
Editors' Note

Human beings like to think of themselves as rational, thinking creatures capable of determining the objective reality of the world around them. It is the premise on which much of scientific inquiry is based. But the truth is, we live in a world where the version of “reality” we perceive has been highly processed by our senses. Sensory systems are far from simple—the visual system does not simply transfer information to the brain the way a camera might capture images on a screen, nor does the auditory system simply pass on recordings of sound. Our senses are not merely circuits for transmitting information but intricate filters that color everything we experience from the taste of a gourmet meal to the delicate scent of a flower.

Inside this semester’s issue of *The Harvard Science Review*, readers will find a wide range of topics dealing with sensory perception. While most readers will be able to name the “Five Senses” of touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell, recent research suggests that we are capable of extracting even more nuanced information from

the world around us. As the issue delves into *The Science of the Senses*, readers will come to recognize not only how their known senses work, but also how they may not have been aware of new senses scientists are only just discovering.

Our writers have covered a fascinating array of topics, from how the senses normally work, to how they can be tricked, to how they can malfunction. By understanding human sensations, scientists can better understand not only how human beings interact with the world, but how those sensory mechanisms can be harnessed by technologies of the future. We are especially honored to include in this issue an original article on color perception written by Harvard Professor and Nobel Laureate Dr. David Hubel.

We often take the elegant simplicity of our own senses for granted. Yet, as our readers peruse this issue, we hope they will find themselves amazed by the interactions that allow us to perceive something as seemingly simple as the color red or the sweet taste of sugar. Thank you for reading *The Harvard Science Review*, bon appetit! ■

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Editors in Chief