

May 2

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sonia Bishop

Associate Professor, Dept. Psychology and Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute, UC Berkeley

WHEN? 12:30-1:50

WHERE? SWING 121

WHAT ELSE? Food.

TALK: Anxiety and Decision Making Under Uncertainty

Anxiety is associated with elevated self-report of uncertainty and ambiguity aversion, however there has been relatively little attempt to characterize the underlying mechanisms. Over recent years, computational modeling has been used to advance our understanding of human decision-making and the brain mechanisms that support it. This approach can help us to formalize and understand how choice behaviors can be optimally adapted to different situations and the ways in which individuals may deviate from optimal behavior. In particular, it can be used to characterize how participants make decisions when one or more forms of uncertainty complicate the action-outcome relationship. Here, I will describe studies using manipulations of both contingency volatility and contingency ambiguity and findings from these studies indicating that trait anxiety is associated with deficits in decision-making under second order uncertainty.

BIO:

Professor Bishop obtained her undergraduate degree in Experimental Psychology from Oxford University and PhD from the Institute of Psychiatry, at the University of London. During her post-doc, she trained in fMRI at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit in Cambridge under the mentorship of Professor John Duncan. Following an additional year postdoc split between Princeton and U Penn working with Jonathan Cohen and Martha Farah she returned to Cambridge to hold a MRC Career Development Award. From there, she moved to UC Berkeley in 2008 where she is now an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute

May 3 Graduate Student Talks

10:45AM Morning snacks

11:00AM I. Presentations

12:30PM Lunch

1:15PM II. Presentations

2:45PM Coffee break

3:00PM III. Presentations

4:15PM Awards

4:30PM BOH in Suedfeld Lounge

I. PRESENTATIONS

11:00 - Eric Mercadante

A paradox of pride: Hubristic pride predicts strategic, self-enhancing dishonesty in response to status-threats

Previous research has found two distinct pride facets: authentic and hubristic (Tracy & Robins, 2007). Authentic pride is prosocial and achievement-based, whereas hubristic pride is more self-aggrandizing and associated with anti-social behaviors; yet both forms of pride have been theorized to promote social rank attainment (Cheng, Tracy, & Henrich, 2010). This raises the question: If hubristic pride foments anti-social behaviors, how does it help individuals attain status? We hypothesize that hubristically proud individuals are motivated to pursue status based rewards, such as respect and admiration from high-status peers, in order to validate their overly inflated and grandiose self-concepts and will use strategic dishonesty to facilitate this goal when their status is threatened. To test this prediction, we examined whether hubristic pride predicted dishonest behavior across four studies. In Studies 1 and 2, we shed light on the situational contexts that elicit dishonesty from hubristically proud individuals, specifically demonstrating the importance of status-threats and the opportunity to achieve status-based rewards. In Studies 3 and 4, we demonstrate that this effect is specifically about gaining status, and not about gaining power nor a reaction to any indication of inferiority. Together, these findings suggest that individuals who feel hubristic, but not authentic, pride are willing to lie to gain social status for the subjective benefit of self-concept validation, even if it does not come with objective benefits, like power.

11:15 - Lucy De Souza

(Mis)perceptions of other men's beliefs about gender bias predict men's intentions to be allies to women in STEM

In an effort to make workplace cultures more inclusive, men play a critical role as outspoken allies to women in STEM. We pose the question: What are the social-psychological constraints that prevent men from being outspoken allies to women in the STEM workplace? Considering pluralistic ignorance (Prentice & Miller, 1996) as one potential constraint, these studies (1) compare STEM professionals' own and perceptions of other men's beliefs that gender bias is an issue of concern in STEM and (2) examine how these perceptions influence the likelihoods of enacting four distinct allyship behaviors. In both Study 1 and 2, male STEM professionals underestimated the extent to which men in STEM on average perceive gender bias as a problem in the field. Additionally, participants reported being significantly less likely to enact public reactive allyship, that is, confronting gender bias among other men. Regression analyses revealed that perceptions that other men have little concern for gender bias predicted men's anticipation of enacting public reactive allyship. Taken together, our results suggest that pluralistic ignorance may inhibit men's confrontation of gender bias in the workplace.

11:30 - Raechel Dren

Do executive functions facilitate children's prosociality? A meta-analysis

Considering the importance of prosocial behaviour in daily social life, it is not surprising that young children already demonstrate a range of prosocial acts (Schmidt & Sommerville, 2011; Svetlova, Nichols & Brownell, 2010; Warneken & Tomasello, 2007). The specific mechanisms underlying these behaviours, however, have yet to be fully understood. One body of research has been exploring the extent to which self-regulation may be implicated in a child's ability to produce acts such as cooperation, sharing, comforting, and helping (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000). Indeed, a handful of recent studies have found that executive functions (EF) - particularly inhibition - play a substantial role in children's prosociality (e.g., Blake et al., 2015; Steinbeis & Over, 2017). At the same time, null results have challenged these findings (e.g., Smith et al., 2013). The current meta-analysis aims to summarise and clarify the relationship between performance on measures of EF and prosocial behaviour, while examining the effects of several moderating variables. Selected studies reported cross-sectional, correlational data on the association between EF and prosocial behaviour in non-clinical samples of children under age 14. Various forms of EF were measured via behavioural tasks and distinct types of prosocial behaviours were assessed through observation or parent/teacher report. After systematically searching the literature and screening eligible studies published between 1997 and 2017, 18 studies and 22 independent effect sizes (N = 2466) were analyzed using a random effects model. The global metaanalysis yielded a moderate positive effect size (Z = 0.27, k = 22, 95% CI = [0.21, 0.33], p < .001, r = .26), and this relationship was not moderated by SES, the method of assessing prosocial behaviour (behavioral versus teacher- or parent-report), or a composite measure of study quality; however, effect size was moderated by the type of prosocial behaviour being measured. Specifically, cooperation was more strongly associated with EF than was sharing, perhaps due to the relative complexity of cooperation tasks included. Moderation analysis by EF subtype was not possible given the small number of effect sizes available for comparison; however, both inhibition and cognitive flexibility showed a significant moderate positive association with prosocial behaviour. Finally, a meta-regression by children's age indicated a marginally significant increase in overall effect size with age. In conclusion, EF is likely a key factor in children's production of prosocial acts; however, limitations of the present analysis - including a small number of effect sizes and the inability to assess causal relationships reflects a need for further exploration, particularly via experimental designs. Additionally, although inhibitory control has garnered increasing attention as an underlying mechanism, our results suggest that other forms of EF should receive similar consideration. Finally, the dissociation of cooperation and sharing aligns with research indicating a multi-dimensional approach to prosocial behaviour. During my presentation, I will provide a brief overview of past and current research on the topic, highlight important steps in the meta-analysis, and discuss potential implications of the results for both research and intervention design.

11:45 - Jessica Stemart

Examining the Good Target: Consistency across Domains and Contexts, and Links to Well-Being

We meet many new people regularly. Some of these people become our acquaintances, friends, or romantic partners. What facilitates the process of forming a social tie with a new person? Accurate and positive first impressions are individually associated with greater liking and a higher quantity of future interactions. Some people, Good Targets, are seen more accurately than others. This has been shown in a variety of initial impression contexts, including in-person interactions, in text, and through social media, and has been associated with higher levels of well-being. Most work on personality perception has been done at the level of personality traits. However, goals or motivations are another domain by which we can understand people. Although research has shown that motivations can be accurately perceived by close others, we don't know whether initial interactions can lead to accurate perceptions of motives and, if so, whether there are individual differences in being seen accurately in this domain. We examined the Good Target in person and through written essays for both personality traits and motivations to examine whether this individual difference is present and consistent across domains and contexts, and to what extent well-being moderates being seen accurately.

12:00 - Ellen Joplina

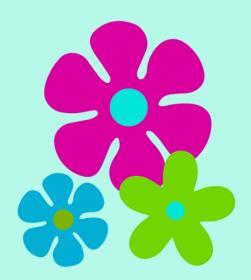
Cognitive disengagement and biological stress responses in youth

Depression and anxiety-related disorders are the most prevalent classes of mental illness in youth and are associated with severe long-term impairment. Thus, a thorough understanding of factors contributing to the development of these disorders is paramount. Evidence indicates that dysregulated biological responses to stress increase risk for the onset of depression and anxiety, but the mechanisms underlying dysregulated stress responsivity are unclear. I am investigating whether difficulty in cognitive disengagement underlie dysregulated biological responses to stress in a sample of preadolescents. I propose to recruit youth immediately prior to the adolescent transition, during which rates of depression and anxiety sharply increase. Participants will complete two computer-based tasks to assess biases in both attentional disengagement and in the ability to disengage from material in working memory. Stress responsivity will be indexed by levels of both cortisol and alpha-amylase in response to a psychosocial stressor, the Trier Social Stress Test for Children (TSST-C; Buske-Kirschbaum et al., 1997). I predict that difficulty disengaging from negative emotional stimuli, indicated by both negative biases in attentional disengagement and by difficulty disengaging from negative material in working memory, will predict delayed biological recovery from the social stress task. The proposed study has the potential to have broad implications, spanning methodological, theoretical, and clinical domains.

12:15 - Gordon Heltzel

Attitudes towards political perspective-takers

People endorse (and research findings corroborate) the value of perspective-taking in improving intergroup relations. However, people are averse to encountering opposing political perspectives, and may dislike fellow group members who openly consider opposing political views. With this in mind, the present research examines how people feel about fellow partisans who take, or avoid taking, opposing political perspectives. A series of pre-registered online studies present initial evidence that people approve of political perspective-taking, and this preference replicates in the lab as well. Furthermore, this effect is robust to factors related to the motivations of the perspective-taker as well as individual differences in the political ideology and attitude strength of the perceiver. We also discuss a current study which assesses whether situational contexts influence these effects. We end by highlighting the importance of understanding how perspective-taking plays out in social contexts.

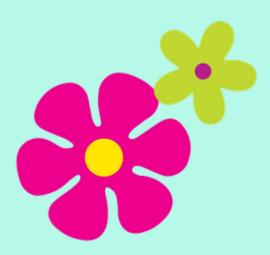


II. PRESENTATIONS

1:15 - Adam Alic

How cost influences rationalization in moral judgement

People are generally motivated to punish social norm violations, even when they are mere bystanders not directly affected by the violation. However, they might sometimes be tempted to rationalize when judging what counts as a violation, finding ways to be complacent by interpreting others' immoral behaviour as acceptable. We hypothesized that this might happen when the punishment option conflicts with people's self-interest: In such cases, people might rationalize others' immoral acts to free themselves of their duty to punish. In an initial study, we manipulated self-interest conflict in an economic punishment game. Participants had an opportunity to punish a person who acted selfishly; we manipulated whether or not punishing came at a cost. When it was costly to punish, people made commensurately less severe moral judgements, compared to when punishing came at no cost, which in turn predicted less punishment behavior. In a second study, we inhibited people's ability to rationalize when reporting their moral judgments to clarify the causal role of rationalization in driving complacency. From this second study, we did not find strong support for of our hypothesis that preventing rationalization inhibits complacency. Thus, we have found evidence that people rationalize moral beliefs when costs are associated with taking action against transgressors. The causal relationship between rationalization and complacency in this context, however, requires further study.



1:30 - Ariel Ko

The mediating effect of attachment insecurity on adverse parenting behaviours and perfectionism: Testing the perfectionism social disconnection model in children and adolescents

Perfectionism is a complex personality style involving perfectionistic traits (demand for the self and others to be perfect), perfectionistic self-presentation (requirement of the self to appear perfect), and self-relational cognitive elements (automatic perfectionistic thoughts and self-recriminations). Perfectionism has been described as a vulnerability factor to many clinical and non-clinical problems in both children and adults, and the tremendous costs associated with perfectionism call for a better understanding of the process in which perfectionism develops. Recently, Hewitt, Flett, and Mikail (2017) proposed a theoretical framework in understanding the development of perfectionism as part of the Perfectionism Social Disconnection Model (PSDM). The PSDM posits that perfectionism arise from insecure attachment rooted in asynchronous or adverse parent-child relationships. There is currently some support for various components of the developmental portion of the PSDM, but research has focused extensively on adults and primarily on trait dimensions of perfectionism. As a consequence, there is a scarcity of research on developmental antecedents of childhood perfectionism as well as other components of perfectionism, such as perfectionistic self-presentation and self-relational cognitive elements. Therefore, the present study examines the PSDM's developmental framework of perfectionism in a sample of 8 to 15-year-old children and adolescents and their parents. It is hypothesized that insecure attachment will mediate the relationship between adverse parenting behaviours and various components of perfectionism. Findings from this study can not only provide further empirical support for the PSDM, but also has implications in developing treatment and prevention programs for children and adolescents struggling with perfectionism.



1:45 - Giulia Capuzzo

Roles of medial prefrontal cortex regions in modulation of action selection during aversivelymotivated behaviours: Insights from a novel active/inhibitory avoidance behavioural assay

Decision making in stressful and potentially aversive situations is an evolutionary trait functionally vital to avoid dangerous situations. It can either require action performance to actively avoid negative outcomes, or behavioural suppression to stay safe from danger. Failure to coordinate behaviour discrimination in real-life conflicting threatening situations can lead to aversive consequences because of improper inhibition of motor output when action is needed or, vice versa, when defensive actions are performed instead of withheld. These disruptions of appropriate functioning in avoidance behaviours can lead to improper action selection and increase in negative outcomes seen in disorders such as substance abuse, anxiety and depression.

It has already been shown that striatal regions (namely the core and shell of the nucleus accumbens) are involved in regulation of avoidance behaviours with distinct roles in suppression and promotion of behaviour. Following the corticostriatal connections with the prefrontal cortex (PFC), we investigated how active and passive avoidance are controlled by the prelimbic cortex (PL) and infralimbic cortex (IL), which have been differentially implicated in instrumental response acquisition and expression.

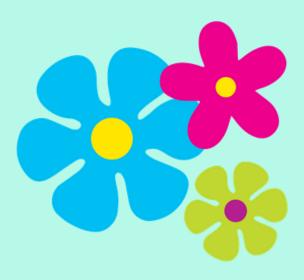
Animals trained to criteria on a Go-NoGo task to avoid foot-shock delivery underwent pharmacological inactivation of these prefrontal regions, which revealed a role for PL in driving goal-directed action to actively avoid punishment only when response allocation is under flexible conflicting conditions. IL inactivation, instead, was found to be necessary to refine action selection by inhibiting inappropriate responses while promoting instrumental active behaviour.

These results add a link in the neural network of avoidance processing and help further our understanding of how conditioned instrumental behaviours in threatening situations are processed by cortical regions and how pathological avoidance can arise in neuropsychiatric disorders.

2:00 - Yeeun Lee

How helping a stranger can help you: The effect of support-giving on stress appraisal and perception of others.

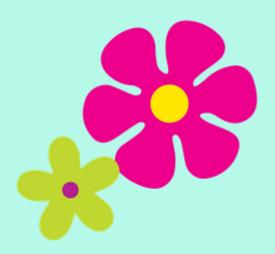
Growing evidence suggests that prosocial behavior is linked with better health and well-being outcomes. However, causal relationships and underlying mechanisms remain unclear. In this talk, I will present my research examining the effect of giving support to a stranger on stress appraisal and perception of others, which may be potential mediators for enhanced stress regulation. Results of Study 1 showed that participants who wrote a supportive note to a stranger-in-need perceived their own stress as less "serious" and less "significant" and reported a lower self-focus state than others. This suggests a decentering effect from one's stress after engaging in prosocial behavior. In addition, they perceived others as less self-centered and more caring; this suggests that participants' decreased self-focus after support-giving may have been projected to their views of others. The findings suggest two potential psychological mechanisms—decentering and positive projection—both of which may mediate the relationship between prosocial behavior towards someone outside of one's immediate network and enhanced stress regulation and wellbeing. I will also discuss an ongoing study designed to replicate and extend the initial findings using behavioural measures in addition to self-report measures.



2:15 - Arezoo Shahnaz

The relationship of suicide attempts and eating disorder symptoms: A mediating role for suicide capability?

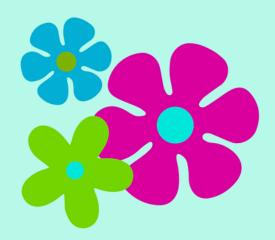
Individuals with eating disorders have an elevated risk for suicide compared to the general population. To date, research has mainly focused on defining features within the context of ED diagnostic categories, often yielding conflicting results when comparing Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa with regard to the frequency and lethality of suicide attempts. However, an increasing number of studies suggest that features of EDs (i.e., restrictive eating, fasting, binge-eating, and purging and other compensatory behaviours) may be most helpful in predicting suicide risk rather than the actual diagnostic category; with findings suggesting that bingeing and purging symptomology is associated with an increased risk for suicide attempts. To our knowledge, little to no studies have focused on defining features in EDs more generally. Moreover, it is unclear in the current literature why certain ED features elevate suicide risk. Capability for suicide is one theoretical construct that may explain why individuals with certain ED features may be more likely to attempt suicide. Broadly speaking, capability for suicide represents the extent an individual is able to engage in potentially harmful acts as well as their comfort with and preparation for potentially harmful situations. Specifically, restrictive eating, purging and compensatory behaviours have been suggested to increase an individual's capability to make a suicide attempt. The present study aims to clarify which ED features are associated with a greater history of suicide attempts, as well as examine whether capability for suicide is one theoretical construct that may explain why certain defining features of EDs are associated with suicide compared to those with other features. The present study will utilize a large and diverse online sample (MTurk) of United States adults. Validated self-report measures of eating disorder pathology, suicide history, and other relevant variables will be administered via an online platform.



2:30 - Britiney Russell

A novel treatment for dopamine agonist induced gambling disorder in Parkinson's disease

Selective dopamine D2/3 receptor agonists, such as ropinirole (ROP), effectively treat the motor symptoms of Parkinson's Disease (PD), and unlike L-DOPA, do not cause problematic dyskinesias after prolonged use. Thus, D2/3 agonists can be an attractive alternative to L-DOPA for the long-term management of PD. However, D2/3 agonists induce impulse control and gambling disorders in a substantial minority of patients, raising concern over the use of these agents. Adjunctive medications that could be safely administered with D2/3 agonists and prevent the development of such psychiatric side-effects would therefore be highly desirable. GPR52 is a Gs-coupled g-protein coupled receptor (GPCR) enriched in D2 receptor expressing neurons of the striatum. Activation of GPR52 has been demonstrated to attenuate behaviours associated with increased striatal dopamine release without altering basal function. We have previously shown that ROP increases preference for uncertain outcomes on a rodent test of gambling-like decision making known as the rodent betting task (rBT). This task measures preference for certain versus uncertain rewarding outcomes of equal utility. Although most rats maintain a constant preference for the uncertain outcome regardless of the amount at stake, some rats increase their preference for guaranteed rewards as the wager-size increases, despite the relative expected value of the two options remaining constant. The choice strategy of these wagersensitive rats may be considered mathematically non-normative, and such irrational decision-making patterns have been linked to the manifestation and severity of problem gambling. The degree of wagersensitivity has been associated with the density of D2/3 receptors in the dorsal striatum. We therefore hypothesized that GPR52 agonists may attenuate the ability of ROP to promote choice of uncertain outcomes in wager-sensitive rats on the rBT. We tested this hypothesis by administering GPR52 agonists BD442618 and S111224 in two cohorts of healthy male rats that were also implanted with osmotic pumps, delivering either ROP or saline. The rats performed the rBT for 28 days after osmotic pump implantation. A reduction in ROP's ability to increase preference for uncertainty on the rBT would suggest that GPR52 agonists may be a potential treatment for iatrogenic impulse control and gambling disorders.



III. PRESENTATIONS

3:00 - Kate Men Guan

How do we feel when angels turn out to be demons?: Experiencing Misperceptions of Character in Everyday Life

In everyday life, seemingly good people may act in ways that reveal a hidden, darker character. How do we feel when our positive moral perceptions of others are disconfirmed? Past research finds that moral character judgments dominate in person perception. Furthermore, our ability to identify friends from foes helps guide our behavior around others, providing us with a sense of safety and control. We therefore propose that apparent misperceptions of character are threatening in both deep and broad ways: they violate our core assumptions about another person, and they broadly signal that our ability to judge others may be flawed. Across two studies, we used diverse methods to investigate the psychological experience and effects of learning that one has misperceived another's character. Participants report that past misperception experiences threatened their sense of meaning and control, and elicited moderate levels of negative affect. Furthermore, across both retrospective memories and in-lab experiences of misperceptions, we find that misperceptions lower participants' confidence making judgments about other people's moral character. This research provides evidence that misperceptions of character affect perceivers negatively, and these effects generalize to their broader judgments of others.

3:15 - Charlotte Roddick

Effects of loneliness on parasympathetic functioning in women

Trait loneliness is a risk factor for numerous adverse physical and mental health outcomes, including early death (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). One mechanism by which loneliness may negatively impact health may be through dysregulation of the parasympathetic nervous system. However, whereas trait loneliness may be maladaptive, transitory feelings of loneliness, or state loneliness, may serve an adaptive function by motivating social engagement behaviours. The current study examined the associations between high-frequency heart rate variability (HF-HRV), a marker of parasympathetic functioning, and trait and state loneliness in a sample of young women (*N* = 148). Trait loneliness was found to predict blunted HF-HRV responding to a cognitive challenge task, whereas state loneliness was associated with increased HF-HRV. These findings support an evolutionary model of loneliness positing that state loneliness elicits a physiological state that supports spontaneous social engagement behaviours (Cacioppo et al., 2015; Porges, 2007). This study is the first to demonstrate that parasympathetic activity is increased during state loneliness, and extends earlier findings on blunted HF-HRV responding to cognitive challenge in a larger sample, using regression analyses and controlling for covariates.

3:30 - Brent Stewart

The emotional lives of objects: The role of affective anthropomorphism in hoarding

Alterations in social cognition have been associated with a wide range of individual differences and mental illness from paranoia and schizotypy to psychopathy and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Recent evidence suggests that hoarding disorder can be added to this list. However, as opposed to a deficit – as we see in ASD – people who struggle with hoarding widen the scope of their social cognition to include inanimate objects as well. This anthropomorphic tendency gives us a clue to what is one of the central mysteries in research on hoarding disorder: The extreme attachments that people who hoard develop towards their possessions. However, so far this research – and indeed research on anthropomorphism more broadly – has focused almost entirely on the cognitive domain of social cognition (i.e., theory of mind) and neglected the affective dimensions (i.e., empathy and compassion). Without understanding this affective side of anthropomorphic social cognition, our understanding of how anthropomorphism functions in hoarding disorder and human psychology in general is importantly incomplete. In the face of this, we developed a scale to measure this anthropomorphic empathy and compassion – the Empathy and Compassion for Objects scale (ECO). Factor analyses revealed the two expected dimensions of empathy and compassion and the scale displayed good reliability. The ECO was strongly correlated with hoarding behaviour and cognitions predicting symptoms over and above other measures of anthropomorphism. The results suggest a possible explanation for the extreme distress experienced by people who hoard when discarding objects: They are experiencing same social emotions that regulate our behaviour to other humans. Accordingly, the thought of discarding an object occasions similar emotional processes that occur when we anticipate causing harm to another conscious being.

3:45 - Holly Enastrom

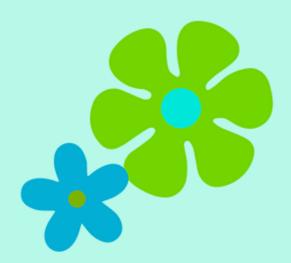
High socioeconomic status predicts more positive meta-perceptions of both competence and warmth

People with higher socioeconomic status (SES) tend to be more narcissistic, have higher self-esteem, be more optimistic, and experience less discrimination than people with lower SES. They are also stereotyped as more competent but colder than those with lower SES. Thus, SES likely influences how people think they are (or will be) seen by others (meta-perceptions), either by influencing meta-perception positivity in general, or by influencing meta-perceptions of competence and warmth in opposite directions. Across both online studies with imaginary interactions and in-lab studies with real interactions, we find that higher SES individuals have more positive meta-perceptions of both competence and warmth than lower SES individuals. We also find that high SES individuals blame themselves less when they receive negative feedback in both competence and warmth domains, and that this is mediated by their more positive meta-perceptions.

4:00 - Iris Lok

Bridging the gap between reason and emotion: Harnessing the psychology of risk perception to prepare for earthquakes

Can we encourage people to prepare for a natural disaster by altering the way that scientific information about risk is presented? In assessing the risk posed by a particular hazard, people tend to be guided more strongly by their emotional reactions than by logical or statistical analysis; human beings are driven to protect themselves from risks that that they have actually experienced, that are easy to envision, or that are linked to vivid, concrete images. Thus, even if people recognize that earthquakes pose an important threat, they may be unmotivated to take action to prepare for this abstract risk in the absence of direct personal experience. Harnessing past research and theorizing, we developed a novel intervention to transform scientific information into vivid, emotionally evocative imagery. In a preregistered study, 411 participants were shown publicly available statistics or a vivid, scientifically-grounded image of what a local school would look like after a major earthquake. Compared to those who viewed statistics, participants who viewed the image were more likely to sign a petition to upgrade schools to make them safer during earthquakes. These findings suggest that using vivid images to communicate scientific information can be an effective strategy for motivating people to support risk mitigation initiatives.



AWARDS

Categories:

- ***** Best costume
- * Best hair
- * People's choice
- * Best set design
- * Most entertaining
- * Most laid-back
- * Best animations
- * The no-frills award
- ***** Best real-world implications
- ***** Best stage presence
- * Best incorporation of psychapalooza theme
- * Most ready for a TED talk
- * Most Woodstock
- ***** Best embodiment of peace and love values
- * Most groovy vibes
- * Most psychedelic stats
- *** Most WOW**

Supervisor Award:

* Most psychedelic introduction from supervisor