

FROM TRACKING RELATIONS TO PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDES ADAM MORTON

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ABSTRACT

I explore the possibility that propositional attitudes are not basic in folk psychology, and that what we really ascribe to people are relations to individuals, those that the apparently propositional contents of beliefs, desires, and other states concern. In particular, the relation between a state and the individuals that it tracks shows how ascription of propositional attitudes could grow out of ascription of relations between people and objects.

Key words: propositional attitudes, psychological relations, content

FOLK PSYCHOLOGY IS NOT A METAREPRESENTATIONAL DEVICE

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ABSTRACT

Here I challenge the philosophical consensus that we use folk psychology for the purposes of metarepresentation. The paper intends to show that folk psychology should not be conceived on par with fact-stating discourses in spite of what its surface semantics may suggest. I argue that folk-psychological discourse is organised in a way and has conceptual characteristics such that it cannot fulfill a fact-stating function. To support this claim I develop an open question argument for psychological interpretations, and I draw attention to the central role of rationality, the conceptual connections, and the essential evaluative content inherent in folk psychological ascriptions. As a conclusion I propose that a fictionalist account of the discourse would fit its characteristics better than a factualist-realist interpretation.

Key words: folk psychology, mental fictionalism, rationality, metarepresentation

NOT EVERY FEELING IS INTENTIONAL

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ABSTRACT

The most promising representationalist account of sensations and occurrent emotions is the 'impure' version of representationalism, which analyses the structure of an intentional state as consisting of an intentional content and a psychological mode. However, a critique of representationalism could question the analogy between propositional attitudes and sensory modes. Propositional attitudes cannot be exemplified without an object; but the same is far from clear in the case of sensory modes. In order to have a plausible account of non-intentional emotions and sensations, we need to conceive these mere feelings as playing certain characteristic functional roles. What makes this account possible is the observation that having a certain functional role does not entail that the state is intentional.

Key words: representationalism, intentional content, bodily sensations, non-intentional mental states

THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE DISJUNCTIVE THEORY OF PERCEPTION

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According to the phenomenological argument for disjunctivism, the reasons why we should prefer the disjunctive theory over its rivals is that (1) the disjunctive theory conforms the most to our pretheoretical or natural convictions about perception (what Michael Martin calls naïve realism), and (2) we should commit ourselves to naïve realism because it conforms the most to the phenomenology of the perceptual experience of objects. In this paper I try to explain why is the phenomenal argument exceptionally strong argument for disjunctivism and at the same time against sense-datum and intentional theories. Furthermore I try to show that the disjunctivist's explanation of hallucination (which is allegedly the weak point of the theory) is as plausible as its rivals'.

Key words: perceptual experience, sense-datum theory, intentional/representational theory, disjunctivism, transparency, perceptual presence.

UNDERSTANDING HOW EXPERIENCE “SEEMS”

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I argue against one way of understanding the claim that how one's visual experience “*seems*” provides support for the naïve-realist theory and weighs against sense-data theories (and other theories). If my argument is correct, and we abandon this way of understanding how experience “seems”, we would lose one reason for favouring naïve-realism at the start of the dialectic of the traditional problem of perception. En route, I distinguish different ways of understanding the (alleged) transparency of experience, consider how to make sense of rival theorists' disagreement over the manifest nature of visual phenomenology and recount a story about Wittgenstein.

Key words: visual experience, phenomenology, Tim Crane, M. G. F. Martin, transparency, naïve realism, sense-data, intentionalism, Wittgenstein, introspection, consciousness, attention

WHY PHENOMENAL CONTENT IS NOT INTENTIONAL

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I argue that the idea that mental states possess a primitive intentionality in virtue of which they are able to represent or ‘intend’ putative particulars derives largely from Brentano's misinterpretation of Aristotle and the scholastics, and that without this howler the application of intentionality to phenomenal content would never have gained currency.

Key words: intentionality; perception; phenomenal content; sensation