

## An introduction to the philosophy of time perception

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### An introduction to the philosophy of time perception

**Speaker:**

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**Abstract:**

The aim of this talk is to offer a critical overview of the major topics of debate in the philosophy of time perception, by underlining the overlap between psychology and metaphysics in answering questions about our perceptual experience of temporal phenomena. Firstly, I will focus on the notion of duration, by discussing the mechanisms that allow us to infer metric information (that is, information about the duration of a given event) from tensed information (information about how far the event is located in the past). To this end, I will contrast the so-called strength model with the inferential one (Friedman 1990) and I will discuss the objections usually raised against them. Secondly, I will present the recent literature on the perception of temporal precedence and its role in explaining the perception of movement. One prominent idea, due to Mellor (1998), is that we perceive, say, the event *e* precede the event *e'* in virtue of a causal relation between our perception of *e* and our perception of *e'*. Crucially, in Mellor's view the cognitive mechanism that allows to perceive a temporal order of events is entirely insensitive to the content of perceptions. In offering an intriguing explanation of the phenomenon called 'backwards referral in time', Dennett (1991) goes in a different direction, by arguing that the perception of time-order is never independent of what the perceptions are of. Finally, I will spend some words on the relation between causal asymmetry and the experience of temporal asymmetry. It is tempting to say that the latter is somehow explained by the former. But what if causation is symmetric, as postulated in some fields of contemporary physics (Faye 2018)? Huw Price's (1996) causal perspectivalism explores the fascinating idea that causal asymmetry is (at least, in part) a mind-dependent phenomenon. As such, it should be explained by appealing to the features of our cognitive system

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