Religion and Cognitive Science: From Conflict to Connection
GTU/UCB Conference, held at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, CA
January 16-18, 2008

This conference brings together scholars from theology, religious studies, psychology, neuroscience, and many other disciplines to discuss the interaction of religion and cognitive science. Building on three years of collaborative dialogues between GTU and UCB faculty and students, this gathering will include focused discussions of mind-body philosophy, psychosocial dynamics, contemplative practice, and caregiving in pastoral and clinical settings, along with critically-informed methodological approaches to new research.

The conference is free and open to the public.

Wednesday, January 16

1 pm Introductions
1:15 Eugene Taylor (Saybrook Graduate School): “‘Come Hither and be Measured’: On the Problematic Relation Between Cognitive Science and Spiritual Experience from a Jamesean Perspective”
2:15 Break
Intentionality in Mind, Brain, and World
2:30 Howard Fields (UCSF): “Origins of Pleasure and Pain”
4:00 Break
4:15 Walter Freeman (UCB) and Eraldo Cacchione (GTU): “Intentionality and Neurodynamics: Two Key Concepts to Understand Better the Relations Between Brain, Body, World, and Mind”
5:00 Panel discussion
5:30 End

Thursday, January 17

9:15 Introductions
Methods in Religion and Cognitive Science
10:10 Eve Sweetser (UCB): “Cognitive Linguistics and Sacred Texts”
10:50 Kelly Bulkeley (GTU): “What’s in a Name?”
11:15 Panel discussion
12:00 Lunch
Coping and Coherence: Psychosocial Dimensions of Religious and Spiritual Experience
1:15 David Gortner (GTU) moderated panel: Susan Folkman (UCSF); Doug Oman (UCB); Jeffrey Baerwald (SCU)
3:15 Break
Consciousness and Contemplative Practices
3:45 Kelly Bulkeley moderated panel: Richard Payne (GTU); Tracey Kahan (SCU); Eleanor Rosch (UCB)
5:30 End

Friday, January 18

9:15 Introductions
From Trauma and Distortion to Forgiveness and Healing
9:30 Christine Skarda (formerly UCB): “ Perception’s Illusion: The Origin of Suffering”
10:00 Jim Emerson (formerly GTU): “Realized Forgiveness: Prelude to Sound Cognitive Research”
10:30 Mark Graves (GTU) moderated panel: Jim Emerson; Christine Skarda; Emily Lyon (GTU); Mary Walsh (GTU); Alejandro Garcia-Rivera (GTU)
11:30 Break
11:45 Closing discussion
12:30 End

GTU = Graduate Theological Union
UCB = University of California, Berkeley
UCSF = University of California, San Francisco
SCU = Santa Clara University

Room for all the talks will be the “Refectory” (dining area), unless otherwise posted. (Note: change of location.)
Directions at: http://www.cdsp.edu/about_contact.php#directions
Map at: http://www.gtu.edu/about/gtu-at-a-glance/campus-map (The talks are on the main floor of building #8, named Parsons, on the map)

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