The College of Liberal Arts Research Academy (CLARA)

proudly presents...

PUBS  &  CAKE

November 4th, BRNG 6138, 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Celebrating publications in Liberal Arts.

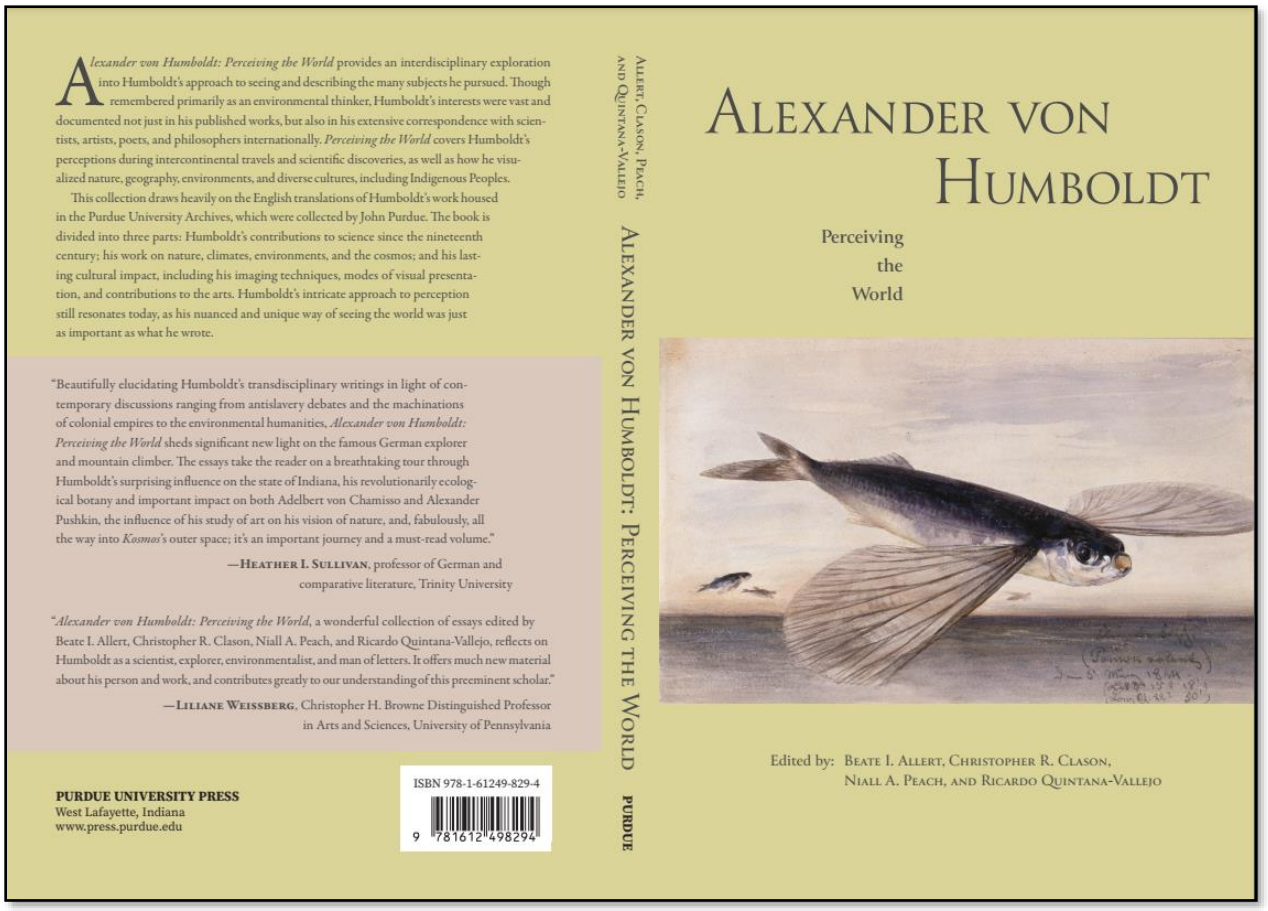
Beate Allert

School of Languages & Cultures



Dr. Allert's website

Allert, B., Clason, C. R., Peach, N. A., & Quintana Vallejo, R. (2023). *Alexander von Humboldt: Perceiving the world*. Purdue University Press. https://www.press.purdue.edu/9781612498294/



Alexander von Humboldt: Perceiving the World provides an interdisciplinary exploration into Humboldt's approach to seeing and describing the many subjects he pursued. Though remembered primarily as an environmental thinker, Humboldt's interests were vast and documented not just in his published works, but also in his extensive correspondence with scientists, artists, poets, and philosophers internationally. *Perceiving the World* covers Humboldt's perceptions during intercontinental travels and scientific discoveries, as well as how he visualized nature, geography, environments, and diverse cultures, including Indigenous Peoples.

This collection draws heavily on the English translations of Humboldt's work housed in the Purdue University Archives, which were collected by John Purdue. The book is divided into three parts: Humboldt's contributions to science since the nineteenth century; his work on nature, climates, environments, and the cosmos; and his lasting cultural impact, including his imaging techniques, modes of visual presentation, and contributions to the arts. Humboldt's intricate approach to perception still resonates today, as his nuanced and unique way of seeing the world was just as important as what he wrote.

"Beautifully elucidating Humboldt's transdisciplinary writings in light of contemporary discussions ranging from antislavery debates and the machinations of colonial empires to the environmental humanities, *Alexander von Humboldt: Perceiving the World* sheds significant new light on the famous German explorer and mountain climber. The essays take the reader on a breathtaking tour through Humboldt's surprising influence on the state of Indiana, his revolutionarily ecological botany and important impact on both Adelbert von Chamisso and Alexander Pushkin, the influence of his study of art on his vision of nature, and, fabulously, all the way into *Kosmos*'s outer space; it's an important journey and a must-read volume."

—Heather I. Sullivan, professor of German and comparative literature, Trinity University

"*Alexander von Humboldt: Perceiving the World*, a wonderful collection of essays edited by Beate I. Allert, Christopher R. Clason, Niall A. Peach, and Ricardo Quintana-Vallejo, reflects on Humboldt as a scientist, explorer, environmentalist, and man of letters. It offers much new material about his person and work, and contributes greatly to our understanding of this preeminent scholar."

—Liliane Weissberg, Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor in Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania

PURDUE UNIVERSITY PRESS
West Lafayette, Indiana
www.press.purdue.edu

ISBN 978-1-61249-829-4

Allert, Clason, Peach, and Quintana-Vallejo

Alexander von Humboldt: Perceiving the World

PURDUE

Alexander von Humboldt

Perceiving the World

Edited by: Beate I. Allert, Christopher R. Clason, Niall A. Peach, and Ricardo Quintana-Vallejo

Aaron Mendon-Plasek

Department of History



Dr. Mendon-Plasek's website

Mendon-Plasek, A. (2023). Irreducible worlds of inexhaustible meaning: early 1950s machine learning as subjective decision making, creative imagining and remedy for the unforeseen. *BJHS Themes*, *8*, 65–80. https://doi.org/10.1017/bjt.2023.12

BJHS Themes (2023), **8**, 65–80
doi:10.1017/bjt.2023.12

BSHS

Check for updates

Irreducible worlds of inexhaustible meaning: early 1950s machine learning as subjective decision making, creative imagining and remedy for the unforeseen

Aaron Mendon-Plasek

Information Society Project, Yale Law School, USA
Email: aaron.mendon-plasek@yale.edu

Abstract

Little historical work examines the problems, practices and values of 'machine learning' as it was understood and justified within pattern recognition research communities prior to the 1980s. This omission has led to a failure to appreciate how the efficacy of machine learning was often justified by its perceived capacity for 'originality' rooted in machine (and human) subjectivity. This paper examines why and how early 1950s pattern recognition researchers came to see 'machine learning' as a technical and epistemological set of nominalist strategies for performing induction and abduction given incomplete, complex or contradictory information that might also spur 'creative' insight in such diverse activities as political judgement and scientific inquiry. I document local research problems, epistemological commitments, institutional contexts and the circulation of 'machine-learning' practices and values through three cases of early-career researchers imagining, building and programming digital computers to 'learn' from 1950 to 1953. This machine learning implemented in learning programs came to be seen by some researchers as more efficacious descriptions of the natural and social world because these descriptions were perspective-dependent, profoundly contingent and contextually non-exhaustive. Often indexed as colloquial appeals to greater 'generality', conceptions of machine learning's efficacy as the capacity to make meaning from contradictory information continues to inform contemporary debates regarding artificial intelligence, society and possibility.

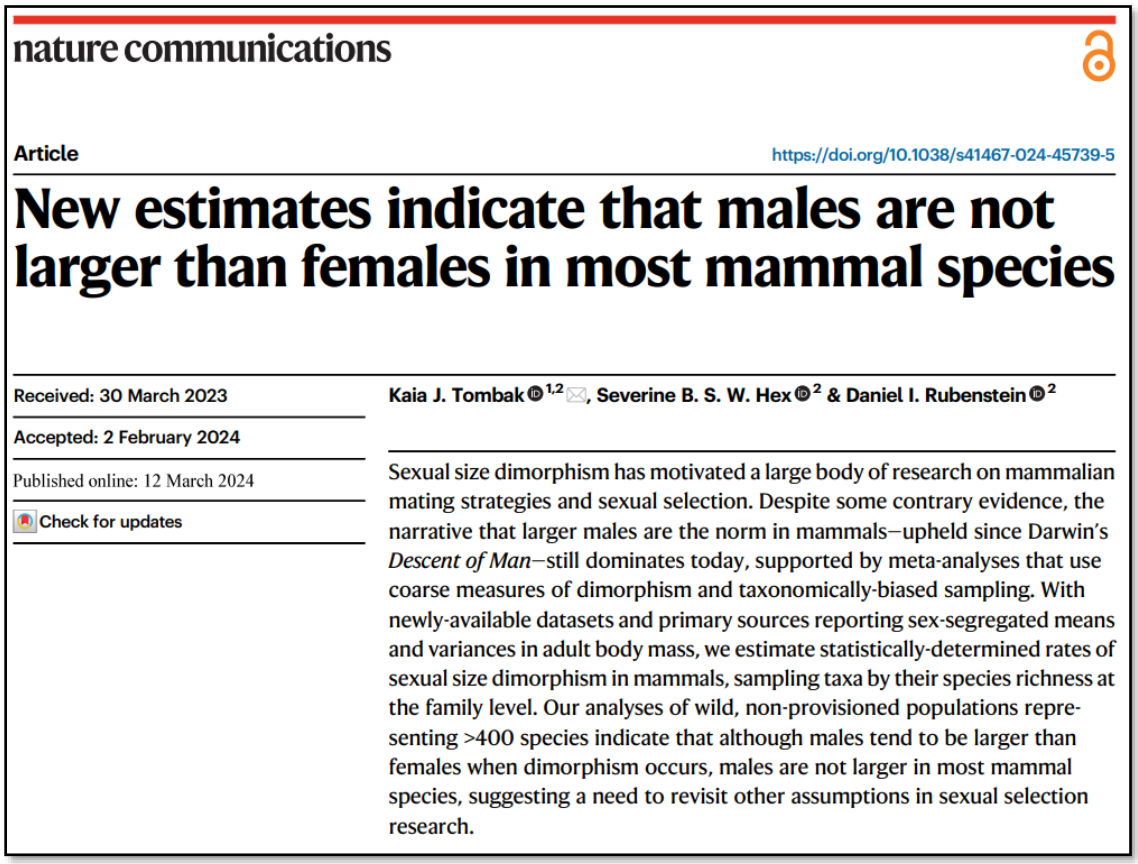
Kaia Tombak

Department of Anthropology



Dr. Tombak's website

Tombak, K. J., Hex, S. B., & Rubenstein, D. I. (2024). New estimates indicate that males are not larger than females in most mammal species. *Nature Communications*, *15*(1), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-45739-5



nature communications

Article

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-45739-5

New estimates indicate that males are not larger than females in most mammal species

Received: 30 March 2023

Accepted: 2 February 2024

Published online: 12 March 2024

Check for updates

Kaia J. Tombak [1,2], Severine B. S. W. Hex [2] & Daniel I. Rubenstein [2]

Sexual size dimorphism has motivated a large body of research on mammalian mating strategies and sexual selection. Despite some contrary evidence, the narrative that larger males are the norm in mammals—upheld since Darwin's *Descent of Man*—still dominates today, supported by meta-analyses that use coarse measures of dimorphism and taxonomically-biased sampling. With newly-available datasets and primary sources reporting sex-segregated means and variances in adult body mass, we estimate statistically-determined rates of sexual size dimorphism in mammals, sampling taxa by their species richness at the family level. Our analyses of wild, non-provisioned populations representing >400 species indicate that although males tend to be larger than females when dimorphism occurs, males are not larger in most mammal species, suggesting a need to revisit other assumptions in sexual selection research.

Nathanael Johnson & Torsten Reimer

Communication and Cognition Lab

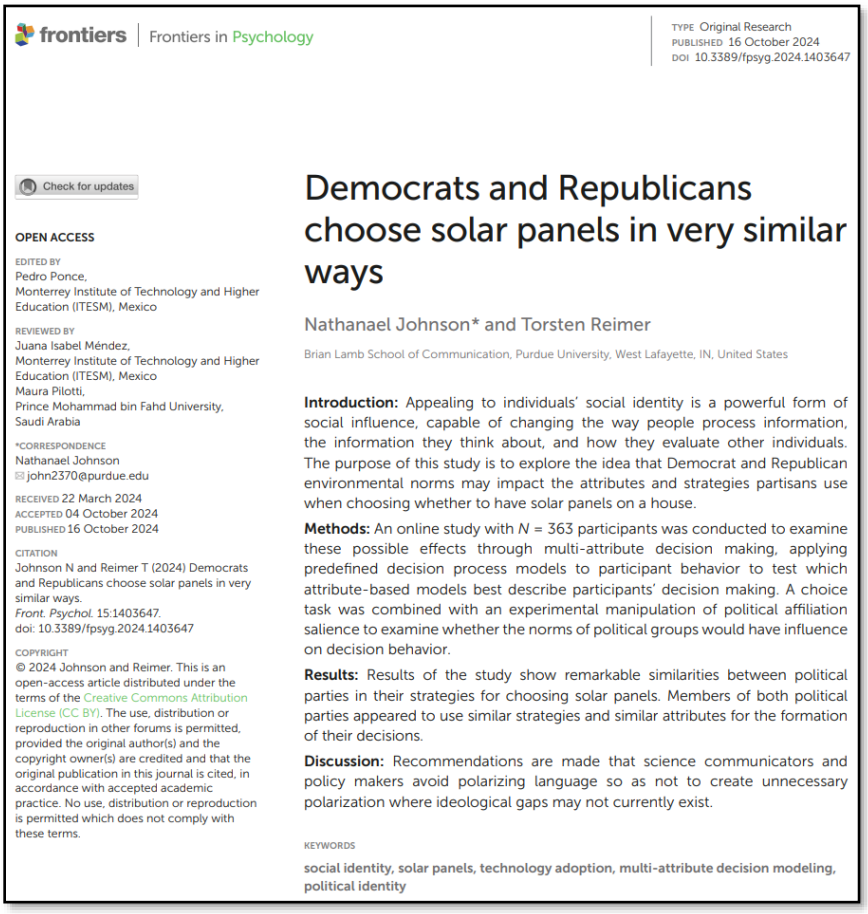
Brian Lamb School of Communication



Dr. Johnson's website & Dr. Reimer's website

Johnson, N., & Reimer, T. (2024). Democrats and Republicans choose solar panels in very similar ways. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *15*, 1403647. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1403647





frontiers | Frontiers in Psychology

TYPE Original Research
PUBLISHED 16 October 2024
DOI 10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1403647

Check for updates

OPEN ACCESS

EDITED BY
Pedro Ponce,
Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM), Mexico

REVIEWED BY
Juana Isabel Méndez,
Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM), Mexico
Maura Pilotti,
Prince Mohammad bin Fahd University, Saudi Arabia

*CORRESPONDENCE
Nathanael Johnson
john2370@purdue.edu

RECEIVED 22 March 2024
ACCEPTED 04 October 2024
PUBLISHED 16 October 2024

CITATION
Johnson N and Reimer T (2024) Democrats and Republicans choose solar panels in very similar ways.
Front. Psychol. 15:1403647.
doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1403647

COPYRIGHT
© 2024 Johnson and Reimer. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.

Democrats and Republicans choose solar panels in very similar ways

Nathanael Johnson* and Torsten Reimer

Brian Lamb School of Communication, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, United States

Introduction: Appealing to individuals' social identity is a powerful form of social influence, capable of changing the way people process information, the information they think about, and how they evaluate other individuals. The purpose of this study is to explore the idea that Democrat and Republican environmental norms may impact the attributes and strategies partisans use when choosing whether to have solar panels on a house.

Methods: An online study with $N = 363$ participants was conducted to examine these possible effects through multi-attribute decision making, applying predefined decision process models to participant behavior to test which attribute-based models best describe participants' decision making. A choice task was combined with an experimental manipulation of political affiliation salience to examine whether the norms of political groups would have influence on decision behavior.

Results: Results of the study show remarkable similarities between political parties in their strategies for choosing solar panels. Members of both political parties appeared to use similar strategies and similar attributes for the formation of their decisions.

Discussion: Recommendations are made that science communicators and policy makers avoid polarizing language so as not to create unnecessary polarization where ideological gaps may not currently exist.

KEYWORDS

social identity, solar panels, technology adoption, multi-attribute decision modeling, political identity