

ATTENTION!!

Working Memory

(and a tiny bit of agency and norms)

Philosophy 250A Philosophy of Cognitive Science

Thurs 1-3:50

RWAC 0472

Course Description:

Do you work in philosophy of mind and have an interest in mental taxonomy and explanation? Great! Do you work in moral psychology and see people talking all the time about things like cognitive control, sensitivity to reasons, intentions, skilled action, agency, and bias, and thought to yourself, I wonder what's up with all that? Maybe you have no interest in these things. But let me ask you this: Have you ever been distracted by the cacophony of enchanting things happening all around you and thought to yourself: wait, what *is* attention anyway? And how is it connected to the most plausible empirical account of working memory? Why do some things just **POP** out and others remain *hidden*? And what does this tell me about myself? Well then, this class is for you.

This will be a seminar on [attention](#) and [working memory](#). The bulk of the course will involve a careful reading of Wayne Wu's new book *Movements of the Mind*. Wayne will at some point be joining the seminar virtually to discuss the material with us. We will follow this with a tour of recent work on the philosophy of cognitive science of attention (some by philosophers, some by psychologists), including some work on norms of attention, affect-driven attention, and agency.

Requirements:

Enrolled students are required to lead discussion for at least one reading, submit 8 short weekly discussion forum contributions, and write a 10-12 page final paper.

Tentative Reading Schedule

(note readings required for our first meeting!)

All readings will be available through dropbox and course website

Week 1: September 28

Background: Chris Mole's entry on Attention in the SEP:

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/attention/>

Main readings: Wu MoM: Introduction and Ch. 1

Week 2: October 5th

NO CLASS: To be rescheduled, see below

Week 3: October 12th

MoM: Ch. 2 and 3

Week 4: October 19th

MoM: Ch. 4 and 5

Week 5: October 26th

MoM: Ch. 6 and 7

Week 6: Nov 2nd

Logie, et al, "The State of the Science of Working Memory"

Baddeley, Hitch, and Allen: "A Multicomponent Model of Working Memory"

Week 7: Nov 9th

Peter Carruthers: "Working Memory in Action"

Javier Gomez-Lavin: "Working memory is not a natural kind and cannot explain central cognition"

Week 8: Nov 16th

Denis Beuler: "Explicating Agency: The case of visual attention"

Klaus Oberauer: "Working Memory and Attention – A Conceptual Analysis and Review"

Week 9: Nov 30th

Norms and Virtues of attention

Ella Whitely: "A Woman First and a Philosopher Second": Relative Attentional Surplus on the Wrong Property"

Ellen Fridland, "Motor Skill and Moral Virtue"

Week 10: Dec 7th

Zach Irving week:

"A Guidance-Based Taxonomy of Attention"

"Drifting and Directed Minds: The significance of mind-wandering for mental agency"

Make up Class for Week 2: Time TBD

Work from Rebecca Todd's lab:

Ransom, M., Fazelpour, S., Kryklywy, J. H., Markovic, J., Thompson, E. T., & Todd, R. M. (2020). "Affect-biased attention and predictive processing." *Cognition*.

James H. Kryklywy, Maria G. M. Manaligod & Rebecca M. Todd (2021) "Within and beyond an integrated framework of attentional capture: A perspective from cognitive-affective neuroscience," *Visual Cognition*, 29:9, 618-621.