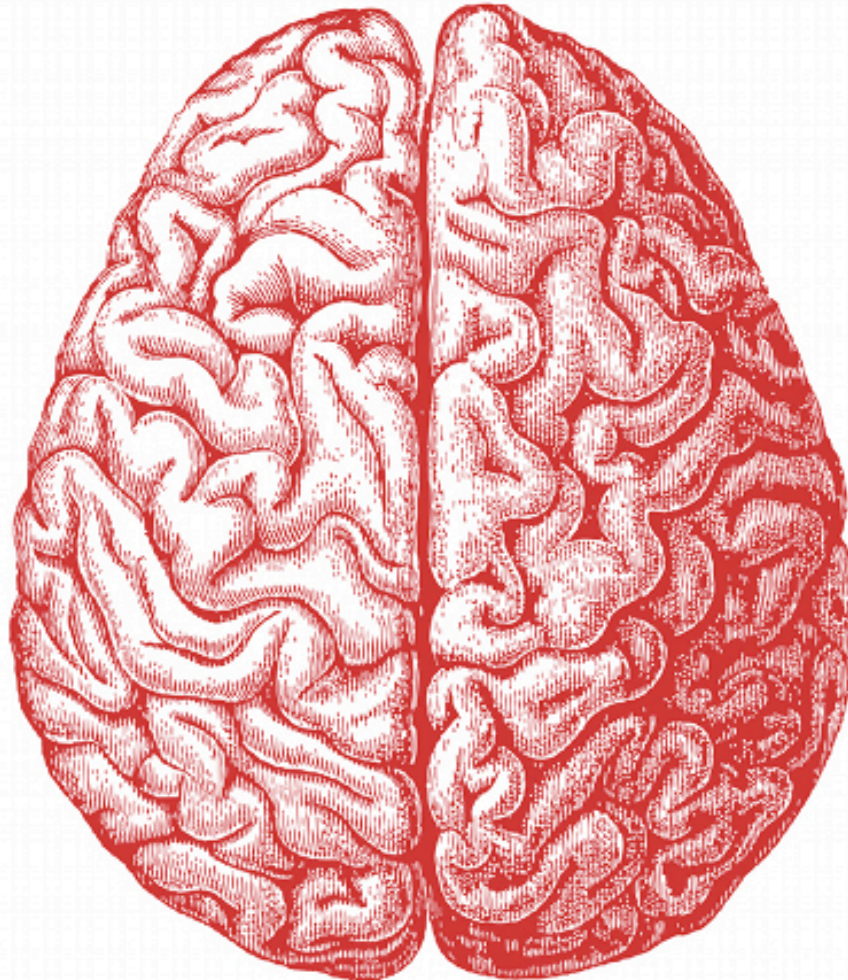




## A special issue of Cortex coordinated by SISSA



### **The famous journal devotes an issue to social cognitive neuroscience**

Social cognitive neuroscience is a relatively young but promising field that stems from the encounter between cognitive neuroscience and social cognition studies. The journal Cortex is devoting a whole issue to the subject (available online on August 1 and in print on September 1), which has been coordinated by SISSA and the University of Oxford.

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"Scientists have been trying to integrate social cognition themes with a neuroscience approach for some years now. This process is giving rise to a highly promising interdisciplinary science that still needs time to settle", explains Raffaella Rumiati, professor at the International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA) in Trieste where she coordinates the iNSuLa lab (Neuroscience and



Society Lab). "The special issue of the journal Cortex, which I coordinated together with Glyn Humphreys, aims to assess what has been done so far, and to provide a reference in the future development of the field". Glyn Humphreys is a neuroscientist from the University of Oxford where he heads the Department of Experimental Psychology.

The idea to create this issue came to Sergio Della Sala, a neuroscientist and editor of Cortex, after taking part in a workshop on social cognitive neuroscience organized by Rumiati and colleagues. "Della Sala thought it was important to explore the topic by devoting a special issue to it, and he asked us to coordinate it", explains Rumiati.

The special issue provides an overall picture of research in the field by addressing a number of topics. There are studies on social actions (are we humans the only ones to cooperate or does this skill also exist in non-human primates?) and studies on the role of oxytocin (what are the social effects of this hormone?). Other topics include the effect of levodopa on the "social actions" of patients with Parkinson's disease, loneliness, "social anxiety", theory of mind and the ability to take on someone else's point of view, empathy and much more. A rich issue that provides a good overview for those approaching these studies for the first time (but also for more expert readers).

"Leafing through this special issue of Cortex it appears obvious that the aim of this intersection of different fields of expertise and techniques isn't to arrive at a single model. The encounter between these different disciplines has made it possible to elucidate phenomena and behaviours that were previously understood only superficially, and it promises to answer the many new questions that we have started to ask in the meantime", concludes Rumiati.

#### **USEFUL LINKS:**

- **Link to the Cortex special issue:** <http://goo.gl/nXXPyA>

#### **IMAGES:**

- **Credit:** [Allan Ajifo \(aboutmodafinil.com\)](http://aboutmodafinil.com) Flickr: <https://goo.gl/vldRd6>

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