

Department of Philosophy

2010 Lecture Series

The AIR Theory of Consciousness

Dr. Jesse Prinz

City University of New York Graduate Center

Thursday, October 21, 2010

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Room: RB 130

A theory of consciousness needs to specify which of our mental states can be conscious and how they become conscious. In this talk, I propose an answer to these questions based on evidence from psychology and neuroscience. I argue that only those perceptual states that present the world from a particular perspective can be conscious, and these states become conscious when and only when we attend. I then offer an account of the neural correlates of attention, and indicate how these correlates can shed light on such things as the unity of consciousness and the experience of time. I compare this theory to some other accounts of consciousness and argue that it has advantages.