



**Universität  
Zürich** <sup>UZH</sup>

Institute of Philosophy  
Doctoral Program "Philosophy – Language, Mind and Practice"

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Master Class

**Tyler Burge**  
(UC Los Angeles)

**Perception  
And  
Default Warranted Perceptual Belief**

**24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

## Synopsis

The first part will discuss the nature of perception and perceptual representational content. It will begin with a broad introduction to anti-individualism—the view that the natures of most psychological states, including perceptual states, constitutively depend on relations between the individual in those states and aspects of the physical environment. Then we will discuss broad constitutive aspects of perception, and provide an overview of how perceptual systems work, according to advanced, mainstream work in perceptual psychology. Finally, we will survey the range of perceptual systems, emphasizing the relative primitiveness of some animals with perception. Comparisons will be drawn to even more primitive forms of action in the animal kingdom. Ways in which norms for accuracy and efficiency apply to primitive perception and primitive action will be discussed.

The second part of the seminar will center on the specific norm for perceptual belief, *prima facie* warrant—often termed (I think unnaturally) ‘*prima facie* justification’. In the first session of this second part, we will begin with a brief introduction to a modest foundationalist view, according to which perceptual beliefs are *prima facie* default warranted. This introduction will be pointed toward a discussion of relations between ordinary perceptual belief and scepticism, with emphasis on Moore’s anti-sceptical argument. In the second session, we will discuss in more detail the nature of *prima facie* default warrant (entitlement)—contrasting externalist (loosely, reliabilist) conceptions with internalist conceptions. We will also attend to relations between externalism about warrant and anti-individualism about the nature of psychological states. The third session will focus on two arguments that have been aimed at showing that there is something wrong with the idea of *prima facie* default warrant. Both arguments fail. The failure of the first will point up the importance of grounding the epistemology of empirical belief in perceptual psychology.

## **Programme**

### **Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

- 9:30 – 12:00 Anti-Individualism
- 13:30 – 16:00 Perception – What It Is, A Bit About How It Works
- 16:30 – 19:00 The Primitivity of Perception and Action –  
And of Norms for Perception and Action

### **Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

- 9:30 – 12:00 Modest Foundationalism and Moore's Argument Against Skepticism
- 13:30 – 16:00 Perceptual Entitlement and Reliability
- 16:30 – 18:30 Priors and Bootstrapping

**Registration:** [phd@philos.uzh.ch](mailto:phd@philos.uzh.ch)

**Details:** <http://www.philosophie.uzh.ch/doktorat/meisterkurse.html>

**Venue:** Philosophisches Seminar, Zürichbergstrasse 43, 8044 Zürich

**Room:** ZUP-U-8

**No fees apply, but please note that participants are expected to have done the reading of the texts. PhD students at the UZH are required to book the module in order to get credit points.**

## Readings

### Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014

#### Anti-Individualism

Burge, T.: *Origins of Objectivity*, OUP 2010, chapter 3.

-- Individualism and the mental, *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 4, 1979, 73-122.

-- Other bodies, in Woodfield, A. (ed.): *Thought and Object*, OUP 1982.

#### Perception – What It Is, A Bit About How It Works

Burge, T.: *Origins of Objectivity*, OUP 2010, chapter 8, 315-319, 342,366; chapter 9, 367-395.

#### The Primitivity of Perception and Action – And of Norms for Perception and Action

Burge, T.: *Origins of Objectivity*, OUP 2010, chapter 8, 308-314, 326-341; chapter 9, 419-421.

Luthra, Y.: Non-Rational Aspects of Agency, unpublished.

Burge, T.: Reply to Block: Adaptation and the Upper Border of Perception, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 2014.

### Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014

#### Modest Foundationalism and Moore's Argument Against Skepticism

Burge, T.: Perceptual Entitlement, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 67, 2003, sections I-II, 503-522.

Moore, G.E.: Proof of an External World, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 25, 1939, 273-300.

Pryor, J.: The Sceptic and the Dogmatist, *Noûs*, 2000, 517-549.

-- What is Wrong with Moore's Argument?, *Philosophical Issues* 14, 2004, 349-378.

#### Perceptual Entitlement and Reliability

Goldman, A., "Reliabilism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, , Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/reliabilism/>, sections 2-4.

Burge, T.: Perceptual Entitlement, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 67, 2003, 503-548.

Bonjour, L.: Externalist Theories of Empirical Knowledge. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 5, 1980, 53-73.

Pollock, J.: Reliability and Justified Belief, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 14, 1984, 103-114.

#### Priors and Bootstrapping

White, R.: Problems for Dogmatism, *Philosophical Studies* 131, 2006, 525-557.

Weatherson, B.: The Bayesian and the Dogmatist, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 107, 2007, 169-185.