

Thinking and Seeing



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著者:Levin, Daniel T. 编

出版者:

出版时间:2004-6

装帧:

isbn:9780262122627

Experimental research has shown that people miss apparently obvious visual

discontinuities -- a phenomenon known as "change blindness." For example, in one experiment, subjects watching a brief film of a conversation between two actors did not notice that in some shots one actor appeared wearing a large, colorful scarf and in other shots she wore no scarf; in another experiment, subjects did not even notice when one actor was replaced by another between shots. Moreover, when told what they had missed, many subjects were incredulous, and occasionally even insisted that the film they had seen had not included anything unusual ("change blindness blindness"). This kind of conflict between actual and presumed cognitive functioning has been analyzed in other areas of metacognition; the contributors to *Thinking and Seeing* explore the implications for vision, which have remained largely unexamined. Doing so, they make important connections among diverse areas in cognitive science and provide a starting point for new research on how people think about seeing. Demonstrating the interdisciplinary nature of the work in this field, the contributors draw on developing theories of the mind to explore the foundations of metacognitive understanding in children and metacognition errors by adults; on traditional metacognition research to analyze potential connections between research on problem solving and vision; on research in folk psychology and concepts to examine "the illusion of explanatory depth" and how systematic our understanding of seeing is; and on an understanding of the relationship between consciousness and cognitive control of ongoing tasks.

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