

Talk titles, Schedule and Abstracts

Titles

Speaker	Title
Kenneth Aizawa	Perception, Action, and Embodiment
Katalin Balog	Zombies, Illuminati and Metaphysical Gridlock
David Bitter	Two Dogmas of the Cognitive-Penetrability Debate
Tim Crane	Mind, Body, Person and Self
Frances Egan	The Contents of Perceptual Experience: A Deflationary Account
Katalin Farkas	Extended Mind, Embodied Mind
Barry Loewer	The Consequence Argument Meets the Mentaculus
Johannes Mahr	What is Episodic Memory and what is Its Function?
Howard Robinson	Semantic Direct Realism and the Sense-datum Theory

Schedule

Friday		
10:00–11:20	Howard Robinson	Semantic Direct Realism and the Sense-datum Theory
11:20–11:40	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:40–13:00	Frances Egan	The Contents of Perceptual Experience: A Deflationary Account
13:00–14:30	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14:30–15:50	Kenneth Aizawa	Perception, Action, and Embodiment
15:50–16:10	<i>Coffee break</i>	
16:10–17:30	Katalin Farkas	Extended Mind, Embodied Mind
20:00–25:00	<i>Dinner</i>	
Saturday		
10:00–11:20	Katalin Balog	Zombies, Illuminati and Metaphysical Gridlock
11:20–11:40	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:40–13:00	David Bitter	Two Dogmas of the Cognitive-Penetrability Debate
13:00–14:30	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14:30–15:50	Tim Crane	Mind, Body, Person and Self
15:50–16:10	<i>Coffee break</i>	
16:10–17:30	Johannes Mahr	What is Episodic Memory and what is Its Function?
17:30–17:45	<i>Coffee break</i>	
17:45–19:05	Barry Loewer	The Consequence Argument Meets the Mentaculus

Abstracts

[Kenneth Aizawa](#)

Perception, Action, and Embodiment

Here are two theories that intertwine perception, action, and embodiment that might be found in the work of Alva Noë and Kevin O'Regan. According to Strong Enactivism, perception is constituted, in part, by the exercise of sensorimotor knowledge in overt physical behaviour. This theory makes a tight connection between perception, action, and the physical body outside of the brain. If perception is bodily action, then perceptual processing is, in part, bodily processing. If perception is bodily action, then perceptual process is something the body is engaged in. According to Weak Enactivism, however, perception is constituted, in part, by the exercise of sensorimotor knowledge. This theory forges a less tight connection between perception, action, and the body outside of the brain. This theory allows that a mere brain and its sensory apparatus would be capable of perceiving. A mere brain and its sensory apparatus may well be sufficient for the exercise of sensorimotor knowledge. There might, for example, be purely brain-based use of what one knows about the effects of bodily or object movement on perception.

Both of these theories, however, face difficulties that have largely been underappreciated. First, contrary to a common misconception, visual perception does not, strictly speaking require the exercise of sensorimotor knowledge in overt behaviour. Vision does not require bodily action or even bodily. This undercuts one of the most familiar lines of supports for Strong Enactivism. Second, experiments with neuromuscular blockade show that an essentially completely paralyzed individual may nonetheless perceive the world quite normally. Third, there are an abundance of cases that support the view that, holding perceptual stimulus constant, but varying sensorimotor knowledge, yields not effect. There is what one might call an 'impotence of sensorimotor knowledge'.

[Katalin Balog](#)

Zombies, Illuminati and Metaphysical Gridlock

This paper is a birds-eye view of the physicalism-antiphysicalism debate. Having developed a master argument against the anti-physicalist, I then notice that there is a puzzling symmetry between dualist attacks on physicalism and physicalist replies. Each position can be developed in a way to defend itself from attacks from the other position. My suggestion is that we might want to look more seriously at the view that the reason for the seeming unresolvability of the problem is that there is no determinate fact about the metaphysical status of the mind that is being tracked by the debate.

[David Bitter](#)

Two Dogmas of the Cognitive-Penetrability Debate

Tim Crane

Mind, Body, Person and Self

Discussions of the mind-body problem often formulate it in terms of contrasts like that between mental and physical properties, or mental and physical/material substance, or between the physical facts and the mental facts etc. In this talk I will ask how these contrasts relate to the idea of the self, and the idea of the person: should our answer to the traditional mind-body question be constrained by our answer to the question of the nature of the self or the person? I will sketch a way in which the ideas of mind, self and person are related, in the context of some recent criticisms of the doctrine of animalism.

Frances Egan

The Contents of Perceptual Experience: A Deflationary Account

In other work I defend a deflationary account of representational content for computational neuroscience. In this talk I sketch a version of adverbialism about perceptual experience – a view I call *external sortalism* – according to which perceptual contents play similar heuristic roles.

Katalin Farkas

Extended Mind, Embodied Mind

The claims that cognition is *embodied*, *embedded* and *extended* are often seen as progressively stronger; embodied cognition extends the dependence base of cognition beyond the brain, to the agent's body; embedded cognition extends the dependence base even further, to the agent's social and natural environment; and extended cognition is the idea that not only the dependence base, but also cognitive systems themselves extend beyond the agent's body. (See for example the Stanford Encyclopedia article on embodied cognition for this approach). On this picture, the claims that cognition is embodied and extended can be happily held together. In this talk, I'll raise some doubts about this picture. I argue that the embodied and extended characters of cognition pull into two different directions; the two views are not incompatible, but arguably, they limit each other's scope.

Barry Loewer

The Consequence Argument Meets the Mentaculus

Peter van Inwagen's Consequence Argument claims to show that free choice and determinism are incompatible by arguing that if determinism is true then we have free choice over the future only if we have free choice over the past or the laws. Proponents of the argument go on to claim that since it is obvious that we have no free choice over the past or the laws given determinism we have no choice over the future. In my talk I will describe a global and realist version of statistical mechanics that David Albert and I call 'the Mentaculus' and have been arguing has the resources to account for temporal asymmetries e.g. the second law, asymmetries of knowledge, influence, counterfactuals, and causation. I then show how the Mentaculus can also provide a compatibilist response to the Consequence Argument.

Johannes Mahr

What is Episodic Memory and what is Its Function?

What is the proper function of our capacity for episodic memory? Only recently has there been sustained interest in this question. This effort has been impeded by differences in the way the concept of episodic memory has been analysed both in psychology and in philosophy. Here, I propose a novel account of episodic memory function based on a conceptual and empirical analysis of its role in belief formation. I provide a critique of the view that episodic memory serves future-directed imagination, and argue that the central features of this capacity can instead be explained by the role it plays in human communication. On this view, episodic memory allows us to communicatively support our interpretations of the past by gauging when we can assert epistemic authority. This capacity is ineliminable in justification of, and negotiations about, social commitments established by past interactions.

Howard Robinson

Semantic Direct Realism and the Sense-datum Theory

What I call 'semantic direct realism' is the theory that perceptual experience embodies judgements (you might prefer the term 'subjectively recognized putative information') about the external world and that this is the only sense in which experience is directly *of*, or puts us *in touch with* the world. I argue that intentionalists, such as Susanna Schellenberg and Mark Johnston (if he is an intentionalist) in fact adopt such a theory, but so does Bill Brewer, who is a relationalist, and, therefore, supposedly a naive realist. In fact, it is hard to see how one can be more realist than this. A sense-datum theorist can equally adopt this theory and this strategy is by far the most straightforward.