

PHIL 470: Philosophy of Cognitive Science

TR 4:05-5:25pm LEA 110

McGill University, Winter 2014

Dr. Noah Moss Brender

noah.mossbrender@mcgill.ca

The ‘Cognitive Revolution’ of the 1960s united a number of disciplines—including psychology, linguistics, artificial intelligence, neuroscience, and philosophy—in a new approach to the study of mind and intelligence. The key to this new Cognitive approach was the identification of thinking with computation or ‘information-processing.’

In this course, we will study the origins and development of Cognitive Science, trying as much as possible to engage directly with the scientific literature. We will start by surveying the roots of Cognitive Science in ancient and early modern philosophy, and in the behaviorist psychology that immediately preceded it. Next, we will study some landmark texts from the Cognitive Revolution in psychology, linguistics, computer science, and philosophy. Finally, we will explore more recent developments such as connectionism, dynamicism, and 4E (Embodied, Embedded, Enacted, Extended) approaches to cognition, which attempt to modify or challenge the original Cognitivist program.