## **Social Attention**



UCSD \* Cogs 143

## Paying attention to attention . . .

- Can provide significant payoffs in multiple domains
  - Predator defense
  - Identifying, finding food
  - Skill learning
  - Social negotiations











## **Gaze Following**

• Gaze Following develops in children between 9-18 mos







• Frequently observed in primates



Female sees male's head turn...



...She looks same direction

#### Gaze Following in the Lab







All higher primates tested can <u>follow head turn</u> (Tomasello et al 1998)

Most could NOT use <u>eyes-only</u> as a cue

(But, contrived lab setting may underestimate the role of eyes)





Now being tested for ( and found! ) in many other social species

#### Gaze Following – How sophisticated can it get?



• So, Subject must be taking more than head orientation into account . . .

## MacLean & Hare 2012

- Ape "<u>attributes</u>" familiarity/novelty (<u>knowledge states</u>) to Human
  - To accomplish task, A needed to track what B <u>did and did not see</u>, under changing conditions (i.e. which <u>objects</u>, <u>when</u>)
    - i.e. "Familiar" = object there when B looked earlier & "Novel" = object new
    - And, A expects B is more likely to show attention to "Novel"



• So, Subject must be taking more than head orientation into account . . .

## Dolphins??

As ever, very little relevant data . . .



- Do show "Eavesdropping" Listening-in on the echolocation of others
- Since beam also directed socially, could learn about relationships from such attentional acts
  - <u>Attending the attention of others likely useful in these cooperative hunters</u>

Spontaneous Attention-Following in Bottlenose Dolphins



Currently underway --

- A study of "attentional acts"
  - UW video from pool complex at Brookfield Zoo, Chicago
- If one animal turns its head such that it gains better acousti-visual access to a back pool...
- ...Will an animal that had access to that act then also act to increase its own access?



i.e. Do dolphins use head turn as a cue that something worth observing is likely along an extrapolated line...

## Gaze Following

- So, basic skill here is to extrapolate primate line-of-sight, or dolphin beam direction, from head & body orientation
- Sometimes referred to as: "<u>Perspective Taking</u>" since appears to require discriminating between other's view & one's own.
  - But, given how widespread gaze-following is, may sometimes be reflexive
  - The more *flexible* the use, the more higher cognition is likely involved
- So ask, how is Perspective-Taking USED...?



Xitco et al., 2001; 2004

**Solicitous** Asking for or offering something

- Dolphins "solicit following" from humans (i.e. look to destination, then back to human, repeat)
- Only if humans attending (oriented toward them)



i.e. Appear sensitive to human line-of-sight

But further interpretation requires caution -

Are they "showing" human where to go (i.e. "pointing") or just checking to see if human following???

## <u>Solicitous</u>

#### Asking for or offering something

#### Experimenter's head and body orientation systematically varied



Body & Head Toward



Body Toward & Head Away



Body & Head Away



Body Away & Head Toward

## How will an ape direct its begging?



## Begging

## <u>Solicitous</u>

#### Asking for or offering something

#### Experimenter's head and body orientation systematically varied



Begging

Body & Head Toward





Body Toward & Head Away





# Orangutans & Gorillas beg to the human's <u>BODY</u>

## <u>Solicitous</u>

#### Asking for or offering something

#### Experimenter's head and body orientation systematically varied



Begging

Body & Head Toward



Body Toward & Head Away Body & Head Away

Body Away & Head Toward





## <u>Solicitous</u>

## Begging

Asking for or offering something



## <u>Solicitous</u>

• "Show-to-Share" Tasks

Asking for or offering something

- Indicate some <u>limitations on perspective-taking</u> in primates...
- Experimenter attends (head turn, eyes turn, point) to baited (vs. not baited) container
- Subject can't see reward; Must select which box to request the Exp to open



#### Note **Humans** (and human-enculturated apes) are the <u>only primates that "point</u>"





Important in many Human-specific activities such as teaching, language learning.







- Nonhuman-primates better at using Perspective Taking in **competitive** situations ٠
  - They are largely <u>competitive foragers</u> (co-operative foraging rare)
  - And these are "foraging" (food reward) tasks --•

- Hare et al. 2001 tested this in chimps ۲
  - One treat visible to both Dom & Sub
  - Other only visible to Sub ٠
- Dom confined Sub chooses treat first •
- Results: Sub tends to choose treat ٠ that dominant can not see
- Discriminates treat based on whether ٠ it falls within **other's line of sight**.



#### **Dominant**

# **Machiavellian Intelligence II Extensions and Evaluations** Edited by ANDREW WHITEN and RICHARD W. BYRNE

Byrne & Whiten 1988; Whiten & Byrne, 1997

## Machiavellian Intelligence

- Individuals <u>exploit</u> other's behavior, perception, knowledge/ignorance etc. <u>for own benefit</u>
  - e.g. Social Tool Use
  - e.g. Human affairs, fictional & non



## Machiavellian Intelligence

## Deception

- M.I. proposes, for example, adapting to such interactions generated an <u>evolutionary "arms race</u>"
  - i.e. Deception selects for improved counter-deception, which selects for improved deception, etc...
- Probably played a significant role in HUMAN cognitive evolution (See Cogs 184!)
  - Esp with language-mediated lying...



## Deception

- Many mechanisms!
  - Can be "built in"

- Eyespots on butterflies
  - Work by <u>exploiting</u> regularities in the world
  - i.e. Such stimuli tend to be correlated with Large Teeth (Predator!)





## Deception

#### Eyes, across the phyla, predict direction of movement

Eyes tend to be on the leading edge of an animal's body



Again, deception exploits regularities in the world in ways that promote mis-interpretation

So, in fish, "eyespots" tend the be near the tail (vs the head), leading predators to erroneous predictions.



- "Tactical Deception in Primates" (Whiten & Byrne, 1988)
  - Complied Primatologists' examples, esp in Old World primates



- e.g. <u>Move out of sight</u> of dominant that might interfere before mating, eating etc.
- e.g. Look/move away from object of interest ("<u>feign" indifference</u>) possibly to distract/move competitor away



## Gaze control often mediates



- Experimenter in booth w/food on either side
- Chimp can reach through tunnels for food
- If detected, Experimenter will snatch food away
  - So, this is a <u>competitive</u> paradigm



Experimenter view of subject blocked



• Chimp will reach in <u>opaque not transparent</u> tunnel

- Experimenter in booth w/food on either side
- Chimp can reach through tunnels for food
- If detected, Experimenter will snatch food away
  - So, this is a <u>competitive</u> paradigm

IN	THE	LAB

Experimenter view of subject blocked



• If both tunnels opaque, will reach in <u>quiet not noisy</u>

- Above interactions (and others) probably selected for increased Self-Control
  - e.g. <u>Stealth</u>
    - Orca silently hunting other cetaceans
    - Collaborative chimp hunters that silently get into position



In the Lab

In the Lab

Subject watches as experimenter hides a treat













After repeated encounters, most subjects will <u>suppress</u> reaching in presence of "Mean" trainer

In the Lab



Some will actually actually <u>MISDIRECT</u> "Mean" trainer!

Seen in Chimps (Woodruff & Premack, 1979) and Cebus (Mitchell & Anderson, 1997)



Recall:

- Boysen's "<u>Greedy Giveaway</u>" task
- How <u>symbol use</u> can facilitate self-control



#### Cetaceans

- Very little research on social attention
- But other evidence for <u>Self Control</u>



Orcas in captivity treat humans (& other edibles) as friends not prey

## **Fission / Fusion**

- Within a community, subgroup membership frequently changes
  - Seen, for example, in chimpanzees and bottlenose dolphins
- Adds considerable pressure for social cognition, esp in a complex society
  - i.e. Establishes differential access to information
    - i.e. Animal present today has access to current activity; Animal absent does not
  - Sets up situations in which there are payoffs for attending to attention (access)
- This differential access can be <u>exploited</u>
  - e.g. Through competitive interactions, deception
  - Or <u>redressed</u>
    - e.g. Through informing ignorant, as with human language

## **Theory of Mind**

- Attributing mental states (e.g. knowledge) to others
  - Often based on attention to other's attention
    - e.g. I SEE you SEE dog . . .
      - I think (believe) that you are thinking (know about) dog



Often presumed to involve <u>embedded</u> representations

Now considered definitive task for determining Theory of Mind in human children

#### "Sally/Ann Task"

• Subject sees Sally & Ann





Or Bert & Ernie, etc.

Now considered definitive task for determining Theory of Mind in human children

#### "Sally/Ann Task"

- Subject sees Sally & Ann
- Sally hides object at A



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#### "Sally/Ann Task"

- Subject sees Sally & Ann
- Sally hides object at A

• Sally leaves, Ann stays



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- Sally leaves, Ann stays
- Ann moves object to B, then leaves



Now considered definitive task for determining Theory of Mind in human children

#### "Sally/Ann Task"

- Subject sees Sally & Ann
- Sally hides object at A

- Sally leaves, Ann stays
- Ann moves object to B, then leaves
- Experimenter asks subject:
  "Where will Sally look for object when she returns?"



## RESULTS

- 2 yr olds tend to "fail"
  - Pick B (where object is)
  - Interpreted: "They believe others believe what they believe"
- 4 yr olds tend to "succeed"

  - Interpreted: "They believe other has '<u>false belief</u>' different from their own"
- Much controversy over interpretation, role of language, devel trajectory, etc.
  - e.g. Can get success at much younger ages if only use eye-gaze measures

NOTE!

 False Belief Task sets up <u>differential access to information</u>, just as in <u>Fission/Fusion</u> society!

This is Sally. Sally has a basket. This is Anne. This is Anne. This is Anne. Anne has a box.		
Sally has a marble. She puts the marble into her basket.		
Sally goes out for a walk.		
Anne takes the marble out of the basket and puts it into the box.		
Now Sally comes back. She wants to play with her marble.		

## "Guesser vs. Knower" (Povinelli et al. 1990)

A version of "Show-to-Share" with one <u>knowledgeable</u> and one <u>ignorant</u> show-er i.e. One experimenter saw where treat hidden, other did not

Both face forward, hide eyes vs. mouth



Both face forward, bucket near/covers face





Bodies away, one face to, one from



Both face forward, barrier near/covers face

## "Guesser vs. Knower" (Povinelli et al. 1990)

A version of "Show-to-Share" with one <u>knowledgeable</u> and one <u>ignorant</u> show-er i.e. One experimenter saw where treat hidden, other did not

- Run with Chimps and Macaques
  - Chimps <u>eventually</u> consistently selected "Knower"
  - Macaques did not
- But note, even Chimps took <u>hundreds of trials</u> to learn!
  - In part, we'd now say, because generally poor at "show-to-share"
  - Plus, tho chimps could learn conditions under which it paid to pick X vs Y, not clear if those conditions involved gaze, knowledge, reinforced associations, etc
- In any case, lack of "first trial success" suggests they may <u>not</u> have come to this task <u>prepared to solve it</u> -- ?
- Not very compelling evidence for ToM
  - And, for several years, subsequent efforts also failed, until --

#### Krupenye et al 2016

## Used eye tracking (indicated by red dots) to determine where subject looks while watching a "False Belief" scenario



**False Belief in Apes** 

1) "Ape" attacks Experimenter (establish adversarial relationship)



2) Experimenter sees adversary disappear into right haystack



3) Experimenter NOT see adversary move to left haystack

#### TEST

- Where will subject look when Exp returns w/stick?
  - Look to left, last place Subject saw adversary?
  - Look to right, where adversary last seen by Exp?

#### RESULTS

- Subject gives anticipatory looks to right
- Consistent w/her recognizing that Exp has "False Belief" that adversary still there (even tho Subject knows it is not)





(Premack & Woodruff 1978)

• Later, became major focus of human developmental research



She was then asked to choose a photo that "solves" the problem



Note that both options are associated with heater, but only 1 solves current problem

 Sarah presented with videos of Trainer facing various problems (familiar from lab)



• Sarah often chose "correct" photo

(Premack & Woodruff 1978)

- BUT, exactly what question was she answering???
  - Sarah presented with videos of Trainer facing various problems (familiar from lab)



She was then asked to choose a photo that "solves" the problem



Note that both options are associated with heater, but only 1 solves current problem

- Sarah often chose "correct" photo
- BUT, exactly what question was she answering???
  - If problem involved a human she did not like...



• She would select what was (<u>to her</u>) the <u>desirable</u> outcome



 So, unclear if she attributes mental states (goals, desires) to human, or just recognizes problem and selects her own solution

(Premack & Woodruff 1978)

*Falsifiable??* How do you rule out alternative explanations??

- Prevent Target from <u>knowing</u>, since if he knows, he'll interfere ? (= ToM)
- Prevent Target from <u>seeing</u>, since if he sees, he will interfere ?
- Prevent <u>yourself</u> from <u>seeing</u> his face, since seeing it predicts he'll interfere ?
- Avoid <u>stress of possible eye contact</u> with Target, so can relax for sex ?





Best solution to these issues is to focus on the cognition we can *see* - <u>behavioral complexity & flexibility</u>

#### Especially in "complex society", important to assess attention interactions between others







- Studied triadic attention in videos of 3 adolescent bonobos (Johnson 2004)
  - What happens when A turns to B in C's presence??



- Given primates' sensitivity to changes in head direction
- We scored <u>relative</u> head orientation of all 3 animals



#### Useful metaphor: "Brightness"!

- The more direct the look, the "Brighter" that animal is to the other
- So, we can assess overall "Triadic Brightness"

For example, A = 2 to B, 1 to C B = 9 to A, 5 to C C = 7 to B, 6 to A

Total Triadic Brightness = 30

B



- Studied triadic attention in videos of 3 adolescent bonobos (Johnson 2004)
  - What happens when A turns to B in C's presence??

<u>Unstable</u> = A turn to B, A turn away <u>Stable</u> = A turn to B, stay



 "Brightness" of B did NOT predict A' s in/stability!

- Studied triadic attention in videos of 3 adolescent bonobos (Johnson 2004)
  - What happens when A turns to B in C's presence??



- "Brightness" of B did NOT predict A' s in/stability!
- "Brightness" of <u>C</u> did!
- i.e. A more likely to turn away from B if C was "Bright"

So, in this triad of bonobos ----



#### ... and A Turns To B ... A will soon turn From B

In fact, if all three attain high levels of access to each other simultaneously, (i.e. head turn raised total Triadic Brightness > 35) one will turn away within 260ms (immediately, at limits of reaction time!)



Suggests parallels with "cognitive embedding" that is presumed to be required for Theory of Mind . . .

## All Triadic Interactions are **Embedded**

e.g. "Social Tool" interactions

#### e.g. Buffer



User Connie embeds her interaction with buffer Lori in her interaction with aggressor Akili

> User Loretta embeds her interaction with recruited Akili in her interaction with aggressor Erin



e.g. Recruit

## All Triadic Interactions are **Embedded**

e.g. "Social Tool" interactions

"Alibi" = Use show of interest in Tool to deflect unwanted interest from other/s



• Limits on layers of embedding? How deep does it go?!

#### Gallup 1970 – <u>Self recognition in mirror via "Mark Test</u>"

- Subject exposed to mirror, then mirror removed.
- Subject anesthetized, forehead marked with paint
- When it awakens, watch to see if detects paint (it does not), then re-exposed to mirror





#### NOTE: Successfully done in Human children and Elephants



Monkeys tend to react SOCIALLY to a mirror i.e. as if seeing another Monkey



<u>Apes</u> tend to react as if seeing themselves, i.e. GROOM the mark

Apes show a variety of "contingency" behaviors when familiar with mirrors



#### So Apes have a "self concept" but Monkeys do not???

**Or** are monkeys just too put off by EYE CONTACT from monkey in mirror??!

#### "Mark Test" has been done with Dolphins

They "seem" to check out mark...



But cannot actually TOUCH mark, so ???

<u>OBJECTION</u>! Not Ecologically Valid test for this species!!

#### Like apes, dolphins also show <u>"Contingency Testing</u>" to mirror

• Open mouth, wag head, turn over, etc...





BUT, also do this when human (or other dolphin?) IMITATES them - i.e. GAME: "Can you keep up?!"

Maybe rather than recognizing ME, they are recognizing WE...?



- What does "self-concept" even mean???
- Recall see mom's hands, hear her echoes, before your own, so perhaps wrong to presume ToM maps "self" onto "other"
- In humans, seems to develop out of social interaction...
  - Is this related to "Perspective Taking"?
  - i.e. Seeing yourself as a thing <u>"seeable" by others</u>...??!

So many interesting questions still unanswered...!



Hopefully, some of YOU will help find them?!