



and



cordially invite you to a

DySoC/NIMBioS Interdisciplinary Seminar

with

Dr. Garriy Shteynberg

on

“Not by imitation alone: Collective learning as a psychological foundation of human evolutionary success”

Monday, April 16, 2018

3:30-5 p.m.

Reception & refreshments at 3 p.m.

Hallam Auditorium, Room 206
1122 Volunteer Boulevard



Dr. Garriy Shteynberg is an assistant professor of experimental psychology at the University of Tennessee. He holds a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in anthropology from the University of Oxford. His research is focused on the psychological mechanisms at the foundation of human sociality, with a special interest in the phenomenon of shared attention—occasions when people co-experience reality. In his research he seeks to understand how shared attention with other agents influences what people remember, the goals they pursue, and the things they value.

Abstract: Imitative learning, or learning from others, serves as a cornerstone of cognitive, biological and social science scholarship, as it grounds the continuity, diversity, and innovation inherent to humanity's cultural repertoire in the social learning capacities of individual humans. In contrast, collective learning, or learning with others, has received scant attention. Here we outline the theoretical and empirical case for the importance of collective learning in human cognition and action. We will posit that collective learning is a social learning capacity that facilitates sophisticated forms of collective cognition, which in turn enable more successful collective action. We (1) discuss the development and nature of collective learning, (2) distinguish collective learning from that of imitative learning, (3) address the implications of learning collectively to forms of collective cognition such as shared deliberation, shared memory, and shared motivation, (4) posit that collective learning contributes to cumulative cultural evolution, (5) argue that collective learning is part and parcel of other social cognitive human capacities such as spontaneous teaching, egalitarianism, and theory of mind, and finally, (6) speculate on the implications of collective learning capacity in a socially networked world.