New Research From Psychological Science

March 28, 2014

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

[Beyond Gist: Strategic and Incremental Information Accumulation for Scene Categorization](#)

George L. Malcolm, Antje Nuthmann, and Philippe G. Schyns

Scene categorization is generally thought of as a perceptually driven process, but in this study, the authors examined whether hierarchical categorization may be driven by both top-down and bottom-up processes. The authors examined the processes involved in categorizing scenes at different hierarchical levels by recording participants' eye movements as they categorized scenes at the basic or subordinate level. Differences in the gaze patterns and eye-movement strategies of participants categorizing images at different levels suggest that scene categorization is facilitated by bidirectional feedback between the visual information available and the goals of the task.

[Cultural Relativity in Perceiving Emotion From Vocalizations](#)

Maria Gendron, Debi Roberson, Jacoba Marieta van der Vyver, and Lisa Feldman Barrett

According to the *universality hypothesis*, all humans innately recognize and express the same emotions. Although this has been tested using facial expressions — with mixed results — few studies have examined this hypothesis using vocal expressions. In the first of two studies, researchers tested the ability of the Himba (a remote ethnic group living in Namibia) to name emotions conveyed by nonword vocalizations and found that Himba participants did not recognize the intended emotions. Findings from a second study suggested that although the perception of valence in vocalizations may be more robust across cultures, the recognition of discrete emotions may be culturally relative.

Come listen to [Lisa Feldman Barrett](#) present her research at the [26th APS Annual Convention](#) in San Francisco, CA, USA.

[The Emergence of Us and Them in 80 Lines of Code: Modeling Group Genesis in Homogeneous Populations](#)

Kurt Gray, David G. Rand, Eyal Ert, Kevin Lewis, Steve Hershman, and Michael I. Norton

Groups often form based on some identifying dimension, such as race, language, or religion. How do groups form in homogenous populations in which there are no such identifiers? An agent-based model was used to simulate prisoner's dilemma interactions between members of a homogenous population. Group formation was found in all simulations in which there were both reciprocity (people responding in kind to those who help or harm them) and transitivity (people sharing their friends' opinions of others),

and was found to be adaptive, leading to better payoffs in the prisoner's dilemma game. These findings shed light on the conditions necessary for group formation and demonstrate the usefulness of agent-based models in examining this phenomenon.

[Later Maturation of the Beneficial Than the Detrimental Effect of Selective Memory Retrieval](#)

Alp Aslan and Karl-Heinz T. Bäuml

Research in adults indicates that selective memory retrieval has both positive and negative effects on the recall of other memories, but are these positive and negative effects also seen in children? Participating 2nd-, 4th-, and 7th-grade students learned a list containing target and nontarget words that they were told to remember or to forget. The children then recalled the target words on the list with or without first recalling the nontarget words. The detrimental effects of selective recall were seen in all three age groups, but the beneficial effects of selective recall were seen only in the oldest group, revealing a developmental dissociation between the two effects of selective memory retrieval.