

Philosophy of Attention: Wrapping up



Our two big questions

What is attention?

Metaphysics of attention

Why should we care about attention?

Epistemology

Metaphysics

Moral philosophy

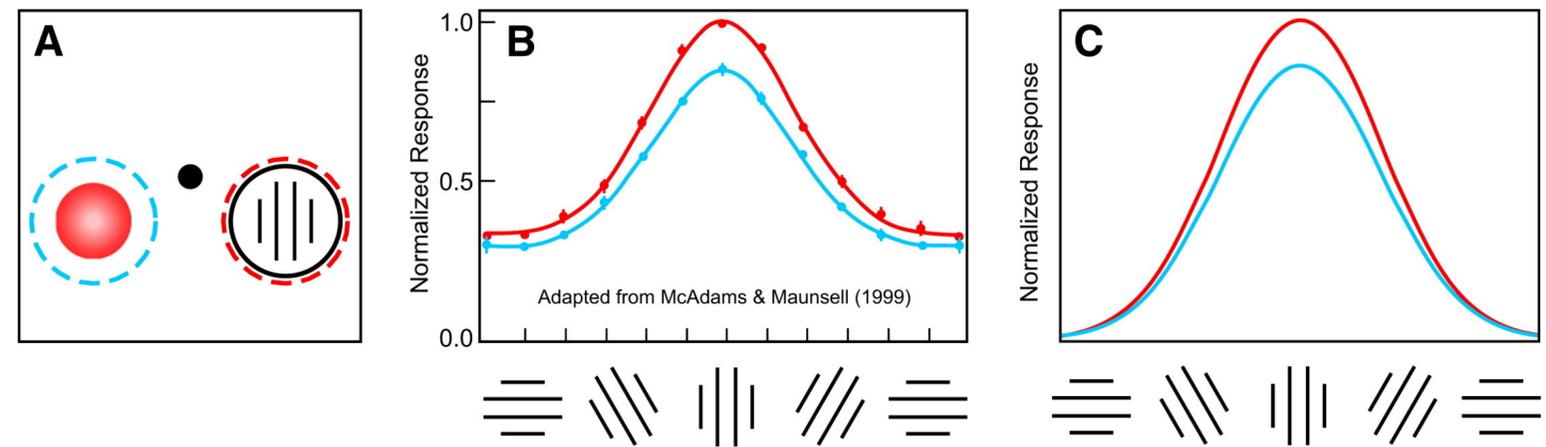
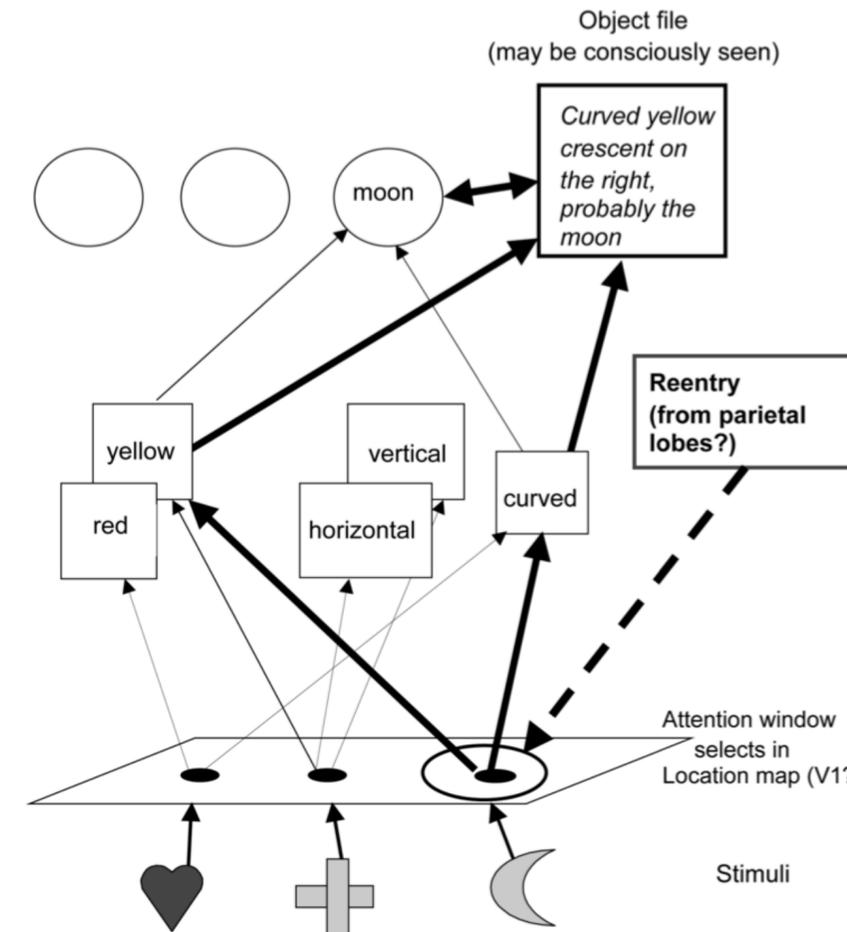
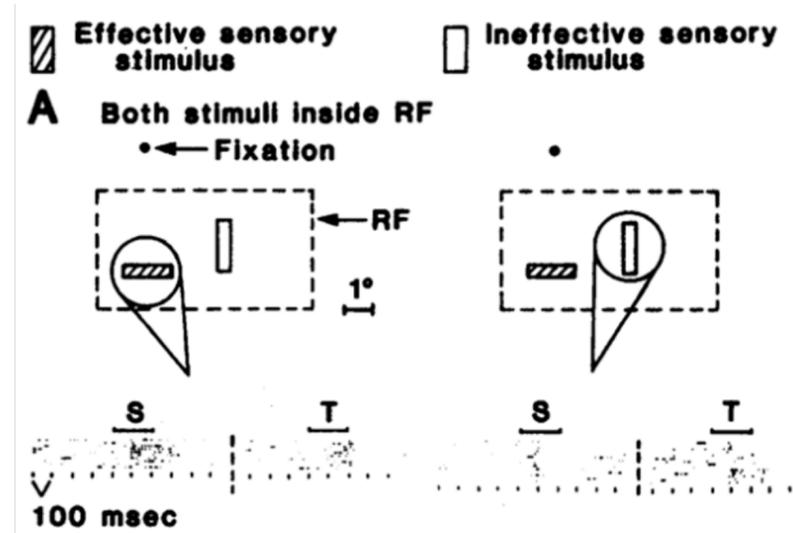
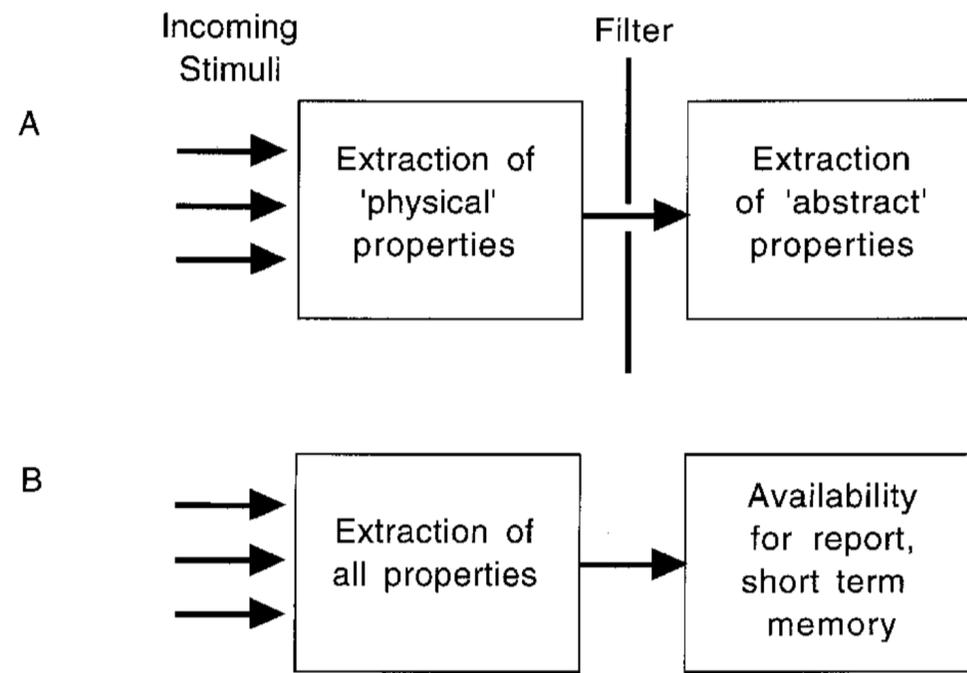
Metaphysics of
mind

Philosophy of
action

Social cognition

Sebastian Watzl:

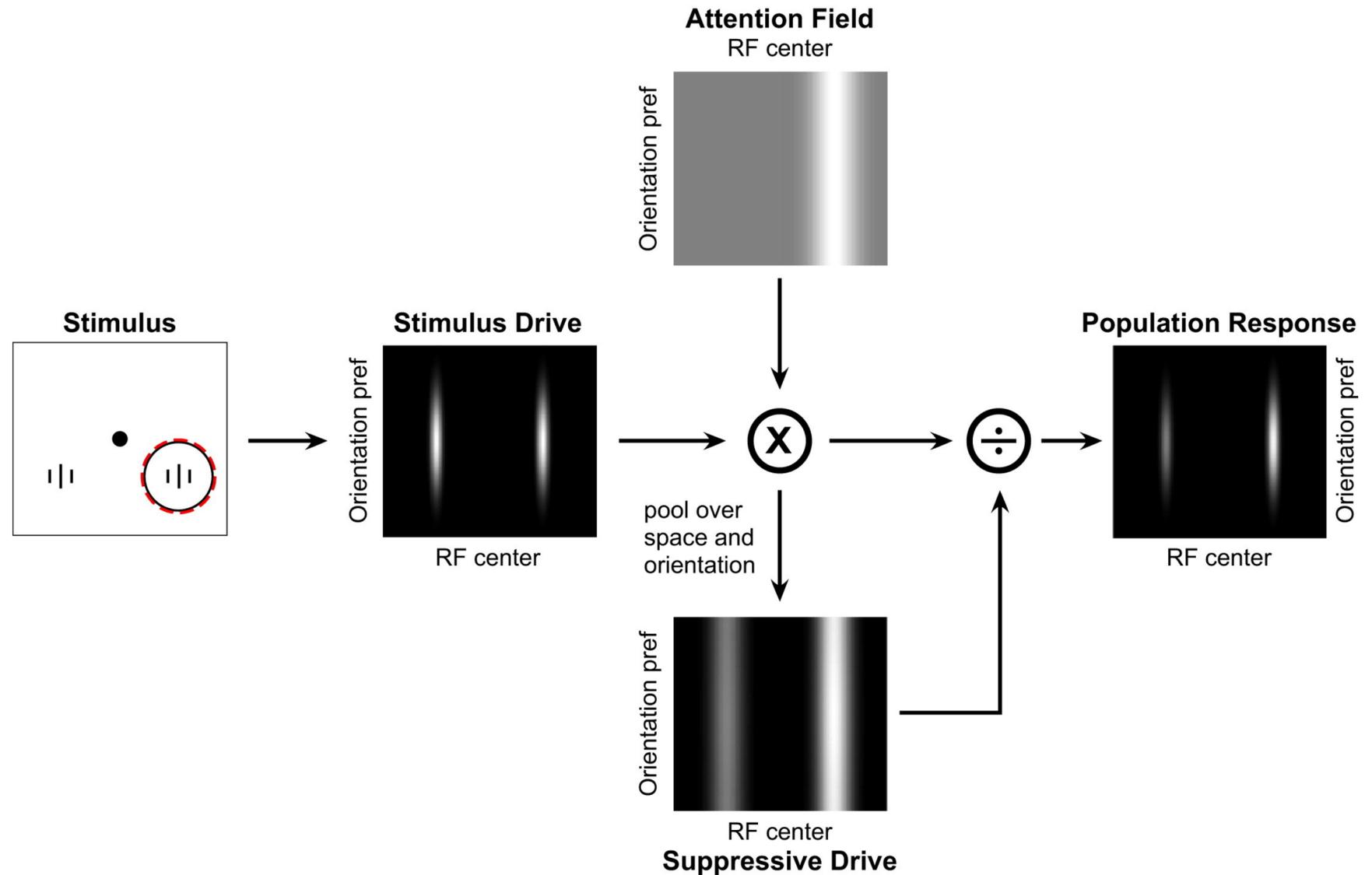
Attention is not just a brain mechanism or a psychological function



Peter Fazekas & Bence Nanay:

Attention *is* a brain mechanism:

It is an input-amplifier!



Carolyn Dicey Jennings:

Attention is something subjects do

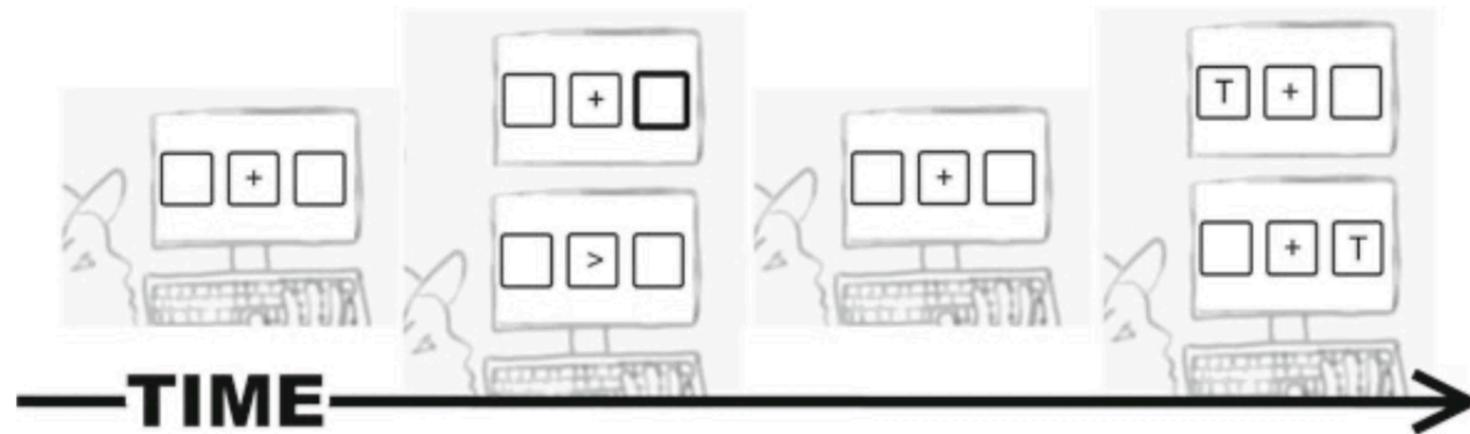
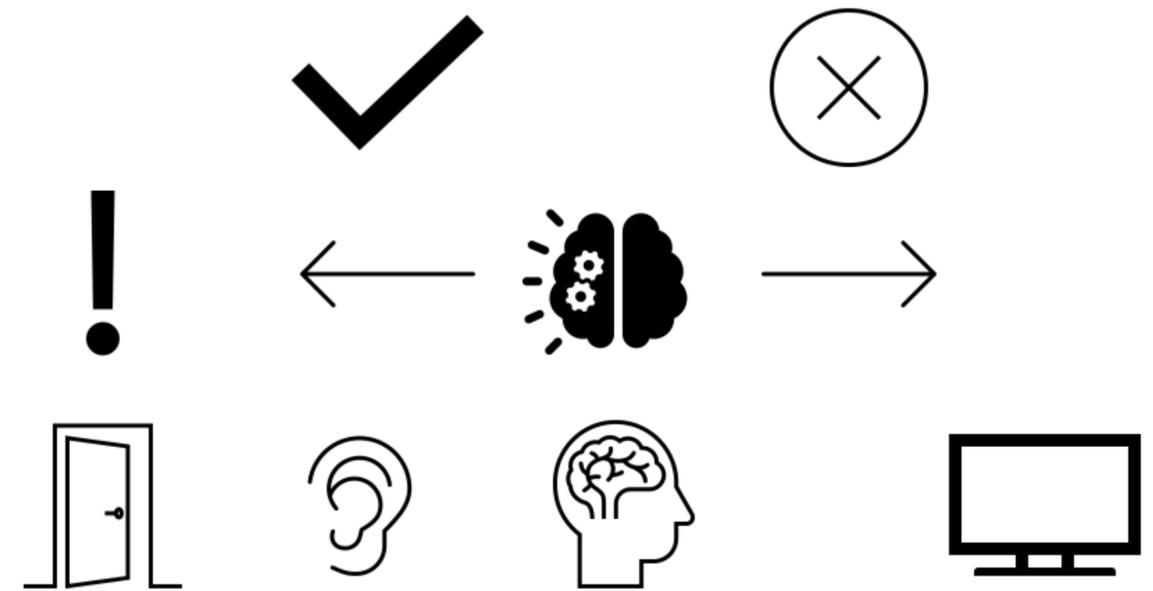


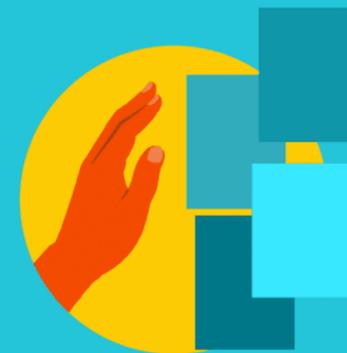
Fig. 1 Sample RT experiment: fixation, cue, fixation again, and target. The cue can be either central (*below*) or peripheral (*above*). The target can be either valid (*below*) or invalid (*above*)

CONFIRMATION BIAS

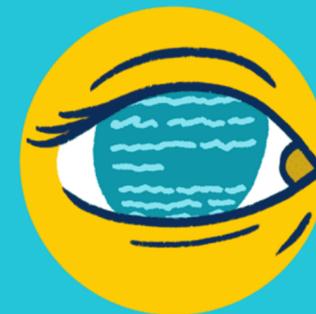


Susanna Siegel:

Attention patterns can inherit and transmit epistemic badness



Not seeking out objective facts



Interpreting information to support your existing belief



Only remembering details that uphold your belief



Ignoring information that challenges your belief

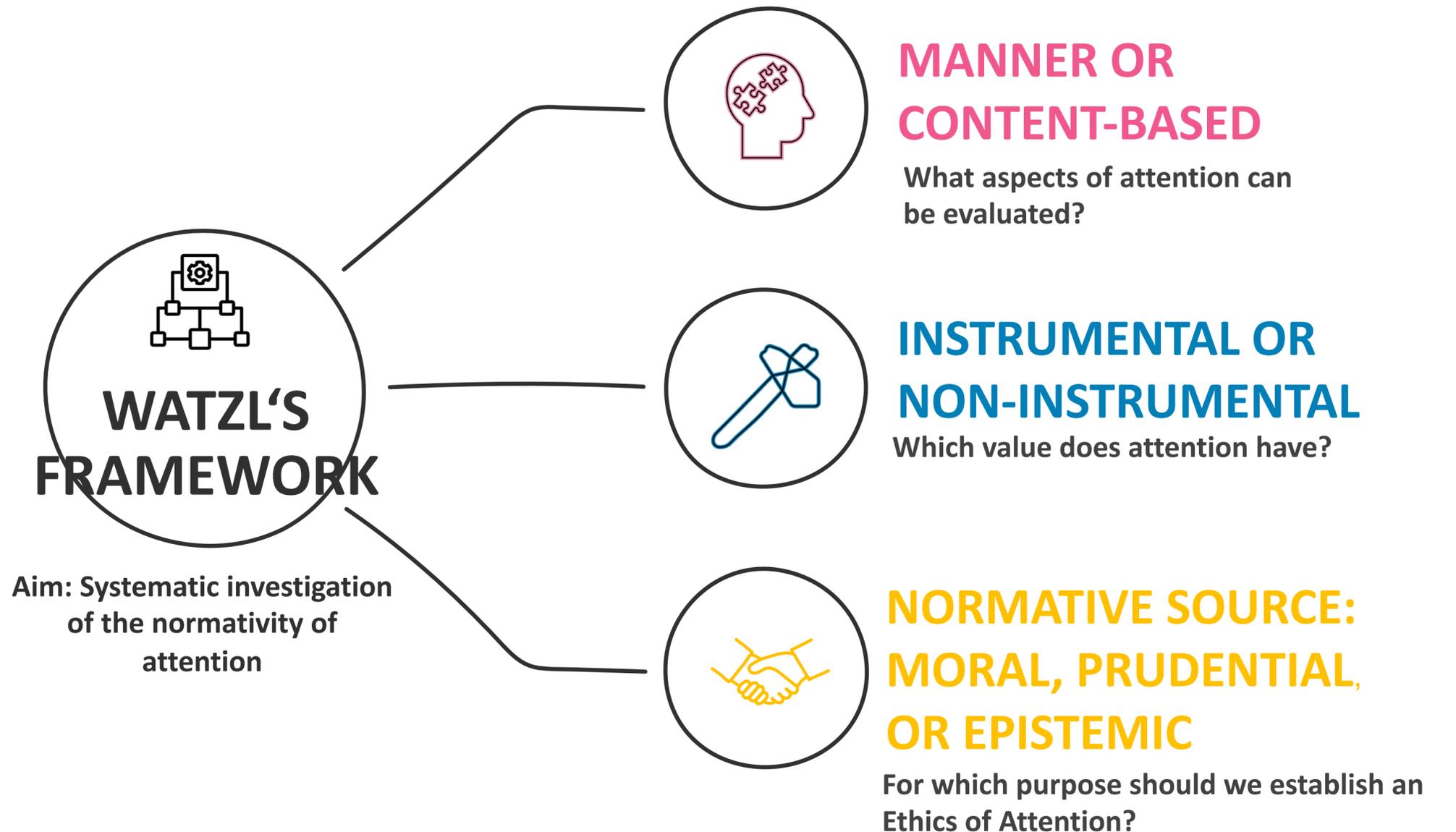
Zach Irving:

Epistemic norms of attention should prescribe a balance between exploration and exploitation



Sebastian Watzl:

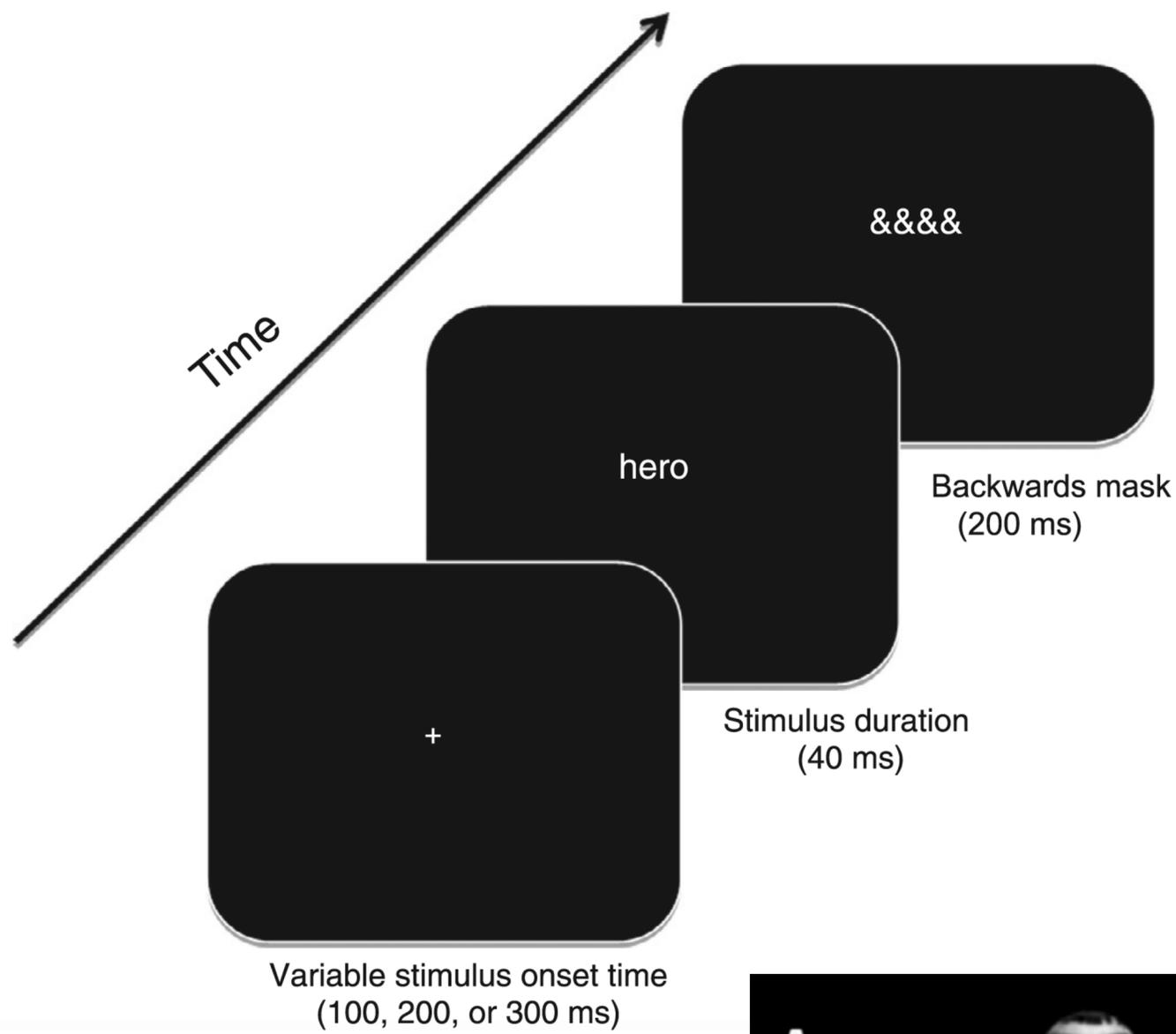
We need norms of attention!



**Helen Yetter-Chappell &
Richard Yetter-Chappell:**

**A virtuous moral
character requires
finding certain things
attention-grabbing**

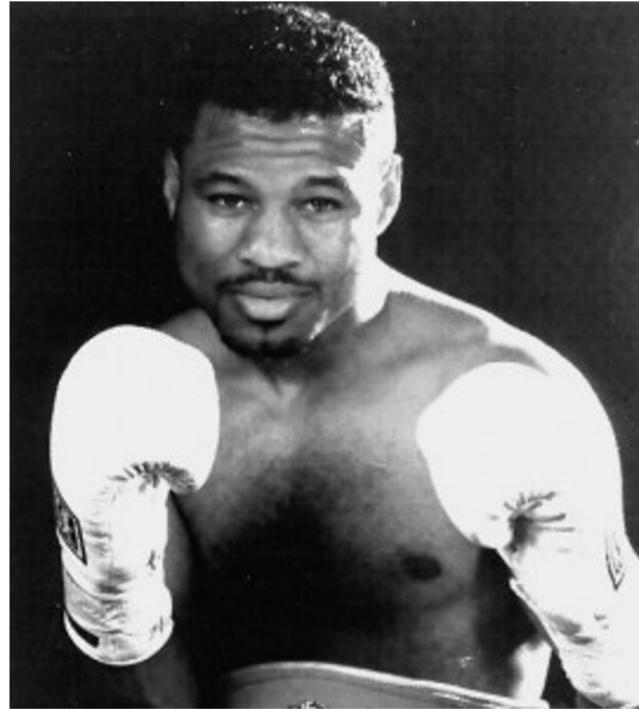




Jonna Vance & Preston Werner:

Morally relevant features of our environment can in fact capture our attention

<p>A</p>  <p>“threw a chair at his classmate”</p>	<p>B</p>  <p>“helped an elderly woman with her groceries”</p>	<p>C</p>  <p>“passed a man on the street”</p>
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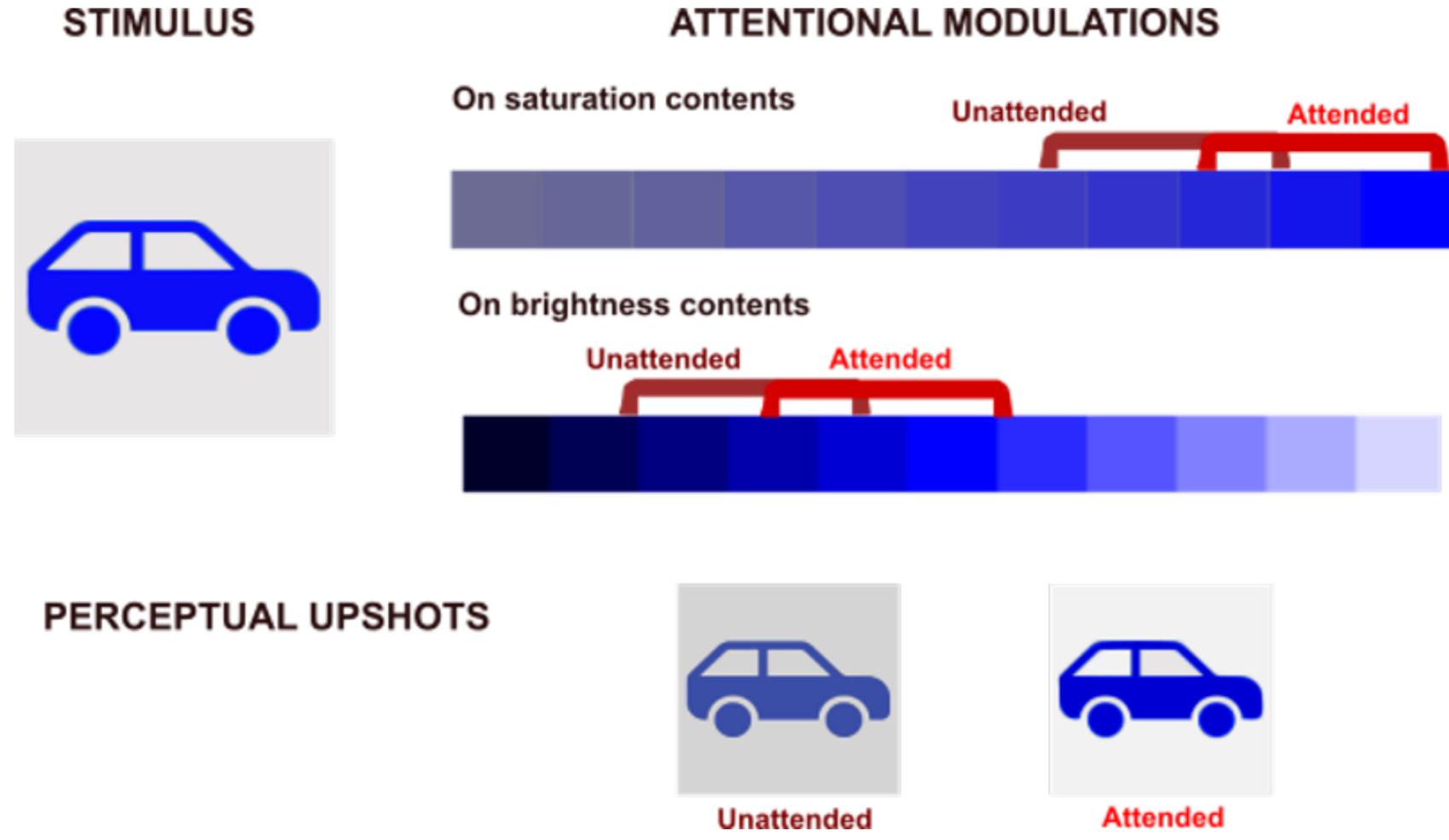
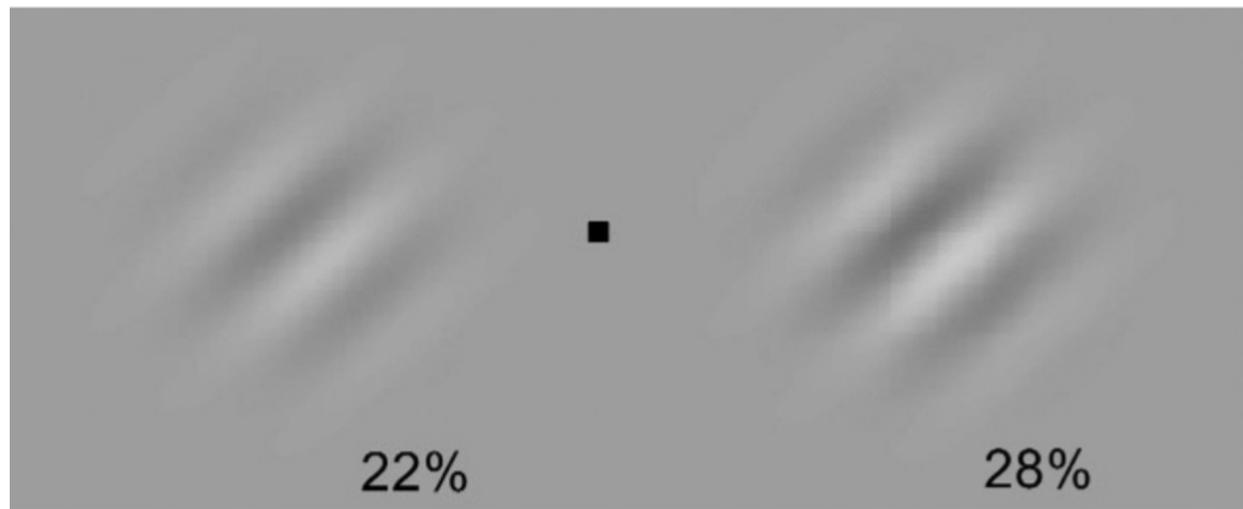
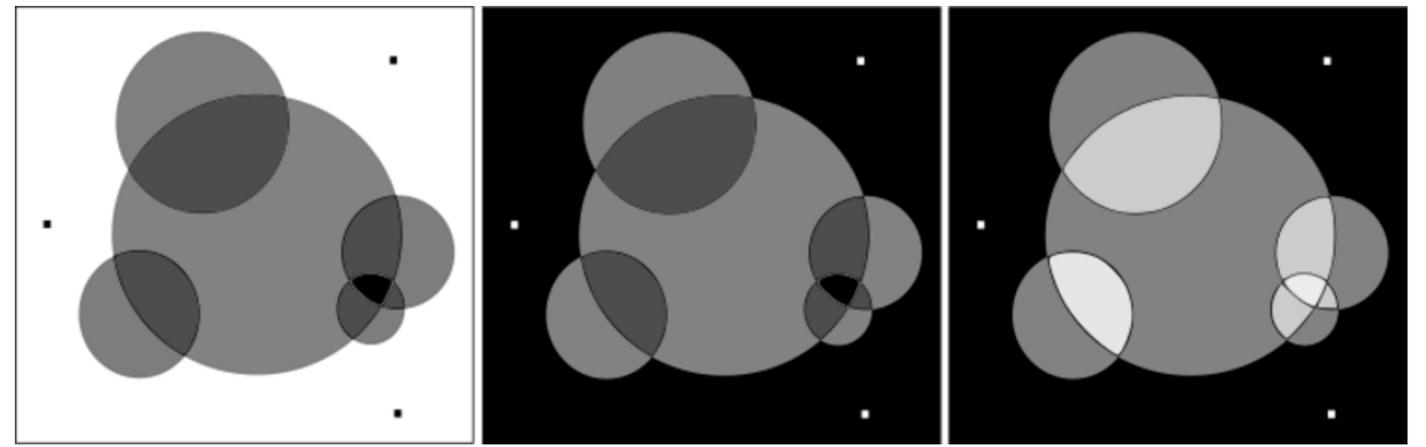


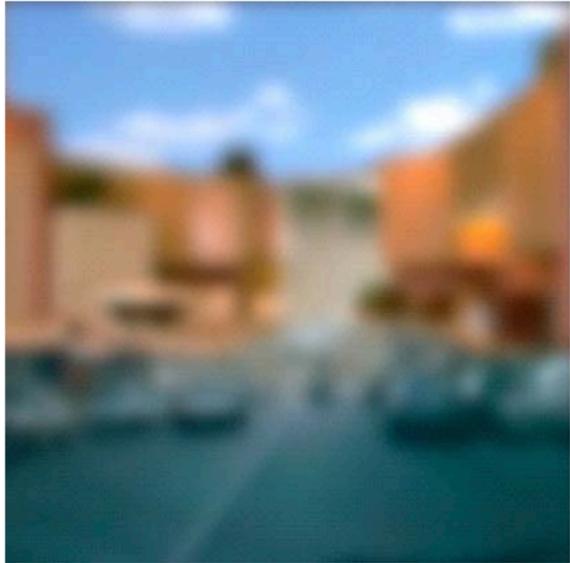
Carolyn Dicey Jennings:

**But moral
responsibility (and
control over our
actions) does not
require attention**

Sebastian Watzl:

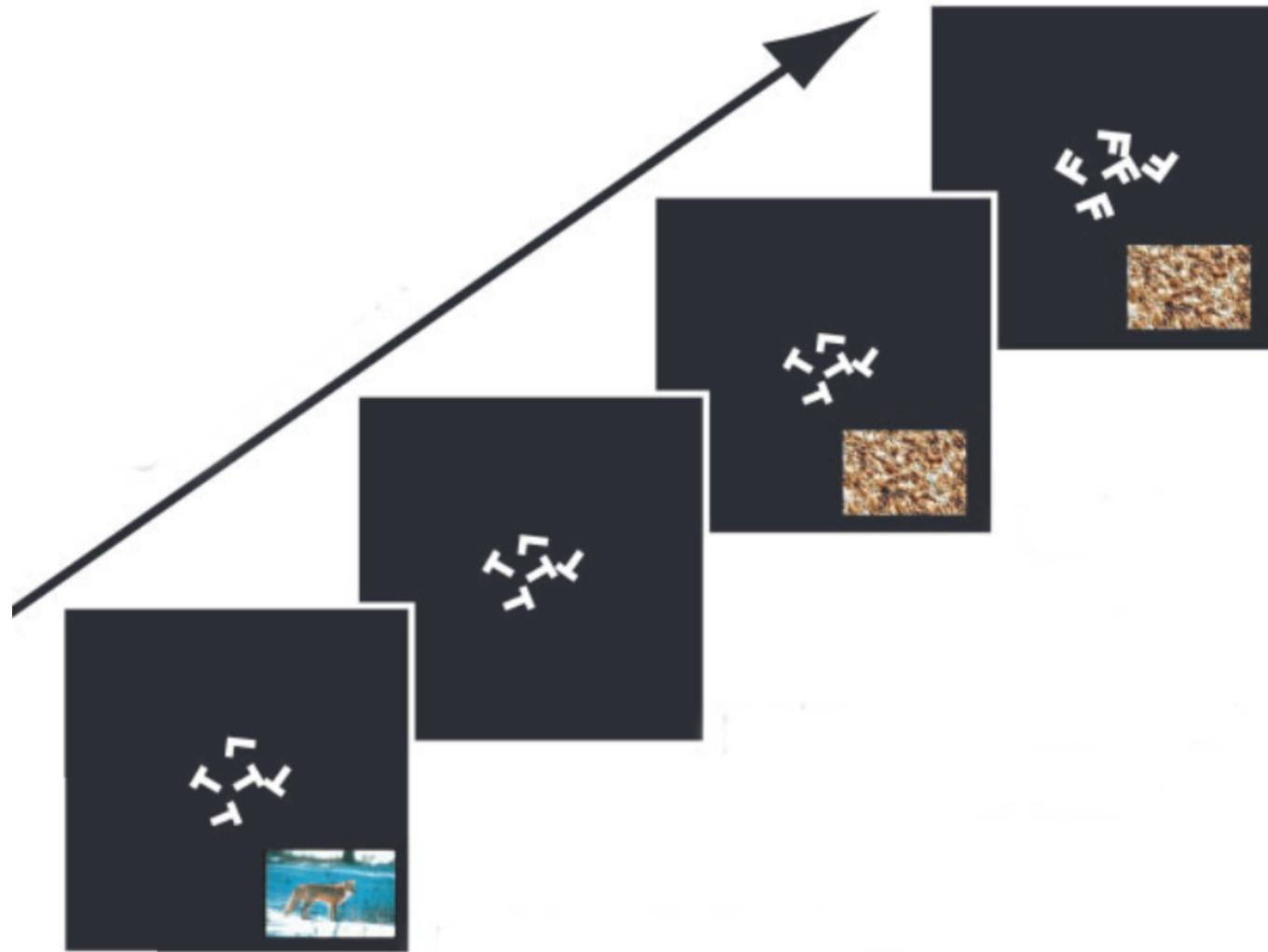
Attention makes
unique and irreducible
contributions to our
conscious (perceptual)
experiences





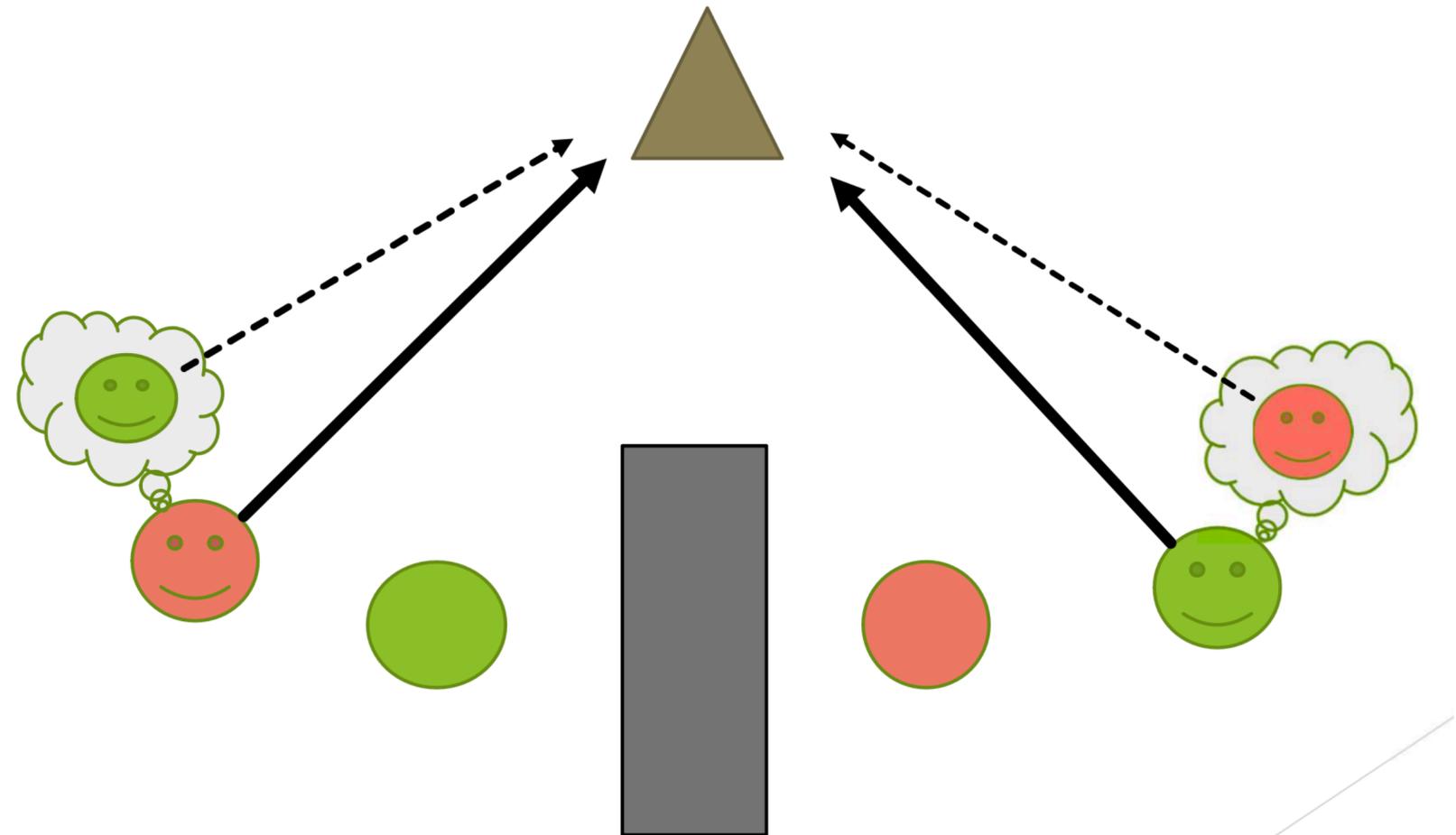
Carolyn Dicey Jennings:

However, attention is not necessary for conscious experience



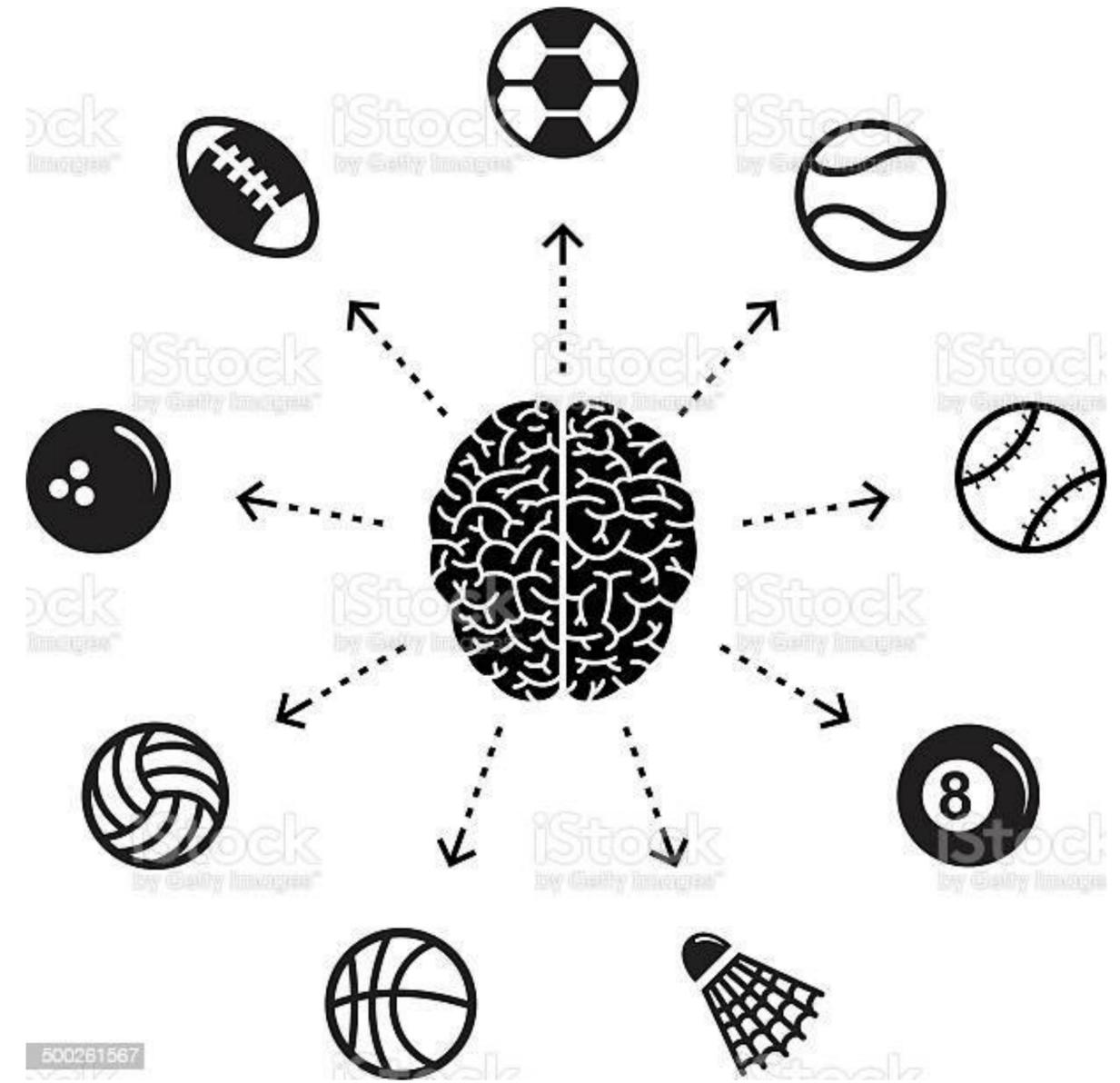
Lucas Battich and Bart Geurts:

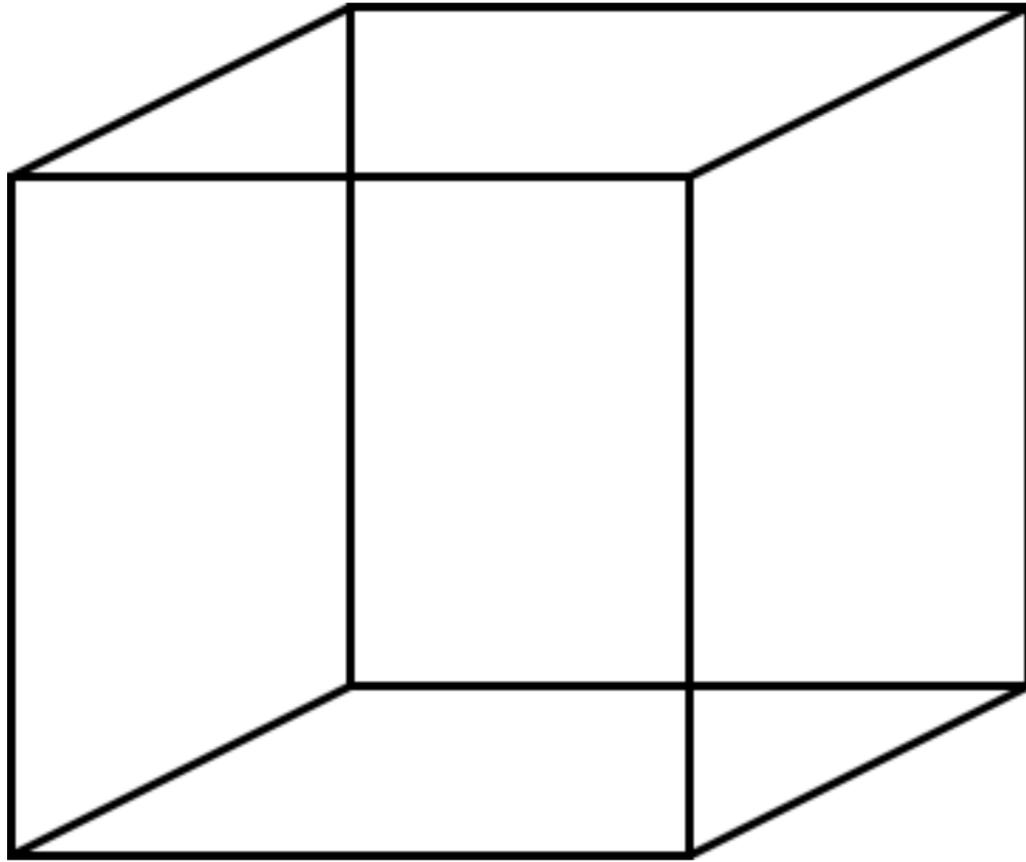
**Attending together
with others might go
beyond solo
attention**



C.O. Evans:

Controlling our attention gives us free will!





Grant Gillet and Sam Liu:

**Attention is top-
down causation at
work**

Juan Pablo Bermudez:

**Expert and skilful
performance
requires attention**



Next steps

- If you gave a presentation in class:

➡ I'll send you feedback within 2 weeks

➡ Submit your written version by **September 30th.**

- If you are writing a final paper:

➡ Send me your outline by **July 31st**

➡ You will get feedback within two weeks

➡ Submit your paper by **September 30th**

Next steps

Research

Teaching

CV

Contact

Philosophy of Attention

A seminar for M.A. and advanced B.A. students

- Full course program
- Sign-up sheet for presentations
- Guidelines for presentations
- Guidelines for final papers

Assigned readings:

- Session 1: "[Beyond brain mechanisms](#)"
Session 2: "[Attention is amplification, not selection](#)"
Session 3: "[The subject of attention](#)"
Session 4: "[Selection effects](#)" + "[Attention norms](#)"
Session 5: "[The ethics of attention](#)"
Session 6: "[Virtue and salience](#)"
Session 7: "[Attentional moral perception](#)"
Session 8: "[Attention, action and responsibility](#)"
Session 9: "[Beyond appearances](#)"
Session 10: "[Consciousness without attention](#)"
Session 11: "[Joint attention and perceptual experience](#)"
Session 12: "[Free will and Necker's cube](#)"
Session 13: "[Do we reflect when we perform skilful actions?](#)"



Handouts & slides:

1. Why do we need a philosophy of attention?
2. The Amplification View of attention
3. Attention as a process we control
4. Epistemic norms of attention + [Slides](#)
5. Towards an ethics of attention + [Isabel's slides](#)
6. Salience as an indicator of virtue + [Thomas' slides](#)
7. How attention might pick up moral difference-makers
8. The role of attention in action, responsibility and free will +

- If you are writing a final paper:
 - ➔ Send me your outline by **July 31st**
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**Thank you for your
attention!**