

Social Cognition: Making Sense of People

Ziva Kunda



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How do we make sense of other people and of ourselves? What do we know about the people we encounter in our daily lives and about the situations in which we encounter them, and how do we use this knowledge in our attempt to understand, predict, or recall their behavior? Are our social judgments fully determined by our social knowledge, or are they also influenced by our feelings and desires?

Social cognition researchers look at how we make sense of other people and of ourselves. In this book Ziva Kunda provides a comprehensive and accessible survey of research and theory about social cognition at a level appropriate for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as researchers in the field.

The first part of the book reviews basic processes in social cognition, including the representation of social concepts, rules of inference, memory, "hot" cognition driven by motivation or affect, and automatic processing. The second part reviews three basic topics in social cognition: group stereotypes, knowledge of other individuals, and the self. A final chapter revisits many of these issues from a cross-cultural perspective.

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