

New Research From Psychological Science

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

[The Link Between Self-Dehumanization and Immoral Behavior](#)

Maryam Kouchaki, Kyle S. H. Dobson, Adam Waytz, and Nour S. Kteily

The authors explored the relationship between one's own immoral behavior and self-dehumanization. In several studies, they asked participants to describe a situation in which they did something ethical or something unethical (e.g., lying, cheating) and then measured dehumanization by using a scale focusing on two central dimensions of humanity: the abilities to have self-control and to experience emotion. Results showed that participants who recalled an unethical situation reported higher dehumanization than those who recalled an ethical situation. This effect also occurred when participants read a story about an unethical situation but not when participants read a negative but morally neutral story. When participants recalled situations in which they had not felt fully human (e.g., lack of control or emotion), they were more likely to (a) cheat on an anagram task and on a coin-flip game and (b) engage in more antisocial behavior by assigning a burdensome task to someone else. Thus, self-dehumanization might increase dishonesty and unethical behaviors. Moreover, when the authors provided participants with the opportunity to engage in dishonest behaviors, they found that those who showed dishonesty in the first place reported more self-dehumanization and engaged in subsequent unethical behaviors.

[Language Skills, but Not Frequency Discrimination, Predict Reading Skills in Children at Risk of Dyslexia](#)

Margaret J. Snowling, Debbie Gooch, Genevieve McArthur, and Charles Hulme

According to the *auditory-processing-deficit* theory, dyslexia is due to a phonological deficit related to low-level auditory problems. In a longitudinal study with a large sample, the authors tested whether auditory-processing deficits, measured by sound frequency discrimination, predicted reading difficulty. They assessed children at risk for dyslexia because of family history, children with a language impairment, and typically developing children (a control group) at 4.5 and 5.5 years old. They collected measures of language (grammar and vocabulary), reading, executive function (visual search, self-regulation, and visuospatial memory), and frequency discrimination (in which children had to identify the sound that mismatched a target, varying only the frequency of the sound). The authors found that the group with language impairment had difficulty with the frequency-discrimination task, but the risk of dyslexia group did not. In a model taking into account the longitudinal data, frequency-discrimination performance predicted neither language nor reading skills, but executive-function skills predicted frequency-discrimination performance. These results indicate that executive-function problems might be the reason why children who have language impairments perform poorly in auditory tasks.

[Prosocial Predictions by Bottlenose Dolphins \(*Tursiops* spp.\) Based on Motion Patterns in Visual Stimuli](#)

Christine M. Johnson, Jessica Sullivan, Jane Jensen, Cara Buck, Julie Trexel, and Judy St. Leger

Human infants are able to attribute animacy and social meaning to simple moving geometric forms. The authors tested whether this critical cognitive skill present in socially complex species was present in bottlenose dolphins. They tested dolphins in captivity by projecting videos of moving geometric shapes. In test trials, dolphins would see “friendly” shapes (movements indicating helping and caressing) and “unfriendly” shapes (movements indicating hindering or hitting) and a target shape; then, the friendly and unfriendly shapes left the screen on opposite sides, and the target would disappear and reappear on the side where the friendly shape had last been seen. Results showed that dolphins turned their heads to the location where the friendly shape had disappeared more often than chance would predict, indicating that dolphins anticipated that the target would follow the friendly shape. This effect shows that dolphins learned that the target and the friendly shape had a prosocial relationship and that the target and the unfriendly shape had an antisocial relationship. Thus, dolphins might interpret prosocial interactions just like humans.