

News item. Retrieved from <http://www.commens.org/news/item/pragmatism-and-embodied-cognitive-science>, 22.06.2025.

Category: Academic Meeting

Title: Pragmatism and Embodied Cognitive Science

Description: **Keynote speaker:**

- Mark Johnson (University of Oregon)

Invited speakers:

- Anthony Chemero (University of Cincinnati)
- Teed Rockwell (Sonoma State University)
- Erkki Kilpinen (University of Helsinki)
- Tibor Solymosi (Mercyhurst University)
- Saskia Nagel (University of Osnabrück)
- Jörg Fingerhut (University of Stuttgart)
- Lena Kästner (HU Berlin)
- Rebekka Hufendiek (University of Basel)

Over the last two decades, cognitive sciences, as well as human sciences in general, have witnessed a considerable paradigm shift with regard to their outlook on the nature of mind, cognition, perception and action. The traditional computation-based cognitivist outlook on the nature of cognition and functioning of the central nervous system has been gradually surpassed by 'pragmatically-oriented' approaches to the study of cognition and action.

In their search for philosophical justification of such a paradigm shift, cognitive scientists of the new wave as well as certain philosophers of mind have turned their attention to existential phenomenology and also to classical American pragmatism (Peirce, James, Dewey, Mead). Although there are considerable differences in how Peirce, James, Dewey, and Mead understood the mind, their common ground seems to lie in the belief that mind and consciousness are to be explained in terms of action. For the pragmatists, mind and cognition are 'servants' of action, not the other way around.

The conference titled "Pragmatism and Embodied Cognitive Science" aims to scrutinize the outcomes of the interaction between different facets of the mind-research and the philosophy of pragmatism. More precisely, we will discuss the contributions made by the pragmatists to new understanding of phenomena like emotions, perception, action, cognition, etc. We will also address the prospects, challenges and limitations which pragmatically-oriented research in cognitive sciences might face in the future. At the conference, we will,

therefore, address issues like:

- What is the role of representation in cognition?
- Can there be a genuinely anti-representationalist science of the mind?
- Is there a way of reconciling the notion of representation with anti-Cartesianism?
- What is the role of the active body in the process of acquiring knowledge?
- What is the definition of cognition in the genuinely pragmatist sense?
- Is cognition internal to the cognizing subject? Is it extended? Is it spatially localizable at all?
- Is the self socially constructed all the way down?
- What is the role of the body in self-consciousness?
- What new methodological principles for cognitive sciences can be drawn from the work of the classical pragmatists?
- What challenges or limitations in empirical research does the pragmatically-oriented understanding of cognition bring along?
- Does the pragmatist paradigm shift in contemporary cognitive science mean a revival of behaviorism?
- What, if any, are the broader social/ethical ramifications of the pragmatic turn in contemporary sciences of the mind?

To our conference, we cordially invite not only philosophers, but also other social and natural scientists, who, in their research, have benefited from the ideas stemming from the work of philosophers like Charles S. Peirce, William James, George H. Mead, or John Dewey. We will also welcome constructive critiques of the pragmatically inclined approaches to cognitive science.

Abstracts for papers relating to any of the above topics or any other facet of the theme 'Pragmatism and Embodied Cognitive Science' are welcomed. Abstracts should be no more than 500 words in length and prepared for blind review. On a separate sheet, please include:

- your name
- affiliation and contact details
- current status (graduate student, post-doc, professor)
- please, indicate the year when you received your PhD (several spots have been reserved for junior researchers, i.e., researchers less than 5 years after a PhD, or graduate students).

Decisions on submissions will be communicated no later than 10 February 2015.

Papers selected for presentation should be no longer than 3,500 words, and are

to be presented in approximately thirty minutes with additional fifteen minutes for questions and discussion.

Abstracts should be submitted in .DOC or .PDF format only to Roman Madzia at pragmacogsci [at] gmail.com by midnight (GMT) on 1 February 2015, with the subject line 'Abstract-pragmacogsci'. If you have any questions, send them the given address as well.

Date: 26/05/2015 to 28/05/2015

Deadline: 01/02/2015

Place: University of Koblenz-Landau, Campus Koblenz, Koblenz, Germany

Keywords: Pragmatism, Cognitive Science