



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

*Innateness
and the Structure of the Mind*



Innateness and the Structure of the Mind

The AHRC Innateness and the Structure of the Mind project (2001-2004) was a major three-year interdisciplinary project based in the Philosophy Department at the University of Sheffield. The project was funded primarily through a major research grant of £310,000 from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (to the Project Director, Stephen Laurence).

The project brought together top scholars in a broad range of disciplines - including animal psychology, anthropology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, economics, linguistics and psycholinguistics, neuroscience, and philosophy - to investigate the current status and most promising future directions of nativist research.

By bringing together many of the top researchers in philosophy and cognitive science to investigate basic philosophical questions and issues surrounding the doctrine of nativism, the project's aims were:

- To undertake a comprehensive assessment of where nativist theorising now stands, and determine what directions future research should take.
- To foster cross-disciplinary interaction aimed at achieving a synthesis of distinct strands of nativist thinking.
- To produce a series of three volumes which present a comprehensive overview of contemporary nativist thought and provide the definitive reference point for future nativist enquiry.

[Related project: AHRC Culture and the Mind](#)

Research questions

The project was centred around three sets of research questions, which we tackled in successive years.

- Year one: The structure of the innate mind
- Year two: Culture and the innate mind
- Year three: Foundations and the future

Conferences

Three major international conferences were held in 2002, 2003 and 2004. All conferences were open to anyone wishing to attend, and [volumes of papers](#) from the conferences are now being published.

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