Ellen Peters

Professor of Psychology, Director of the Decision Sciences Collaborative & Professor of Medicine | Department of Internal Medicine at The Ohio State University
Columbus, OH, US

Decision psychology expert, with a penchant for the study of numeracy, risk and uncertainty

Description

Dr. Peters is Professor of Psychology, Director of the Decision Sciences Collaborative, Professor of Medicine in the Department of Internal Medicine (by courtesy) and Professor of Marketing & Logistics in the Fisher College of Business (by courtesy.) She conducts basic and applied research in judgment and decision making. She has worked extensively with the U.S. National Cancer Institute and FDA to advance the science of human decision making as it applies to health and health policy. She is former President of the Society for Judgment and Decision Making, former Chair of FDAâ€™s Risk Communication Advisory Committee, and is a current member of the National Academies committee on the Science of Science Communication. She is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science and the Society of Experimental Psychology. She was the first American to receive the Jane Beattie Scientific Recognition Award, and she has been awarded an NIH Merit Award. Her research has been funded extensively by the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health.

In her research, Dr. Peters focuses on understanding the basic building blocks of human judgment and decision making. She is particularly interested in how affective, intuitive, and deliberative processes help people to make decisions in an increasingly complex world. She studies decision making as an interaction of characteristics of the decision situation and characteristics of the individual. She has three major strands of basic research. First, she studies how numbers are processed in judgment and decision making. In recent publications, Dr. Peters and colleagues have focused on how numbers critical to decisions are processed by individuals who differ in number ability (also called numeracy). A second central strand of research concerns how affect and emotion influence information processing and decisions. Affect appears to have multiple functions in judgment and decision processes (as information, as a common currency, as a spotlight on information, and as a direct motivator of behaviors). Third, she is interested in how information processing and decision making change in complex ways across the adult life span. In applied research, she is also generally interested in issues of risk perception and risk communication in health, financial, and environmental contexts, including how to present information to facilitate its comprehension and use.

Industry Expertise

Research, Education/Learning, Public Policy

Topics

Medical Decision-Making, Risk Perceptions, Judgement, Human Decision-Making, Affect and Information Processing, Numeracy

Affiliations

Education

University of Oregon
Ph.D. Psychology

University of Oregon
M.S. Psychology

University of Pennsylvania
B.S. Marketing, The Wharton School of Business

University of Pennsylvania
B.S.E. Systems Engineering

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