New Research in *Psychological Science*

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**Responding to the Association for Psychological Science Strategic Plan, 2022–2027**

*Patricia J. Bauer*

Editor-in-Chief Patricia Bauer announces several changes intended to ensure that research published in the journal represents a greater breadth of human culture, thought, experience, and behavior. The changes align with two of the three strategic goals in APS’s new 5-year strategic plan: to strengthen the global psychological science community and make psychological science more meaningful in the public sphere.

See a related article [here](#).

**When Do Observers Deprioritize Due Process for the Perpetrator and Prioritize Safety for the Victim in Response to Information-Poor Allegations of Harm?**

*Maja Graso et al.*

How do people assess allegations of harm for which there is no physical evidence, such as “my word against yours” cases, allegations involving psychological harm, and incidents that happened in the distant past? Factors might include perceptions about who fits the roles of “victim” and “perpetrator” along with political ideology. Across four experiments, Graso and colleagues found that participants playing the role of observers were more likely to prioritize the victim’s safety over the alleged perpetrator’s due process when the two parties exhibited features that aligned with stereotypes of victims and perpetrators. However, when the alleged perpetrator was a member of the same political group as the participant, the participant was more likely to prioritize justice over safety.
Socially Stratified Epigenetic Profiles Are Associated With Cognitive Functioning in Children and Adolescents
Laurel Raffington et al.

Researchers can measure how much stress a person experiences by looking at their epigenetic profile—a score based on markers on the DNA that turn genes “on” or “off.” Raffington and colleagues used salivary DNA to create epigenetic profiles of children and adolescents. They found that children growing up in more socioeconomically disadvantaged environments and children from marginalized racial/ethnic groups had epigenetic profiles indicative of higher chronic inflammation, lower cognitive functioning, and a faster pace of biological aging. Children’s epigenetic profiles were also associated with their cognitive and academic skills. Epigenetic profiles can clarify how social inequalities become embedded in the body and impact the mind.

The Dispositional Essence of Proactive Social Preferences: The Dark Core of Personality vis-à-vis 58 Traits
Benjamin E. Hilbig, Isabel Thielmann, Ingo Zettler, and Morten Moshagen

The tendency to maximize one’s own gains above those of other people is associated with behaviors such as aggression, cheating, crime, manipulation, and violence. These behaviors are thought to be driven in part by various aversive (“dark”) traits such as psychopathy, narcissism, greed, or spitefulness. However, this research suggests that these traits can be understood as manifestations of a single, underlying disposition: the dark factor of personality (D). Hilbig and colleagues tested 58 traits and found that none explained beyond D the extent to which individuals placed their own gains above those of other people. Thus, D appears to be sufficient to represent the social preferences inherent in aversive personality traits.

Bilingual Language Experience and Its Effect on Conflict Adaptation in Reactive Inhibitory Control Tasks
Jason W. Gullifer, Irina Pivneva, Veronica Whitford, Naveed A. Sheikh, and Debra Titone

Bilingualism appears to have the greatest impact on cognitive tasks with high language-related uncertainties, similar to those that bilingual individuals experience in their day-to-day lives, this research suggests. Instead of simply comparing bilinguals to monolinguals, Gullifer and colleagues used machine-learning techniques to assess different types of bilingualism and their cognitive impacts. Participants (ages 18–43 years) were grouped according to their bilingualism type, reflecting their experience with and usage of the second language (e.g., usage of a single language across contexts; very frequent joint engagement of two or more languages). In two tasks measuring inhibitory control and conflict
adaptation, they found that the different measures of bilingualism related to cognition in predictable ways.

**Mnemonic Content and Hippocampal Patterns Shape Judgments of Time**
*Brynn E. Sherman, Sarah DuBrow, Jonathan Winawer, and Lila Davachi*

The content and accessibility of memories shape time perception, this research suggests. Participants judged the duration of events (i.e., how long a colored square stayed on a screen) while Sherman and colleagues collected functional MRI data. The researchers found that event boundaries (e.g., when the square changed colors during the presentation), which have been shown to disrupt ongoing memory integration processes, resulted in temporal compression (i.e., events were judged as shorter). When participants judged the events as longer, fMRI indicated greater changes in the left hippocampus. Thus, memory disruptions and time distortions may be linked via the hippocampus.

**Many Roads Lead to Rome: Differential Learning Processes for the Same Perceptual Improvement**
*Yangyang Du, Gongliang Zhang, Wu Li, and En Zhang*

The mechanisms supporting the same kinds of perceptual learning can be flexibly adjusted according to the training settings, this research suggests. Participants repeatedly performed a task involving orientation-discrimination at either one or multiple locations in a visual field. Both types of training enhanced orientation discriminability by the same amount and induced a bias in perceived orientation at the trained locations. However, multiple-locations training promoted short-lived location generalization (transfer of learning) of both discriminability and bias, whereas single-location training resulted in long-lasting location specificity.

**Preferential Attraction Effects With Visual Stimuli: The Role of Quantitative Versus Qualitative Visual Attributes**
*C. Miguel Brendl, Özgün Atasoy, and Coralie Samson*

Offering somebody a decoy option (e.g., a $5 small beverage) can increase their likelihood of choosing the option most similar to the decoy (e.g., a $3 small beverage instead of a $10 large beverage). However, this research suggests that this attraction effect might occur when the options are presented as images depicting quantitative information (e.g., size) but not as images depicting qualitative information (e.g., color). Brendl and colleagues examined quantitative visual attributes that can be perceived as magnitudes and qualitative visual attributes that do not fall onto a magnitude scale. They found robust attraction effects for quantitative visual attributes but repulsion effects for qualitative visual attributes.

**From Pictures to the People in Them: Averaging Within-Person Variability Leads to Face Familiarization**
*Yaren Koca and Chris Oriet*
Averaging differences in one person’s facial characteristics over successive encounters (within-person variability) contributes to face familiarization, or recognizing faces despite changes in them, this research suggests. Participants were shown 80 photos of faces. Six targets were shown in eight photos each, and the other 32 faces were distractors. Participants recognized the targets, successfully matching their new photos to their existing photos regardless of whether they actively learned the faces or incidentally learned them by rating their attractiveness. In a second experiment, participants appeared to update a mental average of a person’s face as they learned it.

**Well-Being and Cognitive Resilience to Dementia-Related Neuropathology**  
*Emily C. Willroth et al.*

Well-being might be a key factor to prevent and delay the onset of dementia, this research suggests. Willroth and colleagues analyzed data from older adults in the United States and found that people with higher eudaimonic and hedonic well-being showed better-than-expected cognitive functioning relative to their neuropathological burden (e.g., beta-amyloid, vascular pathologies, hippocampal sclerosis). The protective effect of eudaimonic well-being was present regardless of known cognitive resilience factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, cognitive activity) and dementia risk factors (i.e., apolipoprotein E [ApoE] genotype, medical comorbidities). Thus, people with higher levels of well-being might tolerate higher levels of neuropathology associated with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias without experiencing memory and thinking impairments (i.e., greater cognitive resilience).

**Evidence That Event Boundaries Are Access Points for Memory Retrieval**  
*Sebastian Michelmann, Uri Hasson, and Kenneth A. Norman*

Event boundaries (e.g., picking up the phone marks the beginning of a “phone-call event”) can act as stepping stones to facilitate memory search, this research suggests. Michelmann and colleagues presented a movie and asked viewers to remember specific moments (A and B) from it. The researchers could thus measure the time it took participants to get from A to B in memory. The number of events within a segment and the distance of the search target to the previous boundary predicted scanning time better than the duration of the segment did. These findings are consistent with the authors’ model, which posits that memory search can occur by skipping to event boundaries rather than scanning one’s
memory more exhaustively.

Chimpanzee and Human Risk Preferences Show Key Similarities
Lou M. Haux, Jan M. Engelmann, Ruben C. Arslan, Ralph Hertwig, and Esther Herrmann

Risk preference, which impacts how people make key life decisions related to health, wealth, and well-being, appears to emerge independently of the influence of human cultural evolution, this research suggests. Haux and colleagues combined observer ratings with behavioral choice experiments to study the risk preferences of chimpanzees. They found that chimpanzees’ willingness to take risks was structurally similar to that of humans: (a) chimpanzees’ risk preference manifested as a traitlike preference that was consistent across domains and measurements; (b) chimpanzees were averse to ambiguity; (c) males were more risk-prone than females; and (d) risk preference peaked in young adulthood.

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