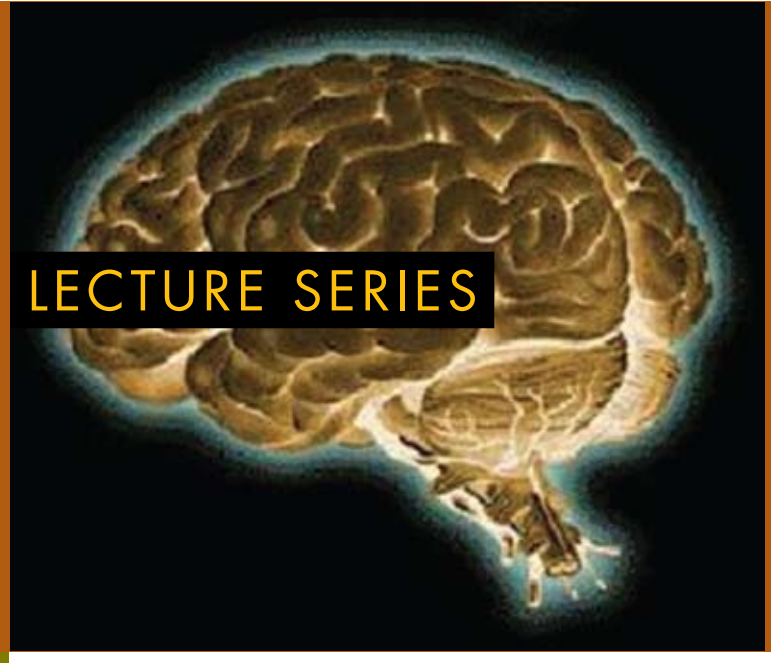
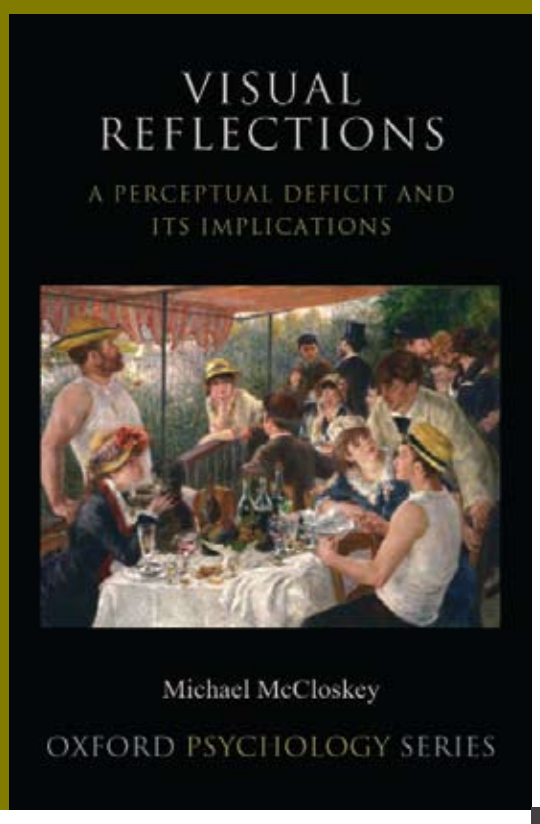
Inaugural Lecture

HOMEWOOD BRAIN AND COGNITION LECTURE SERIES



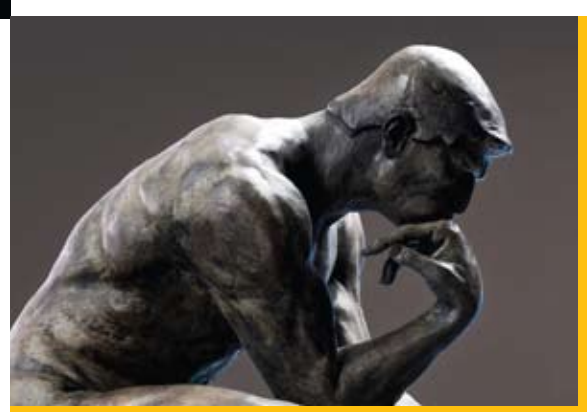
Visual Reflections: Implications of an Extraordinary Perceptual Deficit

Professor Michael McCloskey
Department of Cognitive Science
Johns Hopkins University



THURSDAY MAY 14, 2009 4 P.M.

210 Hodson Hall
The Johns Hopkins University
Homewood Campus
3400 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD



When the brain is damaged or fails to develop normally, basic perceptual and cognitive abilities may malfunction. The resulting deficits, although unfortunate or even tragic for those who suffer from them, offer unique windows into the structure and functioning of the normal mind. In this talk I discuss an extensive study of a JHU undergraduate alumna, AH, who has a remarkable deficit in visual perception. When AH looks at an object, she sees it clearly and identifies it readily; yet she is often dramatically mistaken about where the object is or how it is oriented. For example, she may reach out to grasp on object that she sees on her left, only to miss it completely because it is actually on her right; or she may see an arrow pointing up when it is really pointing down. Despite her perceptual impairment, AH functions surprisingly well in daily and professional life, in part because of sophisticated adaptations to the impairment. I suggest that results from the study of AH support a number of interesting conclusions about how we perceive the world. In particular, I develop conclusions about how the brain codes the locations and orientations of objects, how the brain's visual system is organized, and what levels of the system contribute to conscious awareness.

JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY

Sponsored by
Department of Cognitive Science
Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences
Mind Brain Institute
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Reception immediately following

Please respond by May 10 to
rsvp@cogsci.jhu.edu