



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI TRENTO

Dipartimento di Psicologia
e Scienze Cognitive

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SEMINARIO

Revising social evaluations: Morality and impression updating

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Friday 20 April 2018, ore 12.00

Sala Convegni – Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science - corso Bettini, 31 – Rovereto

Abstract:

Recent research suggests that morality, sociability, and competence characteristics exert different effects on impression formation and that morality forms the primary basis for the global evaluation of others. However, most of this work has almost exclusively focused on “first” impressions, overlooking that social interactions require continuous and flexible updating of initial evaluations. Filling this gap, we will present two set of studies. The first set analyzes the characteristics of moral (vs. non-moral) traits in terms of flexibility and falsifiability. More specifically, it investigates the extent of the behavioral range associated with the positive and negative ends of the moral dimension. Results consistently show that people consider a moral social target more likely to engage in trait-inconsistent behaviors (i.e., a moral person acting immorally) than an immoral target (i.e., an immoral person acting morally). The second set explores people’s revision of their first impression of a target person in light of new and inconsistent information pertaining his/her morality, sociability or competence. Results show that morality has a leading role over sociability and competence in the impression updating process. Moreover, as suggested by the analysis on the mediating mechanism, morality would promote a greater impression change because such information is interpreted as more diagnostic of interpersonal good/bad intentions. These findings will be discussed in relation to prior models concerning the way the core structure of social information affects person perception and impression updating.

Contacts

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