



SEMINARIO

“The Unbearable Lightness of Social Psychology”



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With the advent of the cognitive revolution, social psychology turned away from simple behavioral models and made it its primary aim to understand mental processes (viz. social cognition). Because mental processes cannot be directly observed and have to be deduced from e.g., self-reports, social psychology has happily exploited its considerable degrees of freedom to create an overwhelming and highly idiosyncratic number of latent constructs, pathmodels and “theories”. Contemporary social psychology rarely goes beyond the private experiences and shared intuitions of the research community. Such “quantified introspection” impedes scientific understanding and undermines the legitimacy and relevance of social psychology as a field of science. I propose to (1) separate the wheat from the chaff and identify the defining contributions of social psychology; (2) engage in creative destruction of our hundreds of “theories” and “models”; (3) ban hairsplitting battles about semantics; and (4) develop computationally sound theory on the proximate and distant functions of social cognition and behavior, amenable to accurate description and prediction.

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ore 14.30 - Aula 14
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