

# Origins of Mind: Philosophical Issues in Cognitive Development

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## The Challenge

Explain how humans come to know about objects, causes, words, numbers, colours, actions and minds.

## What will I learn about?

Recent scientific breakthroughs about the emergence of minds in development, and the philosophical issues arising from these.

Also issues like innateness, modularity and pre-linguistic cognition.

## How is it organised?

The course will be organised around domains of knowledge. Some the topics to be covered may include:

1. Social Interaction without Words
2. Objects and How They Interact
3. Numbers
4. Seeing and Talking about Colours

5. Words and Other Communicative Tools
6. Actions: Teleology and Motor Awareness
7. Mindreading

## Do I have to know something about science?

No but you will learn to read scientific papers papers, and consume quite a bit of developmental psychology. You will also learn to integrate philosophy with psychology.

## Is there a web page?

<http://origins-of-mind.butterfill.com>

Currently this page contains materials from an earlier version of the module. I will update it as the module progresses.

## Can you suggest some reading?

There's a list on the back of this handout.

## Reading Suggestions by Topic

These are some of the topics which may be covered in the module.

## 1. Social Interaction without Words

Could social interaction enable cognitive development?<sup>19,18,8,2,16,25</sup>

## 2. Objects and How They Interact

When can infants first know things about objects they aren't perceiving?<sup>17,1,11</sup>

## 3. Numbers

How might abilities based on core knowledge enable the emergence in development of knowledge proper?<sup>28,27,10,6</sup>

## 4. Seeing and Talking about Colours

How do children acquire colour concepts and colour words—concepts and words for red, blue and green, say?<sup>23,12,13</sup>

## 5. Words and Other Communicative Tools

What comes first in development, knowledge or language?<sup>26,4,22,14</sup>

## 6. Actions: Teleology and Motor Awareness

Which events do infants take to be actions? And how do they understand the relation be-

tween actions and the goals to which they are directed?<sup>5,7,21,3</sup>

## 7. Mindreading

What is involved in representing belief?<sup>20,24,15,9</sup>

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