New Research From Psychological Science

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Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

[To Live Among Like-Minded Others: Exploring the Links Between Person-City Personality Fit and Self-Esteem](#)

Wiebke Bleidorn, Felix Schönbrodt, Jochen E. Gebauer, Peter J. Rentfrow, Jeff Potter, and Samuel D. Gosling

Does it matter if your personality meshes with the personality of the city in which you live? More than 500,000 participants from 860 cities across the United States were assessed for their Big Five personality traits, religiosity, and self-esteem. City-level personality was calculated from the personality scores for each trait within each city. The researchers found that people have higher self-esteem when living in cities where people share the traits of Openness, Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness with them. The relationship between self-esteem and the personality traits of Extraversion and Emotional Stability was not influenced by city-level traits. The researchers hypothesized that a good fit between personal and city-level traits reduces feelings of uncertainty, thereby increasing feelings of self-worth.

[Looking Under the Hood of Third-Party Punishment Reveals Design for Personal Benefit](#)

Max M. Krasnow, Andrew W. Delton, Leda Cosmides, and John Tooby

People often intervene in situations in which they seem to have nothing to gain — for example, when stopping someone who has robbed another person. The social-benefit hypothesis suggests that third-party punishment helps to create a cooperative society by encouraging transgressing group members to act toward the group. In contrast, the deterrence hypothesis posits that people intervene in order to deter mistreatment that one day might be directed at themselves. These hypotheses were examined in two studies using a third-party punishment game. The researchers found that people use the way they were treated to determine the punishment of transgressors; however, when that information is not available (e.g., if they merely witness transgressions done to others), people infer that mistreatment of others will predict how they themselves will be treated and that inference predicts punishment — findings that support the deterrence hypothesis.

[Infants Understand Others' Needs](#)

Moritz Köster, Xenia Ohmer, Thanh Dung Nguyen, and Joscha Kärtner

Infants begin to help others by age 2; however, researchers are not sure whether helping behavior is motivated by prosociality or infants are merely finishing others' incomplete actions. Infants between 9 and 18 months old watched animated stories while their eye movements were tracked. In each story, one

character was unable to reach a ball because of an obstacle (character in need) and one was able to reach the ball (character not in need). A helper then entered the scene and assisted one of the two characters. Infants' real-world helping behavior was also assessed. Although infants of all ages understood others' need for assistance — and expected helpers to assist those in need — real-world helping behavior increased with age. Although early helping behavior may be motivated by prosociality, these findings hint there may be other competencies that contribute to this behavior.