

## **ACCURACY IN DETECTING POLITICAL IDEOLOGY FROM FACES IS MODERATED BY THE STRENGTH OF ONE'S POLITICAL ATTITUDES**

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Research on interpersonal accuracy (IPA) has demonstrated the ability to correctly categorize others into perceptually ambiguous groups just by their looks (Tskhay & Rule, 2011). For example, the political orientation of unknown politicians can be assessed above chance from their portraits alone (e.g. Samochowiec, Wänke & Fiedler, 2010). Although various moderators, such as training, or familiarity with the target category, have been proposed to interact with the general discrimination ability, there is little research on this in the aforementioned area of politics. We investigated attitude strength (Petty & Krosnick, 1995) as a moderator. First, we focused on a component of this multidimensional construct, especially relevant in the area of politics: The extremity of one's political ideology. We reason, that for those with extreme political attitudes it might be important to recognize the orientation of a politician, even with minimal information. This might translate into a higher discrimination ability, compared to those with more moderate views, who in the past, had lower incentives to implicitly learn about facial features more characteristic of one's in-group. In four studies participants in France and Germany were presented with two different portrait sets of unknown politicians from Switzerland or France. They were asked to identify the political orientation of these unknown politicians. Next, we assessed participants' own political attitudes. Results demonstrate that those with a more extreme political orientation show higher interpersonal accuracy, while those who described themselves as having a moderate political attitude show lower IPA. Participants' interest in politics did not additionally contribute to IPA. In order to extend these findings, we conducted another independent study, which also confirmed that political extremity correlated considerably with attitude strength in general. A final study looked at the moderating effect of these other dimensions of attitude strength – e.g. certainty, importance and self-relevance (Petty & Krosnick, 1995) - on IPA.

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## **A SOCIAL COGNITIVE APPROACH TO CLINICAL GUT: THE IMPACT OF BACKWARD AND FORWARD INFERENCES ON PSYCHOTHERAPIST'S METACOGNITIVE CONFIDENCE AND INFORMATION SEEKING**

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The non-decomposable nature of a psychotherapy session favours intuitive judgments (see Hammond et al., 1987), which may have lingering effects on psychotherapists' conceptualization of patients' conditions. Specifically, the feeling of rightness associated to intuitive judgments (e.g., Koriat, 2012, Thompson et al., 2012) is likely to lead to overconfidence and to the use of a confirmatory hypothesis testing strategies. This, may compromise therapists' evaluation of their clinical (intuitive) judgments. This tendency could be moderated if besides backward inferences (causal explanations) therapists were requested to make forward inferences (predictions) based on the same session information. Forward inferences are associated to more uncertainty than backward inferences (Hogarth, 2010), and are expected to be associated to an open mindset (e.g. Fiedler et al., 2005). Therefore, forward inferences could decrease overconfidence in the clinical judgment and promote non-confirmatory information seeking, thus contributing to therapy effectiveness. Two studies manipulate inference direction to test the aforementioned hypotheses. Study 1 used a between-participants design to manipulate backward or forward inferences about a fictional case in order to induce causal (closed) or predictive (open) mindsets. Dependent measures include confidence ratings (feelings of rightness) for each judgment and perceived judgments' utility to prepare the following sessions. As expected, making backward inferences lead to a) higher feelings of rightness; and b) higher perceived utility. Study 2 (data collection is undergoing) was designed to replicate Study 1 and to shed light on the underlying psychological mechanisms. Specifically, psychology students are presented with two cases and requested to estimate the probability of causal factors for the client's symptoms for one case and the probability of future effects of the client's symptoms for the other case. After each clinical judgment, confidence (fe-

eling of rightness) is measured. Subsequently, participants rate their willingness to include their judgments in the client's report (Koriat & Goldsmith, 1996). Finally, participants information seeking strategies are assessed by asking them to a) rate the likelihood of several diagnosis; and b) select the symptoms they would like to know more about in order to better understand the client's case. Backward inferences (closed mindset) should lead to higher confidence and a more confirmatory information seeking strategies than forward inferences (open mindset). Feelings of rightness are expected to mediate the relation between causal reasoning (backward vs. forward inferences) and the information seeking strategy. Strategies to prevent overconfidence stemming from clinical intuitions are discussed.

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## **DONATIONS FOR PANDAS AND INVESTMENTS IN STOCKS: CATALYZING DECISIONS INCREASES THE RELIANCE ON FEELINGS**

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"If you cannot decide, just flip a coin" is a commonly known strategy when individuals are undecided. Such decision devices lead to clear results, but interestingly individuals report that they do not necessarily follow the coin's suggestion. Instead, when looking at the result, they either like or dislike it, and then decide based on this feeling. Because the coin causes a reaction, and facilitates decision making, we call this catalyzing decisions. On the level of psychological processes, a catalyst (e.g., a coin) renders a decision quasi-factual, meaning as if decided. The decision is moved from the realm of hypotheticality to the here and now. As psychological distance is reduced, feelings are strengthened, and individuals are enabled to make different or eventually better decisions. Two experiments support these hypotheses: Experiment 1 focused on reliance on feelings and is based on an adaptation of the Iowa Gambling Task (IGT) by Bagnoux, Font, and Bollon (2013). Participants were asked to invest in four different companies (modeled after the card decks of the original IGT) for 40 rounds. After every 10 investments participants indicated their preference for one of two companies. In the IGT, it is generally assumed that over 40 trials individuals collect emotional learning experiences, which however do not yet show in advantageous decision performance. To the extent that reducing psychological distance strengthens feelings, catalyst compared to control participants should display superior decision performance after about 40 trials. Experiment 2 focused on strategies of determining value. Value of objects can be determined by feeling, which is sensitive to the presence or absence of stimuli but insensitive to variations in scope. Value can also be determined by calculation, which is sensitive to the scope of the stimuli (Hsee & Rottenstreich, 2004). We asked participants how much they would donate for either 1 or 4 exemplars of different endangered animals (varying the scope). Participants received written information on the animals, which in the original study triggered a calculation-driven strategy (scope-sensitive). If a catalyst strengthens feelings, individuals' behavior should display a more affect-driven approach and donations become insensitive to variations in scope. Results of both experiments are in line with hypotheses and therefore support the general notion that by using a catalyst, feelings may be strengthened, allowing individuals to make decisions when they were undecided before.

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## **EVENT-RELATED POTENTIALS REVEAL EARLY ATTENTION BIAS FOR NEGATIVE, UNEXPECTED BEHAVIOR**

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Numerous studies have documented that expectancy-violating (EV) behavior (i.e., behavior that violates existing person impressions) elicits more effortful cognitive processing compared to ex-