Editorial for the Special Issue

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One may notice that the final title of this issue “special issue on change blindness” is different from its title at the time of call for papers “special issue on change blindness and visual short-term memory”. This change has to do with how this special issue project first came about. In May 2007, I invited Ronald Rensink to be a speaker of plenary talk at the annual conference of the Japanese Cognitive Psychology Society, and organized a symposium featuring young researchers working on change blindness. Ron and I were quite impressed by their work, and wondered if they could be published. Around that time, I was asked to organize a special issue from the editor of Psychologia, and I took advantage of this opportunity. Although the call for papers announced a broader perspective including visual short-term memory, the majority of submitted papers were on change blindness, probably due to the announcement of featuring Ron’s invited article on change blindness, which forced me to drop the term visual short-term memory from the title. I should emphasize that this issue is not simply collected papers of the symposium. All submissions are reviewed with equal standard, except for Ron’s invited paper. The issue ended up with a mixture of papers from symposium participants and other general submissions.

It has been a decade since a seminal paper on change blindness was published: Rensink, O’Regan & Clark (1997). Change blindness attracted researchers’ attention to issues on the nature of visual attention, consciousness, visual memory, and scene perception. Since then, there has been great progress in our understanding of the mechanisms involved, and at the same time, various new directions, including individual variability, cultural differences, roles of social context, effects of emotion, effects of training and expertise, etc., have emerged. This special issue aims at publishing a collection of papers reflecting new directions of research on change blindness. An invited article by Ronald Rensink titled “On the Applications of Change Blindness” (2008) reviews a decade of change blindness research, and discusses future directions in the next decade. This invited article from the pioneer is a nice roadmap of this research field in the near future. Following Ron’s article, this issue features four regular articles on various new directions of this field: expertise, individual difference, social context, and relation between perception and intention. Personally, I am happy with the fact that all the regular articles are contributions from young researchers who will build the future of this field. Finally, I thank all the contributors on this issue. In particular, I greatly appreciate Ronald Rensink, who kindly accepted my request for contributing an invited article, and helped me in various aspects of this project.

REFERENCES

Rensink, R. A., O’Regan, J. K., & Clark, J. J. 1997. To see or not to see: The need for attention to perceive change in scenes. Psychological Science, 8, 368–373.