

Affective Processes in Evaluation

The 3rd EAESP Meeting on the Psychology of Attitudes

Program

June 5th, 2008 - June 8th, 2008

Radboud University Nijmegen



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Practical Information

The conference will be held at the Hotel Erica. This is also the hotel that all participants will be staying in. Hotel-Restaurant Erica is located on the border of Nijmegen, in the beautiful forest surrounding the village of Berg en Dal. Just a few kilometers from the hotel you will find the centre of Nijmegen, the oldest town in the Netherlands. More information about the hotel can be found at: <http://www.hotelerica.nl/>

The address of Hotel Erica is:

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Welcome Letter

Welcome!

It's our great pleasure to welcome you at the the 3rd EAESP Medium Sized Group Meeting on the Psychology of Attitudes. After the wonderful meetings in Wales (2000) and in Madrid (2004) the meeting now moves to the east of the Netherlands. The current meeting addresses recent research on Affective Processes in Evaluation. As becomes clear when you look at the program, the meeting concludes a series of excellent talks and poster presentations.

Additionally, we hope to facilitate more informal conversations on affect and evaluation during the various social events. We very much look forward to an interesting and inspiring meeting.

We hope you have a great time in Nijmegen!

On behalf of the organizing committee,

Rob Holland

Organizing committee

Pablo Briñol, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Geoff Haddock, Cardiff University

Greg Maio, Cardiff University

Rich Petty, Ohio State University

Rob Holland, Radboud University Nijmegen

Local organizing committee, Behavioural Science Institute, Radboud University Nijmegen

Maarten Bos

Ron Dotsch

Madelijn Strick

Severine Koch

Marijke Crum

Ap Dijksterhuis

Rob Holland

Sponsors

European Association of Experimental Social Psychology

Behavioural Science Institute

Radboud University Nijmegen

Cardiff University

Ohio State University

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid



Behavioural Science Institute

Radboud University Nijmegen



General Program

Thursday 5th June

4:00 PM – 7:00 PM: Registration at the conference site (Hotel Erica)

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM: Opening and welcome drinks at the conference site

Friday 6th June

07:00 AM – 09:00 AM: Breakfast

09:00 AM – 10:10 AM: Plenary presentations

Rich Petty
Russel Fazio

10:10 AM – 10:40 AM: Coffee break

10:40 AM – 12:00 PM: Plenary presentations

Madelijn Strick
Robert Livingstone
Harm Veling
Pamela Smith

12:00 PM – 01:30 PM: Lunch

01:30 PM – 02.50 PM: Plenary presentations

Michael Häfner
Rob Holland
Duane Wegener
Ron Dotsch

03:00 PM – 04:30 PM: Poster session

05:15 PM – 06:45 PM: Whisky tasting

07:00 PM: Transportation from conference site to city centre

08:00 PM: Dinner at restaurant “De Schat”

Saturday 7th June

07:00 AM – 09:00 AM: Breakfast

09:00 AM – 10:10 AM: Plenary presentations

Gerald Clore
Pablo Briñol

10:10 AM – 10:40 AM: Coffee break

10:40 AM – 12:00 PM: Plenary presentations

Geoff Haddock
Helma van den Berg
Frenk van Harreveld
Marc Kiviniemi

12:00 PM – 01:30 PM: Lunch

01:45 PM: Transportation from conference site to Kröller Müller Museum

02:45 PM – 06:00 PM: Visit Kröller Müller Museum

08:00 PM: Barbecue at the conference site (Hotel Erica)

Sunday 8th June

07:00 AM – 09:00 AM: Breakfast

09:30 AM – 10:40 AM: Plenary presentations

Ap Dijksterhuis
Piotr Winkielman

10:40 AM – 11:10 AM: Coffee break

11:10 AM – 12:30 PM: Plenary presentations

Kirsten Ruys
Adriaan Spruyt
Roger Giner Sorolla
Joop van der Pligt

12:30 PM – 12:45 PM: Closing remarks

12:45 PM – 02:00 PM: Lunch

Presentation Abstracts

Friday 6th June (09:00 AM - 10:10 AM)

Multiple Processes by Which Incidental Emotions Influence Attitudes

Richard E. Petty - Ohio State University
Pablo Briñol - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

We describe and provide evidence for the fundamental processes by which incidental emotions influence attitudes and other judgments. Emotions can: (1) serve as a simple cue, (2) be evaluated as an argument, (3) influence the amount of thinking, (4) bias the thoughts generated, or (5) validate one's thoughts. The conditions under which these mechanisms operate are specified and the importance of examining specific emotions rather than emotional valence is highlighted.

Evaluative conditioning: The "How" question

Russell H. Fazio - Ohio State University

The mechanisms underlying evaluative conditioning will be addressed. A program of research concerning one such mechanism will be summarized. The proposed model postulates that evaluative conditioning can occur through an implicit misattribution mechanism in which an evaluative response evoked by a valenced stimulus (the US) is incorrectly and implicitly attributed to another stimulus (the CS), forming or changing an attitude towards this other stimulus. In various studies, variables that relate to the potential for the misattribution of an evaluation (what we call "source confusability") were measured or manipulated. Across the studies, greater evaluative conditioning was observed under conditions conducive to source confusability.

Friday 6th June (10:40 AM - 12:00 PM)

He who laughs is defenceless: Humor distracts but enhances advertising effectiveness

Madeliijn Strick - Radboud University Nijmegen
Rick van Baaren - Radboud University Nijmegen
Rob W. Holland - Radboud University Nijmegen
Ad van Knippenberg - Radboud University Nijmegen

Six experiments studied the impact of humor in advertising. Experiments 1 and 2 showed that repeatedly pairing products with humor in a conditioning paradigm on the one hand distracts attention away from products, i.e. impairs product memory, and on the other hand enhances affective responses towards products, i.e. enhances automatic evaluations and behavioral choice. Experiments 3 and 5 showed that this effect is unique to humor and does not apply to other positive stimuli. Experiments 4 and 6 studied the quality of humor to overcome resistance to persuasion. Participants were told that the experiment was aimed at influencing their behavior like in advertisements. In a conditioning paradigm, products were paired with either distracting or non-distracting stimuli. In line with research showing that distraction can overcome resistance, the results indicated that the more participants felt resistant to the influence, the more they liked objects that were associated with distracting information compared to objects that were associated with non-distracting information. This line of research suggests that, as humor both distracts and involves positive affect, it constitutes a useful advertising strategy when consumers feel resistant to persuasion. Theoretical and applied implications of the research will be discussed.

Why are some individuals not biased? Racial tolerance as affective resilience

Robert Livingstone - Northwestern University

Do truly nonprejudiced individuals exist? If so, what are the psychological processes that enable such individuals to avoid bias altogether? The present study examines the notion that nonprejudice is, at least in part, the result of individual differences in affective learning style. Two studies showed that Whites who harbored very little or no bias toward Blacks on both explicit and implicit measures of prejudice (approx. 7% of subjects) differed from ordinary individuals (the remaining 93%) in their susceptibility to affective conditioning. Specifically, nonbiased individuals were less likely than ordinary individuals to acquire negative associations toward objects paired with negative photos in a classical conditioning paradigm, but were more likely to acquire positive affect toward objects paired with positive photos. These data suggest that racial attitudes may have their origins in lower-level affective processes that are difficult to regulate by rational processes. Just as it is difficult to alter visceral reactions to the taste of disliked foods (e.g., lima beans) through reason or sheer force of will, racial attitudes may require more than just the desire to reduce negativity toward outgroups. Data will be presented from studies examining effective strategies for prejudice reduction via affective reconditioning.

On the behavior-regulatory consequences of stopping impulses elicited by rewarding objects

Harm Veling - Utrecht University

Rob W. Holland - Radboud University Nijmegen

Henk Aarts - Utrecht University

Ad van Knippenberg - Radboud University Nijmegen

Many models of behaviour regulation explain how approach of a rewarding stimulus can be overridden by behavioural inhibition. What has remained unspecified, however, is how to move on after such an act of inhibition. That is, to prevent permanent freezing, approach, or continuous oscillation between an approach tendency and inhibiting the approach tendency, an additional mechanism is likely operating that guides behaviour after inhibiting an initial approach tendency. As a solution, we propose that when behavioural inhibition is instigated, the positive stimulus that elicited the unwanted response tendency becomes less desirable. This devaluation ensures that inhibition can be released, as the approach eliciting stimulus has stopped to function as a trigger for behaviour. In a first experiment we show that withholding a response towards positive, but not to neutral stimuli, involves behavioural inhibition. Next, using the same task, we show that withholding a response towards positive stimuli leads to lower evaluations of these stimuli, but withholding a response towards neutral stimuli does not affect evaluations. These results are in line with our proposal and suggest that attitudes can be modified by behavioural inhibition to facilitate future behaviour.

Approach behavior increases one's sense of power

Pamela K. Smith - Radboud University Nijmegen

Individuals' subjective sense of power often has greater influence on behavior than their objective power, but little is known about the source of this sense. I propose that thinking styles and behaviors associated with power contribute to one's sense of power (e.g., Smith, Wigboldus, and Dijksterhuis, in press). Due to its rewarding nature, having power is inherently linked with an approach motivational state (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). Thus, performing approach-related behavior, because it serves as a cue for a rewarding environment, should lead individuals to feel more powerful. Participants who performed various approach-related behaviors (e.g., arm flexion) consistently felt more powerful than participants who performed avoidance behaviors or control behaviors: they perceived themselves as more in control of their environment, felt both implicitly and explicitly more powerful, and were more comfortable with assuming high-power roles. Importantly, the effects of these manipulations were limited to the domain of power, leaving mood and perceived sociability/warmth unaffected. This research demonstrates that basic motivational mindsets can affect self-perception in a non-diffuse fashion. It also sheds new light on how power hierarchies may be nonconsciously perpetuated.

Friday 6th June (01:30 PM - 02:50 PM)

"Indirectly Direct": On Negative Mood and the Immediate Positive Attitudes it May Seed

Michael Häfner - Utrecht University
Diederik A. Stapel - Tilburg University

Based on the joint observation of direct and indirect mood influences, the research presented in this paper reveals a previously overlooked "indirectly direct" mood effect on attitudes. In particular, the set of experiments we will present shows that the mood-dependent attunement of the cognitive apparatus exerts not only an indirect but also a direct influence on attitudes. This is the case because apart from directly being of informational value to attitude formation mood states trigger different processing styles that lead to information representations at different levels of perceptual fluency. In turn, the latter should have direct effects on subsequent attitudes. Specifically, in four experiments we demonstrate that the detailed, piecemeal style of information processing induced by negative mood states yields information representations at higher levels of perceptual fluency and therefore elicits positive affect that directly spreads to subsequent implicit attitudes. In parallel, we also find a typical, congruent mood-as-information-effect on explicit attitudes towards the same attitude objects.

Diffuse affective states and attitude-behavior relations

Rob W. Holland - Radboud University Nijmegen

The present research aimed to examine the processes underlying attitude-behavior relations as a function of mood. Based on several theories and empirical studies on the effects of mood on cognitive processing styles, we expected that negative mood states to reduce reliance on intuitive processes and facilitate deliberative, belief-based attitude-behavior processes. Positive mood individuals were expected to facilitate the link between automatically activated attitudes and behavior. These ideas were studied in four experiments. When we used intentional decisions as a dependent variable, the results show that belief-based attitudes predict behavior in negative mood states, whereas implicit measures of attitudes predict behavior in positive mood states. We also conducted experiments focusing on unintentional approach /avoidance behavior or intentional behavior conducted under cognitive load. Consistent with the other experiments, positive mood individuals based their behavior on automatically activated attitudes, whereas negative mood individuals did not. Interestingly, cognitive load did not cause negative mood to act on their implicit attitudes. This is in line with the idea that these individuals adopt a cautious processing style and reduce reliance on first affective reactions that come to mind. Together, these studies extend our knowledge with regard to diffuse affective states influences on deliberative and intuitive attitudinal processes in behavior regulation.

Hedonic Contingency and Long-Term Mood Management in the Processing of Persuasive Communications

Duane Wegener - Purdue University

Previous research on mood-management and persuasion has shown that people in happy moods process uplifting information to a greater extent, but processing depressing information to a lesser extent than people in neutral or sad moods (Wegener, Petty, & Smith, 1995). This processing pattern is consistent with happy people paying greater attention to the short-term hedonic consequences of their actions (i.e., whether the activity will make them feel better or worse). However, as pointed out by Wegener et al. (1995), happy moods might also encourage people to pay attention to the longer term hedonic consequences of their actions. For example, if processing of negative (depressing) information allows the person to avoid negative events in the future, happy people might be likely to process that information (because doing so will improve their long-term hedonic outcomes). Therefore, in a pair of studies, we measured or manipulated the extent to which message recipients could control negative events in their futures (Wegener, Petty, Chen, Habashi, Smith, & Jeong, 2007). When message recipients were in a happy mood, they processed the information about the negative event to a greater extent when the event was controllable rather than uncontrollable. However, when message recipients were in a neutral mood, event controllability had no effects on information processing. Therefore, people in a happy mood engaged in more effortful processing of negative information only when that processing served long-term mood management goals. These results provide further support to the hedonic contingency view of mood and message processing.

Ethnic faces are biased in the prejudiced mind

Ron Dotsch - Radboud University Nijmegen
Daniel Wigboldus - Radboud University Nijmegen
Oliver Langner - Radboud University Nijmegen
Ad van Knippenberg - Radboud University Nijmegen

Two studies tested the hypothesis that highly prejudiced people have more negatively stereotyped mental representations of ethnic faces than less prejudiced people. The current research made use of the category of Moroccans, a highly stigmatized immigrant group in the Netherlands. In Part 1 of each study, participants' implicit attitude towards Moroccans was assessed with an implicit association test (IAT, Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Prior to completing the IAT, participants produced images of a face based on their mental representations of Moroccan faces using a forced-choice reverse-correlation image classification technique (Mangini & Biederman, 2004). Across trials participants repeatedly chose the most Moroccan-looking face from two stimulus faces. All stimulus faces consisted of the same base face with added random noise. The average of all stimulus faces a participant chose as most Moroccan is called a classification image. This classification image looks like a face and is a function of a participant's representation of Moroccan faces, the base face, and error. In Part 2, other participants rated these classification images on two personality traits: criminal and trustworthy. The results of both studies showed that images of Moroccan faces produced by highly prejudiced participants were rated more negatively than those produced by less prejudiced participants, indicating that prejudiced people have biased mental representations of ethnic faces.

Saturday 7th June (09:00 AM - 10:10 AM)

Affective Dispositions and Behavior

Gerald L. Clore - University of Virginia

Social psychologists have long assumed that attitudes cause behavior, but results often fail to show evidence of this assumed relationship. We propose an alternative possibility; namely, that rather than causes of behavior, attitudes are alternatives to behavior. On the basis of an accessibility model (Robinson & Clore, 2002), we suggest that beliefs, emotions, and attitudes may all play fill-in roles when experience and behavior are not options.

A Meta-cognitive Perspective of Emotional Thoughts

Pablo Briñol - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Richard E. Petty - Ohio State University

Beatriz Gandarillas - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

In the present research we argue that whether a mental representation (e.g., a memory of a happy past event) influences congruent feelings (happiness) is affected by the confidence accompanying activation of the mental representation. According to this meta-cognitive perspective, when emotion-related thoughts are accompanied by confidence, as opposed to doubt, people are more likely to rely on those thoughts as inputs into assessing their emotion. Consequently, the same emotion-related thoughts can differentially affect emotions based on the confidence accompanying those thoughts. We present several experiments revealing that the confidence (vs. doubt) that people have in their emotion-related thoughts can be affected by meta-cognitive experiences, such as ease. In another line of research called double-emotion, we show that the appraisal of confidence involved in some emotions (e.g., happiness, anger) can also increase the reliance of emotional thoughts, leading to paradoxical effects.

Saturday 7th June (10:40 AM - 12:00 PM)

Need for Affect and Need for Cognition Determine Receptivity to Affect-and Cognition-Based Appeals

Geoffrey Haddock - Cardiff University
Gregory R. Maio - Cardiff University

In this presentation, we describe research demonstrating that individual differences in need for affect (Maio & Esses, 2001) and need for cognition (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982) jointly influence receptivity to affect- and cognition-based persuasive messages. We begin by showing that need for affect heightens receptivity to an affect-based (but not cognition-based) appeal, whereas need for cognition heightens receptivity to a cognition-based (but not affect-based) appeal. We then describe experiments that address the mechanism underlying this individual-difference-based matching effect. These studies indicate that need for affect and need for cognition influence the attention individuals devote to affect- and cognition-based appeals. Overall, the research points to the importance of individual differences in need for affect and need for cognition in understanding how individuals respond to affect- and cognition-based persuasive appeals.

Why Does a Focus on Feelings Enhance Evaluations?

Helma van den Berg - University of Amsterdam
Russell H. Fazio - Ohio State University

The present research is concerned with investigating why an affective focus enhances evaluations. In a first study, we found that faster responding was a consequence of an effect of affective focus on the ease of attitude formation. Faster latencies of response to the attitudinal query were apparent in an affective focus only if the attitude was not yet consolidated; when participants had been induced to consolidate the attitude prior to the latency task the effect did not occur. Thus, an affective focus results in faster attitude formation, but not in a faster activation once the attitude has been formed. In a second study, we demonstrated that this effect was predominant when affective focus preceded attitudinal information, as compared to when the affective focus was elicited at the time of evaluation. A third study demonstrated that both affective and cognitive ambivalent attitudinal information were enhanced in an affective focus, suggesting that an affective focus facilitates the resolution of ambivalence. Compared to a cognitive focus, an affective focus results in structurally different attitudes, in terms of their likelihood of being formed spontaneously. This process might operate during encoding of information, by speeding up the integration of ambivalent information.

Ambivalence and decisional conflict as a cause of psychological discomfort: Feeling tense when jumping off the fence

Frenk van Harreveld - University of Amsterdam
Bastiaan T. Rutjens - University of Amsterdam
Mark Rotteveel - University of Amsterdam
Loran F. Nordgren - University of Amsterdam
Joop van der Pligt - University of Amsterdam

It is generally assumed that people prefer their attitudes to be consistent with one another and with one's behaviour. Likewise it has been assumed that people are aversive towards inconsistencies within their attitudes, i.e. attitudinal ambivalence. In two studies we test this assumption and argue that ambivalence is only unpleasant when one has to commit to one side of the issue. Only then ambivalence will be related to outcome uncertainty and feelings of discomfort. We examined this prediction using both self-reports and physiological measures. In a first study we manipulated ambivalence and whether or not participants had to take a clear stand vis-a vis the attitudinal issue. Results indicate ambivalence was only related to physiological arousal when a dichotomous choice had to be made. Feeling ambivalent about an issue without the necessity to commit did not result in higher levels of arousal as compared to non-ambivalent participants. A second study replicated and extended these findings by including a measure of uncertainty. Results showed the same pattern as in Study 1, and indicate that the relation between ambivalence and arousal is mediated by uncertainty about outcomes. We discuss the implications for the way we think about causes and consequences of ambivalence.

The Head AND the Heart: Affective Components of Attitudes Mediate the Relation Between Cognitive Components and Behavior

Marc T. Kiviniemi - University at Buffalo

Social psychologists have long held that attitudes are based on cognitive and affective components. Several researchers have examined the relation between cognitive and affective bases of attitudes and behavior. With few exceptions, the relation between cognitive and affective components has been conceptualized as two main effects – the two are seen as having independent effects on behavior. By contrast, and consistent with perspectives from neuroscience and decision-making research, my recent work has shown that the affective component of attitudes mediates effects on behavior of cognitive components, serving as a more proximal and central signal guiding behavior. This work has primarily looked at health behaviors (Kiviniemi, under review; Kiviniemi et al., 2007; Kiviniemi & Duangdao, under review) but other behavior domains have also been studied (Kiviniemi & Hillard, in preparation). In this presentation, I will provide an overview of the behavioral affective associations model, the theoretical model I have developed to describe the interplay of affective and cognitive influences on behavioral decision making, outline empirical support for the model, and discuss its implications for understanding the structure of attitudes and attitude-behavior relations. The centrality of affective components to attitude-behavior relations alters our traditional conceptualizations of the function of attitude components.

Sunday 8th June (09:30 AM - 10:40 AM)

Conscious thought, unconscious thought, and the weighting problem

Ap Dijksterhuis - Radboud University Nijmegen

When people have to choose between alternatives, they have to assess the valence of the attributes of the various alternatives, as well the relative importance of the different attributes. Whereas the first task is usually relatively easy, the second is often very difficult. Decision makers often make “weighting errors”, in that vital attributes are overlooked, and futile attributes are seen as disproportionately important. In various lines of research, we have compared conscious and unconscious thought to investigate how each of them deals with what we may call the weighting problem.

Embodiment of Emotion: Why, how, and when.

Piotr Winkielman - University of California, San Diego

Recent theories of embodied cognition offer exciting new ways to understand emotion processing. I will show data from my and related labs that both perceiving and thinking about emotion involves somatosensory, visceral and motoric processes. Further, I will show that this involvement is causal, as manipulating embodiments changes the processing of emotion and its influence on cognition. Embodiment is also useful, as individuals, such as autists, who do not show it, are impaired in certain kinds of emotion tasks. However, I will also discuss the contextual nature of embodiment -- when exactly we do it. Further, I will show evidence that emotion processing can occur using non-embodied pathways. All this will hopefully offer a more differentiated perspective on the role of embodiment in emotion, and social cognition in general.

Sunday 8th June (11:10 AM - 12:30 PM)

On the (mis)categorization of unattractive brides and attractive prostitutes: Extending evaluative congruency effects to social category activation

Kirsten I. Ruys - Tilburg University
Ap Dijksterhuis - Radboud University Nijmegen
Olivier Corneille - Université Catholique de Louvain

The automatic activation of valence has been a central topic of investigation for twenty years (for a review, see Fazio, 2001). This research was traditionally concerned with automatic evaluation and its implications for the implicit measurement of attitudes. Affective priming may also prove useful for advancing our understanding of a psychological phenomenon that is unrelated to attitude measurement: social category activation. Social categories often have strong associated evaluations. In the present research, we investigated the hypothesis that automatic evaluations induced by the individual features of a stimulus may facilitate access to evaluatively congruent category dimensions of this stimulus. To illustrate, assuming people value the category 'smoker' negatively, access to the latter category may be facilitated upon encountering a smoker with a negative individual feature (e.g., an unattractive smoker) rather than a positive individual feature (e.g., an attractive smoker).

Two studies provide support for our evaluative-matching hypothesis, showing that social categorization was faster and more accurate for evaluatively congruent categories (i.e., unattractive foreigners, unattractive prostitutes, attractive fellow-citizens and attractive brides) than for evaluatively incongruent categories (i.e., attractive foreigners, attractive prostitutes, unattractive fellow-citizens and unattractive brides). We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings.

Affective and nonaffective stimulus processing of task-irrelevant stimuli: a matter of feature-specific attention allocation

Adriaan Spruyt - Ghent University
Jan de Houwer - Ghent University

Affective stimulus information can be processed rapidly, with minimal effort, and outside the reach of consciousness. Accordingly, it has been concluded affective stimulus processing is a fairly automatic and unconditional phenomenon. We will demonstrate that affective stimulus processing is not the unconditional phenomenon that several researchers have claimed it to be. In addition, we will demonstrate that nonaffective processing of task-irrelevant stimuli can proceed in an equally 'automatic' fashion as the affective processing of task-irrelevant stimuli, provided that feature-specific attention allocation is taken into account. Implications for the affect primacy hypothesis will be discussed.

Compunction and Disgust Within the Emotional Attitude: Implications for Automaticity and Cognitive Elaboration

Roger Giner-Sorolla - University of Kent

Roberto Gutierrez - University of Kent

Pascale S. Russell - University of Kent

Lay people and psychologists both tend to assume that emotional associations within attitudes are more automatic (e.g., more accessible) than non-emotional associations. While there is ample evidence that evaluative judgments are made especially rapidly, the accessibility of emotional versus non-emotional material depends on a number of factors, including the specific emotion involved. I will review evidence from my lab and elsewhere, showing that specific types of emotional associations have different processing implications. At the high end of the processing continuum, self-conscious emotional associations are generally less accessible than other types of emotion, but can act as cues for self-control either when chronically accessible or when made accessible. At the low end, associations of concepts with disgust are made automatically and irrationally, and resist cognitive reappraisal. In the context of moral and intergroup judgment, a number of our recent studies show that disgust, versus anger: does not involve as many justifying cognitions; is expressed regardless of mitigating factors such as lack of intent or harmlessness; and has a greater impact on judgment under cognitive load. As some of these findings involve judgments of groups, they also suggest the utility of an attitude- rather than appraisal-based view of intergroup emotions.

Moralization of attitudes and the role of emotions

Joop van der Pligt - University of Amsterdam

We investigated the moralization of attitudes in a longitudinal study in which we approached participants in 2004, 2006 and 2007. The hazard of avian influenza provided the opportunity to study the impact of moral concerns and emotions on attitudes and behavior. Results showed that moral concerns about eating meat increased, and that these concerns were also seen as more important determinants of attitude than before the 2006 crisis. Moral concerns were associated with disgust and (to a lesser extent) guilt. The impact of moral concerns on behavior was mediated by disgust. In a second study we induced moral concerns by showing a film about modern meat production methods. Results revealed an increasing role of moral concerns for the experimental group. Their impact on behavior was fully mediated by emotions (disgust and guilt). Moreover, attitude strength was more pronounced for participants whose attitude was primarily based on moral concerns as opposed to other considerations such as health consequences and the environmental impact of meat production. Results confirm and extend Rozin's (1999) work on moralization and help to specify the role of emotions in moral-based attitudes.

Poster Abstracts

Expressing prejudice without appearing unfair: The role of attitudinal ambivalence

Francesca Romana Alparone - University of Perugia
Stefano Pagliaro - University of Perugia
Maria Giueppina Pacilli - University of Chieti-Pescara
Angelica Mucchi Faina - University of Perugia

Attitudinal ambivalence can be considered a form of modern prejudice because it allows us to express negative attitudes toward the outgroup without violating individual non-prejudiced standards. Furthermore, ambivalence might be connected to prejudice also in terms of complying to social standards, e.g. to conforming the fairness norm. Since not all groups are protected by the fairness norm to the same degree, the aim of this study was to investigate whether and how the normative protection of outgroup (NPO) affects the relationship between ambivalence and prejudice.

Eighty-five Italian university students completed measures of prejudice and ambivalence with reference to two outgroups high/low in NPO. Results highlighted a curvilinear relation between ambivalence and prejudice moderated by NPO. A stronger positive relationship between ambivalence and prejudice for the high protected group emerged while, conversely, for the low protected group the relationship resulted weak and negative. Overall, results confirmed that when the social norm pushes to hide prejudice people tend to counterbalance the negative valence of attitude via ambivalence. In contrast, when people feel freer of the norm, they maintain a more univalent and negative attitude.

Beyond a Single Pattern of Mixed Emotional Experience: Sequential, Prevalent, Inverse, and Genuine Simultaneous"

Pilar Carrera - Universidad Autonoma de Madrid
Luis Oceja - Universidad Autonoma de Madrid

The Analogical Emotional Scale (AES) permits respondents to represent the changes that occur in the course of two different emotions over the time in which they are experienced (Carrera & Oceja, 2007). We tested whether the use of the AES allows us to go beyond the distinction between sequential and simultaneous emotional experiences. Specifically, the use of the AES permits us to detect and discriminate the existence of at least four different patterns of mixed emotional experience: sequential, prevalent, inverse, and genuine simultaneous. We carried out four studies in which we used different stimuli for inducing emotion: personal memories, verbal accounts, videos and photographs. The results supported our expectation that these four patterns are associated with different levels of emotional ambivalence and tension along a continuum from lesser to greater: sequential, prevalent, inverse, and genuine simultaneous.

In the Mood to Face the Facts: The Effects of Mood on Implicit and Explicit Processing of Self-Threatening Information

Enny Das - VU University

Four experiments tested the hypothesis that a positive mood can increase attendance to, and systematic processing of, self-threatening information (cf. Raghunathan & Trope, 2002); and that these effects reverse for high levels of self-threat. In Study 1, a positive mood speeded up responses to smoking-related illness words – compared with neutral words - for smokers. In Study 2, a positive mood increased differentiation between strong and weak arguments in a threatening health message about smoking, only for smokers. Studies 3 and 4 tested the effects of mood for higher levels of self-threat (moderate, high) regarding the use of toxic products. In Study 3, a positive mood increased differentiation between strong and weak arguments in a health message for moderate levels of threat; these effects reversed under high levels of threat. In Study 4, a positive mood speeded up response times to threatening target words in a LDT for moderate levels of threat, and slowed down response times to threatening target words under high levels of threat. It is argued that a positive mood may serve different self-regulatory functions depending on self-threat level; parallels with self-affirmation effects (Briñol, Petty, Gallardo, and DeMarree, 2007; Van Koningsbruggen & Das, 2007) will be discussed.

Fitting Decisions: Mood and Intuitive versus Deliberative Decision-Strategies

Marieke de Vries - Radboud University Nijmegen
Rob W. Holland - Radboud University Nijmegen
Cilia L. M. Witteman - Radboud University Nijmegen

We investigated the influence of the compatibility between mood and decision-strategies on the subjective value of a decision-outcome. Several studies have provided evidence for the idea that a sad mood induces people to analyze information carefully, probably fitting well with a deliberative decision-strategy. In a happy mood, people tend to more strongly act on their feelings, probably fitting well with an intuitive decision-strategy. However, sometimes the situation demands the use of decision-strategies that seem incompatible with mood states. We expected that decision-makers would value a decision-outcome higher in case of a fit between mood and decision-strategy than in case of a non-fit. After a mood manipulation, participants were instructed to decide either based on their first affective reaction or after deliberation. Results confirmed our expectations: fitting decisions enhanced the subjective value of a decision-outcome.

Affect as Information or as Spotlight

Koen Dijkstra - Radboud University Nijmegen

Recent research indicates that emotions profoundly affect judgment and decision making. Decisions are not exclusively based on rational trade-offs between pros and cons, but often on affective reactions. In my experiment I test the hypotheses whether the affective evaluation of stimuli is used as extra information or functions as a spotlight, directing the decision maker to relevant information.

I have tested these two hypotheses by asking participants to judge the probability of guilt of a defendant in a criminal case. Participants are given a picture of the defendant and nine witness statements (prosecuting, defending and neutral) on which to base their judgment. However, the picture of the defendant is subjected to 'evaluative conditioning' (positive, negative or neutral) at the start of the experiment. After the judgment task a recognition task follows to assess accessibility of the witness statements.

An effect of evaluative conditioning on the judgment task, but not on the recognition task, can be interpreted as evidence for the "affect as information" hypotheses. When however an effect is found on both tasks, the effect on the judgment task can solely be the result of the spotlight effect.

The findings of this experiment will be presented.

The uncertainty roots of the political decisions: The role of implicit attitudes

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A research was carried in order to test the power of the Gawronski and Bodenhausen's APE model (2006) in detecting the psychological processes underlying the route from uncertainty to the expression of a choice. The implicit and explicit attitudes of a group of participants about a bill on de facto relationships were measured using two different techniques: The performance in a IAT task, in the case of the implicit attitudes, and the answers to an attitude questionnaire, in the case of the explicit attitudes. An intention of voting in favour or against the bill was also registered.

Our hypothesis was that in the case of uncertain participants two qualitatively different structures and routes for implicit and explicit attitudes could be detected. A pattern of inconsistent propositions, unable to express a definite choice, could be predicted for the explicit side of the attitude. A set of automatic affective reactions aroused from the object of the attitude, in the case of its implicit component was also hypothesized. Even not clearly expressed at the conscious level, this latter component was predicted to drive the progressive fit of the propositions of the explicit structure of the attitude moving to a definite behavioural intention.

The implicit and explicit attitudes manifested by certain and uncertain participants were detected at time 1 and one week later (time 2). The implicit attitudes measured at the time 1 anticipate the subsequent choices of people who initially defined themselves as uncertain. The results confirm the hypothesis derived from APE model, emphasizing the crucial role played by automatic affective responses in shaping the decision processes.

Inclusion-Exclusion of Positive and Negative Past Selves: Mood Congruence as Information

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The attitude towards the self (self-esteem) is people's most important attitude. It is well established that enduring affect (chronic mood) is among the strongest predictors of self-esteem. Therefore, every analysis of the role of affect in attitudes and attitude change is incomplete unless the prominent case of self-esteem is considered. The current research focuses on self-esteem change as a function of (a) recalling valenced self-attributes and (b) enduring affect. Specifically, we challenge the widespread truism that recalling positive self-attributes necessarily increases self-esteem, whereas recalling negative self-attributes decreases self-esteem. Four experiments establish that chronically happy people show a relative increase in self-esteem by recalling either positive or negative self-attributes. Chronically sad people, however, show a relative decrease in self-esteem by recalling either positive or negative self-attributes. These effects are due to divergent perceptions of mood congruence between the recalled self and the current self. Specifically, happy (sad) people perceive mood congruence between a recalled positive (negative) self and the current self, but mood incongruence between a recalled negative (positive) self and the current self. Perceived mood congruence (incongruence) fosters perceptions of temporal recency (distance). In turn, perceived temporal recency elicits assimilation effects on self-esteem, whereas perceived temporal distance elicits contrast effects. The results highlight the interplay among affective processes, memory, and attitudes toward the self.

How contact stage and incongruent liking and respect affect ambivalence of interpersonal attitudes

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Three studies aimed to examine how the contact stage (closed vs. continued) with another person may affect ambivalence of the attitude towards them. The main hypothesis was that attitudes towards people with whom the contact continues are characterised by higher level of ambivalence as compared to the attitudes towards people with whom the contact has been closed. Studies 2 and 3 also focused on both the role incongruent liking and respect may play as the antecedents of ambivalence and whether the postulated main effect of the contact stage (found in Study 1) will hold independently of the level of ambivalence introduced by the inconsistency between liking and respect. The results of all the 3 studies lend substantial support to the main hypothesis, with Studies 2 and 3 showing that discrepant liking and respect are indeed strong antecedents of ambivalence and Study 3 additionally demonstrating that ambivalence is a mediator of the attitude extremity.

I didn't feel like drinking beer but I don't know why: Evaluative conditioning changes drinking behavior and explicit attitudes

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In a first study, we used a conditioning paradigm to change attitudes toward beer and drinking behavior in students. Participants had to spot an irrelevant target picture in a series of trials in which many different stimuli were presented. In a number of these trials beer-related pictures (CS's) were paired with negative words and pictures (US's). After conditioning, the experimental group showed less positive explicit beer attitudes and reduced beer consumption in a bogus taste test compared to the control group (no exposure to US-CS pairs). However, in this study, there was no effect on implicit attitudes. The value of evaluative conditioning as a means to change both explicit and implicit alcohol-related attitudes as well as drinking behavior is currently under further examination in a second study. In this second study, participants in the experimental condition are again exposed to critical pairings of alcohol-related stimuli (CS's) with negative stimuli (US's). Moreover, drinking behavior and both explicit and implicit attitudes are measured immediately after the conditioning procedure and in two follow-ups. Results are expected in the spring of 2008.

Look Black In Anger: Implicit Prejudice Influences The Categorization of Racially Ambiguous Angry Faces

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Previous research by Hugenberg and Bodenhausen (2003) has shown that participants high in implicit prejudice are biased to perceiving threatening affect in Black target faces. The current study assessed whether individual differences in implicit prejudice influence how individuals categorize racially ambiguous angry and happy faces as Black or White. In the study, White participants were shown a series of racially ambiguous target faces displaying angry, happy, and neutral expressions. The task of participants was to (a) classify the face as either Black or White and (b) rate the intensity of the emotion display. The results revealed that participants high in implicit prejudice categorized significantly more racially ambiguous angry faces as Black compared to participants low in implicit prejudice. Further, when a racially ambiguous angry face was perceived to be Black, participants high in implicit prejudice tended to rate the emotion display as more intense than participants low in implicit prejudice. These findings provide further evidence that implicit prejudicial attitudes influence the perception of threatening affect, and highlight the interplay of affect evaluation and attitudes.

Lateralization of Diffuse Positive and Negative Affect: Ascribing Valence to Ambiguous Stimuli

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The available evidence regarding the lateralization of affect is rather divergent. Interestingly, the common procedure in previous research concerned with affective lateralization has been to measure hemispheric dominance following exposure to concrete affective stimuli. Therefore, prior research seems to tap primarily into the lateralization of motivational (approach-avoidance) directions rather than diffuse affective states. In the present studies an alternative methodological approach is proposed that seeks to exclude approach-avoidance motivations and merely study the lateralized nature of diffuse affect. In two studies, participants were asked to evaluate ambiguous stimuli presented in either the right or left visual field. Stimuli presented in the left visual field were significantly more often ascribed a positive meaning compared to information presented in the right visual field. The present findings are compatible with research on related lateralized processes and emphasize the necessity to distinguish between motivated affective states that are directed at desired end states, and more diffuse, free-floating affective states.

Prime arousal influences the extent of affective priming

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Previous research has shown that primes that are attended to more lead to enhanced affective priming. As high arousal stimuli attract more attention than do low arousal stimuli, the present study assessed the effect of rated prime arousal as well as of prime valence on affective priming. Contrary to expectation, prime arousal interacted with prime valence such that affective priming was largest with low arousal pleasant primes and high arousal unpleasant primes and weakest with high arousal pleasant primes and low arousal unpleasant primes. This pattern held for picture (Experiment 1; n=60) and word primes (Experiment 2; n=41) and did not vary across a range of stimulus onset asynchronies for both types of primes (Experiment 3; n=61). The present finding seems difficult to accommodate by response competition accounts of affective priming, but is consistent with spreading activation accounts.

Selective association activation: Material-specific effect in the Implicit Association Test?

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A set of models of conceptual knowledge and semantic memory (e.g. Warrington & McCarthy, 1983; Barsalou, 1999, 2003) argues for modality-specific knowledge representations, suggesting divisions between various sensory representations and/or between visual and verbal representations. If implicit affective processing is dependent on modality-specific conceptual representations, then evaluative responses should vary when representations across domains are associated with differently valenced information. Alternatively, if affective processing relies on amodal representations, no modality-specific effects should be found, no matter how conflicting the associations are. The present research tested the effect of visual and verbal stimuli and labels in the Implicit Association Test (IAT), with conditions when verbal and non-verbal associations are thought to have consistent or conflicting valences. Results showed small, but significant modality-specific effects when verbal and non-verbal associations were in conflict. The implications of the findings are discussed, including differences between pictorial and verbal versions of the IAT.

Let it be...it's familiar! – The role of target familiarity in affective priming.

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The impact of the activation of an affective/evaluative construct, by the context, on subsequent processing (i.e., affective priming) has been extensively demonstrated in the literature, emerging evidence that supports both the generality of such effects and the automaticity of their underlying processes. However, research has mainly focused on how certain characteristics of the prime may influence the processing of the target, being the role played by the later in this process largely overlooked. Considering that some attitude objects are able to automatically activate their associated evaluative judgments, and that these “strong” attitudes towards well-known (familiar) objects are also taken to be more resistant to contextual influences, we propose that the target’s familiarity have a moderating role in affective priming effects. In one experiment, we have used images representing two categories of “neutral” target objects that varied in terms of their associated familiarity. It was found that only the least familiar target objects appeared to be evaluated in the direction of the activated valence, while the photos of the most familiar category of target objects were not sensible to that manipulation. To address the possibility of an interference of the chronically associated valence to the objects by the mere activation of their categories, in a subsequent study we have manipulated the salience of such categories (between-participants) in the instructions given to participants. The implications for the affective priming research domain, as well as for the field of attitudes’ strength and resistance to persuasion will be discussed.

Unconscious Thought and the development of Implicit Preferences

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Unconscious Thought Theory (Dijksterhuis & Nordgren, 2006) states that choices often improve as a result of a period of unconscious thought. Indeed, research has shown that unconscious thought improves the quality of decisions as judged from a normative, but also subjective perspective. However, up to now, preferences have been measured explicitly in unconscious thought research. The role of unconscious thought in the development of implicit preferences remains unclear. Investigating this process is important, as the development of implicit preferences can tell us more about how exactly unconscious thought works.

In the present research, we address this question by examining whether unconscious thought improves the quality of implicit preferences. Participants were presented with information about 4 hypothetical roommates. The roommates were described by positive or negative attributes in such a way that one roommate represented the best, and one roommate represented the worst option. After either 4 minutes of unconscious thinking, or immediately, participants did an affective priming task. Response latencies showed an implicit preference for the best roommate, but only for unconscious thinkers. Participants who immediately pursued with the affective priming task did not show such an enhanced implicit preference. The conclusion is that unconscious thought indeed helps to develop implicit preferences.

The similar roles of affective and cognitive arguments in advertising

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The role of affect has been examined in various contexts in advertising (Ambler & Burne, 1999; Batra & Stephens, 1994; Batra & Ray, 1986; Derbaix, 1995; Edell & Burke, 1987; Olney, Holbrook & Batra, 1991). In the current research, two experiments were conducted to examine the role of affect as an argument in attitude formation through advertising. In the first experiment, participants were exposed to a print ad for a fictitious brand of instant coffee. The ad contained either affective or cognitive arguments (appeal) that were either strong or weak (argument strength). The results show a main effect of argument strength on brand attitudes. However, they do not support any effect of appeal on brand attitudes or attitudes towards the ad. In the second experiment, participants were assigned to a high vs. low elaboration condition and saw a print ad for a fictitious brand of chocolate that contained either affective or cognitive arguments (appeal). It was expected that in the high elaboration conditions, cognitive arguments would lead to more favorable attitudes than affective arguments. The reverse pattern was expected in the case of low elaboration. However, the results did not support the hypothesized interactive effect of elaboration and appeal on brand attitudes or attitudes towards the ad. Taken together the findings of these experiments indicate that the nature of argument appeal does not affect the valence of the resulting attitudes and support the notion that affective arguments are perceived as information about the attitude object, leading to "content-based affective elaboration" (Rosselli, Skelly & Mackie, 1995: 188).

Sometime stories sell: Narrative appeals, affective processes, and attitude change

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Research has demonstrated that narratives can be effective in eliciting attitude change, especially when recipients become transported into the narrative (Green & Brock, 2000). In two studies, we addressed whether some people are predisposed to be influenced by narratives and whether narrative and rhetorical appeals are differentially effective for different people. In Study 1, participants read an experimental or a control narrative, and completed measure of attitudes, Need for Affect (NFA), Need for Cognition (NFC), Personal Need for Structure (PNS), Transportation, and Transportability. The results revealed that NFA and NFC were positively correlated with transportation, transportability, and attitudes, while PNS was negatively related to transportation and transportability. In Study 2, participants read either a narrative appeal or a rhetorical appeal about cervical cancer and completed a measure of attitudes and the individual difference constructs. The results revealed the same pattern of relations among the individual difference measures. Further, we found that while the narrative and rhetorical appeals were judged to be equally effective, participants high in NFA and NFC were more persuaded by the narrative appeal than by the rhetorical appeal, as were participants low in PNS. The implications for narrative persuasion are discussed.

Automatic evaluation isn't that crude! On the Automaticity of Self- vs. Other-Relevant Evaluations in Social Attitudes

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From a social cognitive point of view attitudes are defined as an association of the representation of an attitude object with an evaluation (Fazio, 1986). One hypothesized characteristic is the automaticity of attitude activation triggered by cues representing the object in question. A second, so far rather not scrutinized assumption is the undifferentiated nature of automatic evaluations; they have been conceptualized as merely varying between a positive and a negative pole. In contrast to this, we propose that a differentiation of types of evaluations can be found already at an automatic level. Using masked and unmasked versions of the affective priming paradigm as a measure of automatic evaluations, we were able to show in a variety of studies that automatic evaluations of attitude-related stimuli reflect the distinction of possessor- vs. other-relevance (Peeters, 1983), that is, whether a trait is evaluated from the perspective of someone who has to interact with the trait-holder or from the perspective of the trait-holder him/herself. For example, whereas picture primes of Turks conveyed relative negativity of the other-relevant type, picture primes of older persons conveyed relative negativity of the possessor-relevant type.

Assessing and retraining automatic action tendencies in heavy drinkers and alcoholics

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We will describe three studies regarding the assessment and modification of automatic action tendencies in heavy drinkers.

Study 1 describes a new test to assess action tendencies in heavy drinkers: the alcohol approach-avoidance test (Alcohol-AAT). Participants react to a picture on a computer-screen by either pushing or pulling a joystick depending on the form of the picture (portrait or landscape). Pulling the joystick makes the stimulus grow bigger ("approach"), while pushing the joystick makes the stimulus shrink ("avoid"). The AAT successfully discriminated between heavy and light drinkers, and this was only the case for alcohol-pictures. Heavy drinkers were genotyped for the mu-opioid receptor gene (a potential risk-gene). Heavy drinkers carrying a G-allele (risk-group, $n = 24$) showed stronger approach reactions for alcohol than participants with AA-genotype ($n = 79$).

Study 2 tested an adapted retraining version of the Alcohol-AAT. Half of the participants were trained toward alcohol (90% approach for alcohol pictures) and half of the participants were trained away from alcohol (90% avoid for alcohol pictures). This resulted in the expected differences after the training (especially in stronger alcohol-avoid tendencies in the corresponding condition). Interestingly, the results generalized to new pictures in the same test and to an entirely different test (an approach-avoidance IAT, using words rather than pictures). This was not found in previous retraining studies of attentional bias (see Wiers et al., 2006, ACER). Moreover, heavy drinkers successfully trained to avoid alcohol, drank significantly less beer in a taste-test after the experiment. All these effects occurred outside awareness of the participants.

Study 3 applied the new re-training AAT to alcoholics in treatment (ongoing study). We compared two training groups, one with relevant instructions (push alcohol away), and one with irrelevant instructions (push landscape pictures away), with two control conditions, one in which alcohol pictures were pushed and pulled equally often (assessment only control) and one group who received only pre- and posttest. Preliminary results indicate that the training changed the automatic action tendencies from alcohol-approach to alcohol-avoidance, both in the relevant and in the irrelevant training group, with no changes in the control groups. Interestingly, generalization was found both within the training task on new pictures and on the verbal approach-avoidance IAT. The training groups also showed reduced craving for alcohol.

We will argue that this approach is interesting theoretically, regarding the causal status of approach/avoidance tendencies in problem drinking and may eventually offer new ways to let problem drinkers and alcoholics regain control over their largely automatic impulses to drink, which may be a useful new tool in clinical interventions.

Self-Inferences about the implicit disposition of disgust sensitivity from nonverbal behavioral cues

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We tested the double dissociation model and the self-perception theory in the domain of disgust. In Study 1 (N = 79) we tested whether implicit and explicit disgust sensitivity indicators are specific predictors of automatic and controlled disgust behavior. In contrast to the double dissociation model, we found that controlled disgust behavior was predicted both by explicit and implicit disgust sensitivity measures. In line with self-perception theory we investigated Study 2 (N = 85), whether self-perceivers can spot implicit dispositions from nonverbal behavioral cues contained in videofeedback and whether these cues are used as a valid basis for explicit dispositional inferences. These effects however depend on both personality moderators and the framing of the self-perception task.