

WORKSHOP DEADLINE EXTENDED TO FRIDAY 14 MAY 2010

Unusual Bodies, Uncommon Behaviors: Implications for Embodied Views of Spatial Cognition

One Day Workshop at the Spatial Cognition Conference (Mount Hood, Oregon)

*****EXTENDED DEADLINE: FRIDAY 14 MAY 2010*****

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/psychology/news/conferences/unusualbodies.htm>

This workshop will highlight research on embodied representations and embodied processes in spatial tasks. A slightly unusual twist of this meeting is a focus on *differences* in these processes, rather than generalities. Do *all* individuals use embodied processes in similar ways in spatial tasks? Do individuals with *atypical bodies* or *unusual experiences* show *typical* or *atypical* patterns of embodied representations? By bringing together findings on questions such as these, we hope to shed light on the nature of the relationship between mind and body in spatial cognition.

The influential embodiment view of human cognition postulates that our knowledge and thinking are constrained by sensory and motor processes. It predicts that similarities in the configurations and actions of our bodies should generate similar mental representations of space and movement across individuals, and conversely that differences in the use of our bodies will impose different cognitive behaviors.

This workshop will consider the naturally occurring variance in embodied processes among typical individuals (e.g., within- and between-subjects differences in strategic deployment, subjective experience, or spontaneous engagement of embodied representations in spatial tasks). It also aims to bring together exciting new research on spatial cognition in populations with atypical bodies (e.g., blindness, amputees, stroke patients, deafferented, or locked-in patients).

Our goal is to constrain theories of embodied cognition and consider implications for embodied processes in representations of space. By drawing on evidence from non-typical cases and the naturally occurring variance in typical individuals, we hope to address questions such as:

- whether embodied processes in spatial cognition are automatic or obligatory
- whether they can be strategically or flexibly applied
- whether there is a strict, one-to-one mapping between the physical body and mental representations of the body and its action space

Answering these questions will help us understand how human spatial cognition is constrained by embodiment.

To maximize the involvement of workshop attendees, the morning will comprise selected presentations and the afternoon will comprise discussions, group activities, and an interactive poster session.

The central interest is inter- and intra-individual differences, and what they can teach us about embodiment in spatial cognition. In considering submissions, the notion of differences will be construed quite broadly, including, but not limited to, issues such as:

- Atypical individuals and what they can tell us about embodied representations
- How individuals differ in spontaneous engagement of embodied processes in spatial tasks
- Differences in subjective experience or vividness of embodied representations
- Strategic or flexible deployment of embodied representations in spatial tasks
- Neural underpinnings of differences in embodiment
- The role of experience in shaping individual differences in embodiment
- Developmental differences in embodied processes in spatial cognition
- Embodied processes within different spatial frames of reference

Important dates:

*****Friday 14th May 2010** – submission of extended abstracts***

We will aim for a journal special issue (to be confirmed), based on selected submissions from the workshop and additional invited papers from experts in the field.

To submit a contribution, please send an **extended abstract** (approximately **400 words**) to:

Madeleine Keehner m.m.keehner@dundee.ac.uk and Martin Fischer
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Please state in your submission whether you prefer to give a **talk** or a **poster**.

Please also state whether you would be interested in contributing a **full written paper** for a journal special issue, and describe whether you expect this to be an empirical, theoretical, review, or position paper.

For convenience, the conference is co-located with *Cognitive Science*:

<http://cognitivesciencesociety.org/conference2010/index.html>

Information about *Spatial Cognition 2010* is here: <http://www.spatial-cognition-2010.com/index.html>