



Brain To Society Decision and Behavior Seminar Series

Date: Wednesday, April 18, 2018

Time: 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM EST

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Topic: **Understanding and Modulating the Multiple Dimensions of Empathy**

Abstract: Observing pain in others modulates the level of activity in brain regions involved in the processing of nociceptive stimuli. The extent and specificity of this shared representation of suffering is not yet fully understood, and whether the vicarious experience of other people's pain is predictive of one's subsequent helping behaviour remains unclear. Based on a multiple dimension framework of empathy, this presentation will discuss recent findings from three different lines of research showing how empathy in the context of pain and suffering can evolve; experimental pain "overexposure", pain exposure in healthcare professionals, and non-invasive brain stimulation to modulate empathic responses. The presentation will also introduce EEVVEE, a virtual reality platform designed to study empathy and its potential physiological markers in an interactive environment. The overarching objective of the current research program is to find ways to optimise empathy, by increasing the benefits of the suffering person while minimizing the costs for the caring one.

Presenter: Philip Jackson, Ph.D., Professor, School of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Université Laval, co-director of Consortium d'imagerie en neurosciences et santé mentale de Québec (CINQ), researcher at CIRRIIS and CERVO research centers and member of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada.



Professor Jackson is head of the Cognitive and Social Neuroscience Lab dedicated to the study of human empathy. Funding from the three main national agencies provide a unique multidisciplinary environment to study the physiological and neurophysiological signature of empathy, using the latest technology in brain imaging, non-invasive brain stimulation and virtual reality.



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