

Newsletter

european society for cognitive psychology

Number 1, January 1986

Haren, January 13, 1986.

Dear Colleagues,

Though the plan had been to get in touch with you much earlier it turned out to be a case of "the best laid schemes o' mice and men"! It does, however, give us the opportunity of beginning our first Newsletter by not only extending our best wishes for 1986 to you personally, but also to the European Society for Cognitive Psychology which officially came into being in November 1985.

Since we began so successfully as "the gang of five" we have decided to remain so and will share responsibilities for the running of the Society. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for the letters we received praising the organisation of the Nijmegen Conference. We also thoroughly enjoyed the meeting and though we may well have worked hard, most of the credit lies with you. The well prepared talks, enthusiastic discussion and friendly atmosphere you created made the meeting the success it was. Shall we try to continue this success? We may officially exist on paper - but without your enthusiastic cooperation we will never come alive. Read further and find out what you have to do!

Looking forward to hearing from you soon,

Janet Jackson

Janet L. Jackson
(on behalf of the Committee)

Constitution

Following the decision reached at the business meeting held during the Inaugural Conference in Berg en Dal, the European Society for Cognitive Psychology was officially established as a foundation ('stichting') under Dutch law on November 14, 1985. The following is a brief summary of the principal issues that are treated in the official 'deed of establishment'.

The object of the foundation - we are told in Article 3 of the official translation of the constitution - is "to promote the pursuit of cognitive psychology in a European context." (...) "The foundation will attempt to achieve its object by stimulating scientific education, organizing conferences, publishing and promoting the publication of scientific treatises, promoting the exchange of scientific views, collaborating with other organizations," as well as by other (legal) means.

According to Article 5, the board of the foundation will consist of at least five and no more than nine members (natural persons), for a period of four years, with a possible extension of one further term of four years. Vacancies in the board are filled by the board itself, "after hearing the advisory council about the intended appointment". As a safeguard against absolute autocracy Article 9 states that two board members must act jointly when representing the foundation officially "in legal and other matters."

An important body, the Advisory Council is described in Articles 10 and 11 of the constitution. "The foundation has an advisory council consisting of at least twelve members, who are to be appointed by the board. It shall be the duty of the advisory council to give advice to the board on request or of its own accord." As is the case with the board members, the term of office for members of the advisory council is four years, with at most one further term of four years. (In the meantime the Advisory Council has been appointed as announced below). Most important are, of course, the 'members' (or 'participants'), that is, any natural or legal person who has been registered as such by the board (Article 4). The same article specifies that "sufficient knowledge and well-grounded interest in the field of action and the activities of the foundation" are required to qualify for membership, and demands that the board specify the criteria in greater detail in the by-laws.

The 'means' of the foundation are specified in Article 13. They consist of: fees contributed by the members, subsidies, acquisitions by testamentary succession, bequests, and gifts, and other assets. The board, moreover, determines the annual fee to be contributed by the members. Of course there is also a means-ends analysis involved. Article 15 states, among other things, that "the treasurer is to draw up the annual accounts (of the preceding year) before the first day of May. The annual accounts are to be verified by the board, which is aided in this task by a chartered auditor to be appointed by the board".

The constitution further specifies what should be done when the board is divided among itself on matters of policy, and what procedure to follow when it comes to "dissolution and liquidation."

Altogether, the constitution is nothing more than an organizational bootstrap loader. That is why in Article 16 it says: "After hearing the advisory council the board draws up bylaws in which rules are provided for all matters for which the board considers rules to be necessary (and some of which are specified as 'necessary' in the constitution). The board intends to propose by-laws very soon."

Future events of the Society

As we pointed out in Nijmegen, if our Society is ever to become a flourishing enterprise, the onus for success will not lie solely on any committee but on each one of us. As members we must be prepared to be actively involved in thinking, planning and organising. In this vein, we would ask you to think about possible topics or themes for Workshops or small meetings. Although we can at present offer only moral and not any substantial financial support, we, along with members of the Advisory Board, will be pleased to consider carefully any proposals you care to send us.

Advisory Board

We are happy to announce that the following persons have agreed to serve on the Advisory Board:

T. BACHMANN	-	Tartu, Estonia, U.S.S.R.
M. DENIS	-	Orsay, France
M. EYSENCK	-	London, United Kingdom
H-G. GEISSLER	-	Leipzig, E. Germany
A. KORIAT	-	Haifa, Israel
W. LEVELT	-	Nijmegen, The Netherlands
G. LUKATELA	-	Belgrade, Yugoslavia
J. MEHLER	-	Paris, France
L-G. NILSSON	-	Umea, Sweden
K. PATTERSON	-	Cambridge, United Kingdom
E. SCHEERER	-	Oldenburg, W. Germany
M.V. SEBASTIAN	-	Madrid, Spain
A. THOMASSEN	-	Nijmegen, The Netherlands
C. UMITLA	-	Parma, Italy
G. d'YDEWALLE	-	Leuven, Belgium

Membership of the Society

As indicated in Nijmegen, all participants at the Conference automatically become members of the Society. Though we obviously need to expand beyond a membership of 50, we would like to do this gradually. As yet we have no back-up facilities and, as you can imagine, running even a small organisation already requires some money and much work. For such reasons, we would like to grow slowly. The suggestion made at Nijmegen was that each of us should propose two new members, members whom we felt were already actively involved in the broad field of cognitive psychology and would thereby increase our representation both at the subject and geographical level.

For this purpose, I enclose two membership proposal forms. Please send them to the persons of your choice with the request for them to reply as quickly as possible. In this fashion, we should have a membership of approximately 150 by the time of the meeting in September 1987 and can then review our position and make decisions about further expansion. Until such discussions take place, there will be no membership dues. If you have any problems or comments to make on the procedure, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Competition

Given the success of our table tennis competition in Nijmegen, we offer you yet another chance to try out your skills. All members are eligible to take part in this exciting competition. The prize is breathtaking - the lucky winner will be asked to write the leader article in the next issue of our Newsletter!! Get your pens ready. All you have to do is order the following statements in ascending level of 'horror' and write a 100-word summary describing your choice. (If nothing else of interest turns up, the best ten will be published!)

- A. A pub without beer.
- B. A skiing holiday without snow.
- C. A mint with no hole.
- D. A newsletter without news.

Answers should be sent to Janet Jackson, Department of Experimental Psychology, Kerklaan 30, 9751 NN Haren, The Netherlands, as soon as possible. At the same time, why don't you send any news you have about conferences, meetings, new books written by members, any exciting research grants you may have received, information about cognitive psychology in your own country, etc., etc.. All contributions gratefully accepted!

Donald E. Broadbent, Doctor Honoris Causa, Free University of Brussels (U.L.B.)

Professor D.E. Broadbent has received the insignia of Doctor Honoris Causa of the Faculty of Psychological and Pedagogical Sciences of U.L.B., the French-speaking Free University of Brussels, during a ceremony held in that University on November 19, 1985. On the following day he delivered, under the auspices of the Belgian Psychological Society, a lecture entitled: Knowledge you can report and knowledge you can't.

We would like to take this opportunity of congratulating Donald on the honour bestowed on him.

Summer School

It was our intention to organise such an event as soon as possible. As you no doubt know, however, such a course requires a lot of organisational time, particularly if we hope to secure the services of good teachers. For this reason, our first venture in the Summer School business will not take place until 1987. It will probably be held in late June/early July, possibly in Bavaria. We will keep you informed.

Bi-annual Meeting of the Society

This will take place in September 1987 either in Parma, Italy or Madrid, Spain. We are busy exploring possibilities with members from both these places and again, will keep you informed!

Philosophy of Mind

On October 6 and 7, 1986 there will be a conference on consciousness in Munich. The conference belongs to a research project of the German Research Association on the philosophy of mind. The conference as well as the whole project is designed to cut across disciplines. It will have participants from the neural sciences, from psychology, and from philosophy. There will be four main papers and from 8 to 12 commenting papers. All papers will be in the hands of the participants one month before the beginning of the conference. It is planned to have participants both from Germany and from other countries. For further information please contact Professor Peter Bieri, Universität Bielefeld, Abteilung Philosophie, Postfach 8640, D-4800 Bielefeld, W. Germany.

Workshop on Consciousness and Awareness

Philip Smith from the University of Reading has proposed organising a Workshop on 'Consciousness and Awareness'. Planning is still at a very early stage; however, it will take place in September, 1986 at some as yet unknown location! Financial arrangements are also still in the melting pot. Philip will, however, welcome all suggestions re- topics and names of those whom you feel might be interested. Either write to him at: Dept. of Psychology, University of Reading, Building 3, Early Gate, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 2AL, England, or phone him at: 09 - 44 - 734 - 875123, ext. 6271. Philip is considering a format whereby a group of approximately twenty more 'senior' scholars will be expected to do most of the work and another thirty more 'junior' faculty members will make up the audience; he found the grey beards at Nijmegen a bit overpowering!!

Workshop on Structural Organisation

A further Workshop is at the early planning stage. This will probably take place in The Netherlands in late 1986 or early 1987. More information will appear in the next Newsletter.

People and Computers: Designing for Usability University of York, September 23-26, 1986.

Papers are solicited in any area of HCI research and design, for example:

- Practical experience of user centred design
- User interface evaluation
- IT in the high street
- User modelling
- Task analysis
- Interface tools and techniques
- Formal methods
- Systems for the handicapped.

For further information contact:
HCI'86 Conference Department
The British Computer Society
13 Mansfield Street
London, W1M 0BP - UK
Phone: 01-637-0471

Conference on Science and Music
City University, London, UK, 17-18 April, 1986.

Topics will include:

- Psychology
- Psycho-acoustics
- Acoustics
- Music Therapy
- Music and Society

The cost of the meeting will be approximately £18-£20 inclusive of meals. Reasonably priced accommodation is available at the University on request. Further information may be obtained from the organiser, Dr. Eric Clarke, Department of Music, The City University, Northampton Square, London EC1, England. Phone: 01-253-4399, ext. 3265.

Next Newsletter

This one has been rather short without too many interesting items to catch your attention. Let's try to make the next one more interesting and entertaining. Hoping to hear from you soon!

JJ/AvR