

Psychological Science Is Important (video)

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APS Executive Director Alan G. Kraut

Psychological science is important, as APS Executive Director Alan G. Kraut reminds us. By itself, psychological science produces a rich understanding of behavior. When paired with behavioral investigation, many other fields of scientific inquiry produce a richer understanding of our world.

When he was APS President, John Cacioppo pointed out that an analysis of thousands of scientific journals (and literally millions of scientific articles) had identified psychological science — along with math, physics, and chemistry — as one of seven core disciplines that produces research cited widely by scientists in other fields.

In fact, APS Past President Walter Mischel heralded a coming “Golden Age” for psychological science based on boundary-crossing developments of mind, brain, behavior, and genetics; his prediction was later echoed by voices outside the field, including David Brooks and Malcolm Gladwell.

The work of researchers like Cacioppo and Mischel exemplifies the ways in which psychological science is addressing many of the biggest challenges that our society faces, Kraut says. From AIDS to literacy to racism and violence, these challenges can’t be solved without scientific inquiry into human behavior. That’s why governments from the United States to Qatar are investing in psychological science and why psychological scientists should take pride in the experimental questions they ask, the research they do, and the answers they find.

Kraut’s talk, “Psychological Science Is Important,” was delivered during the Opening Ceremony of the 24th APS Annual Convention in Chicago, IL, USA.