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The future of the cognitive revolution

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Abstrak

The chapters in this volume are related to the conference, Reassessing the Cognitive Revolution, that was held at the Glendon campus of York University, Toronto, in October of 1993. The original idea for the conference came from a debate on this subject between Jerome Bruner and Stuart Shanker, which appeared in the pages of the journal Language and Communication. As Johnson explains in more detail at the end of his Introduction, roughly half the chapters included here (the introduction itself, and the contributions of Shanker, Boden, Feldman, Pascual- Leone, Ross, Bialystok, Agassi, Bechtel, Segalowitz and Bernstein, Neisser, Reed, Bruner, Coulter, and Stenlund) are revised versions of either principal papers or of commentaries presented at that conference. The other half (Chomsky's two contributions, and those of Putnam, Green and Vervaeke, Clark, van Gelder, Shotter, Harre, Donald, Johnson, and Erneling's Afterword) were written later and were solicited especially for this volume. We consistently tried to choose papers that would represent the very wide variety of issues, methods and standpoints present in cognitive science today. Accordingly, we have organized the chapters of the book in a thematic style that reflects not just the particular topics that happened to be discussed at the conference but also the more general situation of cognitive science today. More precisely, our guiding editorial idea has been first to summarize what seemed to us the most serious problems that the relatively new discipline of cognitive science faces at the present moment. Then, in the light of these difficulties, we posed the question of what were the main alternative directions its recent practitioners propose for this interdisciplinary field in the future. Because we intended the book to be accessible to as wide and interdisciplinary an audience as possible, we repeatedly encouraged authors to write in as clear and simple a way as they were able, consistent with considerations of accuracy, truth, and completeness. We also made various minor editorial changes to ensure a still greater degree of uniformity in style and accessibility.