

**Abstracts for Invited Talks  
SSPP 2017**

**PHILOSOPHY**

**Bence Nanay** (*Antwerp/Cambridge*) - **Seeing things you don't see**  
Wednesday Afternoon 2:00-3:30 p.m.

This talk is about the importance of mental imagery in general and of multimodal mental imagery in particular in our everyday perception. I bring together empirical findings about multimodal perception and empirical findings about (visual, auditory, tactile) mental imagery in order to argue that multimodal mental imagery, understood as perceptual processing in one sense modality that is triggered by sensory stimulation in another sense modality is a crucial element of almost all instances of everyday perception, which has wider implications to philosophy of perception and beyond, to epistemological questions about whether we can trust our senses. Focusing on multimodal mental imagery can help us to understand a number of puzzling perceptual phenomena, like sensory substitution and synaesthesia. Further, manipulating mental imagery has recently become an important clinical procedure in various branches of psychiatry as well as in counteracting implicit bias – using multimodal mental imagery rather than voluntarily and consciously conjured up mental imagery can lead to real progress in these experimental paradigms.

**Frederique de Vignemont** (*Institut Jean-Nicod*) - **What is it like to feel one's body as one's own?**

Thursday Morning 11:00-12:30

I feel the hand that is typing as my own but what grounds such a feeling? Here I will defend a reductionist approach, according to which the sense of ownership can be reduced to some specific properties of bodily experiences. But which properties? I will first discuss Martin's (1993, 1995) conception, according to which the sense of bodily ownership finds its origin in the spatial awareness of the boundaries of one's body. I will argue that such spatial awareness is not sufficient. I will then analyse whether the sense of bodily ownership can borrow, so to speak, its self-referentiality from the self-referentiality of agency. More specifically, one may suggest that the sense of bodily ownership is grounded in the sensorimotor representation of the body known as body schema. However, this agentive hypothesis faces a number of difficulties that cannot be solved without further refinements. In particular, I will argue that one needs to distinguish between two distinct kinds of body schema: the working body schema involved in instrumental actions, and the protective body schema involved in self-defence. I will then propose what may be conceived as an affective conception of the sense of bodily ownership, according to which the sense of bodily ownership consists in the awareness of the boundaries of one's body as having a special significance for the self. This will lead me to define the phenomenology of ownership as a narcissistic feeling to file with other affective feelings such as the feeling of familiarity.

**David Chalmers (ANU/NYU) - Perception and Illusion in Virtual Reality**

Friday Afternoon 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Do virtual reality devices produce the illusion of an external reality? Or do they produce non-illusory experiences of a virtual reality? I address this question by starting with an analogous question about mirrors. When one looks in a mirror, does one undergo the illusion that there is someone on the other side of the mirror, or does one have a non-illusory experience of someone on this side of the mirror? I will argue that at least for familiar users of mirrors, there is no illusion. Knowledge of mirrors provides a sort of cognitive orientation (a variety of cognitive penetration) that affects the content of visual experience and renders it non-illusory. I will suggest that familiar users of virtual reality devices have a similar sort of cognitive orientation that renders their experience non-illusory.

**INVITED SESSION: DELUSION, IMAGINATION, AND RATIONALITY**

Wednesday Afternoon 12:00-2:25

**Ian Gold (McGill) - A social cognitive theory of delusion**

Most theories of delusion emphasize the importance of anomalous experience, or aberrant thinking, or both in the development of delusions. These theories appear, however, to be unable to explain why delusions have the particular contents they do. In this paper I review the themes of delusion and argue that one way to explain the narrow range of these themes is to posit that delusions are a disordered form of social cognition. I develop this idea and sketch how a social cognitive theory of delusion might explain how delusions develop and why they are retained despite evidence to the contrary. I also consider a possible role of Theory of Mind in delusion development.

**Anna Ichino (Antwerp) - The Powers of Imagination**

Imagination and belief are obviously different. Imagining that you have won the lottery is not quite the same as believing that you have won the lottery. But what does the difference amount to? This is less obvious. According to the standard view in the contemporary debate, they differ in two key functional respects: (1) with respect to the cognitive inputs to which they respond (imaginings do not respond to real-world evidence as belief do), and (2) with respect to the behavioural outputs that they are able to produce (imaginings do not motivate us to act as beliefs do). I argue that the standard view is mistaken: imaginings motivate us to act (and react) precisely as beliefs do, hence the only relevant difference between them is at the input level. I show that this view does not have the absurd consequences that it is generally taken to have; and that, on the contrary, it has important implications for our understanding of how the mind works.

**Neil Van Leeuwen (Georgia State) - OCD and Human Rationality**

The phenomenon of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) puts pressure on both on traditional conceptions of what belief is and on traditional conceptions of what rational action is. This paper takes aim at solving the second problem (rationality) and offers a few speculations with respect to the first (belief). The rationality problem is that certain types of OCD behavior satisfy traditional decision-theoretic characterizations of rational action, even though they're paradigms of irrationality. I propose here that we can effectively solve this problem by putting a self-knowledge condition on our characterization of rational action, according to which the rational actor has knowledge of how her desires will unfold in the future as a result of the action in question. The belief problem, which may be harder, is that OCD obsessions have many features traditionally thought to define beliefs, even though they're not beliefs. I'll suggest a very tentative self-knowledge-based solution to this problem as well.

## INVITED SESSION: PERCEPTUAL AND MEMORIAL EXPERIENCE

Thursday Afternoon 1:30-4:00 p.m.

### **Chris Buford (*Akron*) - The Objects of Memorial Experience**

Theories falling under the label disjunctivism have often been broached as solutions to problems in the metaphysics or epistemology of perceptual (primarily visual) experience. It is a delicate matter as to the exact nature of disjunctivism in the philosophy of perception. I follow others here and understand disjunctivism to at least entail that there is no fundamental or basic kind shared by instances of genuine veridical perception on the one hand, and cases of hallucination on the other. Here we will primarily be concerned with whether there is good reason to believe that metaphysical disjunctivism about experiential (or episodic) memory is correct. The consequences for debates about the nature of perceptual experience are also considered.

### **Derek Brown (*Brandon*) – Colouring the Veil of Perception**

This paper brings some issues in philosophy of colour to bear on the question of whether or not there is a perceptual veil. The main argument is as follows: positing widespread error in colour perception commits one to a perceptual veil; since several colour theories *do* posit widespread error it is reasonable to endorse a veil in visual perception. I begin by introducing various ways of conceiving of a perceptual veil. Following this I provide an overview of two central challenges posed by current colour theory, one from colour variation and one from colour structure. Several colour theories resolve one or both of these challenges by positing widespread error in colour perception. From this I argue that these theories are committed to a veil in visual perception. I conclude by outlining several outstanding issues surrounding the nature and epistemic significance of this veil, including connecting the discussion to sense-datum theory.

### **Grace Helton (*Princeton*) - Doxastic Approaches to Perception**

On the doxastic theory of perception, all perceptual states are partly constituted by a kind of belief or judgment. Multiple theorists have recently defended this view. I draw on a view I defend elsewhere, the revisability view of belief, to construct an argument against the doxastic theory of perception. On the revisability view of belief, all beliefs are necessarily capable of being revised in response to relevant counter-evidence. I draw on empirical evidence to further argue that at least some perceptual states lack this capacity. Together, these results force the doxastic theorist to the view that perceptual states themselves are not revisable in response to counter-evidence, even though they each possess as an essential component a state that is so revisable. I argue that this position is not ultimately tenable, for the reason that it either jeopardizes the view that belief is an essential component of perception or else jeopardizes the view that belief is necessarily revisable.

## INVITED SYMPOSIUM: ANIMAL RIGHTS, CAPTIVITY, AND SUFFERING

Thursday Afternoon 1:30-4:00 p.m.

### **Cheryl Abbate** (*UC Boulder*) - **Feline Liberty and the Right to be a Cat**

In the recent publication of *Cat Wars: The Devastating Consequences of a Cuddly Killer*, Marra and Santella advise that we use “any means necessary” to remove the free-range cat population from the landscape. This sentiment is echoed, perhaps less frankly, by a number of wild-life enthusiasts who are quick to blame free-roaming cats for ecological harm and who are quick to insist that cat guardians keep their feline companions indoors. In this paper, I grant that free-roaming cats do cause some amount of ecological harm, and moreover, that they harm other animals when they roam about outdoors, while still maintaining that some cat guardians ought to grant their feline companions the freedom to roam, under certain conditions. I provide four arguments in defense of this position: (1) the argument from fairness, (2) the argument from nature, (3) the argument from liberty, and (4) and the argument from companionship. Once we come to understand that felines who live under our roofs are our companions, and not merely our “pets,” we will come to accept cats for the animals that they are and we will come to respect the lives that they are entitled to live, without denying them the fundamental freedoms we give ourselves.

### **Robert K. Streiffer** (*University of Wisconsin-Madison*) & **David Killoren** (*Australian Catholic University*) - **Agents’ Intentions and the Ethics of Animal Confinement**

At any given time, humans confine billions of (non-human, sentient) animals. What are the moral implications of the human confinement of animals? We distinguish two conceptions of confinement—the agential conception and the comparative conception—and argue that the agential conception is intimately related to use in a way that the comparative conception is not. After discussing a number of epistemic issues involving group intentions and agential confinement, we extend Neo-Kantian concerns about using human beings to animals. We argue that, in certain conditions, the agential confinement of an animal constitutes use and consequently creates special obligations that make it especially egregious to neglect or abuse an agentially confined animal.

### **Molly Gardner** (*Bowling Green*) - **Should Laboratory Animals be Compensated for their Suffering?**

One of the purported justifications for conducting research on animals is that the benefits—which are usually to human beings—outweigh the costs, which are largely borne by the laboratory animals. If the benefits really do outweigh the costs, then it should be possible, in theory at least, to redistribute some of the benefits so as to fully compensate the laboratory animals for their suffering while leaving the humans better off than they would have been without the research (albeit less well off than they would have been, had they kept all the benefits to themselves). In this paper, I focus on normal adult mammals, since it is generally agreed that normal mammals, at least, have a significant degree of moral standing. I argue that there are cases where it is possible to compensate such animals, not only in theory, but also in practice, and that in those cases, we have a moral obligation to do so. The cases where compensation is possible meet three conditions: first, the research does not require that the animals be killed for a postmortem study of their bodies; second, once the research study is over, the animals are still healthy enough that continued life for them would be a benefit; and third, the animals do not carry communicable diseases. In all cases that meet these three conditions, I suggest that the mammals should either be placed in adoptive homes, or else they should live out their “retirements” in spacious, enriched environments, much like the retirement sanctuaries that already exist for retired laboratory chimpanzees and monkeys. The argument that we ought to do this, not just for primates, but for

all sufficiently healthy mammals who were subjected to laboratory experiments is an argument by analogy: in cases where we harm other human beings for the sake of an overall benefit, we owe compensation to those we harmed. Likewise, in cases where we harm other animals for the sake of an overall benefit, we owe them compensation as well. I then consider two objections to this view. The first is that living in a spacious, enriched environment would not be enough of a benefit to fully compensate a laboratory animal. The second objection is that, unlike us, nonhuman animals are only weakly psychologically connected to their past and future selves. Thus, it is virtually impossible to compensate a nonhuman animal after he or she has been harmed because, when the compensation is attempted, the animal is not the same individual he or she was when the harm occurred. I argue that both objections fail, and that there remains a strong case for compensating laboratory animals.