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In *Furnishing the Mind*, Jesse Prinz attempts to swing the pendulum back toward empiricism. Prinz provides a critical survey of leading theories of concepts, including imagism, definitionism, prototype theory, exemplar theory, the theory theory, and informational atomism.

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A central issue in the debate is the nature of concepts, the internal representations we use to think about

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the world. The traditional empiricist thesis that concepts are built up f Western philosophy has long been divided between empiricists, who argue that human understanding has its basis in experience, and rationalists, who argue that reason is the source of knowledge.

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In his [Furnishing the Mind](#), Jesse Prinz offers us a novel and scientifically-informed defence of concept empiricism. Prinz updates the old thesis that nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu as a claim about what concepts are and where they come from: “all (human) concepts are copies of perceptual representations” (p. 108).

[Furnishing the Mind: Concepts and their Perceptual Basis](#)

[Furnishing the Mind: Concepts and Their Perceptual Basis](#), by Jesse J. Prinz. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002. Pp. x + 358. H/b t27.95. Empiricism says that concepts originate in perception. Cognitive science assumes that concepts are mental representations employed in thinking. Prinz's lively monograph on the nature, functions and formation of concepts

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[Concepts a la Modal: An Extended Review of Prinz's Furnishing the Mind. \[REVIEW\] A. Markman & H. C. Stilwell - 2004 - Philosophical Psychology 17 \(3\):391-401. Proxytypes and Linguistic Nativism.](#)

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Jesse J. Prinz, Furnishing the Mind: Concepts and Their ...

Prinz, Jesse J. *Furnishing the Mind: Concepts and Their Perceptual Basis*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 358 P.(2002)[2004]. [REVIEW] Felipe de Brigard - 2007 - Ideas Y Valores 56 (133):163-168.

Andrew Woodfield, Furnishing the Mind: Concepts and Their ...

*Furnishing the Mind* is a spirited and ingenious defense of concept empiricism. Prinz tackles the philosophical objections head-on and makes superb use of the psychological literature on concept acquisition and categorization. This book will be read with great profit by philosophers and psychologists concerned with the nature of concepts.

Western philosophy has long been divided between empiricists, who argue that human understanding has its basis in experience, and rationalists, who argue that reason is the source of knowledge. A central issue in the debate is the nature of concepts, the internal representations we use to think about the world. The traditional empiricist thesis that concepts are built up from sensory input has fallen out of favor. Mainstream cognitive science tends to echo the rationalist tradition, with its emphasis on innateness. In *Furnishing the Mind*, Jesse Prinz attempts to swing the pendulum back toward empiricism. Prinz provides a critical survey of leading theories of concepts, including imagism, definitionism, prototype theory, exemplar theory, the theory theory, and informational atomism. He sets forth a new defense of concept empiricism that draws on philosophy, neuroscience, and psychology and introduces a new version of concept empiricism called proxytype theory. He also provides accounts of abstract concepts, intentionality, narrow content, and concept combination. In an extended discussion of innateness, he covers Noam Chomsky's arguments for the innateness of grammar, developmental psychologists' arguments for innate cognitive domains, and Jerry Fodor's argument for radical concept nativism.

The problem of consciousness continues to be a subject of great debate in cognitive science. Synthesizing decades of research, *The Conscious Brain* advances a new theory of the psychological and neurophysiological correlates of conscious experience. Prinz's account of consciousness makes two main claims: first consciousness always arises at a particular stage of perceptual processing, the intermediate level, and, second, consciousness depends on attention. Attention changes the flow of information allowing perceptual information to access memory systems. Neurobiologically, this change in flow depends on synchronized neural firing. Neural synchrony is also implicated in the unity of consciousness and in the temporal duration of experience. Prinz also explores the limits of consciousness. We have no direct experience of our thoughts, no experience of motor commands, and no experience of a conscious self. All consciousness is perceptual, and it functions to make perceptual information available to systems that allows for flexible behavior. Prinz concludes by discussing prevailing philosophical puzzles. He provides a neuroscientifically grounded response to the leading argument for dualism, and argues that materialists need not choose between functional and neurobiological approaches, but can instead combine these into neurofunctional response to the mind-body problem. *The Conscious Brain* brings neuroscientific evidence to bear on enduring philosophical questions, while also surveying, challenging, and extending philosophical and scientific theories of consciousness. All readers interested in the nature of consciousness will find Prinz's work of great interest.

In this provocative, revelatory tour de force, Jesse Prinz reveals how the cultures we live in - not biology - determine how we think and feel. He examines all aspects of our behaviour, looking at everything from our intellects and emotions, to love and sex, morality and even madness. This book seeks to go beyond traditional debates of nature and nurture. He is not interested in finding universal laws but, rather, in understanding, explaining and celebrating our differences. Why do people raised in Western countries

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tend to see the trees before the forest, while people from East Asia see the forest before the trees? Why, in South East Asia, is there a common form of mental illness, unheard of in the West, in which people go into a trancelike state after being startled? Compared to Northerners, why are people in the American South more than twice as likely to kill someone over an argument? And, above all, just how malleable are we? Prinz shows that the vast diversity of our behaviour is not engrained. He picks up where biological explanations leave off. He tells us the human story.

*Gut Reactions* is an interdisciplinary defense of the claim that emotions are perceptions in a double sense. First of all, they are perceptions of changes in the body, but, through the body, they also allow us to literally perceive danger, loss, and other matters of concern. This proposal, which Prinz calls the embodied appraisal theory, reconciles the long standing debate between those who say emotions are cognitive and those who say they are noncognitive. The basic idea behind embodied appraisals is captured in the familiar notion of a "gut reaction," which has been overlooked by much emotion research. Prinz also addresses emotional valence, emotional consciousness, and the debate between evolutionary psychologists and social constructionists.

In this bold new work, Ray Gibbs demonstrates that human cognition is deeply poetic and that figurative imagination constitutes the way we understand ourselves and the world in which we live.

Jesse Prinz presents a bravura argument for highly controversial claims about morality, which go to the heart of our understanding of ourselves. He argues that moral values are based on emotional responses, and that these are inculcated by culture, not hard-wired through natural selection. These two claims support a form of moral relativism.

In *Doing without Concepts*, Edouard Machery argues that the dominant psychological theories of concept fail to provide a coherent framework to organize our extensive empirical knowledge about concepts. Machery proposes that to develop such a framework, drastic conceptual changes are required.

New essays by leading philosophers and cognitive scientists that present recent findings and theoretical developments in the study of concepts. The study of concepts has advanced dramatically in recent years, with exciting new findings and theoretical developments. Core concepts have been investigated in greater depth and new lines of inquiry have blossomed, with researchers from an ever broader range of disciplines making important contributions. In this volume, leading philosophers and cognitive scientists offer original essays that present the state-of-the-art in the study of concepts. These essays, all commissioned for this book, do not merely present the usual surveys and overviews; rather, they offer the latest work on concepts by a diverse group of theorists as well as discussions of the ideas that should guide research over the next decade. The book is an essential companion volume to the earlier *Concepts: Core Readings*, the definitive source for classic texts on the nature of concepts. The essays cover concepts as they relate to animal cognition, the brain, evolution, perception, and language, concepts across cultures, concept acquisition and conceptual change, concepts and normativity, concepts in context, and conceptual individuation. The contributors include such prominent scholars as Susan Carey, Nicola Clayton, Jerry Fodor, Douglas Medin, Joshua Tenenbaum, and Anna Wierzbicka. Contributors Aurore Avarguès-Weber, Eef Ameel, Megan Bang, H. Clark Barrett, Pascal Boyer, Elisabeth Camp, Susan Carey, Daniel Casasanto, Nicola S. Clayton, Dorothy L. Cheney, Vyvyan Evans, Jerry A. Fodor, Silvia Gennari, Tobias Gerstenberg, Martin Giurfa, Noah D. Goodman, J. Kiley Hamlin, James A. Hampton, Mutsumi Imai, Charles W. Kalish, Frank Keil, Jonathan Kominsky, Stephen Laurence, Gary Lupyan, Edouard Machery, Bradford Z. Mahon, Asifa Majid, Barbara C. Malt, Eric Margolis, Douglas Medin, Nancy J. Nersessian, Bethany Ojalehto, Anna Papafragou, Joshua M. Plotnik, Noburo Saji, Robert M. Seyfarth, Joshua B. Tenenbaum, Sandra Waxman, Daniel A. Weiskopf, Anna Wierzbicka

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How human musical experience emerges from the audition of organized tones is a riddle of long standing. In *The Musical Representation*, Charles Nussbaum offers a philosophical naturalist's solution. Nussbaum founds his naturalistic theory of musical representation on the collusion between the physics of sound and the organization of the human mind-brain. He argues that important varieties of experience afforded by Western tonal art music since 1650 arise through the feeling of tone, the sense of movement in musical space, cognition, emotional arousal, and the engagement, by way of specific emotional responses, of deeply rooted human ideals. Construing the art music of the modern West as representational, as a symbolic system that carries extramusical content, Nussbaum attempts to make normative principles of musical representation explicit and bring them into reflective equilibrium with the intuitions of competent listeners. The human mind-brain, writes Nussbaum, is a living record of its evolutionary history; relatively recent cognitive acquisitions derive from older representational functions of which we are hardly aware. Consideration of musical art can help bring to light the more ancient cognitive functions that underlie modern human cognition.

It's hard to conceive of a topic of more broad and personal interest than the study of the mind. In addition to its traditional investigation by the disciplines of psychology, psychiatry, and neuroscience, the mind has also been a focus of study in the fields of philosophy, economics, anthropology, linguistics, computer science, molecular biology, education, and literature. In all these approaches, there is an almost universal fascination with how the mind works and how it affects our lives and our behavior. Studies of the mind and brain have crossed many exciting thresholds in recent years, and the study of mind now represents a thoroughly cross-disciplinary effort. Researchers from a wide range of disciplines seek answers to such questions as: What is mind? How does it operate? What is consciousness? This encyclopedia brings together scholars from the entire range of mind-related academic disciplines from across the arts and humanities, social sciences, life sciences, and computer science and engineering to explore the multidimensional nature of the human mind.

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