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## ASSC NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2007

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Welcome to the first ASSC newsletter. The ASSC newsletter is intended to improve communication with the membership by providing a quick summary of current events and activities being undertaken by the association. In addition, it is hoped that the newsletter will act as a bulletin board for current members of the ASSC to inform their colleagues of academic events relevant to the study of consciousness (books, meetings, etc.). The newsletter will be sent out via the membership list around the middle of each month.

This newsletter includes information about the upcoming ASSC-11 meeting in Las Vegas, changes in the ASSC board, the ASSC student survey, and several non-ASSC events that may be of interest to you.

Enjoy the newsletter!

Kristina Musholt

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## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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All members of the ASSC are invited to submit items for inclusion in the newsletter that are of potential interest to the general membership to Kristina Musholt ( [kmusholt@gmail.com](mailto:kmusholt@gmail.com)) by no later than the 10th of the month.

Items should be in the form of ONE paragraph of plain ASCII text no longer than 150 WORDS, and should be of general relevance to the MAINSTREAM ACADEMIC study of consciousness. Attachments will not be accepted. The submitting author must be a current member of the ASSC. Submissions that do not meet these requirements may be rejected without further correspondence.

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## ASSC EVENTS AND INFORMATION

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## 1. BOARD CHANGES

Corresponding author: Dan Dennett (ddennett@tufts.edu)

Further information: <http://assc.caltech.edu/board.html>

The Executive Director of the ASSC, Patrick Wilken, has recently accepted the position of portfolio editor at Cell Press, in Cambridge, MA, where his time will be divided between the journals Neuron, Trends in Cognitive Sciences, and Trends in Neurosciences. This move has necessitated his having to step-down as both director and from the Board of the ASSC.

In other Board changes, Alan Cowey has regretfully had to step down as President-elect for personal and private reasons but would like it to be known that he remains a strong supporter of the ASSC. The Executive Committee has unanimously determined to appoint David Rosenthal to be Alan's successor as President-elect and on the Executive Committee.

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## 2. ASSC-11 MEETING

Corresponding author: Susana Martinez-Conde

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Further information: <http://assc2007.neuralcorrelate.com>

The eleventh annual conference will be held at the Imperial Palace Hotel, Las Vegas, from June 22 – June 25, 2007. The confirmed list of speakers promises an excellent meeting and in addition there will be a number of special events at this year's meeting, such as the THE MAGIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS SYMPOSIUM, the first scientific event to bring in world famous magicians to share their deep insights into the covert manipulation of attention and awareness, and a VENETIAN OPENING RECEPTION. If you have not registered for the conference yet, you should do so now!

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## 3. ASSC STUDENT COMMITTEE: MENTORING PROGRAM

Corresponding author: Michael Hill ([michael.hill@pharm.ox.ac.uk](mailto:michael.hill@pharm.ox.ac.uk))

Further information: <http://www.assc-students.org>

The ASSC Student Committee is organizing a mentoring program at this year's conference. The mentoring program is aimed at offering students the possibility to meet one on one with leading figures in their field and talk to them about their work, careers and interests. The student committee will organize the pairing whilst the peers will be asked to organize their individual meeting (to take place some time during the conference). If you are a peer researcher / philosopher in the field of consciousness studies and would like to take part in this program please contact the chair of the student committee, Michael Hill, by the 30th April. If you are a student and would like to partake in the mentoring program then just keep an eye on your inbox; we'll send out a list of peers to the student mailing list in early May. For more information regarding the student committee's activities in general and at this year's conference visit the student website.

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#### 4. PRE-ASSC-11 STUDENT SURVEY

Corresponding author: Patrick Wilken (pwilken@gmail.com)

Further information: <http://eprints.assc.caltech.edu/264/>

In preparation of this year's conference the ASSC launched a survey that was directed at the ASSC student-members. All members for the ASSC currently classified as students were invited to take part in the survey. Of those invited (148) to fill out the survey 66 (45%) did so. The main aim of the survey was to give students of the association a chance to voice any issues that may be affecting them, and to suggest possible remedies. As our annual meeting is our main activity many of the questions focus specifically on this year's meeting. However, many of the issues raised ( e.g., need for affordable housing) are general ones that affect students on a yearly basis, and can be better addressed given a longer lead-time (e.g., Taipei in 2008). The general sense that comes up again and again by comments made is that students appreciate ASSC meetings specifically because they are social and allow them to mix readily with more senior academics and other students interested in the study of consciousness, something that may be much harder to achieve in larger more discipline orientated events. Activities that help promote this ( e.g., mentoring schemes, student social, cheap lunchtime meals where all attendees mix, etc.) are to be encouraged. As many students are self-funding to a greater or

lesser extent, barriers created by cost should be kept to a minimum, lest we lose those very students we want to encourage. For more details see the URL above.

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NON-ASSC EVENTS AND INFORMATION  
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1. SECOND EUROPEAN SCHOOL ON CONSCIOUSNESS:  
CONSCIOUSNESS & ACTION

Corresponding author: Axel Cleeremans ( [axcleer@ulb.as.be](mailto:axcleer@ulb.as.be))  
Further information: <http://conscience.risc.cnrs.fr>

The Second European School on Consciousness will take place from June 4 to June 16 2007, at the CNRS Institut d'Etudes Scientifiques of Cargèse, on the French island of Corsica. It is organized with the support of COST, CNRS, and RISC and will be dedicated to the relations between Consciousness and Action. It is intended as a new step in the development of a European community of cognitive scientists working in the area of consciousness, building up on the 2005 Cargèse School on Consciousness, Attention and Memory. The school is primarily open to doctoral students, post-docs, and young researchers and academics in cognitive science. Applicants must be affiliated with a research or teaching institution from the European Union. Applications are accepted until April 20th through the School website.

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2. 3RD WORKSHOP ON COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES ON  
(UN)CONSCIOUSNESS: EVALUATIVE CONDITIONING AND  
PREFERENCE ACQUISITION.

Corresponding author: Robert Balas ( [workshopcspu@swps.edu.pl](mailto:workshopcspu@swps.edu.pl))  
Further information: [http://www.swps.edu.pl/new\\_www/workshop](http://www.swps.edu.pl/new_www/workshop)

This workshop will take place from 6th–9th July 2007, in Gdansk, Poland. The scientific scope of the workshop will cover the issues of evaluative conditioning viewed from social, cognitive and applied perspectives. The event is designed to engage young scientists in sharing and discussing ideas concerning investigation of non-conscious processes of preference acquisition with particular

emphasis on evaluative conditioning. Along with regular conference activities participants will be given a chance to actively participate in small group tutorials guided by more experienced scientists. The target group includes postgraduate students, PhD students, and young scientists who have completed their PhD within 5 years prior to the event. Participants will be encouraged to submit talks and posters presenting their own research. The submission deadline is 30th April 2007. The number of participants will be limited to about 50. Participants from Central and Eastern Europe will be supported with a workshop fee reduction when needed.

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### 3. SYMPOSIUM: AI AND CONSCIOUSNESS: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND CURRENT APPROACHES.

Corresponding authors: Antonio Chella (chella@unipa.it), Riccardo Manzotti (riccardo.manzotti@iulm.it)

Further information:

<http://www.aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/fss07symposia.php#fs01>

The symposium will take place in Washington, DC from November 8-11, 2007. It is sponsored by the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence. In recent years there has been a growing interest in the field of consciousness from biological, psychological, philosophical and computational points of view. At the same time, several Artificial Intelligence researchers have designed and implemented systems that take into account the suggestions from the study of consciousness. On the one hand, there is the hope of being able to design better AI programs; on the other hand, the actual implementations of working systems could be helpful for understanding consciousness. The main goal of the symposium is to bring together researchers from AI, cognitive science, philosophy and psychology to reason about the question: can we build better AI and robotics systems by facing the problem of consciousness? The symposium will provide extensive discussions and group interactions in which to present the current state of research and to discuss the experimental results and the theoretical foundations of the field of consciousness and their relationships with artificial intelligence. The symposium will schedule key invited speakers and selected talks from authors. Authors are encouraged to submit their work in long papers and in position papers. Submission deadline is May 1st. A limited amount of support is available for students.

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#### 4. INTERNATIONAL DATABASE OF SCIENTISTS AND SCIENTIFIC GENEALOGY.

Corresponding author: Noam Sagiv (noam@socrates.berkeley.edu)  
Further information: <http://neurotree.org>

<http://neurotree.org/> is an international database of scientists and scientific genealogy in neuroscience and related disciplines. You can find out not only who studied with whom but also trace links between any two names. A few philosophers are listed too but overall, consciousness researchers are underrepresented. Adding yourself is very easy, as well as contributing other information. Of particular value is historic information you may be able to share.

Take a look for example at William James' tree:

<http://neurotree.org/neurotree/tree.php?pid=125> or how to get from Chomsky to Husserl:

<http://neurotree.org/neurotree/distance.php?pid1=1336&pid2=5729>. Patrick Wilken was surprised and pleased to learn that he has such famous academic ancestors as William James and Wilhelm Wundt, not to mention Galileo Galilei:

<http://neurotree.org/neurotree/tree.php?pid=7653&fontsize=3&pnodecount=20&cnodecount=2>, which does raise the question: How many ASSC members belong to the Jamesian Tree?

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#### 5. ANTHROPOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY: AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Corresponding authors: Mariano L. Bianca (bianca@unisi.it) and Lucia Foglia (foglia3@unisi.it)  
Further information: <http://www.aetp.it>

A&P is an International Multidisciplinary Journal dedicated to human and natural scientists interested in sharing research experiences and theoretical issues. A&P focuses mainly on Anthropology, Philosophy and Neurophilosophy, but does not undervalue contributions offered by other human sciences, such as Psychology, Sociology and Human Ethology. A&P's main concern is the development of a general theory of human mind and human nature. It is published as one Volume divided in 2 Issues. The editors would

like to draw your attention to two special issues: (1) Special Issue on the Symposium on Peter Carruthers. *Phenomenal Consciousness: A Naturalistic Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. *Anthropology and Philosophy*, Vol. 6 (1–2), 2005. (2) Special Issue on Mental Imagery and Visual Perception (Edited by Mariano L. Bianca and Lucia Foglia), *Anthropology and Philosophy*, Vol. 7 (1–2), 2006. Furthermore, Mariano Bianca and Paolo Piccari are now editing a Special Issue on 'Informal Logic and Theory of Argumentation' (forthcoming in 2008). The Scientific Committee and the Editorial Board of A&P are very glad to receive papers and contributions for the realization of this volume. It will be devoted to some of the main topics in Philosophy of Mind and Psychology, such as: language and embodiment, awareness and the Self. Others topics and proposals are very welcome as, for instance, issues concerning a general theory of human mind and human nature.