

**NOON TIME
BOOK DISCUSSION
WITH DR. TOM LEITCH**

Thinking about Thinking



**12:00— 2:00 p.m.
P.S. DuPont Room**

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Everybody's an expert in thinking—after all, we've done it all our lives. Recent research in psychology, anthropology, and economics, however, suggests that even the simplest thought processes are considerably more complicated than we may have assumed. Certainly we have more than one way of thinking; a good deal of our thinking proceeds from trial and error; a good deal more is more or less unconsciously outsourced, depending not so much on our own new ideas as on the old ideas borrow from other people; and we're constantly bombarded with new things to think about and new ways to think about them.

If thinking really is a lifelong adventure, it's characterized by many of the qualities of other adventures: complications, missteps, new experiences, and suspenseful moments when we're far from certain that we know what we're doing. Since no one should undertake such an adventure alone, we hope you'll join us at noon four Mondays this fall in a reading and discussion group that will consider some of the many different ways of thinking about thinking in the hope of developing better ways to understand thought processes of other people, and perhaps even sharpen our own.

11 Sept.

Steven Sloman and Philip Fernbach,

The Knowledge Illusion: Why We Never Think Alone

We commonly pride ourselves on knowing more than our friends, more than our parents, and certainly more than our distant ancestors. But Sloman and Fernbach advance the provocative claim that our habit of relegating the search for knowledge to authorities whom we trust without reservation means that we may actually know less than prehistoric cave dwellers.

2 Oct.

Kathryn Schulz, *Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error*

Afraid that making a mistake will lose the respect of others and diminish you as a person? Schulz takes the position that experimental science has held since its beginnings: we learn much more about the world and about ourselves from being wrong than from being right.

23 Oct.

Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*

Seeing the human animal as inherently irrational, Nobel economist Kahneman posits two very different systems we have developed for reacting to the world—the kind of fast thinking represented by instinctual reactions and the slow thinking represented by logic and reflection—and explores how the relations between them shape our lives and our sense of ourselves.

6 Nov.

Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Think Like a Freak*

The authors of *Freakanomics* are at it again, applying mathematical models first developed by and for economists to examine a wide range of problems apparently remote from economics and urging us all to do the same.