

CENTER FOR COGNITIVE SCIENCE

Colloquia Fall 2000

University at Buffalo, State University of New York

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

280 Park Hall

North Campus

2:00 pm –3:30 pm

***“The Multidisciplinary Concept of the ‘Cognitive Map’:
Empirical and Theoretical Arguments for and Against It,
and Why the Fors Win”***

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Introduction by David M. Mark, Ph.D., Professor, Dept. of Geography, UB

In its most general form, the concept of the "cognitive map" refers to internal representations of the world stored in the mind. The concept's precise meaning, however, has varied across disciplines and research areas. Several researchers have even suggested that cognitive maps do not exist, or that they are unnecessary to explain behavior. In this talk, I consider the history and multiple meanings of the concept of cognitive maps. Various debates about its usefulness are considered, including some versions I will propose are red herrings. Some arguments reflect misunderstandings, incorrect statements, or ideas that are limited by disciplinary constraints. The latter includes some methodological limitations of doing research with nonhuman animals. I will offer conceptual and empirical reasons why the cognitive-map concept is necessary and useful as an explanatory tool.

**Refreshments will be available
Everyone is welcome to attend!**

For information please call the Cognitive Science Office at (716) 645-3794 or check
<http://www.cogsci.buffalo.edu/>