Biographies

Prof Christine Mohr is a full professor for Cognitive Psychology at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. After having acquired some research experience on synaesthesia, she started to focus on the relationships between colour and affect. Her second research line concentrates on the psychological mechanisms of irrational beliefs (e.g., the paranormal, superstitions). By today, she has contributed to over 130 peer-reviewed research contributions.

Dr Domicele Jonauskaite is an experimental colour psychologist, studying cognitive and affective connotations of colour across cultures and individuals. Her studies are based on scientifically valid approaches, allowing to validate or debunk myths in colour psychology. Dr Jonauskaite is currently based at the Faculty of Psychology, University of Vienna in Austria, where she has expanded her research to aesthetics, art, and blindness. Previously, she obtained a PhD degree in Psychology from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland.

Déborah Epicoco is a doctoral student in experiment colour psychology. Her studies are based on validated approaches, researching how people cognitively and affectively relate to colours. In particular, she focuses on changes through lifespan: from children to elderly. She is currently at the University of Lausanne, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Institute of Psychology, Switzerland.

Giulia Spagnulo is a Master student at the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, University of Geneva and a Research Assistant at the Institute of Psychology, University of Lausanne, both in Switzerland. Her research activities are twofold. Her first research theme explores cognition and affect related to colours. Her second research theme is focused on couple relationships, and this is her master thesis topic.

The research team has founded the Colour Experience platform (https://www.colourexperience.ch/), designed to disseminate scientifically validated empirical research on psychological effects of colour. They coordinate over 100 researchers in 80 countries within the framework of the International Colour-Emotion Association Survey (https://www.colourexperience.ch/collaborations). Dr Domicele Jonauskaite and Prof Christine Mohr also disseminate their findings to the general public by writing blog posts on Colour Psychology for Psychology Today (www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/color-psychology).

Abstracts

The current state of research on colour and emotion associations

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Colours carry certain affective meaning to most people. We *feel blue, see red,* are *green with envy.* Obviously, with our linguistic, cultural, and perceptual environments being rich in affective colour meanings, colour-emotion associations can also be detected in controlled laboratory settings. In this talk, I will focus on associations between colours and emotions, and empirical studies conducted in our psychology lab in the last five years. By consistently using the same methodology in different samples of participants, we reached four conclusions. First, colours and emotions are associated systematically (not randomly), with a possible exception of *purple*. Second, colour-emotion associations are universal, at least when testing associations with colour terms across 30 nations. Third, these associations are further modulated by perceptual and linguistic experiences. Fourth, colour-emotion associations have a strong conceptual component. With this knowledge at hand, I will highlight some open questions for the future.

What do we think about colours? Coding free associations with colour terms

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Beyond their proper definitions, words carry additional meanings according to contexts. Colour terms are key examples in this regard. Thus, we collected free associations with *purple, violet* and *lilac* in French (n = 2074 associations) and assessed meaning using our coding scheme, consisting of nine themes: i) experiential (sensory and affective experiences), ii) human-made objects, iii) natural elements and objects, iv) scenery, v) abstract concepts, vi) people, vii) colour terms, viii) personal, and ix) ambiguous words. Most themes can be further separated into different levels of abstraction: superordinate, basic, and subordinate. Two researchers coded 20% of associations, resulting in an almost perfect inter-rater reliability (k = .848). Comparisons showed the scheme's ability to depict associated meaning in organized ways (i.e., natural elements and objects as the main theme for all colour terms). We argue our coding scheme can be applied to a wide range of answers related to colours and offers insight into their meaning.

Colour-emotion associations are unrelated to current mood

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When asked to represent their current mood through colours, participants are relatively consistent in their choices. We know that joyful mood is frequently represented lighter chromatic colours, whereas fearful mood is frequently represented by darker achromatic colours. To further investigate, we tested whether we might activate such colour parameter biases through mood induction. We looked at colour choices for the emotion concepts of *love*, *anger*, *disgust*, and *admiration*. Between subjects, we successfully induced either joy in 37 participants (13 men) or fear in 34 participants (10 men). Afterwards, participants selected the most representative colour for *love*, *anger*, *disgust*, and *admiration* using a colour picker. We found no evidence for different colour parameter biases as a function of participants' mood, whether considering lightness, $t(67) = -0.30$, $p = .768$, or chroma, $t(67) = -1.69$, $p = .095$. This supports previous notions that the affective representations of colour seem conceptual.