

The Philosophy of Affective Neuroscience

Our symposium showcases the interdisciplinary cutting edge innovations of the cognitive sciences. It is the unique meeting of the founder of Affective Neuroscience with an interdisciplinary set of scholars who follow the implications of his work through the philosophy of psychology, the philosophy of Self, and neuroscience and law.

Speakers

Stephen Asma
Rami Gabriel
Thomas Greif

Moderator

Jaak Panksepp

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Jaak Panksepp, Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus of Psychology, Bowling Green State University. Head, Affective Neuroscience Research, Falk Center for Molecular Therapeutics, Northwestern University. In addition to 300+ scientific articles, I have co-edited the multivolume Handbook of the Hypothalamus and of Emotions and Psychopathology, a series in Advances in Biological Psychiatry and most recently a Textbook of Biological Psychiatry (Wiley, 2004). My other textbook, Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions (Oxford, 1998), has helped inaugurate a new field of inquiry which attempts to probe the affective infrastructure of the mammalian brain. Our working assumption is that all of consciousness was built on affective value systems during the long course of brain evolution

Speakers

Rami Gabriel, Ph.D in Cognitive and Perceptual Sciences from University of California, Santa Barbara. Dissertation concerned non-conscious affective processes in a Prosopagnosic patient. Member of Columbia College Chicago School of Liberal Arts and Sciences Research Group in Mind, Science, and Culture.

Title of talk: Modularity in Cognitive ψ and Affective Neuroscience.

My talk explores the psychological module in the context of findings from affective neuroscience. I contrast, in terms of practicality and veridicality, cognitive science's formulation of the cognitive module with Panksepp's notion of basic biological behavioral systems. The deeper theme of my presentation is the question of human nature and the processes of the human animal we need to specify towards positing a biologically-based codification of the cognitive processes that constitute human nature.

Stephen T. Asma, Ph.D in Philosophy of Science, is author of several books that seek to bridge the sciences and humanities. He is Professor of Philosophy at Columbia College

Chicago, and member of the Liberal Arts and Sciences Research Group in Mind, Science, and Culture.

Title: Affective Neuroscience and Its Implications for the Philosophy of Self.

The mind/body problem continues to plague philosophy. The nature of Self awareness and the origin and persistence of personal identity still loom large in contemporary philosophy of mind. Many philosophers have been wooed by the computational approach to consciousness and they attempt to generate the Self amidst the phenomenon of neo-cortical information processing. Affective neuroscience offers another pathway to understanding the evolution and nature of Self. This talk will explore how affective neuroscience acts as a positive game-changer in the philosophical pursuit of Self. In particular, I will focus on closing the gap between the phenomenology of psychological consolidation and affective neurodynamic processes.

Glennon Curran, May 2011 Candidate for Juris Doctor at The John Marshall Law School, Chicago, Illinois. Executive Board Member of The John Marshall Law School Center for Trial Advocacy and Dispute Resolution. Member of Columbia College Chicago School of Liberal Arts and Sciences Research Group in Mind, Science, and Culture.

Title of Talk: Affective Neuroscience and Law

My talk explores the application of Affective Neuroscience to the law. Jaak Panksepp's exegesis of the triune brain complicates extant applications of cognitive neuroscience to the law. I contrast the neocortical causal explanations of the mental culpability of criminal defendants made in Cognitive Neuroscience with sub-cortical affective systems explanations raised in Affective Neuroscience. I argue the sub-cortical foundations of human behavior must be considered in any attempt to inform law with neuroscience.