



**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

Department of Economics – Neuroeconomics Seminar

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Causes and consequences of coalitional cognition

What is a group? How do we know to which groups we belong? How do we assign others to groups? A great deal of theorizing across the social sciences has conceptualized 'groups' as synonymous with 'categories,' however there are a number of limitations to this approach: particularly for making predictions about novel intergroup contexts or about how intergroup dynamics will change over time. Here I present two projects that offer alternative frameworks for thinking about these questions. First I review some recent work elucidating the cognitive processes that give rise to the inference of coalitions (even in the absence of category labels). Then I'll discuss an ongoing project on the effects of social group reference dependence--which falls out of coalitional reasoning--on hate crimes in the U.S. between 1990 and 2010.