



CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY

This chapter on mental representation focused on memory; that is, what stays in our heads or is represented by our bodies. We began with associative networks that organize memory in the basic cognitive model, with the basic distinction of long-term versus short-term memory. Associative network models of social memory build on this work. In addition, procedural memory informs some models of social memory. Finally, cognitive models of parallel versus serial processing for coordinating memory processes enlighten ideas about parallel constraint satisfaction in social cognition. Embodied representations rely more on perceptual systems.

Social memory structures matter to social cognition, as in the unique features of categorical person perception and uses of social categories. In response to critiques of classic category and prototype views, the exemplar view, with its own advantages and disadvantages, offers an alternative and a combined resolution.

Chapter 4 has focused on general principles of mental representation that will be useful as we encounter representations of self, causality, attitudes, and stereotypes. Just as in Chapter 2 on dual-mode models, these ideas about mental representation are converging on a consensus useful to the wider field of social cognition.