



Jacobs Center Research Seminar Series

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Walking a Mile in Their Shoes - Refining the Foundations of Social Representation

Interpersonal relationships are a central feature of what it is to be human. Theory of Mind (ToM), or mentalising, is the ability to represent the hidden thoughts and beliefs of the self and others to navigate these relationships. To date there is no common set of formal principles that can be used to understand interpersonal relationships across context, disorder, and diversity, in humans and artificial agents. Focusing on two facets of ToM - self-insertion and hierarchical mentalising - I provide theoretical models, and behavioural, biological, and synthetic evidence to demonstrate how each can provide flexi-

ble, and potentially maladaptive social cognition. I then introduce a potential high level formal generative framework of social representation to situate these capabilities. This framework provides a potential language for expressing falsifiable theories that explain what ToM is, and what it is not. I discuss how this has implications for understanding psychiatric disorder, and can contribute to a more robust architecture for artificial agents.

Monday, April 29, 2024, 14:00 h

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