Developing and Validating Rapid Assessment Instruments

Neil Abell, David W. Springer, and Akihito Kamata

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This book provides an overview of scale and test development. From conceptualization through design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, critical concerns are identified and grounded in the increasingly sophisticated psychometric literature. Measurement within the health, social, and behavioral sciences is addressed, and technical and practical guidance is provided. Acknowledging the increasingly sophisticated contributions in social work, psychology, education, nursing, and medicine, the book balances condensation of complex conceptual challenges with focused recommendations for conceiving, planning, and implementing psychometric study. Primary points are carefully referenced and consistently illustrated to illuminate complicated or abstract principles. Basics of construct conceptualization and establishing evidence of validity are complimented with introductions to concept mapping and cross-cultural translation. In-depth discussion of cutting edge topics like bias and invariance in item responses is provided. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analytic strategies are illustrated and critiqued, and step-by-step guidance is offered for anticipating elements of a complete data collection instrument, determining sampling frame and size, and interpreting resulting coefficients. Much good work has been done by RAI developers to date. Too often, practitioners or researchers either underestimate the skills and effort required, or become overwhelmed by the complexities involved.

The Curse of the Self

Mark R. Leary

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Human beings are unique in their ability to think consciously about themselves. Because they have a capacity for self-awareness not shared by other animals, people can imagine themselves in the future, anticipate consequences, plan ahead, improve themselves, and perform many other behaviors that are uniquely characteristic of human beings. Yet, despite the obvious advantages of self-reflection, the capacity for self-thought comes at a high price as people's lives are adversely affected and their inner chatter interferes with their success, pollutes their relationships, and undermines their happiness. Indeed, self-relevant thought is responsible for most of the personal and social difficulties that human beings face as individuals and as a species. Among other things, the capacity for self-reflection distorts people's perceptions, leading them to make bad decisions based on faulty information. The self conjures up a great deal of personal suffering in the form of depression, anxiety, anger, envy, and other negative emotions by allowing people to ruminate about the past or imagine the future. Egocentrism and egotism blind people to their own shortcomings, promote self-serving biases, and undermine their relationships with others. The ability to self-reflect also underlies social conflict by leading people to separate themselves into ingroups and outgroups. Ironically, many sources of personal unhappiness — such as addictions, overeating, unsafe sex, infidelity, and domestic violence — are due to people's inability to exert self-control. For those inclined toward religion and spirituality, visionaries throughout history have proclaimed that the egoic self stymies the quest for spiritual fulfillment and leads to immoral behavior.

The Psychology of Judicial Decision Making
David E. Klein and Gregory Mitchell (eds)

This volume of essays examines the psychological processes that underlie judicial decision making. Chapters in the first section of the book take as their starting point the fact that judges make many of the same judgments and decisions that ordinary people make and consider how our knowledge about judgment and decision-making in general applies to the case of legal judges. Chapters in the second section focus on the specific tasks that judges perform within a unique social setting and examine the expertise and particular modes of reasoning that judges develop to deal with their tasks in this unique setting. Chapters in the third section raise questions about whether and how we can evaluate judicial performance, with implications for the possibility of improving judging through the selection and training of judges and
structuring of judicial institutions. Together the essays apply a wide range of psychological insights to help us better understand how judges make decisions and to open new avenues of inquiry into the influences on judicial behavior.

The Political Economy of Labour Market Institutions

Gilles Saint-Paul

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Most economists think that unemployment is high in Europe because of rigid labour market institutions such as minimum wages, unemployment benefits, and employment protection. The book develops a theory of labour market institutions as the outcome of the political process. A central hypothesis is that they will be chiefly determined by the interests of employed workers with intermediate skill levels. We show that redistributive conflict between these workers and more skilled workers may lead to an outcome where a set of rigid institutions arise. We analyse why reform may be difficult because of status-quo bias, and discuss how it may nevertheless be implemented by choosing an appropriate design or timing for the reform.

Racial Stigma: Toward a New Paradigm for Discrimination Theory

Glenn C. Loury

in Understanding Poverty

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This essay examines interconnections between “race” and economic inequality in the United States, focusing on the case of African Americans. It is crucially important to distinguish between racial discrimination and racial stigma in the study of this problem. Racial discrimination has to do with how blacks are treated, while racial stigma is concerned with how black people are perceived. It is argued that a so-called reward bias (unfair treatment of persons in formal economic transactions based on racial identity) has become a less significant barrier to the full participation by African Americans in U.S. society than a so-called development bias (restricted access to resources critical for personal development but available only via informal social transactions
that are difficult to regulate because they do not take place in a market context).

Ideology, Psychology, and Law
Jon Hanson (ed.)

Formally, the law purports to be based solely in reasoned analysis, devoid of ideological bias or unconscious influences. Judges claim to act as umpires applying the rules, not making them. They frame their decisions as straightforward applications of an established set of legal doctrines, principles, and mandates to a given set of facts. As scholars who carefully study the law understand, that frame is a façade, and the impression that the legal system projects is an illusion. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. made a similar claim more than a century ago when he wrote that “the felt necessities of the time, the prevalent moral and political theories, intuitions of public policy, avowed or unconscious, even the prejudices which judges share with their fellow-men, have a good deal more to do than the syllogism in determining the rules by which men should be governed.” A century later, though, we are much closer to understanding the mechanisms responsible for the gap between the formal face of the law and the actual forces shaping it. Over the last decade or so, political scientists and legal academics have begun studying the linkages between ideologies, on one hand, and legal principles and policy outcomes on the other. During that same period, mind scientists have turned to understanding the psychological sources of ideology. This book is the first to bring many of the world’s experts on those topics together to examine the sometimes unsettling interactions between psychology, ideology and law.

United States
Mark J. Joe

In the United States, the absence of social democracy made ownership separation easier than it was anywhere else, as pro-shareholder
institutions, while not every bit as strong as shareholders would always have wanted, had an easier time forming. Political pressures existed, and manifested themselves via controls on financial institutions' role inside the firm historically, and in recent decades, in dampening the frequency and ease of hostile takeovers that could disrupt employment relationships. Economic-based social conflict has been lower in the United States than elsewhere. A tradition of low government involvement meant that firms were pressed less than they otherwise would have been, even when political pressures simmered.

THE DILEMMA AS REGARDS PERSONAL NEUTRALITY
Ingmar Persson

This chapter sets out the second dilemma or conflict between the rationalist aim of having rational attitudes and the satisfactionalist aim of fulfilment-maximization. Since it has been found that the bias towards oneself is irrational, rationalists must strive to rid themselves of it. It goes without saying that prudentialist maximizers whose goal is to see to it that their own life contains as much fulfilment as possible should retain this bias. But this chapter argues that it is irrational, even for those satisfactionalists who accept the requirement of universalizability and endorse the universal fulfilment-maximization goal of utilitarianism, to strive to rid themselves of this bias.

The Role of Agriculture in Development
Mukesh Eswaran and Ashok Kotwal

As countries develop, their labor force shifts from agriculture to industry and services, and in the process, the well-being of the people improves. This essay sheds some light on the economic logic that drives the process and on the important role that agricultural productivity plays in it. It argues that agricultural productivity growth is the key to poverty alleviation, and then discusses the policy implications for
developing countries. The first section shows how the process of secular decline in poverty is inevitably associated with a movement of labor from agriculture to other sectors, and how agricultural productivity growth facilitates such a movement. The second section discusses the importance of international trade in this process. Both agricultural and trade policies tend to generate political battles because they redistribute incomes from one group to another. This political economy question is addressed in the third section, which also discusses the causes (and consequences) of the observed policy bias against agriculture. The fourth section discusses the two main determinants of agricultural growth—technology and crop diversification, and reflects on the policy options available to poor countries to induce agricultural growth without causing domestic upheavals.

Observing Possession

Emma Cohen


Chapter 7 addresses the social cognition of possession activities. Some researchers have noted that possession observation is often characterised by ambiguity, contradiction, and inconsistency. This is the first attempt to explain why using established and recent hypotheses and data from social psychology (on social perception processes and biases) and neuroscience together with observations and interview data from the field.

The United Kingdom: Plurality Rule Under Siege

Paul Mitchell

in The Politics of Electoral Systems


‘Times they are a-changing . . .’ is at the source of the Westminster model. Or are they? Electoral reformers are still trying to replace Britain’s single-member plurality electoral system with some form of PR, as they have been for 150 years. The system has maintained the parliamentary
dominance of two parties, but elections have become increasingly multi-party and disproportional since 1974. However, at sub-state, local, and European elections, Britain has become a very active laboratory for electoral system design and implementation.

Sacrifice and Purity
Jonathan Klawans

in Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism
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This chapter reviews theories of sacrifice and interpretations of purity, finding disparities in the ways in which they have been understood by scholarship in recent times. It argues that three biases in particular have unduly affected the analysis of these rituals, with the result that sacrifice has been denied the symbolic understanding more typically applied to purity rites. These biases include Christian and Jewish supersessionism and a contemporary cultural ambivalence toward overt violent rituals. It employs methods inspired by Mary Douglas and argues against approach taken by René Girard.

Representing the Median Voter
Michael D. McDonald and Ian Budge

in Elections, Parties, Democracy: Conferring the Median Mandate
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This chapter performs a static analysis of correspondences between median voter, Parliamentary median, and government preferences by individual government and election. Distortions are widespread but more evident under SMD than PR systems — which are of course designed to produce a ‘necessary’ correspondence between the median voter and the median party in Parliament. However, distortions at each stage (voter-Parliament, Parliament-government) and over time cancel each other out so long-term representational bias is limited.
Feminism
Jacqui True

in International Society and its Critics
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Starts by asking where women are in international society. While observing the absence of women from theories of international society, it argues that women are nonetheless present as actors in diplomatic encounters between and among states, and that gender relations have been an integral part of the evolution and expansion of international society. Then proceeds to account for the conceptual exclusion of gender in the approaches of the English School of International Relations to international society. It reveals the gender bias behind two core assumptions of international society: i.e. that states are the major actors and that domestic politics are irrelevant in the workings of this interstate society. Ends by considering the future viability of the international society concept given its neglect of gender, arguing that, as a concept, international society risks irrelevance unless it can be revised to account fully for contemporary developments that significantly affect international norms and interstate behaviour.

The Press Effect
Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Paul Waldman

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What Americans know, understand, and believe about the world of politics is the product of a negotiation between journalists and political actors. The news is primarily shaped not by a liberal or conservative bias, but by the need for news to be dramatic and easily packaged. Consequently, the frames into which events are fit - more than any objective idea of truth - determine what information passes through the news filter. The Press Effect surveys events in a critical period of American history, from the election of 2000 through the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. In each of the events that took place, journalists inhabited a different role that shaped the news. During the election between Bush and Gore, they acted as amateur psychologists, delving into the minds of the candidates in an attempt to reveal their true character. On election
night, they acted as soothsayers, while in the postelection events in Florida, the press actively shaped events. On September 11 and after, journalists functioned as patriots, seeking to unify the country. In each case, the role inhabited by the press left critical questions unanswered and allowed distortions of the facts to pass into news. The book closes with a discussion of the means by which the press can enhance its most critical role, that of custodian of fact.

How to De-Bias Valuation Over the Cycle
Han Smit and Thras Moraitis

in Playing at Acquisitions: Behavioral Option Games
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Item type: chapter

It is puzzling to note that while companies seem to rush into acquisitions during global economic booms—even when they are aware of the dangers of overpaying—they appear to lose all interest in dealing when the global economy is sluggish and the market invariably offers bargains. Deal framing in executives' analyses—the way they perceive and model their acquisition or divestment opportunities—can cause them to overestimate acquisition opportunities in hot deal markets, while their dismay in cold markets often induces them to frame deals as representing too high risk, so they hold back from making viable new acquisitions or delay divesting loss-making divisions. Decision biases can play surprisingly strong roles in the valuation analyses of even experienced executives. This chapter focuses on this particular problem: how rational analyses can become infected and lead executives to manipulate their analyses to get the answers they expect or require. It proposes a remedy that goes beyond currently applied valuation models.

Social Justice and Public Equality
Thomas Christiano

in The Constitution of Equality: Democratic Authority and Its Limits
Published in print: 2008 Published Online: September 2008
Publisher: Oxford University Press DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198297475.003.0003
Item type: chapter

This chapter argues that social justice requires that equality be publicly realized. Social justice is realized in social and political institutions that attempt to establish justice. It requires that justice must not only be
done, it must be seen to be done. In the case of justice as equality, it must not only be the case that people are treated as equals; they must be able to see that they are treated as equals. Hence, social justice requires what is called public equality. It is argued that public equality is grounded on the principle of equality defended in the last chapter and the circumstances of disagreement, diversity, fallibility, and cognitive bias that attend efforts to implement justice in any moderately complex society as well as the fundamental interests of persons in society. This grounds the idea of the egalitarian standpoint from which the justification of political institutions proceeds. That is the first stage of the argument for grounding of democracy on equality.

Systemic Failure, Coordination, and Contingencies: Understanding Electoral System Change in New Zealand

Jack Vowles

in To Keep or To Change First Past The Post?: The Politics of Electoral Reform


There are two interpretations of electoral system change in New Zealand; one, that it was a result of social and political changes generating a ‘systemic failure’ of the former single-member-plurality (SMP) electoral system, and thus expressing the intentions of key actors: a combination of evolution and design. The alternative interpretation assumes the process to have been contingent or even accidental. In determinist mode, this chapter argues that as a necessary but not sufficient condition ‘systemic failure’ set the agenda. In addition, failure went beyond the electoral system that was only one element of New Zealand's highly majoritarian institutional arrangements. In the electoral arena, multi-party politics had generated a partisan bias that parties and electors could not correct adequately by coordination. With necessary conditions set, actors' intentions combined with various contingencies provide sufficient explanations for change. Unintentional or accidental events may have accelerated the process and shaped how it happened. But pressure for change ran deep, and in alternative counterfactual scenarios other contingencies could have tipped the balance. Indeed, a probabilistic rather than deterministic explanation may better fit the process. Rational choice theories of party interests explain part of the change. But perceptions of the need to enhance the normative performance of New Zealand democracy by reducing its majoritarian elements were, if anything, more important, bringing ‘systemic failure’
into the picture as a justification for change beyond its initial agenda-setting role.

The Press as Custodian of Fact
Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Paul Waldman

in The Press Effect: Politicians, Journalists, and the Stories that Shape the Political World

The custodianship of fact should be the role that undergirds journalism. All too often, reporters allow the frames of their stories to shape the facts, instead of the other way around. The press has a responsibility to adjudicate factual disputes among political actors, even at the risk of charges of bias. The chapter offers a series of recommendations that would guide journalists toward fulfilling this role.

Scientific Objectivity
David B. Resnik

in The Price of Truth: How Money Affects the Norms of Science

This chapter examines science’s most important norm, objectivity. It argues that science ought to be objective because democratic societies need objective beliefs and methods to help resolve controversial moral, political, economic, cultural, and social debates. To help with the resolution of these debates, scientists should attempt to give unbiased testimony in public forums and should try to develop theories, hypotheses, methods, and concepts that are free from personal, cultural, social, moral or political biases. The most effective way of developing unbiased theories (hypotheses, methods, and concepts) is to attempt to test these theories against a mind-independent world. Even though objectivity is often difficult to achieve in science, the quest for objectivity is not an impossible dream or vain pursuit.