



SPECIAL ISSUE

Multiple Perspectives on Decision Making

Guest Editor: S.A. Bunge

Contents

Forewords

Foreword

S.A. Bunge (USA)

1

Neurobiology of decision-making: Quo vadis?

M.P. Paulus (USA)

2

Research reports

Making sense of candidates: Partisanship, ideology, and issues as guides to judgment

R. Huckfeldt, J.J. Mondak, M. Craw and J. Morehouse Mendez (USA)

11

Emotions and cooperation in economic games

M.P. Haselhuhn and B.A. Mellers (USA)

24

Prospect theory on the brain? Toward a cognitive neuroscience of decision under risk

C. Trepel, C.R. Fox and R.A. Poldrack (USA)

34

Outcome representations, counterfactual comparisons and the human orbitofrontal cortex: Implications for neuroimaging studies of decision-making

S. Ursu and C.S. Carter (USA)

51

Functional connectivity with anterior cingulate and orbitofrontal cortices during decision-making

M.X. Cohen, A.S. Heller and C. Ranganath (Germany, USA)

61

Sustained neural activity associated with cognitive control during temporally extended decision making

T. Yarkoni, J.R. Gray, E.R. Chrsatil, D.M. Barch, L. Green and T.S. Braver (USA)

71

The dark side of emotion in decision-making: When individuals with decreased emotional reactions make more advantageous decisions

B. Shiv, G. Loewenstein and A. Bechara (USA)

85

Cardiac concomitants of performance monitoring: Context dependence and individual differences

E.A. Crone, S.A. Bunge, P. de Klerk and M.W. van der Molen (USA, The Netherlands)

93

Neuroimaging of marijuana smokers during inhibitory processing: A pilot investigation

S.A. Gruber and D.A. Yurgelun-Todd (USA)

107

Risky decision making and the anterior cingulate cortex in abstinent drug abusers and nonusers

D.H. Fishbein, D.L. Eldreth, C. Hyde, J.A. Matochik, E.D. London, C. Contoreggi, V. Kurian, A.S. Kimes, A. Breeden and S. Grant (USA)

119

Decision making in pathological gambling: A comparison between pathological gamblers, alcohol dependents, persons with Tourette syndrome, and normal controls

A.E. Goudriaan, J. Oosterlaan, E. de Beurs and W. van den Brink (The Netherlands)

137



Foreword

This special issue was inspired by an interdisciplinary conference titled “Exploring the Mind: Multiple Perspectives on Decision-Making”, held at the University of California at Davis in April, 2004. The objective of this conference was to bring together researchers from various disciplines to discuss a common topic: how we make decisions and carry them out. The occasion was a celebration of the launch of the new Center for Mind and Brain at the university. The conference attracted junior and senior researchers from these different fields, and succeeded in generating interesting discussions between them. Many of these speakers have contributed articles to this issue, in addition to several other researchers who have done interesting work on decision-making.

The issue represents the range of research that is being done on decision-making today. The articles differ from one another in three important ways. First, the authors hail from fields ranging from psychology, neuroscience, psychiatry, and neurology to economics, business, management, and political science. Second, the papers feature cutting-edge behavioral, psychophysiological, neuropsychological, and brain imaging findings, as well as thought-provoking theoretical accounts. Third, the studies focus on healthy individuals, substance abusers, and/or patients with brain lesions or neurological disorders.

Despite the range of perspectives, measures, and sample populations that are evident on these pages, I think you will note some common themes across the articles. In our introductory review paper, Dr. Martin Paulus has done an admirable job of discussing some of these themes and identifying questions that will need to be addressed in the future. I hope that this special issue will foster the kind of collaborative research that is necessary to make progress towards understanding how and why individuals make the choices that they make, and what consequences their choices have.

I would like to thank Dr. G. R. Mangun, who had the idea to hold a conference and put together a special issue on decision-making, Dr. Steven Grant, who encouraged us to apply for a National Institute on Drug Abuse conference grant, and Dr. Cameron Carter, who helped to write the grant proposal. I would also like to acknowledge Elsevier and the National Institute on Drug Abuse for helping to defray the costs of the conference, and the staff of the Center for Mind and Brain, who hosted it at the Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts in Davis. Finally, I thank the authors themselves for their interesting and scholarly contributions.

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