

Announcing a workshop on

PERCEPTION, INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Middlesex University, with the BPS Consciousness and Experiential Psychology Section
Friday 24 June, 2005, Whittington Hospital, North London.

Embodied, externalist and sensorimotor theories of perception have been very prominent of late. Such approaches challenge the idea that perceptual processing consists exclusively of the internal registration of information in the brain, or that perceptual consciousness is just the experiencing of internal sensory qualia. Sensorimotor or Enactive views of perception have been discussed in two earlier meetings in this series. Broadly, the enactive approach to mind sees perceivers as autonomous, self-recreating organisms that define their individuality through an ongoing dynamic sensorimotor engagement with their world.

Perception is often studied as though it is merely a relation between a (lone) perceiver and a set of inanimate objects. Yet perception and interpersonal interaction have fundamental interrelations: there is no social interaction without perception and even the perception of apparently non-social objects is often suffused with social meaning.

In the present meeting we wish to highlight the intersubjective and social aspects of perception, laying particular stress on the developmental context. We will seek to focus on enactive approaches to perception and interpersonal interaction in the light of developmental disorders such as autism. There have been several recent valuable discussions of autism from an enactive or interactive point of view (such as Klin, 2003, Gallagher 2004, Hobson 2001) which, by providing novel accounts of autism, help to clarify the nature of social perception in the general case.

The workshop will involve around half a dozen speakers, with complementary perspectives on the themes of perception, intersubjectivity, and development, with particular reference to developmental disorders. Attendance is limited to a maximum of 40 participants.

Speakers at the workshop will include:

Dr. Ezequiel Di Paolo, University of Sussex
Dr Fabia Franco, Middlesex University
Prof. Peter Hobson, University College London
Dr. Eva Loth, King's College London
Dr. Erik Myin, University of Antwerp, Belgium

Date: Friday 24th of June, 10 am – 5 pm

Venue: Room 2, Department of Mental Health, Level 7, Holborn Union Building, Middlesex University / UCL Medical School, Whittington Hospital Teaching Campus, Archway, London. (Archway tube station 3-5 minutes walk)

This is the 3rd meeting in a series, Perception and Embodied Phenomenology, funded by the British Psychological Society, through their Research Seminars Competition. Previous meetings were held at Oxford University (June 2003), and Sussex University (March 2004). This meeting is also supported by Middlesex University Institute of Social and Health Research.

Workshop organizers: Steve Torrance (Middlesex and Sussex Universities); Hanne De Jaegher (Sussex University). **Please contact Hanne De Jaegher for information and registration:** h.de.jaegher@sussex.ac.uk

Gallagher, S. (2004). "Understanding interpersonal problems in autism: Interaction Theory as an alternative to Theory of Mind." *Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology* 11(3): 199-217.

Hobson, R. P. (2002). *The Cradle of Thought*. London, Macmillan.

Klin, A., W. Jones, et al. (2003). "The enactive mind, or from actions to cognition: lessons from autism." *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond. B* 358: 345-360.