

New Research From Psychological Science

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

[Iconic Memories Die a Sudden Death](#)

Michael S. Pratte

Iconic memory is the sensory memory system that produces and stores visual information (icons) immediately after encountering it. Iconic memory maintains large amounts of unaltered visual information for brief periods of time. But how do items disappear from iconic memory? The author investigated whether items disappear from iconic memory because they gradually decay or because they entirely vanish in a sudden death. Participants saw 10 colored squares arranged in a circle for 200 ms. After a variable interval, participants saw an arrow pointing at one of the circle locations and chose the stimulus they had seen in that location. The author then modeled a guessing parameter (because guessing increases as iconic memory capacity decreases) and a precision parameter (because precision decreases as items degrade). Across four experiments, as the interval between the presentation and decision increased, guessing increased; however, precision for the items still in iconic memory remained largely unchanged. These results show that items in iconic memory do not gradually decay but suddenly die, vanishing entirely. Thus, iconic memory restricts items available for working memory.

[A Rose by Any Other Name? A Subtle Linguistic Cue Impacts Anger and Corresponding Policy Support in Intractable Conflict](#)

Orly Idan, Eran Halperin, Boaz Hameiri, and Michal Reifen Tagar

Language can shape emotions, and emotions influence the conflict-related policies that individuals endorse. In three experiments, the authors asked Jewish Israeli participants to rate their level of support for different Israeli concessions or retaliation measures about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Participants also indicated their level of anger toward the state and toward Palestinians regarding the implementation of each concession or retaliation. The authors manipulated whether the phrasing of concessions and retaliations used nouns or verbs. Results showed that participants reported less anger when the phrasing used nouns than when the phrasing used verbs. Anger, especially toward Palestinians but also toward the state, mediated the support ratings. Thus, using nouns rather than verbs reduced anger, which increased support for the concessions and decreased support for retaliations. These results show how simple phrasing changes might reduce anger in intergroup conflicts. Thus, understanding how language influences emotions is relevant to policymakers and conflict-resolution efforts.

[Why Hate the Good Guy? Antisocial Punishment of High Cooperators Is Greater When People Compete to Be Chosen](#)

Aleta Pleasant and Pat Barclay

Very cooperative individuals are often punished (antisocial punishment), and individuals who work harder are criticized (do-gooder derogation). Why are the best individuals punished? The authors tested whether antisocial punishment is a way of making competitors look less desirable and increasing one's own desirability. They asked participants in groups of four to play a public-goods game. Participants had to decide how much to contribute, knowing that the experimenter would double the contributions and equally redistribute them among the group members. After each round, participants could anonymously choose whom to punish by reducing their earnings. Some groups played the game in a competition situation, in the presence of an observer who would later choose one of the group members to play a game with. Results showed that the highest contributors were punished more, and participants reported higher competitive feelings when the observer was present. These results show that individuals use antisocial punishment to prevent their competitors from gaining a better reputation than themselves.