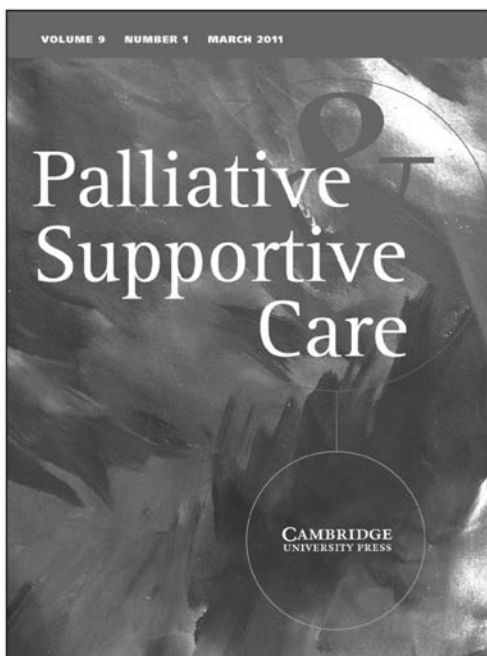


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**Editor-in-Chief:** William Breitbart, *Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center*



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Published for the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies

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Editor: Paul M Salkovskis, *Institute of Psychiatry, London, UK*

VOLUME 39 NUMBER 1 JANUARY 2011

Behavioural  
and  
Cognitive  
Psychotherapy

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PSYCHOTHERAPIES

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Editor: Michael Townend, *University of Derby, UK*



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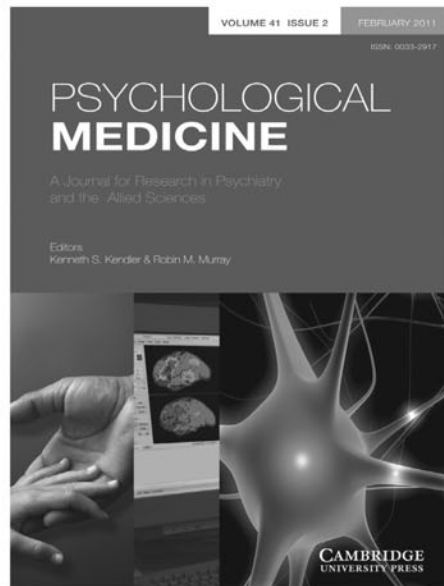
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**Criteria for acceptance:** To be eligible for publication, a paper should not only meet the standards of a journal such as *Psychological Review* or the *International Review of Neurobiology* in terms of conceptual rigor, empirical grounding, and clarity of style, but the author should also offer an explicit 500 word rationale for soliciting Commentary, and a list of suggested commentators (complete with e-mail addresses).

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## In this issue

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## Précis of *The Origin of Concepts*

Susan Carey

## To appear in upcoming issues

## Bayesian fundamentalism or enlightenment? On the explanatory status and theoretical contributions of Bayesian models of cognition

Matt Jones, *University of Colorado*, and Bradley C. Love, *University of Texas, Austin*

Much of current Bayesian cognitive research aims to demonstrate that behavior can be explained from rational principles alone, without recourse to process or representation. This work is compared to other research programs that have relied heavily on computational power, set aside mechanistic explanation, or drawn on assumption of optimality. These comparisons illustrate serious limitations of rational Bayesian modeling, due to its lack of constraint and ambiguity regarding psychological commitments. Alternative approaches are proposed that integrate Bayesian models with mechanistic considerations by taking into account the representations that Bayesian inference operates on and the algorithms and heuristics that carry it out.

**With commentary from** L Al-Shawaf & D Buss; B Anderson; I Baetu, I Barberia, R Murphy & A Baker; L Barsalou; D Borsboom, J-W Romeijn & E-J Wagenmakers; J Bowers & C-J Davis; N Chater, N Goodman, T Griffiths, C Kemp, M Oaksford & J Tenenbaum; D Danks & F Eberhardt; S Edelman & R Shahbazi; PM Fernbach & S Sloman; C Glymour; A Gopnik; B Hayes & B Newell; E Heit & S Erickson; M Herschbach & W Bechtel; K Holyoak & H Lu; GW Jenkins, IK Samuelson & JP Spencer; M Lee; A Markman & R Otto; D Navarro & A Perfors; D Norris; D Pietraszewski & AE Wertz; B Rehder; TT Rogers & MS Seidenberg; DK Sewell, DR Little & S Lewandowsky; M Speekenbrink & D Shanks; EL Uhlmann

## Subtracting "ought" from "is": Descriptivism versus normativism in the study of human thinking

Shira Elqayam, *De Montfort University*, and Jonathan St. B. T. Evans, *School of Psychology, Faculty of Science, University of Plymouth*

We propose a critique of normativism, defined as the idea that human thinking reflects a normative system against which it should be measured and judged. Logicism and normative Bayesianism are both cases of normativism. We analyze the place of normativism in contemporary theories of reasoning, judgment, and decision making and the methodological problems associated with it. We propose that normativism poses conceptual problems for psychology of reasoning and biases its research, and that little can be gained from the normativist approach that cannot be gained by descriptivist computational-level analysis. We conclude that descriptivism is a viable option, and that theories of higher mental processing would be better off freed from normative considerations.

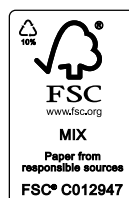
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## Among the articles to appear in forthcoming issues of BBS:

- M. Jones & B. C. Love, "Bayesian fundamentalism or enlightenment? On the explanatory status and theoretical contributions of Bayesian models of cognition"
- S. Elqayam & J. St. B. T. Evans, "Subtracting 'ought' from 'is': Descriptivism versus normativism in the study of the human thinking"
- C. L. Fincher & R. Thornhill, "Parasite-stress promotes in-group assortative sociality: The cases of strong family ties and heightened religiosity"
- Müller, C. P. & Schumann, G., "Drugs as instruments: A new framework for non-addictive psychoactive drug use"
- Guala, P., "Reciprocity: Weak or strong? What punishment experiments do (and do not) demonstrate"
- K. A. Lindquist, T. D. Wager, H. Kober, E. Bliss-Moreau & L. F. Barrett, "The brain basis of emotion: A meta-analytic review"

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