing their own learning. The authors suggest that reframing the child as an active language learner generates novel explanations for key phenomena in language development and generates complex, ecologically valid test contexts for researchers interested in rational accounts of learning.

**A Romantic-Partner Model of Mental Health**

*Susan C. South*

Romantic relationships that become unsatisfying, distressed, or conflicted can be a precursor to the experience of mental illness. South examines how these relationships may trigger a tendency to suffer from psychopathology. She proposes a diathesis-stress model of relationship distress and psychopathology, according to which relationship distress may trigger biological (e.g., genetic) and/or psychological (e.g., cognitive, emotional) predispositions to suffer from psychopathology. Future research should examine the plethora of diatheses (predispositions) that put individuals at risk specifically from distressed relationships, South suggests.

*Feedback on this article? Email apsobserver@psychologicalscience.org or login to comment.*

*Interested in writing for us? Read our contributor guidelines.*