

*Language & Cognition,
University Seminar #681*

Meeting of April 17, 2008

“Building a percept in the brain:
How learned vocalizations are coded by auditory neurons
in songbirds”

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Songbirds, like humans, must learn to produce and recognize their complex communication vocalizations. The songbird is therefore a useful model system in which to ask how the brain creates a socially meaningful percept from sound, and the role of learning/experience in that process. Recent work on the songbird auditory system suggests that auditory neurons code complex, learned vocalizations differently from other sounds and that developmental experience shapes the responses of single neurons to vocalizations. This work suggests that auditory systems are evolutionarily designed to code communication sounds specially and that fully understanding how sensory neurons behave requires the use of natural stimuli.

Place: **Room 1510**, Kellogg Center
School of International and Public Affairs
420 West 118th Street

Time: 4:00 PM

For directions to the School of International and Public Affairs, please refer to the map which can be found at this URL:

http://www.columbia.edu/about_columbia/map/international_affairs.html

RSVP: If you will attend the meeting on April 17, please send a note to:

Sara Maria Hasbun, rapporteur
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If you will join Dr. Woolley for dinner at the Faculty House after the meeting, please indicate this in your note to Ms. Hasbun.