

Decision Processes Colloquium

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“Fishy smells, sticky luck, and balanced minds: Embodiment in judgment and decision making”

Would it make a difference if you moved your hands with the palms facing up vs. the palms facing down while contemplating a choice? Would incidental exposure to a faint fishy smell influence your behavior in a trust game? Would you be less bothered by a poor romantic experience if you wiped your hands with an antiseptic wipe? Would that wipe eliminate the impact of a previous winning or losing streak on your later risk taking behavior? The answer to all of these questions is "Yes". Reviewing these and related studies, I address the role of embodied metaphors in mental construal, judgment, and choice and identify some underlying processes and limiting conditions.

Most of the work is unpublished, but some initial pieces are available at

http://sitemaker.umich.edu/norbert.schwarz/metaphors_embodiment

Chandler, J. & Schwarz, N. (2009). How extending your middle finger affects your perception of others: Learned movements influence concept accessibility. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45*, 123-128. DOI:10.1016/j.jesp.2008.06.012

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Lee, S.W.S., & Schwarz, N. (2010). Of dirty hands and dirty mouths: Embodiment of the moral purity metaphor is specific to the motor modality involved in moral transgression. *Psychological Science, 21*, 1423-1425. DOI: 10.1177/0956797610382788.”