
From: John Brockman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 9, 2014 4:40 AM
To: Epstein Jeffrey
Subject: Re:

>> remind me, is this the event that the 50k helped fund? talk me

Exactly. The second of two. The first, in September, HeadCon'14, is now ready for publication. Here's draft of the announcement and links to the six hours of video and 55,000 word manuscript.

JB

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PRESS EMBARGO: PUBLICATION DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

HEADCON '14

In September a group of social scientists gathered at Eastover Farm for HeadCon'14, an EDGE Seminar on the questions that social scientists are asking themselves.

The speakers and their topics were Sarah-Jayne Blakemore: "The Teenager's Sense Of Social Self"; Lawrence Ian Reed: "The Face Of Emotion"; Molly Crockett: "The Neuroscience of Decision-Making"; Hugo Mercier: "Toward The Seamless Integration Of The Sciences"; Jennifer Acquisti: "Shaming At Scale"; Simone Schnall: "Moral Intuitions, Emulation, and the Scientific Study of Human Nature"; David Rand: "How Do You Change People's Minds About What Is Right And Wrong?"; L.A. Paul: "The Transformative Experience"; Michael McCullough: "Two Cheers For Rationalization".

Also participating were four speakers from HeadCon '13, the previous year's event: Fiery Cushman, Joshua Knobe, David Pizarro, and Laurie Santos.

We are now pleased to present the program in its entirety, nearly six hours of Edge Video and a downloadable PDF of the 55,000-word transcript.

Permalink: <http://edge.org/event/headcon-14>
user id: edge_access
password: edgeaccess

John Brockman
Editor, EDGE

HEADCON 14

Sarah-Jayne Blakemore: "The Teenager's Sense Of Social Self"

"The reason why that letter is nice is because it illustrates what's important to that girl at that particular moment in her life. Less important than that man landed on moon than things like what she was wearing, what clothes she was into, who she liked, who she didn't like. This is the period of life where that sense of self, and particularly sense of social self, undergoes profound transition. Just think back to when you were a teenager. It's not that before then you don't have a sense of self, of course you do. A sense of self develops very early. What happens during the teenage years is that your sense of who you are—your moral beliefs, your political beliefs, what music you're into, fashion, what social group you're into—that's what undergoes profound change."

SARAH-JAYNE BLAKEMORE is a Royal Society University Research Fellow and Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience, Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, University College London. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/sarah_jayne_blakemore

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/sarah_jayne_blakemore

Lawrence Ian Reed: "The Face Of Emotion"

"What can we tell from the face? There's some mixed data, but data out that there's a pretty strong coherence between what is felt and what's expressed on the face. Happiness, sadness, disgust, contempt, fear, anger, all have prototypic characteristic facial expressions. In addition to that, you can tell whether two emotions are blended together. You can tell the difference between surprise and happiness, and surprise and anger, or surprise and sadness. You can also tell the strength of an emotion. There seems to be a relationship between the strength of the emotion and the strength of the contraction of the associated facial muscles."

LAWRENCE IAN REED is a Royal Society University Research Fellow and Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience, Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, University College London. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/lawrence_ian_reed

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/lawrence_ian_reed

Molly Crockett: "The Neuroscience of Decision-Making"

"Imagine we could develop a precise drug that amplifies people's aversion to harming others; you won't hurt a fly, everyone becomes Buddhist monks or something. Who should take this drug? Only convicted criminals—people who have committed violent crimes? Should we put it in the water supply? These are normative questions. These are questions about what should be done. I feel grossly unprepared to answer these questions with the training that I have, but these are important conversations to have between disciplines. Psychologists and neuroscientists need to be talking to philosophers about this and these are conversations that we need to have because we don't want to get to the point where we have the technology and then we haven't had this conversation because then terrible things could happen."

MOLLY CROCKETT is Associate Professor, Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford; Wellcome Trust Postdoctoral Fellow, Wellcome Trust Centre for Neuroimaging. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/molly_crockett

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/molly_crockett

Hugo Mercier: "Toward the Seamless Integration Of The Sciences"

"One of the great things about cognitive science is that it allowed us to continue that seamless integration of the sciences, from physics, to chemistry, to biology, and then to the mind sciences, and it's been quite successful at doing this in a relatively short time. But on the whole, I feel there's still a failure to continue this thing towards some of the social sciences such as, anthropology, to some extent, and sociology or history that still remain very much shut off from what some would see as progress, and as further integration."

HUGO MERCIER, a Cognitive Scientist, is an Ambizione Fellow at the Cognitive Science Center at the University of Neuchâtel. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/hugo_mercier

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/hugo_mercier

Jennifer Jacquet: "Shaming At Scale"

"Shaming, in this case, was a fairly low-cost form of punishment that had high reputational impact on the U.S. government, and led to a change in behavior. It worked at scale—one group of people using it against another group of people at the group level. This is the kind of scale that interests me. And the other thing that it points to, which is interesting, is the question of when shaming works. In part, it's when there's an absence of any other option. Shaming is a little bit like antibiotics. We can overuse it and actually dilute its effectiveness, because it's linked to attention, and attention is finite. With punishment, in general, using it sparingly is best. But in the international arena, and in cases in which there is no other option, there is no formalized institution, or no formal legislation, shaming might be the only tool that we have, and that's why it interests me."

JENNIFER JACQUET is Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, NYU; researching cooperation and the tragedy of the commons; Author, Is Shame necessary? EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/jennifer_jacquet

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/jennifer_jacquet

Simone Schnall: "Moral intuitions, Replication, and the Scientific Study of Human Nature"

"In the end, it's about admissible evidence and ultimately, we need to hold all scientific evidence to the same high standard. Right now we're using a lower standard for the replications involving negative findings when in fact this standard needs to be higher. To establish the absence of an effect is much more difficult than the presence of an effect."

SIMONE SCHNALL is a University Senior Lecturer and Director of the Cambridge Embodied Cognition and Emotion Laboratory at Cambridge University. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/simone_schnall

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/simone_schnall

David Rand: "How Do You Change People's Minds About What Is Right And Wrong?" a

"What all these different things boil down to is the idea that there are future consequences for your current behavior. You can't just do whatever you want because if you are selfish now, it'll come back to bite you. I should say that there are lots of theoretical models, math models, computational models, lab experiments, and also real world field data from field experiments showing the power of these reputation observability effects for getting people to cooperate."

DAVID RAND is Assistant Professor of Psychology, Economics, and Management at Yale University, and the Director of Yale University's Human Cooperation Laboratory. Edge Bio page: http://edge.org/memberbio/david_rand

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/david_rand

L.A. Paul: "The Transformative Experience"

"We're going to pretend that modern-day vampires don't drink the blood of humans; they're vegetarian vampires, which means they only drink the blood of humanely-farmed animals. You have a one-time-only chance to become a modern-day vampire. You think, 'This is a pretty amazing opportunity, but do I want to gain immortality, amazing speed, strength, and power? Do I want to become undead, become an immortal monster and have to drink blood? It's a tough call.' Then you go around asking people for their advice and you discover that all of your friends and family members have already become vampires. They tell you, 'It is amazing. It is the best thing ever. It's absolutely fabulous. It's incredible. You get these new sensory capacities. You should definitely become a vampire.' Then you say, 'Can you tell me a little more about it?' And they say, 'You have to become a vampire to know what it's like. You can't, as a mere human, understand what it's like to become a vampire just by hearing me talk about it. Until you're a vampire, you're just not going to know what it's going to be like.'"

L.A. PAUL is Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Professorial Fellow in the Arché Research Centre at the University of St. Andrews. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/la_paul

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/la_paul

Michael McCullough: "Two Cheers For Falsification"

"What I want to do today is raise one cheer for falsification, maybe two cheers for falsification. Maybe it's not philosophical falsificationism I'm calling for, but maybe something more like methodological falsificationism. It has an important role to play in theory development that maybe we have turned our backs on in some areas of this racket we're in, particularly the part of it that I do—Ev Psych—more than we should have."

MICHAEL MCCULLOUGH is Director, Evolution and Human Behavior Laboratory, Professor of Psychology, Cooper Fellow, University of Miami; Author, Beyond Revenge. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/michael_mccullough

Permalink: http://edge.org/conversation/michael_mccullough

Also participating:

FIERY CUSHMAN is Assistant Professor, Cognitive, Linguistic, Social Science, Brown University. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/fiery_cushman

JOSHUA KNOBE is an Experimental Philosopher; Associate Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Science, Yale University. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/joshua_knobe

DAVID PIZARRO is Associate Professor of Psychology, Cornell University, specializing in moral judgment. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/david_pizarro

LAURIE SANTOS is Associate Professor, Department of Psychology; Director, Comparative Cognition Laboratory, Yale University. EDGE Bio Page: http://edge.org/memberbio/laurie_r_santos

FURTHER READING:

HeadCon '13: WHAT'S NEW IN SOCIAL SCIENCE?

<http://edge.org/event/headcon-13-whats-new-in-social-science>

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