The University of Hong Kong
Department of Psychology

Departmental Seminar

Childhood development of face recognition: Recent evidence suggests early maturity face-specific processing

Date: Jun 10, 2013 (Monday)
Time: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Venue: Room 8.13, 8/F The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU

Speaker: Dr. Kate Crookes
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Performance on laboratory face recognition tasks improves across childhood not reaching adult levels until adolescence. Historically it was believed that the source of this improvement was qualitative change in face processing mechanisms resulting from extended experience with faces. However more recent studies have established that all the hallmarks of adult-like face processing are qualitatively present by the age of 3-4 years. I will present evidence that face-specific processing mechanisms are not only qualitative but also quantitative mature in young children and that the improvement seen on face recognition tasks instead results from general cognitive/perceptual development. These results argue that the role of experience in the development of expert face processing may have been overestimated.