

UC Merced

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society

Title

Embodied Transgender Interactions: Exploring Dyadic Interpersonal Coordination and Decision Making in Virtual Reality

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/36z257nb>

Journal

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 45(45)

Authors

Crone, Cassandra L.
Patil, Gaurav
Chamberlin, Grace
et al.

Publication Date

2023

Peer reviewed

Embodied Transgender Interactions: Exploring Dyadic Interpersonal Coordination and Decision Making in Virtual Reality

Cassandra Crone

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Gaurav Patil

Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Grace Chamberlin

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Kyle Aspinall

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Michael Richardson

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Rachel W. Kallen

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Abstract

Social cognition is shaped by cultural and social-psychological contexts. Depending on the social cues displayed, the cognitive processes that emerge during embodied social interactions can vary. This study explored the influence of gender diverse social cues on interpersonal coordination and decision-making during dyadic interaction in virtual reality. Participants embodied either a transgender or cisgender avatar and interacted with a transgender confederate (human-controlled virtual agent). Results suggest that transgender embodied women and men displayed more interpersonal affiliation, via their coordination dynamics with the confederate, after an explicit gender identity disclosure. Additionally, cognitive flexibility for ambiguous decisions was influenced by attributions of responsibility made toward the confederate. However, cisgender embodied men did not substantially change their decision-making behaviours or increase their coordination with the confederate. Viscerally taking on the perspective and appearance of a transgender person, achieved through virtual embodiment and interaction, may support positive interactions between cisgender and transgender communities.