

Heather Logue Curriculum Vitae

Department of Linguistics and Philosophy
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
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AOS: Philosophy of Mind, Epistemology

AOC: Metaphysics, Philosophy of Science, Feminist Philosophy

Education

2003-2009: Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Ph.D. in Philosophy

Dissertation: "Perceptual Experience: Relations and Representations"

Committee: Alex Byrne (chair), Robert Stalnaker, Stephen Yablo,
Susanna Siegel (Harvard University)

September-October 2007, July-August 2008: Australian National University, Visiting Scholar

1998-2003: University of Pittsburgh: B.Phil. in Philosophy and Women's Studies
(summa cum laude)

Thesis: "Morgan's Canon: A Flawed Maxim for the Interpretation of Animal
Behavior" (defense passed with distinction)

Honors and Awards

2003-2007: Jacob K. Javits Fellowship

2003: Elected to Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society

2002: Outstanding Senior Award, Golden Key International Honour Society

2002: Winner, University of Pittsburgh Women's Studies Essay Competition

1998-2003: University of Pittsburgh, William Pitt Debating Union Scholarship

1998-2003: University of Pittsburgh, University Scholar

Publications

- 2009: *Disjunctivism: Contemporary Readings* (co-edited with Alex Byrne), MIT Press.
- 2008: “Either/Or” (with Alex Byrne), *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, eds. A. Haddock and F. Macpherson, OUP. (available on my website)
- 2002: “Fetal Rights and Mechanized Mothers”, *The Pittsburgh Undergraduate Review*.

Presentations

- July 2008: ANU Conference on the Relational and Representational Character of Perceptual Experience
“Perceptual Particularity and Phenomenal Unity”
- April 2008: Harvard-MIT Graduate Philosophy Conference
Comments on “Towards a Perceptual Basis for Self-Knowledge”, by Arnon Cahen
- September 2007: The ANU Philosophy Society
“Our Introspective Ignorance of Some (Alleged) Phenomenal Facts”
- February 2007: USC-UCLA Graduate Philosophy Conference
“Phenomenal Character is out in the World—What does that Mean?”
- March 2006: Harvard-MIT Graduate Philosophy Conference
Comments on “How to See with Your Eyes Shut”, by John Bengson
- January 2006: MITing of the Minds (MIT Alumni Conference)
“Either/Or: Disjunctivism for Dummies”
- June 2005: University of Glasgow Conference on Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge
“Either/Or: Disjunctivism for Dummies” (with Alex Byrne)

Teaching

Positions held:

- Spring 2008: Writing Tutor, 24.00: Problems of Philosophy (Steve Yablo, MIT)
- Spring 2007: Teaching Assistant, 24.01: Classics of Western Philosophy, 2 sections (Rae Langton, MIT)
- Spring 2006: Teaching Assistant, 24.09: Minds and Machines (Alex Byrne, MIT)
- Fall 2005: Teaching Assistant, 24.00: Problems of Philosophy (Sally Haslanger, MIT)
- Fall 2004: Teaching Assistant, 24.10: Thinking About Life—Philosophical Problems in Evolution and Development (Ned Hall and Evelyn Fox Keller, MIT)

Guest lectures:

- Spring 2007: Rae Langton's MIT course, Classics of Western Philosophy
On Bertrand Russell's *Problems of Philosophy*
- Spring 2007: Alex Byrne and Susanna Siegel's MIT/Harvard graduate seminar on perceptual experience
On John Campbell's *Reference and Consciousness*
- Fall 2005: Sally Haslanger's MIT course, Problems of Philosophy
On materialism and qualitative experience
- Spring 2003: Gerald Massey's University of Pittsburgh course, Philosophy and Animals
On Morgan's Canon for the interpretation of animal behavior

Courses Taken

- Proseminar I (History of Analytic Philosophy: Frege to Wittgenstein)—Ned Hall
- Perception—Christopher Hill
- Consequentialism—Caspar Hare
- Proseminar II (History of Analytic Philosophy: Quine to Kripke)—Robert Stalnaker and Alex Byrne
- Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and *Ethics*—Sally Haslanger

Topics in Philosophy of Science—Ned Hall

Speech Contexts and Context Dependence—Robert Stalnaker

Themes from *Naming and Necessity*—Stephen Yablo

A Priori Knowledge—Sally Haslanger

Self-Knowledge—Alex Byrne

Courses Audited

Kant's Metaphysics and Epistemology—Rae Langton

Metaphysics of Modality—Robert Stalnaker

Philosophy of Social Science—Sally Haslanger

Perceptual Experience—Alex Byrne and Susanna Siegel

Memory—Alex Byrne

Academic Service

2008: Index preparation for Robert Stalnaker's book, *Our Knowledge of the Internal World*

2007: Reviewer for University of Pittsburgh Press

2007-2008: MIT Philosophy Department Alumni Conference Co-organizer

2005-2006: MIT Philosophy Department Graduate Student Representative

2004-2007: Workshop on Gender and Philosophy Co-organizer

2004-2005: MIT Philosophy Department Colloquia Series Co-organizer

2004: MIT Philosophy Department Prospective Students' Visit Co-organizer

References

Alex Byrne, MIT:	617-258-6106	abyrne@mit.edu
Robert Stalnaker, MIT:	617-253-4072	stal@mit.edu
Stephen Yablo, MIT:	617-258-0740	yablo@mit.edu
Susanna Siegel, Harvard:	617-495-1884	ssiegel@fas.harvard.edu
Daniel Stoljar, ANU:	+61-2-6125-2076	dstoljar@coombs.anu.edu.au

Teaching reference:

Sally Haslanger, MIT:	617-253-4458	shaslang@mit.edu
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Dissertation abstract

My dissertation engages with a central debate in recent philosophy of perception. On one view, perceptual experiences involve representing propositions about one's environment (call this the Representational View). Another view holds that veridical perceptual experiences (or roughly, experiences in which things are as they seem to be) involve nothing more than the obtaining of the simple relation of perceiving between the subject and the objects of experience (call this the Relational View). Since perceptual experiences are our primary mode of access to the world beyond our minds, a complete understanding of human engagement with the world requires the resolution of this debate. In my dissertation, I argue that while the Relational View cannot be easily dismissed, only the Representational View can offer a plausible account of how perceptual experience connects us with the world.

The first two chapters of my dissertation assess the current state of the debate. Many proponents of the Representational View believe that the Relational View can't even get off the ground. However, in the first chapter, I argue that many of the standard arguments against the Relational View are flawed. The second chapter is concerned with the ground rules for adjudicating the dispute between the Representationalist and the Relationalist. Some have claimed that introspection of perceptual experience supports the Relational View over its rivals. However, I argue that introspection of perceptual experience is not a reliable guide to its nature. Instead of an introspection-based approach to philosophy of perception, I suggest that we should look to the roles perceptual experiences are supposed to play for constraints on our theory of perceptual experience.

One role of perceptual experience is that of being a source of beliefs about objects in one's environment. In the third chapter of my dissertation, I argue that the Relational View cannot account for this role, as it cannot offer a plausible explanation of why a given experience naturally gives rise to certain beliefs. This goes against the received wisdom that the Relational View offers

an adequate account of at least veridical perceptual experience. Instead, I argue that the theory that offers the most promising account of this cognitive role of perceptual experience is (a certain version of) the Representational View.

Future research

Some of the lines of research I plan to pursue are natural extensions of my dissertation work. First, while I have argued in my dissertation that the Relational View is inadequate with respect to one desideratum for theories of perceptual experience, I have not yet thoroughly engaged with similar charges against the Representational View. For example, some Relationalists have argued that our capacity to have beliefs about the world in the first place requires that perceptual experiences are more “primitive” than representational states. Also, others have insisted that the Representational View has no plausible way of specifying the proposition that a given experience represents. I think these charges can be answered, and one of my first priorities is to further develop my responses to them.

Another lingering issue from my dissertation has to do with the methodology I propose: namely, looking to the roles perceptual experiences are supposed to play for constraints on our theory of perceptual experience. One might worry that no experiential role provides such constraints. For example, as I suggest in my dissertation, one role of perceptual experience is that of being a source of beliefs about one’s environment—in particular, a given perceptual experience naturally gives rise to certain beliefs. However, one might insist that there is no deep explanation of the fact that an experience of a certain sort causes a belief of a certain sort; in other words, that perceptual experience need not have any specific metaphysical structure in order to naturally give rise to a specific belief. While this proposal constitutes a challenge to my methodology, I believe that it is unsatisfactory. In my future research I plan to make my misgivings more precise.

Finally, I want to continue a project regarding the relationship between philosophy of perception and skepticism about the external world. Even though arguments for skepticism start with claims about perceptual experiences (e.g., that one could have the same experience whether or not one is hallucinating), most responses to the skeptic do not engage with philosophy of perception. A notable exception is found in the work of John McDowell, who proposes an approach to skepticism that relies upon a certain theory of perceptual experience. Although I think this approach is interesting, it is not clear to me that it works. I plan to explore McDowell’s view further, and more generally to explore how much ground we can recover from the skeptic by doing philosophy of perception.