
ASSC NEWSLETTER - January 2008

Welcome to this month's 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 and information relevant to the study of consciousness (e.g. books, papers, meetings, jobs, etc.).
This month's newsletter contains the following information:

- ASSC EVENTS AND INFORMATION:

1. ASSC12 Tutorial Announcement
2. ASSC12 Symposia Announcement
3. Reminder: ASSC12 Abstract Submission Deadline is February 1st
4. Changes in the Structure of ASSC Membership Classes
5. ASSC Eprints Archive

- NON-ASSC EVENTS AND INFORMATION:

1. New Book: Thomas C. Dalton, Victor W. Bergenn (2007), Early Experience, the Brain, and Consciousness
2. New Paper: Daniel A. Pollen (2007), Fundamental Requirements for Primary Visual Perception, Cerebral Cortex

Enjoy the newsletter and have a Happy and Successful New Year!

Kristina

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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) by no later than the 10th of the month (subject: ASSC newsletter).

Items should be in the form of ONE paragraph of plain ASCII text no longer than 250 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.

ASSC EVENTS AND INFORMATION
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1. ASSC12 TUTORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
Corresponding author: Chien-Hui Chiu (assc12@ym.edu.tw)
Further information: www.ym.edu.tw/assc12

We are proud to announce the tutorial speakers of ASSC12, Taipei.

Antoine Bechara, topic: Emotion, Feeling, and Interoception
Juliane Wilcke, topic: The Evolutionary Function of Consciousness
Jennifer Windt & Thomas Metzinger, topic: Dreaming
Tim Bayne & Jakob Hohwy, topic: Conscious States and Conscious Creatures: Explanatory Strategies in The Science of Consciousness
Andrew Brook, topic: Consciousness Terminology
Shigeru Kitazawa & Shin'ya Nishida, topic: Consciousness of Time Perception

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2. ASSC12 SYMPOSIA ANNOUNCEMENT
Corresponding author: Chien-Hui Chiu (assc12@ym.edu.tw)
Further information: www.ym.edu.tw/assc12

We are also proud to present the symposia of ASSC12, Taipei.

Symposium 1
Topic: Consciousness and accessibility
Ned Block, New York University, USA
Victor Lamme, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Sid Kouider, Ecole Normale Superieure, France

Symposium 2
Topic: Basic neuroscientific and clinical approaches to disorders of CNS arousal
Barbara Jones, McGill University, Canada
Donald Pfaff, Rockefeller University, USA
Steven Laureys, University of Liege, Belgium
Adrian Owen, University of Cambridge, UK

Symposium 3
Topic: Implicit processing
Charles Spence, University of Oxford, UK
Keiji Tanaka, RIKEN Brain Science Institute, Japan
Glyn Humphreys, University of Birmingham, UK
Shaul Hochstein, Life Sciences Institute and Neural Computation Center, Israel

Symposium 4
Topic: Delusions
Tim Bayne, University of Oxford, UK
Ryan McKay, Queen's University Belfast, UK
Ian Gold, McGill University, Canada
Robyn Langdon, Macquarie University, Australia

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3. REMINDER: ASSC12 ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1st.
Corresponding author: Chien-Hui Chiu (assc12@ym.edu.tw)
Further information: http://www.ym.edu.tw/assc12/submission.htm

We would like to remind you that abstract submission of ASSC12 is scheduled to end on February 1, 2008.
Please submit your abstract to our online forms before that date.
Students who have submitted an abstract can apply for financial assistance until February 15, 2008.

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4. CHANGES IN ASSC MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS
Corresponding author: Jennifer Matey (jjmatey@gmail.com)
Further information: http://www.assc.caltech.edu/apply.htm

The Association for the Scientific Study of consciousness will institute the following changes in the structure of our membership classes. We believe that the new structure will better reflect the composition of the scientific and philosophical community in our field, as well as better facilitate the goals of the ASSC.
As of January 2008, new members will apply to one of the membership categories below. Please note the minimal requirements for membership in each of the categories. All affiliate members will be notified about how to apply for their status to be reviewed when their membership dues are up for renewal.

- Student Member- The applicant is a student working toward a degree in an accredited program. The applicant's research interests and major project matches with the general research areas promoted by the Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness. Student member benefits can be found at: http://www.assc.caltech.edu/benefits.htm. Student members are eligible for various ASSC programs and scholarships, including student activities at annual meetings and such.

- Member (without voting privileges)- The applicant has a degree from an accredited University and an interest in the promotion or pursuit of the scientific study of consciousness as defined by the Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness. Member benefits can be found at: http://www.assc.caltech.edu/benefits.htm

- Voting Member*- The applicant has a graduate degree in a relevant discipline and at least two articles published in internationally recognized peer reviewed journals or the equivalent in scholarly output particular to the applicant's discipline. These articles should relate to the scientific, clinical, or philosophical study of consciousness. Member benefits can be found at: http://www.assc.caltech.edu/benefits.htm. In addition, members meeting these criteria will be entitled to vote on official ASSC matters such as Board elections and other issues presented to the membership as they arise.

* In extreme circumstances, individuals who do not fulfill the above criteria may apply for special consideration. This application must be supported by two voting members, in the form of an email to the membership committee at assc@klab.caltech.edu.

Sincerely,
The Membership Committee
Jennifer Matey
Michel Ferrari
Noam Sagiv

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4. ASSC EPRINTS ARCHIVE
Corresponding author: Kristina Musholt (kmusholt@gmail.com)
Further information: http://eprints.assc.caltech.edu

Unfortunately, due to some kind of error in last month's statistics, we are unable to present you with the five most popular papers of December 2007. According to the statistics, the Eprints archive generated 184797 downloads last month, most of which are attributed to two papers. While we would like to belive that these numbers are real, they do not correspond at all with the numbers from previous months (or the preliminary numbers from this month). It is likely that the statstics software failed temporarily, possibly due to some kind of bandwith attack on the server. Fortunately, there is no evidence that the archive got hacked.

We would nevertheless like encourage you once more to contribute to the ongoing success of the archive (as documented by a steady increase in the interested it has

generated over the last year) by uploading your work in the study of consciousness to the archive.
Please remember that (in addition to ASSC conference presentations, book chapters, and theses) we only accept open-access or PRE-COPY-EDITED versions of papers that have been published in PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS.

NON-ASSC EVENTS AND INFORMATION
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1. NEW BOOK RELEASE: Early Experience, the Brain, and Consciousness: An Historical and Interdisciplinary Synthesis by Thomas C. Dalton, Victor W. Bergenn, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2007
Corresponding author: Thomas C. Dalton (tom.dalton@csueastbay.edu)

This new book examines the interrelationship between neuroscience and developmental science to help us understand how children differ in their capacity to benefit from their early motor and cognitive experiences. In so doing, it helps us better understand how experience affects brain growth and a child's capacity to learn. In this interdisciplinary book, the authors review the most significant research findings and historical scientific events related to early experience, the brain and consciousness. Authors Dalton and Bergenn propose a new theory to help demonstrate the crucial roles of attention and memory in motor and perceptual development. The goal is to help readers better understand the differences between how individuals with normal and dysfunctional brains process information and why conscious access plays a crucial role in their ability to learn from experience.

Early Experience, the Brain and Consciousness opens with a critical examination of why motor and perceptual development should be understood as interrelated phenomena. The authors then introduce their new theory that argues that neurodevelopment is an emergent process that enables infants to respond to the challenge of integrating complex motor and cognitive functions. Subsequent chapters examine the research that suggests that the the sequence of events before and after birth account for divergent neuropsychological outcomes. The authors then demonstrate how the acquisition and early use of language conforms to the same principles as those involved in the construction of motor skills. This perspective views perception and cognition as complex forms of communication and memory rooted in preverbal forms of categorization. The book concludes with a review of strategies to help young children exploit the brain's multiple pathways of retrieval for more efficient learning. The authors contend that this theory can be used to understand why children with brain disorders fail to attain the threshold of conscious control to benefit from their learning experiences.

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2. NEW PAPER: Daniel A. Pollen, Fundamental Requirements for Primary Visual Perception, Cerebral Cortex 2007; doi: 10.1093/cercor/bhm226
Corresponding author: Daniel Pollen (PollenD@ummhc.org)
Full text/pdf available at: http://cercor.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/bhm226?ijkey=ZWqWbAYle3vYXJi&keytype=ref

A novel perspective for the necessary and sufficient conditions for primary visual perception is proposed based upon relating recent discoveries from the visual sciences to relevant foundational neurological observations. This analysis suggests that a fundamental requirement for the emergence of normal primary visual perception is the coupling between the early visual cortices in the occipital lobe subserving image content with specific areas in the parietal lobe subserving selective attention, representations of extrapersonal space, the body schema, and the initiation of perceptual ownership. Fully intact primary visual perception, which includes the normal placement of image content within extrapersonal space, seems to require at each instant a mutually consistent completeness and corresponding removal of ambiguities in each of the linked neural representations subserving image, space and self. Experimental approaches that could either invalidate or strengthen the proposed framework are suggested as well as opportunities to differentiate some aspects of normal primary visual perception from the severely compromised visual experience that survives bilateral parieto-occipital lesions (Balint's syndrome) when visual experience may persist for single but unlocalizable objects.
