

How affective states bias human beliefs

Rational decision-making requires accurate beliefs: i.e. subjective probabilistic assessments that best correspond to the objective probability that they are meant to represent. In this talk, I will present two studies, combining concepts and tools from computational cognitive psychology and behavioral economics, which investigate how affective states can bias our beliefs. In the first study, I will present evidence that anticipatory anxiety lead to the adoption of comforting (biased) beliefs or “wishful thinking”. In the second study, I will show that confidence judgments - a belief that an action, answer, or statement is correct, based on the available evidence - are systematically biased by the anticipated outcome of a decision. Those two studies, based a similar *modus operandi*, provide robust evidence for affect-induced belief biases, and illustrate the value of the interdisciplinary approach to investigate decision-making.