Trends in Cognitive Sciences

CellPress

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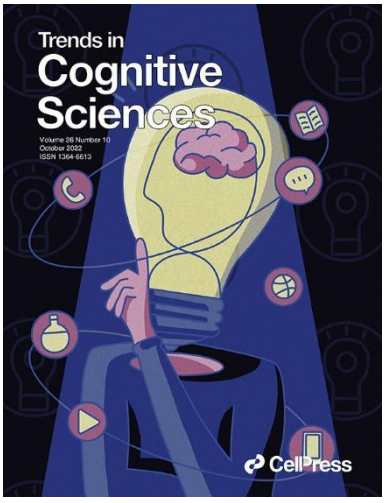
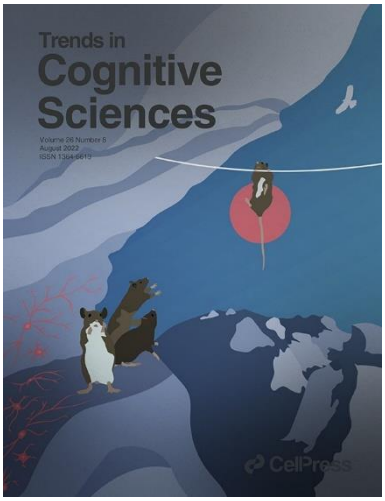
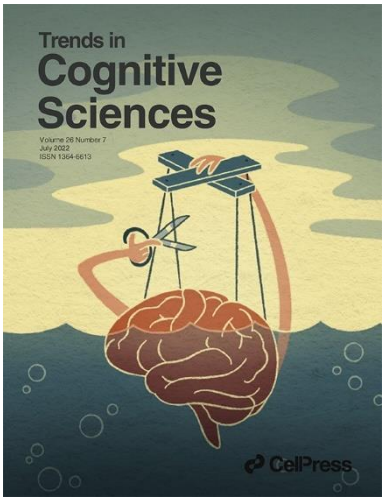
Here are a few examples of author submitted covers that were selected:



Real-life creative problem solving typically takes place in knowledge-rich contexts in which knowledge acquired through prior learning (e.g. education and life experience) is flexibly applied to solve novel problems. In this issue of Trends in Cognitive Sciences, Wenjing Yang and colleagues review classic creativity studies and argue that creative problem-solving research should expand consideration of knowledge-rich problem contexts, both in novices and domain-specific experts. In particular, they suggest that developing paradigms for novices will provide substantial advantages for creative education and professional training. The cover image depicts a person's creative thinking process, which is surrounded by life's access to knowledge, such as phone calls, short videos, chatting, and reading books. Cover art by Quan He



In this issue of Trends in Cognitive Sciences, Christian Keysers, Ewelina Knapska, Marta A. Moita, and Valeria Gazzola review how mice and rats robustly share the distress of their conspecifics through brain regions that closely resemble those associated with empathy in humans. They discuss how this emotional contagion may have evolved to help animals sense danger through the reactions of their conspecifics. Rodents have now also been shown to engage in a number of prosocial behaviors, and emotional contagion may promote such behaviors. The anthropomorphic cartoon on the cover depicts these phenomena: a rat is in peril of falling to her death, and the bystanders on the rock ledge turn to her, partake in her fear, and attempt to help. The neurons on the rock symbolize our consolidating understanding of the neural bases of these processes. Image by Gil Costa.



For centuries, humans have been fascinated by the question of free will. Does it exist? And if so, to what degree? Traditionally, scientific discussion on this topic has focused on evidence for decision-related neural activity preceding the conscious experience of deciding. In this issue of Trends in Cognitive Sciences, Liad Mudrik and colleagues offer a new perspective by examining unconscious effects on decision-making and asking if and how these effects endanger free will. Among others, these include cognitive biases, changes in the decider's state, and subliminal priming effects. In a joint piece by philosophers and neuroscientists, the authors claim that this literature currently does not threaten free will and suggest findings that might do so. Cover image created by Isy Barrett & Kailee Hague.

Behavioral change techniques, colloquially referred to as 'nudges', are used by many governmental and private institutions to encourage specific behaviors (e.g. healthy eating, organ donation, or saving for retirement). In this issue of Trends in Cognitive Sciences, Magda Osman and colleagues discuss cases in which these interventions fail and, in some instances, even produce backfiring effects in which the intervention leads to a worse behavioral outcome. The cover illustration depicts this key idea. Here, instead of nudging an inattentive individual to safety, an invisible hand nudges her towards danger. Cover illustration by Amy Neil.