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Folk Psychology, Mental Concepts and the Ascription of Attitudes On Contemporary Philosophy of Mind

CONTENTS

ON CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE,
ONTOLOGY AND MORAL THEORY

ALVIN I. GOLDMAN

Folk Psychology and Mental Concepts

Abstract
There are several different questions associated with the study of folk psychology: (1) what is the nature of our commonsense concepts of mental states?, (2) how do we attribute mental states, to ourselves and to other people?, and (3) how do we acquire our concepts and skills at mental-state attribution?
Three general approaches to these questions are examined and assessed: theory theory, simulation theory, and rationality theory. A preliminary problem is to define each of these approaches. Alternative definitions are explored, centering on which questions each approach tries to answer and how it answers them. For example, simulation theorists substantially agree on the answer to question (2) but not on the answer to question (1). The paper then turns to some serious problems facing both rationality theory and theory theory.
Rationality theory is faulted for its inadequate treatment of question (1) and for its implausible answers to question (2). Theory theory is faulted for the problems it encounters in explaining first-person attribution, and for its treatment of attributed reasoning about change (the "frame problem"). Turning to simulation theory, the paper argues against Gordon's "ascent routine" account of first-person attribution and in favor of an inner detection account. Finally, the paper addresses the question of the contents of our mental-state concepts. How do these concepts incorporate both behavioral features and inner features? A dual-representation hypothesis is advanced, and linked speculatively to mirror neurons.

I

By "folk psychology" I mean the commonsense understanding and deployment of mentalistic concepts, especially the propositional attitudes. Three (or four) principal questions are of interest in the study of folk psychology: (Q1) How do ordinary people understand, or represent to themselves, the various mental states? That is, what are the contents of their *concepts* of the mental states? (Q2) How do they go about *attributing* these states? This question decomposes into two subquestions: (Q2)(A) how do people attribute such states to others, and (Q2)(B) how do they attribute such states to themselves? (3) How do people *acquire* their concepts of mental states and their skill at applying these concepts? The study of folk psychology is the attempt to

PHILIP PETTIT

How the Folk Understand Folk Psychology

Abstract
Let folk psychology consist in the network of concepts, and associated beliefs, in terms of which we make sense of minded performance.
This paper addresses the question of how we, the folk, come to understand those concepts: this, as distinct from the separate question as to how we come to apply them in the interpretation of particular minds, our own and those of others.
The argument is that even though the network of concepts is akin to a set of theoretical, interdefined terms, still it is possible to explain how we, the folk, understand them without suggesting that we are proto-scientists. The understanding required can be based on a sort of know-how: that is, a practical, untheoretical, form of knowledge.

1. Background

According to analytical functionalism, each type of intentional state is identified by its entry and exit conditions – by the conditions that trigger its appearance and disappearance in the normal subject – and by the way it connects with other states in generating further states and in leading to action. Thus the belief that p is characterised by its role in being sensitive to perceptual evidence for or against p, at least under normal conditions, and in connecting with other beliefs and desires to produce further results: in connecting, say, with the belief that if p then q to generate the further belief that q. According to analytical functionalism what makes a state an instance of believing that p is precisely that it plays that sort of role.[1]

Even if we reject analytical functionalism as a complete account of intentional states, it is plausible that it catches part of the truth about such states. For whatever else is needed to make a state a case of believing that p, it must typically display the sort of profile invoked by functionalists. Why should we think of a state-type as an instance of believing that p, unless in normal circumstances – under some plausible specification of what these are (Pettit forthcoming) – the normal subject would enter the state in face of perceptual

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1   The belief might also be taken, though I think less plausibly, as the role-state rather than the realiser-state (see Jackson 1998; Jackson and Pettit 1988).

JANE HEAL

Understanding Other Minds from the Inside

Abstract
We find it natural to say that creatures with minds can (sometimes at least) be understood 'from the inside'. The paper explores what could be meant by this attractive but, on reflection, somewhat mysterious idea. It suggests that it may find a hospitable placement, which makes its content and appeal clearer, in one version of the so-called 'simulation theory' approach to grasp of psychological concepts. Simulation theory suggests that ability to use imagination in rethinking others' thoughts and in recreating their trains of reasoning is central to our grasp and use of psychological concepts.
On this view to think of another's mind is not to think of some intricate quasi-mechanical assemblage of items in the other's head which causally explain her behavior. If this is all that the 'inside' of another person, i.e. her mind, were like, then there would be no question of anything being 'from' it. The simulation view, however, emphasizes that thoughts essentially have content and that identifying another's thought, and working out its possible effects, involves identifying its content and oneself entertaining thoughts with the same content.
So, on this approach, to think of another's mind is to think of a complex but rationally unified set of thoughts, a set which is conceived as had by one subject but where the contents and relations can be grasped and appreciated by another. Some of these thoughts will be indexical and the whole can thus be said to constitute the subject's point of view on the world, both literally and metaphorically. Grasping this point of view is, the paper suggests, what is meant by speaking of 'understanding from the inside'.

Can we understand other minds 'from the inside'? What would this mean? There is an attraction which many have felt in the idea that creatures with minds, people (and perhaps animals) invite a kind of understanding which inanimate objects such as rocks, plants and machines do not invite and that it is appropriate to seek to understand them 'from the inside'. What I hope to do in this paper is to introduce and defend one version of the so-called 'simulation' approach to our grasp and use of psychological concepts, a version which gives central importance to the idea of shared rationality, and in so doing to

CHRISTOPHER S. HILL

From Assertion to Belief:
The Role of Linguistic Data in the Practice of Belief-Ascription[1]

Abstract
This paper is concerned with the question of how we arrive at knowledge of the propositional attitudes of other agents. I describe a number of methods, but focus on the method that involves arriving at conclusions about the beliefs of others from information about their assertions and acts of assent. I attempt to give a reasonably full characterization of this method.
Among other things, I maintain that when it is properly understood, the method is seen to be altogether independent of simulation. Thus, one conclusion of the paper is that simulation is not in any sense a universal method. At best, it is a method that we use in a highly restricted range of situations. Another conclusion is that there are features of the method of inference from assertion and assent that tend to provide support for the theory-theory – that is, for the view that our ascriptive practice involves the implicit use of a body of principles that resembles a scientific theory.

Section I: Introduction

I will be concerned in these pages with one of the main methods that we use in arriving at beliefs about the psychological states of other human beings. Specifically, I will be concerned with the *method of linguistic inference* – that is, with the method of inferring psychological states from linguistic behavior. This method is important for four reasons. First, it appears to be highly reliable. There is, it seems, no better guide to the internal states of others than the descriptions that are provided by their possessors. Second, MLI is extremely powerful, in the sense that it gives us access to psychological states that no other method can reveal. Consider, for example, the belief that Fermat's Last Theorem is true. Apart from MLI, it appears that we have no method of determining whether other agents have this particular belief. Third, the scope of the method is extremely broad. It enables us to arrive at beliefs about prop-

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David M. Rosenthal

Content, Interpretation, and Consciousness

Abstract
According to Dennett, the facts about consciousness are wholly fixed by the effects consciousness has on other things. But if a mental state's being conscious consists in one's having a higher-order thought about that state, we will in principle have an independent way to fix those facts. Dennett also holds that our speech acts sometimes determine what our thoughts are, since speech acts often outrun in content the thoughts they express.

I argue that what thoughts we have is independent of how we express them in speech, and that this is consonant with speech acts' often seeming to have more fine grained content than the thoughts they express. This model has the advantage, compared with Dennett's, of accommodating our folk-psychological taxonomy of intentional states and preserving the traditional idea that speech acts express antecedent intentional states. Speech acts doubtless do sometimes have richer content than the thoughts they express, though sometimes verbally expressing a thought simply makes us conscious in a more fine-grained way of what that content is.

On the higher-order-thought model, as on Dennett's, a mental state's being conscious is, in effect, our spontaneously interpreting ourselves as being in that state. But such spontaneous self-interpretation need not be the last word on what content our thoughts have. Even though the content of speech acts sometimes outrun that of the thoughts they express, we can explain why the two seem always to be exactly the same. Even when a speech act is richer in content than the thought it expresses, the well-entrenched pragmatic equivalence between saying something and saying that one thinks that thing ensures that one will be conscious of one's thought as having the richer content of the speech act that expresses it. We are conscious of our thoughts as having the content that our speech acts would capture.

I. First-Person Operationalism and Higher-Order Thoughts

We are all familiar with situations in which memory distorts some current experience. I may see a person I don't know at all, but my memory of an old friend causes me to misperceive that person as my friend; the conscious experience that results is of seeing the friend. Perhaps, for example, my friend wears glasses and the person now before me doesn't. Although I see a person with-

Jay L. Garfield

Thought as Language: A Metaphor Too Far

Abstract
Language has often served both as a metaphor for thought. It is highly plausible that language serves as an epistemic entre into thought and that language structures adult human thought to a considerable degree. The language metaphor is, however, uncritically extended as a literal model of thought.
This paper criticizes this extension, arguing that thought is not literally implemented in language and distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate uses of language as a device for understanding thought.

> How does the philosophical problem about mental processes and states and about behaviourism arise? – The first step is the one that altogether escapes notice. We talk about processes and states and leave their nature undecided. Sometime, perhaps, we shall know more about them – we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to learn to know a process better. (The decisive move in the conjuring trick has been made, and it was the very one that we thought quite innocent.) – And now the analogy which was to make us understand our thoughts falls to pieces. So we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the unexplored medium. And now it looks as if we had denied mental processes. And naturally we don't want to deny them. (Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations)
> Yet maybe there are patterns we can detect in the motion of the sand, eddies and flows within its ceaseless flux and ebb. Not skeletons or truth, but feelings, encoded bumps and ridges that might make letters, then a word, then a sentence or maybe more, a secret Braille of touch and faith. A quiet urgency of form. Or they might be no more than they seem. (James Bradley, Wrack, p 9)

1. Introduction: Origins, Motivations and some Puzzles

I have been arguing for years that the intentionality of language is conceptually and epistemically prior to that of thought and that propositional attitudes can only be understood on the analogy of overt utterances. I don't wish to retract any of that now, but I must confess that this commitment has led to my having awakened at times to find strange bedfellows. Depending on their other

Robert M. Gordon

Sellars's Ryleans Revisited

Abstract

It is often said that the simulation vs. theory debate must be resolved empirically. But part of the needed empirical work, perhaps the decisive part, is "armchair" testing against philosophical touchstones such as intentionality, opacity, and Moore's paradox. I will assay Sellars' myth of "our Rylean ancestors," frequently cited as the prototypical "theory" theory.

Sellars' laudable aim was to show how "privileged access" could be preserved without making first person ascriptions of mental predicates incorrigible or dependent on "immediate experience." He attempted this by portraying these ascriptions as essentially theoretical: We are so conditioned that, when situational and behavioral evidence indicates certain theoretical states and episodes, we make the corresponding self-ascriptions, without having to consider the evidence.

Sellars' approach fails, however, because self-reports are actually coordinated only with verbal behavior – typically, the outward-looking "expression" of a state in the non-mental 'Rylean' language. (Such coordination is illustrated, in the case of belief ascription, by Moore's paradox, and more generally, by what I call "ascent routines.") Thus our self-reports could not be a product of theory-based training – nor directly theory-based, as some psychologists suggest.

Given this coordination, the only way to achieve Sellars' aim – without sacrificing nivocality – is to suppose ascriptions to others to be "third person self-ascriptions" based on the other's situation and behavior, as the simulation theory maintains. Sensitive to nonverbal as well as verbal behavior, they prevail over first person ascriptions. This leads to a certain conception of people: peepholes through which the world reappears, possibly transformed.

Wilfrid Sellars's essay, "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind,"[1] introduced, although it did not exactly endorse, what many philosophers consider the first defense of functionalism in the philosophy of mind and the original

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[1] In *The Foundations of Science and the Concepts of Psychoanalysis, Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. I, ed. by H. Feigl and M. Scriven (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956), pp. 253-329. Reprinted in Sellars, W., *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind, with an introduction by Richard Rorty, and a study guide by Robert Brandom* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997), 13-118. Page references are to the original publication.

Louise Röska-Hardy

Self-Ascription and Simulation Theory[1]

Abstract
This paper examines the two leading simulation approaches to mental self-ascription, Alvin Goldman's introspectionist account and Robert Gordon's non-introspectionist, "ascent routine" account, with a view to determining their adequacy as accounts of our ordinary self-ascriptions of mental states.

I begin by reviewing the features of everyday mental state ascriptions and argue that an adequate account of mental state attribution must be able to account for the salient features of those mental attributions we make by using the sentences of a language we know (section 1). By way of introducing the simulation accounts, I outline the tenets of the 'Theory'-Theory of mental state ascription and sketch the simulationists' objections to it (section 2). The specific proposals of Alvin Goldman (section 3) and Robert Gordon to ascent routine simulation approach (section 4) are then examined in detail. I argue that both Goldman's and Gordon's approaches to mental self-ascription have serious shortcomings. However, the difficulties facing their respective positions suggest *investigating a third approach to the self-ascription of mental states.

The ability to characterize what we want, believe, fear, intend, hope and feel is fundamental to the way we anticipate and explain everyday thoughts and actions. It underwrites those self-ascriptions of beliefs, desires, intentions, emotions and other conscious, occurrent 'mental states' which we take to express self-knowledge. It also subserves the ascriptions of mental states to others that we make in the course of explaining, justifying and predicting their thoughts and actions. The ability to characterize oneself and others in terms of mental states is thus a central feature of the psychological competence of normal adults. It is also vital to our conception of ourselves as minded agents in the world. For in ascribing the full panoply of mental states, we place ourselves and those to whom we ascribe them within the common sense psychological framework, in which we speak of persons and actions.

Brian P. McLaughlin

Why Intentional Systems Theory Cannot Reconcile Physicalism With Realism about Belief and Desire

Abstract
In this paper, I examine Daniel Dennett's well-known intentional systems theory of belief and desire from the perspective of physicalism. I begin with a general discussion of physicalism. In the course of that discussion, I present familiar ways that one might attempt to reconcile physicalism with belief-desire realism. I then argue that intentional systems theory will not provide a reconciliation of physicalism and belief-desire realism.

The purpose of this paper is consider whether Daniel Dennett's well-known intentional systems theory can be used to reconcile physicalism with realism about beliefs, desires, intentions, and the like.[1] I begin with a discussion of physicalism itself.

Physicalism is a thesis about what there actually is. It is the thesis that all there actually is whatever there has to be for the actual world to be exactly as it is physically.[2] That is to say, it is the thesis that all there actually is is whatever there has to be for the actual world to be exactly as it is in every physical respect – in respect of what physical objects there are, what physical properties they have, what physical relations they bear to other objects, what physical laws govern their behavior, etc.[3] Thus, if physicalism is true and there really are people, cities, and countries, then, given the way the world is physically, there have to be people, cities, and countries. Contrapositively, if there really

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1 As will become apparent in due course, I shall be concerned exclusively with the mature "real patterns" version of intentional systems theory found in Dennett 1987, not the earlier instrumentalist version found in 1978.

2 Frank Jackson (1998) formulates physicalism as the thesis that any minimal physical duplicate of the actual world is a duplicate simipliciter of the actual world. By a minimal physical duplicate of the actual world, he means a physical duplicate of the actual world that contains nothing other than what is required to be such a physical duplicate. My formulation of physicalism is logically equivalent to his; and I am indebted to his discussion of physicalism.

3 It is a nontrivial problem to say what 'physical' means in 'physicalism'. I favor the view that the notion of physicality must be tied somehow to current physics. But I shall not discuss the nature of the tie here. Instead, I shall rely on a rough and ready intuitive notion of physicality.

GERHARD PREYER

Primary Reasons:
From Radical Interpretation to a Pure Anomalism of the Mental

Abstract

The paper gives a reconstruction of Donald Davidson's theory of primary reasons in the context of the unified theory of meaning and action and its ontology of individual events. This is a necessary task to understand this philosophy of language and action because since his article "Actions, Reasons, and Causes" (1963) he has developed and modified his proposal on describing and explaining actions. He has expanded the "unified theory" to a composite theory of beliefs and desires as a total theory of behavior. At first, the anomalous monism was a byproduct. Yet, the step to this philosophy of the mental is not contingent. It will be shown that the anomalous monism as the primary feature of the mental does not lead us to a materialic monism in our ontology. If the evidence of radical interpretation has no echo in natural science, we have to give up materialism.

Following this, I will argue for a pure anomalism. Or, in other words, for the ascription of propositional attitudes given by the semantical analysis of sentences of such attitudes does not commit us to a materialistc framework in our ontological thinking. Yet, to understand Davidson's unified theory, we have to grasp the role of individual events in this framework since the ontological reduction of individual events explains par example the relation between the mind and the body, and the possibility of autonomous action in the world of causality. I do not argue for a dualism of properties between the physical of the mental in the manner of other philosophers, since from the radical interpreters point the empirical restrictions of the speaker's attitudes and behavior cannot be fixed for all cases.

The *unified theory of meaning and action* is a total theory of behavior. Consequently, it is a composite theory of beliefs and desires. From the analysis of the logical form of action sentences in "The Logical Form of Action Sentences" follows a synkategorematic account of action and event sentences (Davidson (1967a): 1980). Therefore, the identity thesis of actions is reasoned by a *logical* argument. In the relation between the both acts A-A', there is only one action which we can describe in different ways: $A \equiv A'$. The logical form of action sentences gives us a particular analysis of adverbial modifi-

Rebecca Kukla

How to Get an Interpretivist Committed[1]

Abstract
I argue that interpretivists ought to broaden and enrich the constitutive stan-dards of interpretability and epistemic agency that they have inherited from classic Davidsonian theory. Drawing heavily upon John Haugeland's recent account of objective truth- telling, I claim that in order to be an interpretable epistemic agent at all, a being must have various kinds of practical (yet genu-inely epistemic) commitments that cannot be reduced to combinations of beliefs and desires.
On the basis of this claim, I argue that radical interpreters must appeal to many commitments held by their interpretees other than assents to observation sen-tences and commitments to sincerity; hence the interpretive tools available in the Davidsonian toolbox are insufficient. I suggest that we ought to take the behaviors manifesting the various commitments that constitute epistemic agency as straightforwardly available from a third-personal observational perspective, and thus as no threat to the basic spirit of interpretivism.
At the same time, I claim that these behaviors cannot be individuated in non-normative, physicalist terms, so my account should indeed pose a threat to naturalists of a certain stripe. I end by revisiting and moderately revising Davidson's notorious deflation of the problem of radical skepticism.

For several decades, Davidson has promoted his influential brand of *interpretivism*, which consists of at least two primary, interdependent theses: The first is that the meaning of an utterance, thought, or action is holistically determined by the best possible interpretation of the meaning-maker, where the best interpretation is the one that optimizes the attribution of true, ratio-nally connected beliefs and truth-claims to the interpretee. The second is that the constitutive criterion for being an epistemic agent – a believer and mean-ingful claim-maker – is being interpretable as believing and saying mostly true, rationally connected things of the right sort. From this second thesis,

DAVID PITT

Nativism and the Theory of Content

Abstract

Externalism is the view that the intentional content of a mental state super-venes on its relations to objects in the extramental world. Nativism is the view that some of the innate states of the mind/brain have intentional content.

I consider both "causal" and "nomic" versions of externalism, and argue that both are incompatible with nativism. I consider likely candidates for a compatibilist position – a nativism of "narrow" representational states, and a nativism of the contentless formal "vehicles" of representational states. I argue that "narrow nativism" is either too implausible to appeal to the nativist – because it entails that innate representational states are lost as the mind be-comes more experienced, or too costly to appeal to the externalist – because a reasonable version of it requires the analytic-synthetic distinction.

Finally, I argue that "syntactic nativism" is indistinguishable from classical anti-nativist empiricism, given the latter's broad tolerance for innate imple-mentation of psychological principles and mechanisms.

Recent controversy over psychological externalism has centered on the issues of its compatibility with privileged access and the *a posteriority* of empirical knowledge.[1] In this paper I wish to add to the controversy by raising another issue for externalism, viz., its compatibility with an important and widely held version of the innateness hypothesis. I argue that externalism does not, on generally accepted terms, sit comfortably with a plausible and philosophically interesting nativism. Given the existence of influential arguments for both externalism and nativism,[2] I take it a serious tension between them would be a matter of some concern. If I am right, one or another of several popular philo-sophical doctrines about language, thought and meaning would have to be significantly revised – or abandoned.

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1   See, e.g., Boghossian 1989, Brueckner 1990 and 1994, Heil 1988 and 1992, McKinsey 1991, Falvey and Owens 1994, Brown 1995.

2   Viz., Putnam 1975 and Burge 1979 for externalism, and Chomsky 1965 and Fodor 1975 and 1981 for nativism.

RAFFAELLA DE ROSA

On Fodor's Claim that Classical Empiricists and Rationalists Agree on the Innateness of Ideas[1]

Abstract
Jerry Fodor has argued that Classical Empiricists are as committed to the innateness of (at least some) ideas as Classical Rationalists. His argument, however, is proven inconclusive by an ambiguity surrounding "innate ideas".
Textual evidence for this ambiguity is provided and the "Dispositional Nativism" that, prima facie, makes Empiricist and Rationalist views similar dissolves into two distinct views about the nature of both the mind's and the environment's contribution in the process of concept acquisition.
Once the Empiricist's Dispositional Nativism is not conflated with the Rationalist's, it becomes evident that the Empiricist can accept the premises of Fodor's argument without accepting his conclusion and, hence, remain unmoved in her conviction that no ideas are innate.

That Classical Rationalists and Empiricists agree on concept nativism – or on the nativism of (at least some) ideas – is a leitmotif in Fodor's writings.[2] I will evaluate this Fodorian theme, concluding that it is untenable. Here in brief is how I will proceed. Section I outlines Fodor's argument for the view that, contrary to established opinion – according to which Rationalists regard concepts as innate whereas Empiricists regard them as derived from experience – the latter are, willy-nilly, committed to the innateness of, at least, primitive (i.e., sensory) ideas. Section II presents the gist of my criticism of Fodor: the validity of Fodor's argument is threatened by an ambiguity in "innate idea",

2   See [Fodor, 1975], [Fodor, 1981] and [Fodor, 1998]. The present paper focuses only on the "standard argument" for nativism given by Fodor in [Fodor, 1981]. However, it is worth noticing that [Fodor, 1998] rejects the view that Empiricists and Rationalists agree that "the initial state for [concept] acquisition needs to be intentionally specified" ([Fodor, 1998], p.143) – viz., the view that Rationalists and Empiricists agree on innateness of *ideas*. He now prefers the view that Rationalists and Empiricists equally acknowledge the existence of an *innate mechanism* underlying concept acquisition. However, it is unclear how different [Fodor, 1998]'s views are from the content nativism of [Fodor, 1975] and [Fodor, 1981]. Notice that for the purposes of this paper, I use "concept" and "idea" interchangeably.

CONSUELO PRETI

Belief and Desire Under The Elms

Abstract
This paper begins with an exposition the apparent tension between externalist theories of content and common-sense belief/desire psychology, with a view to resolving the conflict between these two views. The second part of the paper is a criticism of Fodor's reformulation of Twin Earth type cases.
I argue that this attempt to mitigate the damage such cases do to the tenability of folk psychological explanation cannot work, because Twin Earth cases pose a metaphysical problem for content and explanation, not a nomological one, as Fodor argues. I discuss this in detail, by arguing that Twin Earth cases are illustrations of a metaphysical appearance/reality distinction for (some kinds of) content.
The paper concludes with a strategy for blending content externalism with a robust folk psychology: one that centers on the distinction between causation and causal explanation.

1. Introduction

This paper is broadly concerned with the implications of semantic externalism for mental causation and for the nature of folk psychology. I have argued elsewhere that concepts subject to *weak* externalism pose a threat to folk psychology[1]. Here I will show that the tension between concepts subject to *strong* externalism and folk psychology remains, notwithstanding recent arguments marshaled by Fodor (1994). The threat of externalism to folk psychology may therefore appear to be intractable, but I will close by suggesting a strategy for a defense of the mutual tenability of externalism and folk psychology, one that deploys a familiar line of argument in a novel and promising way.

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[1]   See Preti (1998). The difference between so-called s*trong* and *weak* externalism can be understood by way of a supervenience claim. Strong externalism says that the supervenience base consists of the environment and the *causal relations* the environment bears to a psychological subject. *Weak* externalism says that the supervenience base is restricted to the environment impinging on a psychological subject and does not include causal relations.

Erwin Rogler

On David Lewis' Philosophy of Mind

Abstract
Are there eliminativist tendencies in Lewis's theory of mind? Prima facie one would like to give a negative answer to this question. Lewis (1994) conceives his theory as "Reduction of Mind". Certainly, both reduction and elimination of mental states are regarded as materialist, yet nevertheless as competive strategies. Relying on folk psychology (FP), as Lewis does, is objected to by eliminativists who denounce FP mainly because they think it is a theory that is essentially wrong. Yet, Lewis sees the importance of FP residing only in its causal schemes that explain behavior and not in its role of specifying internal states by specific mental properties. Should therefore the reduction of mental states not be considered as eliminativist in a certain sense? There is an ambiguity in these concepts that forbids an immediate answer. The problem will be elaborated in section II and III with regard to intentional and qualitative mental states. As a preliminary tho that I discuss in section I central aspects and problems of Lewis' theory of mind.

I Ramsification, Reduction, Multirealization

a) Some Fundamentals of Lewis' Theory of Mind

Lewis' theory is made of two theoretical steps: a semantic-functionalist analysis of mental concepts as the first step and (faithful prospects for) psychophysical identifications as the second (Lewis 1966, 1970, 1972, 1980). The point of departure of his theory is FP. Its "platitudes" concern mainly causal relations among mental states, mental processes or events[1] as well as sensory stimuli (inputs) and behavior (outputs). In the sense of Sellars' myth of our Rylean ancestors, FP is conceived as a term-introducing theory for mental concepts. Mental concepts are taken to be theoretical (T-) terms which FP implicitly defines. Input and output vocabulary, as well as the notion of causality, make up the already understood and unproblematic O-terms. FP sentences containing mental terms $M_1,...,M_n$ – or perhaps, disjunctions of those sentences for neutralizing false sentences – are conjoined via logical conjunction into one single sentence: T(M). Replacing all M-predicates $M_1,...,M_n$

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1   Differences between these concepts can be neglected here.

BARBARA VON ECKARDT, JEFFREY S. POLAND

In Defense of the Standard View

Abstract

 *In Explaining Attitudes, Lynne Rudder Baker considers two views of what it
is to have a propositional attitude, the Standard View and Pragmatic Realism,
and attempts to argue for Pragmatic Realism. The Standard View is, roughly,
the view that "the attitudes, if there are any, are (or are constituted by, or are
realized in) particular brain states" (p. 5). In contrast, Pragmatic Realism that
a person has a propositional attitude if and only if there are certain
counterfactuals true of that person.*

*Baker's case against the Standard View is a complex one. One aspect of that
case is that there are no good general arguments for the Standard View. We
argue that one of the three she considers, an argument from causal explanation,
can be defended. The problematic premise, according to Baker, is the claim that
unless beliefs are [identical to, constituted by, or realized by] brain states, they
cannot causally explain behavior. Baker tackles this premise in two ways: in
Chapter 4, she attempts to undermine the brain-explain thesis by taking issue
with the conception of causal explanation that she believes supports it; in Chap-
ter 5, she argues against the brain-explain thesis directly, by attempting to show
that it is false, whether or not the Standard View is true. Neither of these
attempts are successful, on our view.*

*The alternative version of the causal argument we develop uses the doctrine of
physicalism as a supplementary premise rather than appeal to a reductive
conception of causal explanation. After presenting this alternative version, we
consider how Baker might respond to it by drawing on her discussion of materi-
alism. We conclude that Baker's argument against materialism does not gener-
alize to physicalism as we construe it.*

Introduction

In *Explaining Attitudes*, Lynne Rudder Baker considers two views of what it
is to have a propositional attitude, the Standard View and Pragmatic Realism,
and attempts to build a case for Pragmatic Realism.[1] The Standard View is,
roughly, the view that "the attitudes, if there are any, are (or are constituted

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1   Lynne Rudder Baker, *Explaining Attitudes: A Practical Approach to the Mind* (Cambridge:
    Cambridge University Press, 1995). All chapter and page references will be to this book.

On Contemporary Philosophy of Language, Ontology and Moral Theory

Thomas Baldwin

Nearly Logic

All modern discussions of logical form take their point of reference from Davidson's revival of this conception in papers such as 'The Logical Form of Action Sentences'[1]. In his response to critics of this paper Davidson spelled out the ideal which guided his use there of this conception:

> The ideal implicit in the paper is a theory that spells out every element of logical form in every English sentence about actions. I dream of a theory that makes the transition from the ordinary idiom to canonical notation purely mechanical, and a canonical notation rich enough to capture, in its dull and explicit way, every difference and connection legitimately considered the business of a theory of meaning. The point of canonical notation so conceived is not to improve on something left vague and defective in natural language, but to help elicit in a perspicuous and general form the understanding of logical grammar we all have that constitutes (part of) our grasp of our native tongue.[2]

This is an ideal which Leibniz would have recognised, although its more recent point of origin is in the work of Frege and Russell, to whom we owe the conception of logical form. In the last two sentences of this passage, however, Davidson indicates an important point of disagreement with both Frege and Russell, who regarded natural language as 'vague and defective' in ways which rendered it unsuitable as a vehicle for proper science. Their interest in logic was guided by the aspiration to construct a 'logically perfect language', free

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1   'The Logical Form of Action Sentences' in *The Logic of Decision and Action* ed. N. Rescher (University of Pittsburgh Pres, Pittsburgh PA: 1967) Reprinted in Davidson's *Essays on Actions and Events* (Clarendon, Oxford: 1980) pp. 105-122 and my page references are to this edition.

2   'Criticism, Comment, and Defence' in *Essays on Actions and Events* (op. cit. note 1) p. 123.

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Logical Form, Actualism, and Ontology

Actualism, as I shall understand it here, is minimally the view that there are no objects or entities of any sort that do not actually exist.[1] By the lights of actualism, there are no philosophical problems whose solution calls for or requires an ontological commitment to non-actual individuals. Now I harbor a deep skepticism as regards this ontological stance. And in what follows I seek to extend and sharpen the skeptical concerns presented in my (1993, 1996, 1998a, 1998b) and Tomberlin and McGuinness (1994).[2]

1. A Deontic Case[3]

Jones, as it happens, has taken up nouvelle cuisine with its laudable emphasis on fresh and unusual ingredients. One weekend, in seclusion, he opts to prepare for himself the remarkable ragoût of wild mushrooms with veal stock and red wine concocted by Alice Waters for her renowned restaurant, *Chez Panisse*. For the preparation, Jones decides, why not use wild mushrooms he gathered from the nearby woods just yesterday? A splendid dish indeed, he observes upon dining. But alas, some time later, Jones, still home alone and miles from the nearest person, is rendered comatose. Several of the wild mushrooms were highly toxic and Jones, alone and physically incapable of conveying his plight, faces certain death.

In this situation, I take it, (1) and (2) are true but (3) is false:

> (1) For any individual *x*, if *x* is a moral agent who is available and able to come to Jones's assistance, *x* ought prima facie to provide Jones with aid.

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1   There are grades of actualism. Alvin Plantinga (1985), for example, endorses actualism as the view that there neither are nor could have been objects that do not actually exist. But Nathan Salmon (1987) accepts actualism only by affirming the first half of Plantinga's characterization while explicitly rejecting the second (and modal) half. In addition, there are more technical characterizations of actualism in Menzel (1990) and Fitch (1996). As the reader may verify, my discussion here applies to all of the above. For extensive references on actualism see the bibliographies of Tomberlin and McGuinness (1994) and Tomberlin (1996).

2   The argument of Tomberlin (1993) is unique among this battery: there it is argued that actualism has no viable interpretation of quantification. I stand by that argument.

3   As set out here, the present case weaves together features of Case One and Case Two in Tomberlin and McGuinness (1994).

AREND KULENKAMPFF, FRANK SIEBELT

What a Noncognitivist might tell a Moral Realist

Is being motivated to act in a certain way something which entirely depends on having appropriate desires? Does being motivated to act always require a non-cognitive psychological source? Isn't it true that we sometimes disregard, even act against, our desires while nevertheless acting motivationally, say, by being motivated simply due to our beliefs about what is morally right, valuable or required of us to do? Is a strict cognitivist account of moral motivation philosophically feasible?

Quine has given us the following, somewhat simplified but sharp image that, in a nutshell, contains the non-cognitivist's answer to those questions.

> "Imagine a dog idling in the foreground, a tree in the middle distance, and a turnip lying on the ground behind the tree. Either of two hypotheses, or a combination of them, may be advanced to explain the dog's inaction with respect to the turnip: perhaps he is not aware that it is there, and perhaps he does not want a turnip."[1]

Of course, the Quinian dog lacks a conception of morality, and a turnip is not an appropriate substitute for moral virtues and values. Nevertheless, the concise image illustrates basic ideas of the bifurcated non-cognitivist account which lies at the bottom of the so called "Humean theory of motivation" quite well. (For reasons why it is called "Humean", see Hume (1985) bk.II, part III, sec.iii)

To elaborate, let's refer to those mental states an agent has to be in for her to act intentionally in one way or another, as motivational states of an agent. "Intentionally" is essential here because a lot happens due to us without being motivated at all. Laura's breaking a Chinese vase for example by slipping accidentally in front of it, is something she did. "She broke the vase" is a true description of what happened because of her. Yet, setting Freudian presumptions of hidden destructive desires aside, she simply slipped on the carpet. Neither did she intend to or had in mind to break the precious thing, nor did

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1   Quine (1981) p.54.

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