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Henry L. Roediger, III, will be featured in the Inside the Psychologist’s Studio program at this year’s convention. He will be interviewed by his former student, APS President Suparna Rajaram.

APS-David Myers Distinguished Lecture On
The Science And Craft Of Teaching Psychological Science
Improving the Use of Psychological Science in K-12 Education
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Presidential Column

On Collaborations: The Challenges

APS President Suparna Rajaram acknowledges the challenges that early-career investigators face in establishing their scientific independence in an era of growing collaboration.

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Civil and multilateral relations and income distribution have become the latest targets of APS Past President Susan Fiske’s acclaimed research on stereotypes. In her James McKeen Cattell Award Address, Fiske shares some of her new findings.

52 On Collaborations: The Challenges

How do you establish independence in an era of growing collaboration?

There are always going to be people who are experts in security or end-user devices or collaboration or databases. That’s not going to go away. But what’s the reason all of these professions come together? To help the business transform itself.

— Satya Nadella, CEO, Microsoft

In my March column, I wrote about how collaborations can offer exciting possibilities. These opportunities arise, for example, when collaborations advance independent, original lines of investigation or help test new integrative questions that emerge in each collaborator’s own work. Or, when collaborations benefit several disciplines or investigators by providing access to expensive technologies as, for example, physicists have done so successfully. In this column, I want to share some thoughts on the challenges associated with collaborations, as I continue my conversation with early investigators.

In past issues of the Observer, thoughtful discussions have detailed not only the many gains from collaborations but also several important challenges that come up when we reach across areas of expertise and disciplinary boundaries. Many of these points remain salient even as we make strides toward an era of collaborative research. For example, deep and extended discussions among collaborators with different expertise sharply increase workload and time demands. It takes persistent work at the macrolevel to identify testable questions, and painstaking work at the microlevel to iron out the nitty-gritty details of varying methodologies. Collaborations also call for navigating different “cultural” practices across domains, interpreting findings from different perspectives, and aligning different vocabularies across areas of expertise. These are not easy problems to negotiate.

Beyond such challenges faced by collaborating teams, collaboration also poses some particularly thorny challenges for individual investigators. Scientists aim to make independent, original contributions to advance the field. Similarly, academic institutions pay particular attention to a scholar’s independent record of original contributions and productivity in tenure and promotion evaluations. Collaborations can potentially complicate the assessment of independent contributions. How can early investigators overcome this challenge?

Collaborations call for an important juxtaposition. We must be willing to learn and to teach. This means that we enter collaborations because we cannot answer a question based on our own expertise and tools — or at least cannot answer it as comprehensively as we could by partnering with colleagues. We need to learn from our collaborators. At the same time, in order for the collaboration to succeed, we must offer expertise that others do not possess.

The key then lies in acquiring knowledge in multiple areas of study while offering unique expertise in collaborative ventures. In other words, it is important we become experts in some areas of specialization even as we work on a collaborative vision. Such expertise could include fluency in multiple theoretical areas and methodologies, or it could be mastery over specific domains that are essential for advancing collaborative goals. This requirement — to establish unique expertise — is also crucial for success in the evaluation process for tenure, promotion, and related milestones.

There is also the matter of collaborating with senior investigators in the process of institutional evaluations. Reasonable people can offer sensible yet different views on this subject, but the opinions often go as follows: The opportunity to collaborate with a senior investigator is a clear vote of confidence. But this also makes it potentially difficult to assess credit due to the junior investigator. As psychological science becomes increasingly collaborative, these concerns are likely to diminish and departments are likely to become more experienced at assessing the nature of collaborations and contributions. Once again, establishing clearly defined expertise can help matters by making clear the unique contributions of individual scientists within the collaboration.

Collaboration with senior investigators can also pose a logistical challenge when it comes to the selection of referees for external evaluation in tenure and promotion cases. Collaborators are typically not included as objective sources of evaluation, and this can limit the pool of evaluators who fully understand the
candidate’s research. Here too, as collaborations become more common and individual expertise becomes clearly known, better mechanisms can be put in place to achieve a 360-degree view of the candidate’s work.

The question can be summed up as this: How do you establish independence in an era of growing collaboration? The answers will advance the growth of individual collaborators, the quality of collaborations, the goals of academic institutions, and the scientific process as a whole.

Further Reading


APS Celebrates 2018 William James Fellow Award Recipients

This year, APS is honoring pioneers in social and cognitive neuroscience alongside standard-bearers in language and development with the APS William James Fellow Award. 2018’s class of recipients includes APS Past President John T. Cacioppo and APS Fellow Jonathan D. Cohen, Barbara Landau, and Linda B. Smith. The awards, which recognize a lifetime of intellectual contributions to the basic science of psychology, will be presented at the 2018 APS Annual Convention in San Francisco. Recipients will deliver award addresses at the convention.

Cacioppo, who passed away in March, was the Tiffany & Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor of Psychology and of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Chicago. His work in social neuroscience synthesized fields from psychological science to neuroscience to biology. His research examined questions such as: “What defines the social process?” and “How do we know what we know?” During his career, Cacioppo explored the neural, hormonal, cellular, and genetic mechanisms involved in social lives and social behavior.

Cohen is the Robert Bendheim and Lynn Bendheim Thoman Professor in Neuroscience at Princeton University. His work in cognitive psychology and neuroscience includes his early work developing one of the first computational models of prefrontal brain function. His research provided the basis for new proposals on the role of dopamine in schizophrenia, one of the first contributions to what has come to be called computational psychiatry. Cohen also laid the foundations for modern fMRI research and helped establish the field of neuroeconomics with work in intertemporal choice, economic games, and self-control.

Landau is the Dick and Lydia Todd Professor of Cognitive Science at Johns Hopkins University. She studies human development of spatial cognition and language and examines how experience and genetic variation interact with the developmental process. She has studied sighted and congenitally blind children, along with children with Williams syndrome, to compare their visual and spatial development. Williams syndrome is a genetic disorder that impairs spatial cognition while leaving language intact. This work has revealed how some spatial concepts and related language can develop normally even in cases of visual deprivation and has informed Landau’s proposed theory for atypical spatial representation and language development, which offers an explanation for the abilities and disabilities present in those with Williams syndrome.

Smith is a Distinguished Professor and Chancellor’s Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Indiana University Bloomington. Her studies examine cognition and development through a complex systems view. She examines language learning and infants, looking specifically at the interactions of perception, action, and attention as they contribute to word learning. Smith has been a leader in incorporating techniques and technologies in her field, using head-mounted cameras, eye trackers, and motion sensors to find numerical patterns in infant and toddler behavior. These techniques have been used to study how objects, both named and unnamed, attention, and social interactions affect cognition and development in infants.

DEAN, COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
Clemson University is conducting a national search for its next Dean of the College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences. The Search Committee invites letters of nomination, applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references), or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting the University. Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to March 16, 2018. Applications received after this date may be considered at the discretion of the Committee and/or hiring authority. For a complete position description, please visit the Current Opportunities page at: https://www.parkersearch.com/current-opportunities/clemson-university/dean-college-behavioral-social-and-health-sciences.

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APS is honoring leading researchers in the areas of trauma, women's studies, and cognitive science with the 2018 APS James McKeen Cattell Fellow Awards. APS Fellows Richard A. Bryant, Janet Shibley Hyde, and Richard E. Mayer will be presented with the award — which recognizes APS members for a lifetime of outstanding research contributions that have addressed critical problems in society at large — at the upcoming 2018 APS Annual Convention in San Francisco.

Bryant, Scettia Professor of Psychology at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, is known for his innovative research on the behavioral, cognitive, genetic, and neurological mechanisms underlying posttraumatic reactions. His longitudinal studies on psychopathological responses to trauma have resulted in novel intervention protocols employed by governmental and private organizations worldwide in the wake of natural disasters, wars, and terrorist activities, in addition to personal losses and debilitating physical injuries. Bryant has received numerous awards both nationally and internationally for his research and clinical work and is a Companion of the Order of Australia. Bryant's award address, "Trauma and Society: Why Social Factors Matter for Coping With Trauma," will focus on how the strength and support of our social networks can influence how communities respond to trauma.

Hyde, Helen Thompson Woolley Professor of Psychology and Gender & Women’s Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, has shaped the field of psychology of gender throughout her career. Her psychology-of-women textbook, Half the Human Experience, came to define the field at large when it was first published in 1976 and is currently in its ninth edition. Hyde’s integral research on the psychology of gender differences has resulted in the striking finding that more than three-fourths of previously published gender effects were small or negligible, empirically counterfactual beliefs about gender differences. She has been recognized by the Association for Women in Psychology with the Pioneer in the Psychology of Women Award, and by the International Council of Psychologists with the Denmark-Grunwald Award for outstanding contributions to the psychology of women and gender. Hyde’s award address, “Men Are From Earth, Women Are From Earth: The Science of Gender Differences and Similarities,” will outline how, contrary to popular media, scientific data continue to suggest that gender similarities are far more common than are differences.

Mayer, Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has made foundational contributions to the cognitive science of multimedia learning. The most cited educational psychologist in Google Scholar, Mayer and his colleagues have identified 12 principles of design for online learning environments that have significantly influenced the course of computer-supported learning outside the classroom. He is currently investigating how video games, suggests that video games can improve players' cognitive skills and aid learning in academic and conventional settings.
OBSERVATIONS

John T. Cacioppo, 1951–2018

APS Past President John T. Cacioppo, a cofounder of the field of social neuroscience and a 2018 recipient of the APS William James Fellow Award, died on March 5.

Cacioppo, the Tiffany & Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor of Psychology and of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Chicago, studied the connections between the social and neural mechanisms underlying human behavior. He investigated how societal influences and personal relationships affect cognition and emotions.

Cacioppo’s research focused on understanding the neural, hormonal, and genetic mechanisms that motivate humans to interact and their effects on the mind, behavior, and health. These pursuits all fall under the umbrella of the social neuroscience field that he founded in collaboration with APS Fellow Gary Berns of Ohio State University. His most recent research focused on the adverse effects of social isolation and loneliness on our well-being.

APS named Cacioppo a recipient of the William James Fellow Award in recognition of his lifetime of significant intellectual contributions to the basic science of psychology. His other honors include the National Academy of Science’s Troland Research Award, which he received in 1989 in recognition of his outstanding scientific achievement in experimental psychology.

As APS President from 2007 to 2008, Cacioppo authored a presidential column on psychological science as a hub discipline. That column continues to be among the most influential and widely read articles on the importance of collaboration and multidisciplinary research.

In 2013, Cacioppo was among some of the world’s leading figures in psychological and economics research to gather at a White House workshop to discuss how to incorporate psychological empiricism into policymaking. APS was an organizer of the event, along with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the National Institute on Aging, and the White House Council of Economic Advisers. The workshop, which included presentations from Cacioppo, Nobel Laureate and APS William James Fellow Daniel Kahneman, APS Past Presidents Walter Mischel, Susan T. Fiske, and Elizabeth A. Phelps, and APS Fellow Robert B. Cialdini, influenced the Obama Administration’s creation of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Team to help the federal government translate scientific findings into solving practical policy problems.

Cacioppo founded the University of Chicago Center for Cognitive & Social Neuroscience and was the Director of the Arete Initiative of the Office of the Vice President for Research and National Laboratories at the University of Chicago. He and his colleague, APS Fellow Jean Decety, played leading roles in the founding of the Society for Social Neuroscience in 2010.

Cacioppo served on various boards, including the President’s Committee for the National Medal of Science; the Advisory Committee for the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences of the National Science Foundation; the National Institutes of Health Center for Scientific Review Advisory Council; the Expert Panel on Program to Reduce Social Isolation, Mary Foundation in Copenhagen; the Board of Directors of the Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences; the External Advisory Committee of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology at the University of Illinois; and the US Department of Health and Human Services National Advisory Council on Aging.
W hen APS asked me to write a short piece on changing Norms, I must say I was taken aback. Though I have been a part of it my whole life, I have never given the group of men named Norm much thought. What can psychological science gain from studying these Norms? Needless to say, I have grown fascinated with the Norm subculture since embarking on my journey.

The psychological scientific literature is full of descriptions of changing Norms, social Norms, and cultural Norms. I have only recently donned my academic hip boots and waded into these fascinating waters, but what I've found is sure to interest fellow Norms and non-Norms alike.

While cultural Norms have been shaping Western society for centuries, 1993 seems to have been the Golden Age for Norms on network TV. It was the swan song for Norm Peterson, “Cheers” regular. 1993 also saw the “Saturday Night Live” debut of deadpan dynamo Norm MacDonald. The number of Norms regularly appearing on network television peaked in 1993 but declined by 50% in 1994 and shrank to 0 in 1997, the beginning of the “Normcession.” Thirteen years later in 2010, Norman Reedus’s success on “The Walking Dead” marked the beginning of the “Norm Renaissance.” The highest-rated cable show ever would no doubt suffer without its resident cultural Norm.

Some of our most prominent researchers in psychological science have realized the outsized effects of Norms. In a 2006 Perspectives on Psychological Science article, “Toward a New Psychology of Human Agency”, APS William James and James McKeen Cattell Fellow Albert Bandura writes that social Norms are one of the primary determinants of good and bad learning environments. If it falls to us Norms to do this, it’s easy to see the value of Norms today and tomorrow, but I’m happy to play my part. After all, this Norm got a PhD. Don’t that make you want to stay in school, kids?

A research report in Psychological Science from 2007, “The Constructive, Destructive, and Reconstructive Power of Social Norms,” was coauthored by APS Fellow Robert Cialdini. “The research has clearly established that social norms not only spur but also guide action in direct and meaningful ways, the researchers write.

If my understanding of this work is correct, social Norms have great power to make products and behaviors more desirable. Evidence of this phenomenon abounds. In the summer of 2004, I bought a pair of running shoes and pitched in a dollar to get one of those yellow Livestrong bracelets. Pretty soon, they were everywhere. Direct and meaningful.

In “A Sex-Positive Framework for Research on Adolescent Sexuality” from a 2014 issue of Perspectives on Psychological Science, Paige Harden writes that people are often subject to negative social consequences when they violate sexual Norms. I should hope so!

My research has also led me to a disturbing conclusion, however. I have independently confirmed that numbers of Norms are dwindling. In the United States, popularity of the name Norman for boys peaked in 1937 but dropped out of the top 1,000 names in 2005. While they may be rarer these days, this April, I hope you will reflect on the Norms that have shaped your lives, and give thanks.

The US Congress has directed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to “delay enforcement” of a new policy that would reclassify basic research involving humans as “clinical trials.” Lawmakers concluded that the research community was not adequately consulted about this change and that the policy could have “long-term unintended consequences,” including unnecessary regulations and the inappropriate inclusion of nonclinical trials in NIH’s clinical trials.gov database.

APS has been a leading voice in opposing NIH’s redefinition of clinical trials, which would have brought basic behavioral and neuroscience research under the umbrella of clinical trials and would have subjected those areas to unwarranted, costly, and time-consuming administrative requirements. Although the general outline of the new clinical trials policy had been proposed for some time, basic researchers were unaware of it until June 2017, when NIH developed its operational definition of clinical trials as “a research study in which one or more human subjects are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions (which may include placebo or other control) to evaluate the effects of those interventions on health-related biomedical or behavioral outcomes.”

This definition, “coupled with the requirement that applications be submitted under a clinical trial-specific funding opportunity announcement … will certainly have a negative impact on basic behavioral science,” wrote Sarah Brookhart, APS Executive Director, in a June 6, 2017 letter to NIH Director Francis Collins. “The undue burden placed on researchers, institutions, and NIH in terms of the application process, conduct of research, and monitoring requirements is enormous.”

Wider opposition to the new clinical trials definition was slow to build, in part due to the arcane nature of the issue. It really boiled down to a few words in a larger set of rule changes. Further, basic researchers initially didn’t focus on the problem because something labeled “clinical trials” simply would not have been on their radar. That was the Catch-22 aspect of this issue. However, once the research community became aware of the issue there was unprecedented opposition, including a petition signed by more than 3,500 researchers, including many leaders of APS.

Opposition mounted throughout the summer of 2017. There was even news coverage of the community’s concerns in Science. Unfortunately, in its responses to APS and others, NIH dismissed the community’s concerns as unwarranted and too late — the policy would go into effect as planned, they said.

In early September 2017, APS first alerted Congress to the deleterious impact of NIH’s redefinition of clinical trials, telling members of the House and Senate appropriations committees that “NIH has expanded its definition of clinical trials in order to increase participation of federal grantees in clinical trials.gov, a registry for presenting the findings of clinical studies. While this is intended to meet the laudable goal of increased transparency, this change will have a serious and negative impact on basic science and significantly increase the regulatory burden on Universities and researchers. There are other less disruptive ways to meet the goal of increased transparency.”

In providing additional background, Brookhart indicated that the “inappropriate classification of basic science as clinical trials has the potential to set back scientific discovery because of its impact on individual investigations, on research institutions, and on NIH itself.” We are asking that NIH (1) set aside its new definition of ‘clinical trial’, and (2) work with the scientific community to develop a means for allowing public access to research findings from basic studies without insisting the research be labeled as clinical trials,” she added. “This would in no way prevent NIH from moving forward with efforts to increase participation by true clinical trials in clinical trials.gov and it will avoid the serious problems that we have outlined.”

Fortunately, APS’s message resonated with Congress, which has instructed NIH not to enforce the new policy except for studies that were clinical trials under the prior definition, and has told NIH to consult with the affected areas of science and to report their findings. The policy was conveyed as part of the Omnibus budget that the House and Senate passed March 22. President Trump signed the bill.

Excerpt from the Joint Explanatory Statement to the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2018 (a.k.a. the Omnibus Agreement), section on the National Institutes of Health:

Clinical Trials Definition: The agreement appreciates efforts NIH has taken to increase transparency and improve oversight of its clinical trials and recognizes that the results of NIH-funded clinical trials have not always been reported in a timely manner, reducing the potential benefit from the findings. The agreement urges NIH to continue to address this problem through enhanced registration and reporting through Clinical Trials.gov. There is concern, however, that in addressing this issue, many fundamental research studies
involving human participants are being redefined as clinical trials without sufficient notification and consultation with the research community. Fundamental research is critical to the NIH mission and of value to the public, and there is concern that policy changes could have long-term, unintended consequences for this research, add unnecessary regulatory burdens, and substantially increase the number of studies in the clinicaltrials.gov database that are not clinical trials. For fiscal year 2018, the agreement directs NIH to delay enforcement of the new policy published in the Federal Register on September 21, 2017 including NIH’s more expansive interpretation of “interventions” in relation to fundamental research projects involving humans. [emphasis added] The new policy should go forward for research projects that would have been considered clinical trials under the prior policy. This delay is intended to provide NIH sufficient time to consult with the basic research community to determine the reporting standards best suited to this kind of research. The agreement directs NIH to provide the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate a plan and schedule for soliciting comments and input from the research community within 30 days of enactment of this act, and brief the Committees on the results of these consultations and next steps by June 22, 2018.

Congress is very supportive of NIH as the world’s preeminent health research agency, just as APS is a loyal constituent of NIH and works to strengthen support for its budget. However, as seen by the report language above, Congressional appropriators also recognized the community’s concerns that there was a disconnect between the stated objectives of the proposed clinical trials policy and the move to include basic research under that policy. NIH still has not provided sufficient rationale for a change that had potential for such far-reaching negative consequences. However, APS will continue to work with NIH and Congress on this issue to help develop solutions that address NIH’s objectives while advancing basic behavioral research relating to NIH’s public health research mission.

Additional Background


Scientists hate the NIH’s new rules for experimenting on humans.

In 1969, APS Fellow Philip Zimbardo of Stanford University dressed female students in lab coats, some plain with identity-concealing hoods and some with name tags and no hoods. He told the students to give an electric shock to a confederate. The hooded participants were twice as likely to comply.

Zimbardo’s study was a formative piece of a rich body of research showing a link between anonymity and abusive behavior. Scientists have found a tendency for many people to act rudely, aggressively, or illegally when their faces and names are hidden.

More recent studies, however, have identified the positive features of anonymity, including digital interactions that might be overlooked in the midst of the standard that "trolls" and hackers receive. Just like face-to-face gatherings in support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, the Internet has offered people a chance to self-disclose and offer support without showing their faces or giving out their real names.

Behavioral studies on the role anonymity plays in online interactions have yielded mixed results. Overall, researchers have found that anonymity can reveal personality traits that face-to-face interactions may hide, but that it also allows strong group rules and values to guide individual behavior.

Group Coverage

In 1981, social psychologist Leon Mann demonstrated how being in a crowd can lead people to behave not only offensively, but violently. Mann studied newspapers from 1964 through 1979 to examine reports of apparent suicide attempts — specifically cases where someone threatened to jump off a tall building, bridge, or tower. Mann narrowed the reports to 21 instances that included crowds at the scene and found that in 10 of the cases, people encouraged the suicidal person to jump, and in three of the instances, rescuers prevented the death. Mann found one instance in which the crowd screamed obscenities and threw stones and debris at the rescue squad. Factors such as the crowd’s physical distance from the potential jumper (enabling their cries to be heard but leaving faces impervious to identifying) and the cover of darkness made the onlookers feel anonymous in ways that wouldn’t arise in different types of crowd settings.

This phenomenon can also play out on crowded city streets and highways. Psychological scientists Patricia Ellison-Potter of the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, for example, has demonstrated in driving simulation experiments that people are more likely to drive aggressively when they are less visible (e.g., when driving in a car with tinted windows).

Who Is That?
The Study of Anonymity and Behavior

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Joe Dawson is a science writer at the Association for Psychological Science.
but the degree of obscurity, that influences an individual's consciousness of being observed. This suggests that eye contact may mark a major factor that separates aggression and hostility—even when two strangers are looking eyes on screen.

Safe Sharing and Support
While anonymity may make it easy for people to act aggressively, unironically, or unethically, research has shown it can also make people unusually forthcoming and helpful. A 2010 study by University of Toronto researchers Vanessa Bohns and Zhong found that, in dark rooms versus bright ones, people were more likely to point out that other strangers' pants zippers were undone or that they had food in their teeth, leaving the strangers from possible embarrassment.

Sharing personal information and divulging secrets more frequently than in face-to-face communication is one of the consistent findings of anonymity studies. Experiments and longitudinal studies in teens show that relationships started and maintained online are as stable and deep as relationships offline and that instant messaging and other communication technologies help people maintain relationships, and less so when they did not.

One-on-One
It doesn’t take the protection of a group to unleash the nasty nature of anonymity. A 2016 study led by Christopher Bartlett of Florida International University and Gabriele Vrana of the University of North Florida studied aggression in players of an unwinnable game. “Social modeling” was shown to have a large effect on their behavior. Anonymous participants responded more aggressively when they witnessed examples of aggression, and less so when they did not.


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Apply for funding to travel to the 2019 International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS) in Paris, 7–9 March 2019. Students and early career researchers may be eligible for APS travel assistance to defray costs for expenses including registration, roundtrip economy airfare and lodging.

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Anonymity in Scientific Publishing

By Henry L. Roediger, III

We are entering a new age of transparency and openness in science. New scientific practices that would have been unthinkable to most of us even a decade ago are now becoming commonplace. One of my recently completed projects was fully preregistered on the Open Science Framework website, complete with predictions, reasons for possible exclusion of data, the analytic techniques to be used, and so forth. Well, yes, I am fourth author on the project and one of my recent PhD students, Adam Putnam, did all the work, but I will still bask in being part of the new wave in science.

Even though I have not been at the forefront of writing about all the new practices in science, I followed along from my perch as chair of the APS Publications Committee. I stepped from that position a year ago, once Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science (AMPPS) had been established.) I was edified by the various articles and e-mails I received, and then by the collection of blog posts and tweets forwarded by others, about the pros and cons of the new practices. I think the concept of “open science” and its transparent practices have a strong foothold in our field, at least, and are gaining momentum in all of science. The Center for Open Science (and its Open Science Framework) is one of many exciting developments. Transparent practices seem here to stay.

With one glaring exception: Transparency in publication practices. Some journals, such as the Journal of Educational Psychology, have initiated a “masked review policy, which means that the identities of both authors and reviewers are masked. Authors should make every effort to see that the manuscript itself contains no clues to their identities” (from the website). Other journals do the same. This procedure can present a problem for those people with a sustained record of research on the topic of the manuscript. Do you leave out self-citations from the references? I have seen that happen with a citation of “Author, 2011,” but of course that can itself be a clue to identity. Also, this practice of masking the authors conflicts with the idea from the open science movement of posting one’s paper for comments (free reviews) on a website before submission to a journal. Other journals permit authors to submit anonymously but do not require it, and other models are possible. I am not sure if the practice of anonymous submission is increasing, and I cannot seem to find data on the issue.

Should Reviews Be Signed? What About Action Letters?

Once a paper arrives in the editor’s office, it is either triaged (see, especially, Psychological Science in our field) or sent out to review. Most reviewers choose to be anonymous. I don’t, and I know other cognitive psychologists who sign their reviews, too, but I have been told that the practice is rare in other disciplines.

Why did I change?

I edited a journal in the 1980s and became used to signing my action letters, so I saw no reason to change that practice for reviewing. I thought, and still think, that signing encourages me to write more thoughtful and respectful reviews. Of course, the practice leaves me open to receiving critical responses from recipients of my reviews. A year ago, I reviewed a paper on an old issue in the psychology of memory that did not cite relevant research, so I took a few paragraphs to provide a tutorial review that I thought might be helpful. One of the authors wrote to me and the action editor to say that he found the tone of review offensive; in particular, he found my review “condescending.” I wrote back an apology and said I thought I was being “educational.” But I went back to my review and, sure enough, the reviewer had a point regarding the tone of the review. In my defense, I was annoyed at reviewing a paper on an issue (not even one that I studied) by authors who showed little appreciation of the literature. The hazard of signing reviews is having your reviews reviewed, but that’s fine with me. Transparency. Why snipe at others from behind a rock?
I recently was asked to serve as an editor for two papers for the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). Authors are identified to the editor when they submit papers. The editor-in-chief (or maybe a senior staff person) assigns it to a more specialized associate editor. If the paper is not triggered by these early stages (50%) are reviewed, the associate editor asks someone more specialized (me, in this case) to serve as action editor for the paper. In the most recent case, I chose several reviewers, and rather quickly the reviews came back. I recognized the identification of reviewers to authors, but they are put on a tight deadline — 10 days — for submission of reviews. I had read the paper, so when the reviews came in, I read them a couple of times, read the paper again, and wrote an action letter.

I asked to see how the eventual package looked when it was returned to the submitting author. I found what I had been told to expect: The entire set of information came from PNAS, but neither the reviewers nor I were identified. From the authors’ perspective, some shadowy presence emerging from PNAS had made pronouncements about the publishability of their paper. In my experience, this takes anonymity to a new level, but perhaps this practice is common in some fields of science. If the paper is eventually accepted by PNAS I will be identified in a footnote as the action editor who handled it. I wondered why there has been so little discussion of anonymity in submission and reviewing in the new transparency movement, so I wrote to several friends who have been more deeply involved in the open science movement, and I asked them. Had I just missed the relevant articles? I was told that their entire community is having heated debates about the merits and demerits of transparency in submission and reviewing, but more on Twitter, blog posts, and the like that I don’t read. Let me consider some of the issues, even if briefly.

Anonymous Submissions
Concerning submissions, the argument is that anonymous submission (assuming it works) aids researchers who are starting out, who are not at the most well-known universities, who may be from another country, and so on. Making submissions anonymous may give investigators a shot at a fairer process than they might otherwise receive. I think this is a reasonable argument, but there are counterarguments. For one, many reviewers really bend over backward to help young, perhaps less well-known, or non-native English speakers, especially if they see a reasonably good paper that needs some reshaping. If the reviewer does not know who submitted the paper, she or he might just write a short negative review or try to make suggestions for improving the paper, over slightly positive reviews. I try never to do that in writing reviews, and I usually do not write private comments to the editor; my review says what the editor needs to know. At any rate, if one always voices one’s concern, one can prevent it, which some do. They take my name off, which is odd. One of my friends who also signs told me that he refuses to review any longer for a journal if they follow this practice.

I disagree with the issue of signing reviews over the years. I wrote an earlier column about reviewing in which I provide 12 tips. Perhaps the most critical one is to have the goal of reviewing a paper using the same tone as if you were going to sign it and be identified. Also, never, ever choose to sign your positive reviews and not your negative ones!

The Editor’s Role
What about the editor? Is there any reason for an editor not to sign his or her name, other than not wanting to get pushed back? Not that I know of. Psychological Science has begun the practice of publishing the name of the author, although not yet employed by any psychological journals that I know of. Collabra, the journal published by the Society for the Improvement of Psychological Science, has some of these features. See https://www.collabra.org. On the other end, there is the PNAS model. And we see (and will continue to see) journals experimenting with other kinds of practices, such as requiring that all submissions be vetted by being posted on a website. Some journals (as now) forbid it, whereas others might encourage it (even require it). In due course over the decades, such experimentation may lead to new models of journal publishing. Which journals will receive the best submissions? What forms of publication will survive? I would like to bet on more open practices, but I am often wrong in my bets.

Yet the bias can go in the other direction. A famous researcher may get a mediocre paper accepted simply based on reputation, as if the logic is, “Oh, it’s a paper by X, so it must be a good paper.” This may be less likely to occur with anonymous review — except that, of course, the editor knows who the author is and is the one making the decision about publishability. I have heard of cases in which, when a paper was triaged, the editor gets a note that essentially says, “Don’t you know who I am?” And the answer is yes, and I have heard this several times. This is a reasonable argument, but there are counterarguments.

Another issue, raised by a commentator on this column, is that anonymous submission may encourage authors to submit essentially rough drafts of their paper, thinking, essentially, that the reviewers will not know who they are, so why go through those extra two revisions to comb out all those small problems? The reviewers will do that. That is not fair to reviewers or the editor. At any rate, I can see the issue of anonymous submission has a duality. One way, pros and cons exist, and as usual it depends on how one weights them. Researchers can vote with their feet (as it were) by choosing to submit or not submit to journals requiring them to make their papers anonymous.

Signings Reviews
I used to encourage people to sign reviews, but after numerous discussions, I’ve backed off. Good counterarguments exist. A domain expert can avoid a situation that someone might be advising rejection of a paper of someone senior who will later be asked to write a reference letter for the reviewer’s tenure case. Or that senior person may later be editor and get even when the young scholar submits a paper. (Yes, we would like to think these things don’t happen, but we know better.) That problem exists at the senior level, too. I do think signing reviews makes the reviewer read more carefully, think harder, and be more civil. Yet, as much as they dislike making them, they become too polite. One problem noted by editors is that a reviewer will write a lukewarm-to-warm review, but then in the checklist of recommendations and the private note to the editor, will say the paper should definitely be rejected. In discussing the issue of signing reviews over the years, I have found some people who always sign, and some who at some point went from not signing to signing. However, I also discovered other people who used to sign reviews but now do not. They do not feel the same as the old days, come to the conclusion that it is simply an individual choice. I wrote an earlier column about reviewing in which I provide tips. Perhaps the most critical one is to have the goal of reviewing a paper using the same tone as if you were going to sign it and be identified. Also, never, ever choose to sign your positive reviews and not your negative ones!

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The Structure for Stereotypes

Fiske and her colleagues developed the SCM at the turn of this century. According to the theory, people are predisposed to evaluate other individuals, ethnicities, socioeconomic groups, vocations, and even corporations along the dimensions of warmth and competence. We favor people whom we see as trustworthy and warm and, if we think they're high status or low status, that determines whether they're seen as competent or not, “she said.

"Do they intend us good or ill? It’s like the sentry who calls out in the night and says, ‘Halt, who goes there? Friend or foe?’ It’s the first thing you need to know, and arguably it has survival mechanisms,” Fiske said.

The overall model is that the images of warmth and competence are caused by social structure — that is, people’s perceptions of who is competitive and exploitative or cooperative determine who is seen as trustworthy and warm and, if they’re high status or low status, determines whether they’re seen as competent or not,” she said.

Fiske and her collaborators soon split these stereotype combinations into four quadrants:

• high warmth and competence;
• high warmth but low competence;
• low warmth and competence; and
• low warmth but high competence.
Two decades’ worth of data collection from samples ranging from undergraduate students to residents of Machu Picchu to representative samples show this stereotype content applies to groups as disparate as immigrant populations (with variance from one country to the next), animals, and even corporations. Dogs and cats, for example, fall into the warm/competent quadrant, while cows and ducks sit in the warm/ineptitude space. Luxury brands such as Mercedes and Rolex score high on competence but low on warmth, while Amtrak is on the incompetence space. Luxury brands such as Mercedes and Rolex even corporations. Dogs and cats, for example, fall into the competence ratings, from more than 4,000 people in 38 countries. Another international team that collected data, including warmth/competence from 4,000 people in 38 countries. They combined all the data with both the Gini index of income distribution and political stability. Social psychologists can thus predict the type of hostile or discriminatory behavior that certain groups endure from country to country. Fiske said. Much of that can be reversed by changing people’s image or understanding of the social structure, she added. "For example, if you say there are immigrants coming to your country from the drags of their society and they’re trying to exploit Americans and take away jobs, then you’re going to think those groups are disgusting,” Fiske said. “If you say the immigrants coming to our country are the ones who are newly arrived here in the first place because we make it so difficult, and they grow the economy because they want to send money home, that’s a different structural narrative about why they’re here. Different stereotypes follow and different emotions follow.”

References

To watch the video of Susan T. Fiske’s award address, visit psychologicalsciences.org/stereotypes

V

Values and behavior go hand in hand — while ideals often move us to action, observing the actions and experiences of others can in turn inform our ideals. Values can vary widely across cultures, however, and the question of how those values translate into behavior remains.

These are age-old questions, and yet continue to provide interest both in the general public and in the research community,” said Qi Wang, a professor of human ecologist at Cornell University, during an Integrative Science Symposium at the 2017 International Convention of Psychological Science in Vienna, Austria.

Alongside four experts on human behavior, symposium cochair Wang and APS Past President Walter Mischel (Columbia University) discussed the social, developmental, and anthropological perspectives on how individual preferences, societal norms, and multiculturalism shape our moral codes.

Between Two Worlds: Culture and Personal Preference
When Chi-uye Chiu, a professor of psychology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, was pursuing his PhD in social psychology at Columbia University, he focused primarily on how individuals make decisions and influence their reality through their own actions. Since then, Chiu said, his conceptualization of the relationship between values and norms has evolved to account not just for personal choice, but for the unconscious influence of cultural context.

This phenomenon of corruption in Mainland China illustrates the power of unconscious normative influence on decision-making. Chiu said. When asked if they prefer to live in a corrupt society, most Chinese, predictably, said no. When asked if they would pay a doctor a small sum of money in exchange for higher priority in treatment, however, the same participants said they believed most people in China would do it — and further, most said they would do the same.

What explains this discrepancy between personal preference and societal norms, people may only follow the cultural law when they feel their behavior is public, he added. This nuanced understanding of how those values translate into behavior remains.

The WEIRD Science of Culture, Values, and Behavior

Values, and behavior

How Socialization Goals Shape the Brain
While the dominant norms of a society may shape our behavior, children first influence the experience of those cultural values through the attitudes and beliefs of their parents, which can significantly impact their psychological development, said Heidi Keller, a professor of psychology at the University of Osnabruck, Germany.

Until recently, research within the field of psychology focused mainly on WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) populations, Keller said, limiting the understanding of the influence of culture on childhood development.

The WEIRD group represents maximally 5% of the world’s population, but probably more than 90% of the researchers and scientists producing the knowledge that is represented in our textbooks work with participants from that particular context,” Keller explained.

Keller and colleagues’ research on the ecocultural model of development, which accounts for the interaction of socioeconomic and cultural factors throughout a child’s upbringing, explores this gap in the research by comparing the caretaking styles of rural and urban families throughout the

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The socialization goals of the [Cameroonian] families, the values — to be obedient and to respect what the elderly parts of behavior, “Keller said.

The psychological mechanisms responsible for children's development appear to be universal, she continued. Rather, the way that these cultural differences are instantiated in different socialization goals that seem to result in this divergence in cognitive abilities and behavior.

Interdependent in an Independent World
Quick — your house is on fire. In one room, your mother. In the other, your spouse. You only have time to save one person — what do you do?

According to APS Fellow Hazel R. Markus, a professor of psychology at Stanford University, participants' answers to this seemingly impossible thought experiment often depended on which country the burning house was built in. The Americans, in the large majority, said they would save their spouse because their spouse was their choice, and, of course, the parent of their children,” said Markus, reporting a study by Tsui-feng Wu, Susan Crosh, and Chih-Wen Wu.

The majority of Taiwanese respondents, on the other hand, said they would prioritize their place as places where students who are relatively more familiar and practiced with interdependence could feel comfortable,” Markus said. “If we're going to engage in instigating cultural change, or making a positive difference for families, and to make fewer friends on average despite meeting the expectations and attitudes of others, to the power of norms and to other-regulation as drivers of behavior,” Markus said.

This cultural bias against interdependence permeates the United States' educational and criminal justice systems. Independent agency is strong, valued, and scaffolded. Interdependent agency, on the other hand, is often dismissed as “weak” and “deficient,” and sometimes vilified as “nepotism,” “cronyism,” or “immorality” in a Western context, Markus said, but these parts of behavior can have many normatively positive outcomes in environments that emphasize interdependence.

First-generation college students, for example, have been found to earn lower grades, have higher dropout rates, and to make fewer friends on average despite meeting the same entrance requirements as their continuing-generation peers. Most universities are “saturated” with independence-focused college students and to accommodate for interdependent agency.

To ease this transition, Markus described several brief intervention studies that outlined the opportunities for interdependence on campus. One year later, first-generation students reported differences: those in the intervention were more integrated into university communities, through close friendships, mentorships, and extracurricular activities than those who did not.

“We were encouraged by some simple tweaks that would allow students to present themselves as places where students who are relatively more familiar and practiced with interdependence could feel comfortable,” Markus said. “If we're going to engage in instigating cultural change, or making a positive difference for families, and to make fewer friends on average despite meeting the expectations and attitudes of others, to the power of norms and to other-regulation as drivers of behavior,” Markus said.

“I'm not the idea that you're going to have counter-narratives and to 'eliminate the gray zone between infidels and true believers' in which most of humanity lives, including other Muslims, " Atran explained. "Their Sacred Values and Identity Fusion
It can be difficult to conceive of how an individual could come to commit such acts, much less commit the kind of mass violence encapsulated by events like the 2015 Paris attack or 9/11. There is a tendency, particularly among the parents of young men involved in extremist groups, to view the attackers as 'brainwashed' or completely nihilistic, convinced that life holds no meaning, but that is not the case, said Scott Atran, a professor of anthropology at the University of Oxford and the University of Michigan.

"In fact the opposite is generally the case. They're often very deeply moral people, just as many National Socialists were. They actually believe in what they're doing, just as any truly revolutionary group does," Atran explained. "Their claim that their people would be willing to commit that ultimate measure of devotion," Atran said.

Unlike mundane values, he added, sacred values are not just personal preferences; they imbue individuals with a transcendental quality that cannot be rejected through reasoned debate. This is true for religious ideologies like those that motivate the Islamic State, as well as for secular transcendental ideologies, like those that motivate the Marcos regime or the Coalition for the Resurgence of Kordofan, a Sudanese insurgent group.

"I think one of the biggest mistakes in public diplomacy is the idea that you're going to have counter-narratives and...
somewhat this is going to oppose the ideology of jihadism,” he explained. “It’s much more important to be counter-engaged in working with the particular interdepen-
dent social networks that give life to ideas, of these actors themselves. Resistance to the spread of nos
tious ideas is built within a community of interdependent social networks.”

Recruitment by the Islamic State, like Al Qaeda, “still relies most heavily on penetrating into pre-existing social networks of friends, family, and fellow travelers” throughout the radicalization process. Women also play a key role, supporting these networks “completely under the radar,” and operating — intentionally or not — as central connectors and social bridges in radical networks. Without ever interacting with the criminal justice system.

While Atran said he views the defeat of the Islamic State as strategically inevitable, he stressed that the sympt-
oms that led to the rise of the Islamic State, as well as the populist movements emerging throughout Europe and the United States, aren’t going to disappear on their own. “The great majority of the world has been left in the lurch, their longstanding traditions having collapsed in the forced gamble of global market competition. They’re on the dark side of globalization,” Atran said. “Above all, what is needed is a transcendent message and meaning that gives individual existence significance beyond death, that binds people together beyond perceived self-interest, and creates enduring and peaceful progress toward a common good.”

— Kim Armstrong

To celebrate the 30th anniversary of APS, the March issue of Perspectives on Psychological Science features a special symposium with a collection of insights reflecting on the past of psychological science and looking forward to the future. The authors of the 30 most-cited articles in APS jour-
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Competing for Attention

Distract the world is a bustling place for babies and young chil-
dren, filled with many different things to see and hear. Without proper attention, these children have great diffi-
culties with noise and sound. The energy from background speech can actually block out or make a target signal inaudible because both signals are competing for the children’s attention.

Focusing on learning may be especially difficult for children today given that they spend their early stages of development in environments that may hamper learning more than nurture it.

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psychological scientist Cynthia Chiong used a joint adult-toddler reading task and discovered that alphabet letter learning was worse when the books contained visible manipulative features (e.g., flaps, levers, textures) compared with relatively plain books. Although more complex pop-up or touch-and-feel books may seem more engaging, these findings suggest that parents and teachers may want to select simple picture books for infants and toddlers to facilitate learning.

Visual clutter and overloading seem to have similar effects on learning in preschoolers and older children. University of Sussex investigators reported, for example, that preschoolers had difficulty learning words in a storybook context when two illustrations were presented simultaneously in a reading activity as opposed to when only one illustration appeared. Similarly, a team of psychology researchers from Kent State University and Carnegie Mellon University used eye-tracking methods to investigate where elementary-school-aged readers directed their gaze during reading. They found that when text and illustrations were presented in close proximity, children often shifted their gaze away from the text and ultimately showed diminished reading fluency.

In another laboratory study, a trained experimenter delivered an age-appropriate mini science lesson to a small group of children in a room that was either decorated with a high degree of visual clutter or a room that was relatively bare. The children’s answers to multiple-choice questions about the lesson revealed that those who were taught in the visually sparse room learned more than did those taught in the visually cluttered room, even though the clutter to help dampen educationally relevant items commonly found in real classrooms. A separate research team replicated these effects in a group of elementary school-aged children, signaling that the visual environment affects learning even in later childhood years.

Clinical Populations
It’s important to note that children with hearing, attentional, and cognitive impairments are likely to struggle even more with visual and audible diversions than typically developing children do. Distractions may be especially costly to children with hearing problems, who may find listening to and learning from speech to be especially taxing and effortful. A child with a learning disability may need to exert extra effort to attain the same level of learning as a typically developing child — for such a child, environmental distractions could divert needed cognitive resources from the task at hand. In addition, some research suggests that children with autism often have heightened noise sensitivity and show more pronounced learning impairments in visually cluttered learning environments compared with typically developing children. Taken together, these findings suggest that noise and visual clutter may have especially dramatic effects on learning in children who have sensory impairments or other special needs.

Conclusions
In an ideal world, the best learning environments and materials would account for the interaction between auditory and visual factors. But designing classrooms around children’s cognitive development must also be balanced with fulfilling their socioemotional needs. Many potentially distracting items, like colorful posters or artwork the children created themselves, make children feel happy, comfortable, and open to learning. After all, a frightened toddler who spends the bulk of instructional time in tears is unlikely to make dramatic learning gains. Technology represents one potential avenue for bringing cognitive and socio-emotional concerns into balance. For example, Smartboards could be used to project colorful patterns and photos of children’s artwork on the walls at some moments, but also to create a calming, plain backdrop for key moments of instruction that require their full attention.

Ultimately, low-tech solutions may be as good if not better than electronic ones. For example, rooms could be designed to contain walls with artwork and other potential distractors stored only in prescribed places. A plain curtain could be used instead of a Smartboard to temporarily shroud a wall covered in artwork and posters. Curtains and other soft surfaces can be used to dampen noise and decrease reverberation. Lawn mowing and other noisy maintenance activities can be timed to occur outside instructional hours. Overall, the science is sending a strong message to parents and educators: Children learn best in calm, clean, and quiet settings. So turn off the TV and keep the wall art in check.

References


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In 2012, dozens of psychologists banded together to create Noba, a platform for open psychology resources. When I joined Noba as senior editor, I thought the benefits of open resources would be both obvious and attractive to instructors everywhere. Instead, we were met with resistance. We encountered skepticism about quality and raised eyebrows about the cost, although all the resources are free. I realized that instructors generally did not understand the concept of “open” that well.

For this reason, I applied for and received a grant from the APS Fund for Teaching and Public Understanding of Psychological Science to edit, alongside Rajiv Jhangiani, a volume about open resources and how they are reshaping every corner of psychology. We brought together the voices of 32 contributors from 28 institutions. The topics they discussed include the history of the open movement, an explanation of the Creative Commons license that governs open resources, and chapters on the use of open science, open journals, open textbooks, and open pedagogy in psychology classrooms.

Open resources are appealing to me in part because they address economic inequality by reducing the costs of education. Unfortunately, a college education is out of reach for most people. A 2017 report reveals that 20% of community college students are “food insecure,” and 14% have experienced homelessness. Although 40% of students work 30 hours a week, they also spend $1,200 dollars per year on textbooks. A 2011 PIRG study revealed that 70% of students decided against buying at least one book because of its cost. Reduced costs may mean more students availing themselves of more resources, less pressure to juggle work and school, and increased graduation rates.

Completing college is profoundly important: College graduates enjoy better health, live longer, and are more likely to vote, volunteer, and donate to charity (Trotsel, 2015). Instructors can play a social justice role by “opening” their courses and removing financial obstacles to learning for students of all backgrounds.

This idea was the impetus behind making our APS grant-funded book freely available. The results speak for themselves: It has been downloaded 4,500 times in the last 8 months. Feel free to read, share, or revise it yourself.

Robert Biswas-Diener is a subjective well-being researcher who works with groups who are traditionally overlooked by researchers such as tribal people, the Amish, and sex workers. He is senior editor of Noba, an open publisher that saves psychology students 3.5 million dollars a year.
BUT IT'S NOT JUST GOOD HUMOR THAT HELPS.

WHEN R.L. GARNER ADDED POINTED JOKES TO VIDEO LECTURES ON STATISTICS…

WHEN AVNER ZIV TRAINED TEACHERS TO INCLUDE TOPICAL JOKES IN THEIR CLASSES…

STUDENTS REMEMBERED 10% MORE OF THE MATERIAL.

STUDENTS DID MUCH BETTER ON THEIR FINAL EXAMS.

SURVEYS SHOW THAT TRADITIONAL TEXTBOOKS...

...DON'T ALWAYS LIVE UP TO THEIR ENORMOUS PROMISE.

LESS THAN HALF OF STUDENTS REPORT READING THEM REGULARLY.

...AND THOSE THAT DO DON'T PERFORM ANY BETTER IN CLASS.

THIS MANY STUDENTS BOUGHT THE TEXTBOOK...

...BUT ONLY THIS MANY STUDENTS READ IT.

VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS CAN HELP CLARIFY DATA.

THEM WORK BETTER THAN WORDS ALONE AT GUIDING US THROUGH ABSTRACTIONS.

TO SEE HOW, JUST TRY TO DESCRIBE A KNOT...

...WITHOUT REFERRING TO A DRAWING.

WHAT CONCLUSIONS CAN WE DRAW FROM THIS RESEARCH?

DIAGRAMS SHOW RATHER THAN TELL... DIRECTLY AND BRIEFLY.

AS INCOMING APS PRESIDENT BARBARA TVERSKY HAS NOTED, THIS EFFICIENT DESCRIPTIVE POWER...

...IS PART OF WHAT MAKES COMICS SO USEFUL FOR DESCRIBING SCIENCE.

IT'S ONE OF THE MANY REASONS PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENTISTS ARE NOW USING COMICS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS AS WELL AS EDUCATION.

WHAT DEGREE OF CERTAINTY DO YOU WANT?

"Diagrams show rather than tell... directly and briefly."

"The comics genre, just like conversation, artfully interweaves words at their best and depictions at their best."

OVERALL, NUMEROUS STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT HUMOR HELPS MOTIVATION AND LEARNING.

FIRST OFF, NUMEROUS STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT HUMOR HELPS MOTIVATION AND LEARNING.

THEM ARE SUPPORTED BY GOOD PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH.

AND LET'S MAKE THEM FUNNIER AND GRAPHICAL... BECAUSE THOSE THINGS HELP EDUCATION!

WHAT CONCLUSIONS SHOULD WE DRAW FROM THIS RESEARCH?

AND WE HAD FUN!

BUT IT'S NOT JUST GOOD HUMOR THAT HELPS.

LETS MAKE TEXTBOOKS...

...AND CHEAPER... AND LIGHTER...

...AND LET'S MAKE THEM FUNNIER AND GRAPHICAL...

BECAUSE THOSE THINGS HELP EDUCATION!

LETS MAKE TEXTBOOKS...

INTERACTIVE...

...AND CHEAPER... AND LIGHTER...

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Recently, Cleveland announced they would stop using a cartoonish depiction of an Indigenous American on their Major League Baseball team uniforms, a practice that had been denounced by tribal, civil rights, and educational organizations for some time. Other teams, however, continue to feature Indigenous Americans as mascots. Many Americans argue that fans themselves are not racists, so the mascots should be allowed to continue. The answer, according to Phia Salter, Glenn Adams, and Michael Perez (2018), is yes. Racism resides inside the heads of individuals in the form of prejudice and bias. But it also lives “out there,” in everyday practices, institutions, and cultural products—and even in baseball logos (Salter, Adams, & Perez, 2018).

Consider where your own beliefs on the nature of racism fall, using the line below: 

Racism is about:

Social–structural forces of oppression

Prejudiced beliefs by biased individuals

Salter and colleagues (2018) argue that the structural forces and the individual beliefs constantly influence each other. People’s beliefs are shaped by interactions with racist institutions and products. After being shaped by these interactions, people continue to construct racist worlds as they endorse familiar perspectives and products and reject others.

Given the field’s disciplinary focus on the individual over the social system, psychology textbooks emphasize an individualistic approach to racism by focusing on prejudiced beliefs rather than racist systems. However, White Americans feel most comfortable with individualistic constructions, minority groups tend to endorse the systemic oppression view. If we emphasize individual prejudice over systemic oppression, we can unwittingly privilege the majority’s construction (Adams, Edkins, Lacka, Pickett, & Cheryan, 2008). Without a cultural approach, we perpetuate the more comfortable belief that racism depends mainly on individual racists.

Students welcome the chance to discuss prejudice and racism in the classroom, so how might we convey the full cultural psychological framework? Start with the 2017 Pew Research poll at http://pewrsr.ch/2wFVBe2, in which White Americans (52%) were less likely than Black Americans (81%) to agree that racism is a “big problem” today. Students can write privately about why Whites and Blacks disagree.

Second, display the continuum above and ask students to consider where their own understanding of racism is positioned. Discuss their views.

Then, mimic past research by asking students to rate their familiarity with historical facts. In one study, after reading statements about racial oppression (e.g., “Dred Scott, a slave, sued for his freedom in 1847. The Supreme Court ruled that he was property and could not sue in federal court”), Whites became more likely to endorse the systems view and perceive structural racism in society. After reading statements about Blacks’ achievements (for example, “Mae Jemison was the first African American woman to enter outer space”), Whites maintained individualistic views (Salter & Adams, 2016).

In class, try reading the previous statement about the Dred Scott decision and follow it up with these:

Rather than integrate after the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision, large urban areas in Virginia closed all public schools. White students transferred to private schools, while Black students had to improvise or not attend school at all. Starting in the 1930s, the United States government’s “red-lined” maps outlined neighborhoods where minorities lived, rating them as high-mortgage risk. Redlining excluded Black people from getting mortgages and owning homes.

Blacks are more likely to be wrongfully convicted of murder, sexual assault, and drug crimes than are Whites. Students may adjust their position on racism, just as participants in Salter and Adams’s (2016) study did. Instructors can explain that when people are reminded of historic oppression, they are more likely to acknowledge racist systems today. Students can also discuss whether holding individualistic constructions of racism makes people less likely to notice (and potentially change) racist institutions.

Finally, bulletin board displays for Black History Month (see figure) depict how these different views of racism became tangible in the material world. Displays that emphasize overcoming oppression were more common in majority-Black high schools (Salter & Adams, 2016). In contrast, displays depicting individual achievements were more common in majority-White high schools and also were preferred by Whites.

A cultural psychological framework can help us work constructively with students who ask about “reverse racism,” by which they mean racism by minority groups against Whites. In this framework, prejudice is a negative belief, so anybody can harbor individual prejudices. However, racism is defined as systemic oppression. Economic, educational, and political data contradict the idea that Whites face systemic reverse racism in the United States.

By demonstrating a cultural construction of racism that emphasizes both individual and systemic elements, we can teach in ways that resonate with students of color and help move majority students forward in their understanding of social justice.
and belonging” (p. 33).

YouTube existed. In today's world, argue Clark, Algoe, and Clark's advocacy for Facebook use echoes Clark et al's report that “research has empirically distinguished between passive Facebook use (defined as consuming information without direct exchanges) and active Facebook use (defined as activities that facilitate direct exchanges with others)” — and reinforces that only passive Facebook use has been linked to a decline in well-being.

In iGen, Jean Twenge (2017; Twenge et al., 2018) affirms the benefits and pleasures of social media, but also — for adolescents (and especially for early teen girls) — the psychological costs of excessive use. As smartphone use soared post-2011, fewer teens were out drinking, having sex, and getting in car accidents, but more were experiencing sleep deprivation, depression, and loneliness, and more were committing suicide. In both correlational and experimental studies, more screen time (beyond 2 hours daily) entailed increases in mental health issues. Alternatively, more time spent on face-to-face relationships (for which nature designed us) equated greater happiness and development of social skills. Other researchers have likewise confirmed that time on social media (across active and passive use) increases depression and social isolation, and that a social media fast can diminish social comparison and increase feelings of well-being (Arad, Barzilay, & Perchick, 2017; Babich et al., 2017; Kross et al., 2013; Lin et al., 2017; Primack et al., 2017; Shklya & Christakis, 2017; Tromholt, 2016).

Assessing Smartphone Use

All but 4% of entering US collegians use social networking sites, and 99% have used one or more forms of social media. These are social animals, we thrive on connection. Mark Zuckerberg, a former psychology student, understood this. In 2012, he recalled founding Facebook to “accomplish a social mission — to make the world more open and connected.” Later, in 2018, he affirmed studies summarized by his research team (Ginsberg & Burke, 2017) showing that, when we use social media to connect with people we care about, it can be good for our well-being. We can feel more connected and timely, and that correlates with longer-term measures of happiness and health. In contrast, passively reading articles or watching videos — even if they’re entertaining or informative — may not be as good. In their timely and student-relevant essay, Jenna Clark, Sara Algoe, and Melanie Green (2018) recap the research that apparently swayed Zuckerberg to prioritize “more meaningful social interactions [among] friends, family, and groups” on Facebook’s News Feed. The first wave of research revealed the time-sucking social costs of Internet use. After acquiring computers and Internet connections, people's face-to-face interactions diminished and their depression and loneliness increased (Kraut et al., 2001). Social psychologists also worried that the Internet might exacerbate social polarization, as people network with like-minded others and control, as we do with every other temptation in life. “As Steven Pinker (2010) has noted, “The solution is not to bemoan technology but to develop strategies of self-control, as we do with every other temptation in life.”

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Twenge, J. M. (2017). iGen: Why today’s super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood—and
Going Global With Your PhD
Examining International Opportunities

By Bethânia Monteforte Sasseron

Research in the field of psychological science provides many opportunities for personal and professional growth. One way to take advantage of these opportunities is to study abroad, where you can find new scientific perspectives and research methods as well as improve your career options. Leaving home is about going outside of your comfort zone and broadening your horizons, allowing you to foster knowledge of a new culture — sometimes in a new language — and forcing you to think outside the box. Working toward your doctorate in another country also allows you to build an international CV, which in turn provides more opportunities for employment, scholarships, training grants, project funding, international visibility, and business collaboration in the future.

There are, however, significant obstacles to pursuing your PhD abroad. There are several considerations you should address before you start packing your bags:

1. Evaluate your stress potential. Although individual experiences vary, composing a doctoral thesis is most often a long and time-intensive commitment. This can be even more stressful in another country, where you are far from your usual social network. There will be moments of distress, stress, and loneliness, all of which may impact your time abroad. Before you go, it is important ensure that you can manage your time well, meet deadlines, avoid procrastination, and handle frustration healthily.

2. Think carefully about where you want to live. Going abroad for your PhD will allow you to experience a new culture with local practices that probably are different from your own. You will need to develop alternative ways to debate and negotiate your perspective with your advisor and other researchers, as well as get used to new rules, laws, and bureaucracy.

3. Start your search for the university at least 6 months in advance. After you identified your potential research field, it is important to select institutions with doctoral programs in departments that have current professors engaged in your research topic. Ask for information about the documenta-

Bethânia Monteforte Sasseron is a PhD candidate in psychology at Instituto Universidade of Lisbon — Portugal. Her work examines the social networks of parents and teachers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. She can be contacted at bmonte@icict-itk.pt

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tence. Whether you receive a visa as a researcher, student, or worker may vary depending on the national legislation.

**Healthcare:** It is important to know where to look. Consider applying for research fellowships, university scholarships, international scholarships, and international health insurance plans. Be prepared to have unexpected costs and issues with bureaucracy. It is also important to take into account the country where you will be living. Foreign citizens may face challenges like accessing healthcare in a foreign country.

**Finances:** This is available from a range of sources, but it is important to know where to look. Consider applying for research fellowships, university scholarships, international scholarships, and international health insurance plans. Be prepared to have unexpected costs and issues with bureaucracy. It is also important to take into account the country where you will be living. Foreign citizens may face challenges like accessing healthcare in a foreign country.

**PhD funding:** This is available from a range of sources, but it is important to know where to look. Consider applying for research fellowships, university scholarships, international scholarships, and international health insurance plans. Be prepared to have unexpected costs and issues with bureaucracy. It is also important to take into account the country where you will be living. Foreign citizens may face challenges like accessing healthcare in a foreign country.
Behavior, Energy, and Climate Change Conference
The Behavior, Energy, and Climate Change (BECC) conference invites psychological scientists to submit presentations, posters, or panels for its upcoming conference October 7–10, 2018, in Washington, DC. BECC is a conference focused on understanding the behavior and decision making of individuals and organizations and using that knowledge to accelerate a transition to an energy-efficient and low-carbon future. The theme of the 2018 BECC conference is “Building Bridges,” which emphasizes the role that the behavioral sciences can play in achieving solutions to climate change. Visit https://beccconference.org/ and submit by April 15, 2018.

Funding Opportunities for Research on Methodologies for STEM Education
The National Science Foundation (NSF)’s Directorate for Education and Human Resources’ (EHR) Core Research Program has released a new letter detailing opportunities supporting psychological scientists and others who wish to study methodologies supporting inferences in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education. Interested scientists should visit the NSF EHR Core Research Program site for more information on how to submit a grant proposal. Full proposals are due September 13, 2018; however, researchers can submit for conference grants as well as the EAGER funding mechanism (designed to support exploratory work) throughout the year. For more information, visit nsf.gov/funding.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has released a funding announcement for Methodology Research. NIH is supporting research on methodology and measurement via the R21 grant mechanism, which is a 2-year grant for exploratory or developmental research providing up to $275,000 in direct support. NIH encourages applicants to contact one of the many NIH Institutes or Centers participating in the funding announcement which matches the research focus of the proposed project before applying for funding. The participating Institutes and Centers are: Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research, National Cancer Institute, National Eye Institute, National Institute on Aging, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, and the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. Applications are due February 16, June 16, or October 16, 2018, depending on the proposed project.

What specific values or knowledge did you take away from joining the Singapore Police Force more than 3 decades ago that you still use today as a professor, researcher, and scientist?

My time as a police officer, which spanned 9 years prior to entering academia, put me in diverse practical situations as they occur in people’s lives, involving people from all backgrounds in Singapore. Through these experiences, I learned the importance of fairness and trust perceptions, empathy, adaptability, and situational-judgment ability, all of which are distinct from formal authority, academic abilities, and technical expertise.

I came to appreciate how important it is to be sensitive to contextual factors and see things from another’s perspective. I also learned that one can use different types of power effectively and use opportunities efficaciously to make a positive difference in people’s lives.

All of these experiences significantly affected my judgment and decision-making in terms of what issues to focus on and how to approach them. It could be choosing a research topic, mentoring a student or junior faculty, working with experts from diverse disciplines and different cultures, advising the government or an organization on a policy or program, consulting for a television documentary series, writing an op-ed for a newspaper, or volunteering for a cause.

One of your current lines of research focuses on perspective-taking. Why has that received much attention from policymakers and the public?

Perspective-taking offers an adaptive approach to solving problems and making decisions in the real world. There are evidence-based approaches to enhance perspective-taking abilities and tendencies in an adaptive way — for example, guarding against our confirmatory biases by learning to be more open-minded and to honestly consider other perspectives very different from our own.

But don’t just imagine possible perspectives in an armchair. Get into the action and interact with others to find out their concerns and collaborative strategies. As scientists, we are naturalistic as opposed to controverse, people are more likely to tell each other what they truly think instead of what they think the other wants to hear.

Over time, quality interactions build mutual trust, reciprocity norms, social cohesion, and possibly even shared values on some core issues. All these will motivate people to see things from each other’s perspective and facilitate conflict resolution and collaboration.

Based on your experiences as a scientist, professor, consultant, and public intellectual, what are some lessons you think would benefit students and early-career researchers?

Psychological science has so much to contribute to solving real-world problems and improving people’s lives. When we learn how to address our paradoxical goals and use opportunities to move from a zero-sum, trade-off mindset, we will see many commonalities and complementarities in goals between science and practice.

Two points are worth reiterating — they are often preached but seldom practiced. First, our research can solve real problems and improve people’s lives when they are based on scientific rigor and practical relevance. Rigor and relevance are not merely abstract values that we profess; they are operating principles to guide actual decisions in the research process and in the communication and application of the findings.

Second, the translation from scientific knowledge to practical applications is critical. As psychologists, we will have much greater impact if we develop the skills to effectively integrate science and practice.
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