

Psychology

Research Seminar  
Programme



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NATURAL SCIENCES



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**29 March 2012**

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**University of Stirling Seminar Programme**

Hosts: Hannah Buchanan-Smith - Sarah Vick

*Cognitive bias in rhesus macaques:*

*a role for cognitive theories of emotion in improving our understanding of animal psychological wellbeing*

### Abstract

Recent advances in animal welfare research have resulted in the cognitive bias model of animal psychological wellbeing. Cognitive bias describes the way in which changes in affective state are characterised by changes in cognitive processes. Cognitive biases are widely associated with psychological wellbeing in humans, and are implicated in the onset and maintenance of human psychological disorders. For example, socially anxious people avoid looking at social stimuli such as emotional faces and interpret ambiguous cues more negatively than do non-anxious people. In this talk I will present data from the first studies investigating cognitive biases in a non-human primate, the rhesus macaque, *Macaca mulatta*. I will discuss the role of affect in mediating attention to emotional faces, and in influencing interpretation of ambiguous stimuli, and suggest the method presented provides a valuable means of measuring psychological wellbeing in animals.

**Seminars are free of charge and held on**

**Thursdays @ 4:00 pm Room 3A94**

**Refreshments are served upon arrival \* All are welcome**

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