

for those who want to understand better the phenomenological tradition and a book from which much is to be learned.

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Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge, edited by Adrian Haddock and Fiona Macpherson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xi + 409. H/b £55.00.

The topic of this book is disjunctive, and not just in the ways its title indicates. As the editors explain in their helpful introduction, even in the case of perception, 'disjunctivism' names three different views, corresponding to its three most influential exponents: Paul Snowdon, M. G. F. Martin, and John McDowell. According to Snowdon's *experiential disjunctivism*, we cannot explain veridical perception as having an experience also present in illusion and hallucination together with causal and other relations between that experience and the subject's environment. (Here 'veridical' implies success, not just accuracy.) Instead, perceptual appearance is explained as veridical perception *or* one of those potentially deceptive states. Martin's *phenomenal disjunctivism* is a species of this view on which even the *phenomenology* of veridical experience implicates the objects perceived and cannot be explained apart from them. Finally, McDowell's *epistemological disjunctivism* denies that the perceptual evidence present in the veridical case is also present in illusion or hallucination. In veridical perception, one has conclusive warrant for one's perceptual belief; not so when something merely appears to be the case.

On the face of it, although phenomenal disjunctivism entails experiential disjunctivism, the doctrines are otherwise logically independent. Are there hidden connections? One might imagine a path from epistemological to experiential disjunctivism, but as the editors stress (pp. 8–12), it is not obvious how this would go. In their contribution to the present volume, Alex Byrne and Heather Logue agree: 'epistemological disjunctivism is quite compatible with the denial of metaphysical [i.e. experiential] disjunctivism' ('Either/Or', p. 67). The resulting position is occupied by Alan Millar in 'Perceptual-Recognitional Abilities and Perceptual Knowledge'. With the partial exception of Ram Neta ('In Defence of Disjunctivism', pp. 313–4), none of the contributors contests the verdict of independence. But it might be done. After all, epistemological disjunctivism would place a special constraint on

attempts to reduce veridical perception to non-committal experience plus relations to one's environment: the further elements must be epistemically significant. That may well exclude simple-minded reductions on which the added relation is merely causal, and perhaps others, too. At any rate, the possibilities are worth exploring.

Despite the variety of disjunctivism, the present collection hangs together well. Along with a useful set of abstracts, the editors provide an excellent introductory map which makes the distinctions noted above and finds a unity of spirit in the disjunctivists' shared hostility to a 'Cartesian picture of [...] the inner world as constitutively independent of anything outer' (p. 21). This is not intended as a definition, and it is certainly too broad: it applies to non-disjunctive forms of externalism about content. What marks a properly disjunctive view is that resistance to the Cartesian picture leads it to treat some apparently unified psychological kind as having fundamentally different species, at least one of which is thoroughly world-involving. It is an interest in theories of this kind that unifies the contributions to this volume and explains why they belong in one place.

The book's first and longest section, whose official title is 'Perception', contains essays by Paul Snowdon, Alex Byrne and Heather Logue, E. J. Lowe, Scott Sturgeon, William Fish, Bill Brewer, A. D. Smith, and Susanna Siegel; these essays mainly concern phenomenal disjunctivism. The third, on 'Knowledge', contains essays by Duncan Pritchard, Ram Neta, Alan Millar, Sonia Sedivy, John McDowell, and Crispin Wright; these essays concern experiential and epistemological disjunctivism. And the second section, on 'Action', contains essays by David-Hillel Ruben, Jennifer Hornsby, and Jonathan Dancy.

Since the idea of a disjunctive theory derives from the philosophy of perception, the middle section calls for some comment. The continuities here rest on the abstract formulation above. Thus, in 'Disjunctive Theories of Perception and Action', Ruben distinguishes two kinds of events: actions (e.g. my raising of my arm) and events that can occur without action (e.g. my arm's rising), insisting that the former are distinct from, and do not involve the presence of, the latter. In a sense that he attempts to explain, but which remained obscure to me, when I raise my arm there is no such event as my arm's rising.

The other essays in this section investigate reasons for acting, with Hornsby defending and Dancy resisting a disjunctive account. Hornsby's premise is the plausible one that some reasons-explanations entail knowledge. If A is doing ϕ because p , and this is an explanation that gives her reason, A *knows* that p ; true belief is not sufficient (pp. 250–1). (Hornsby applies the same condition to those who act 'for the reason that p '. As Dancy points out, this extension is problematic; but it is not essential to her argument.) The knowledge requirement yields a kind of disjunctivism: acting for a reason is *either* acting because p , and thus on the basis of knowledge that p , or acting on the mere belief

that p (p. 252). It follows that belief–desire accounts of acting for a reason leave something out. Hornsby goes on to draw parallels between her view and McDowell’s perceptual disjunctivism, and to explore their interaction. It is worth stressing, however, that nothing in her argument precludes a reductive theory of knowledge as true belief plus other conditions, which might supplement a belief–desire account of action and provide a conjunctive theory of acting because p . She appears to treat the irreducibility of knowledge as a separate datum. Hornsby also relates her disjunctive theory to the view, characteristic of belief–desire theorists, that reasons-explanations ‘belong in a naturalistic account of the world’s causal workings’ (p. 259). Her tentative diagnosis is that ‘dismissal of [explanations like “A did ϕ because p ”] on the part of these theorists leads them to an erroneously naturalistic view of human agency’ (p. 259). It is not clear, however, why a reductive causal theorist must be a reductionist about knowledge, and if he is not, he can simply add it to his repertoire of psychological causes. Despite her suggestion to the contrary, the question whether reasons-explanations are ‘naturalistic’ or not is independent of Hornsby’s disjunctivism. That such explanations are understood in normative terms is no more obvious for ‘A is doing ϕ because p ’, which entails knowledge, than for ‘A is doing ϕ on the ground that p ’, which does not.

A notable fact about the contributions to this part of the book is that they consider only analogues of *experiential* disjunctivism: they are essays in metaphysics. What about *epistemological* disjunctivism in action theory? The topic I have in mind here is not knowledge of other minds by way of action, which falls under McDowell’s original view (see, again, the editors’ introduction, pp. 18–19), but Anscombean ‘practical knowledge’, knowledge of what one is doing intentionally that does not rest on observation. There are puzzles about how this is possible that are at last superficially similar to the argument from illusion. Is the similarity more than superficial? And is there a need for a disjunctive theory of intention and practical knowledge inspired by McDowell’s disjunctive theory of perception? That these questions go unexplored in the present volume is a missed opportunity.

What does get explored, and in impressive depth, is the plausibility of phenomenal disjunctivism. Snowdon provides some valuable background with a meticulous study of J. M. Hinton’s at once seminal and neglected book, *Experiences* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), along with fascinating if inconclusive ruminations on its pre-history. (The historical question is what disjunctivism adds to the perhaps implicit commitments of naïve realism.) Snowdon’s essay contains, in a footnote, a lovely brief biography of Hinton. Other contributors give their own accounts of perceptual experience, as in Lowe’s ‘causal theory’ and the act–object disjunctivism of Brewer’s ‘How to Account for Illusion’. Byrne and Logue provide an extended treatment of Martin’s case for phenomenal disjunctivism, concluding that his arguments fail. The remaining essays focus on hallucination and

how to make sense of it if phenomenal disjunctivism is true. They form a sustained conversation about the tenability of Martin's view that there is nothing more to hallucination than being in a state one cannot distinguish from veridical perception. Could this 'negative epistemic theory' be correct?

Sturgeon's intricately argued paper, 'Disjunctivism about Visual Experience', lays out the original claim with precision and makes two serious objections. To begin with, we cannot identify having a visual experience as of x with being in a state in which one cannot know that one is *not* seeing x , since I could know that I am hallucinating on the basis of testimony or the sheer improbability of seeing a pink elephant. Instead, we should ask whether the state is discriminable from seeing x 'by reflection' (pp. 125–6). Sturgeon objects to the obscurity of this clause, which is hard to spell out without undue restrictions (pp. 137–8). This only exacerbates his deeper objection. The negative epistemic view implies that I am having a visual experience as of x for any value of x for which I cannot know by reflection that I am not seeing x . But at the margins of awareness, as when I look at a distant shape on the horizon, I may be unable to know by reflection just what I am seeing, and it does not follow that I am having experiences of all the things, perhaps incompatible with one another, that I cannot rule out (pp. 135–6).

In closing, Sturgeon contemplates a radical form of disjunctivism on which we give up the attempt to explain the phenomenology of illusion and hallucination as indiscriminability and deny that there is any such thing; there merely seems to be (pp. 139–40). As well as provoking the incredulous stare, this idea prompts an obvious objection: how can Sturgeon's radical disjunctivist make sense of that 'seeming' without falling into the problems discussed above? In 'Disjunctivism, Indistinguishability, and the Nature of Hallucination', Fish answers this question by appealing to beliefs. At least in sophisticated creatures like us, veridical perception typically induces the belief that one is in that perceptual state. According to Fish, '[if] a mental state which was not a veridical perception were somehow to come to have effects which included such higher order beliefs, then this would look to be sufficient to explain why that mental state was mistaken for a veridical perception of that kind' (p. 152). It would explain why one seems to have perceptual phenomenology in illusion and hallucination, even though one does not. But this suggestion is problematic. As Smith points out in 'Disjunctivism and Discriminability', someone can believe that they have seen a momentary flash when they have not, and when they did not even hallucinate one (pp. 184–5). They might even have the whole array of beliefs that ordinarily come with veridical perception, but they are in no sensory state whatever. Fish is unable to account for this. According to Smith, the negative epistemic theory cannot account for it, either. His case for this involves close critical attention to Martin's idea of 'impersonal discriminability', which Siegel also contests. Her paper, 'The Epistemic Conception of Hallucination', ends with

a further challenge: how can phenomenal disjunctivists explain the ‘positive’ epistemic fact that I can know on the basis of my hallucination of a dog that I am not seeing an elephant? Unless there is more to hallucination than its negative epistemic property, this becomes a mystery. By this point, the obstacles to phenomenal disjunctivism look vast. It is a pity that there is no reply to the critics by Martin himself. But the continuous debate about his view for more than a hundred pages is a highlight of the book.

Its final third is devoted to experiential and epistemological disjunctivism and includes the latest installment of a dispute between Wright and McDowell that began in the 1980s. In the background are two arguments that McDowell reiterates here. The first is epistemic. On the view to be opposed, one’s perceptual warrant is the same in veridical perception as it is in illusion and hallucination, which is to say defeasible. It follows that one’s ‘standing the space of reasons’—one’s best response to the evidence of one’s senses—can never be sufficient for knowledge, since it is not sufficient for truth. Knowledge is bound to involve a further ingredient, external to the space of reasons: at the very least, truth, and in light of Gettier, presumably more than that. This ‘hybrid’ conception is found intolerable. The view that our perceptual evidence is always inconclusive ‘seems incompatible with supposing that we ever, strictly speaking, *know* anything about our objective surroundings’ (p. 378).

Does this argument beg the question? Why concede that knowledge requires conclusive evidence, evidence sufficient for truth? One way to understand the pressures here is in terms of the fragmentation of epistemology. Unless knowledge is more closely bound to justification and evidence than the hybrid conception allows, we face a dilemma. Epistemology is concerned, primarily, with standings in the space of reasons. Either knowledge falls, absurdly, outside its province or this province extends to something quite different, the further materials that the hybrid conception needs. There are then two standards in epistemology, knowledge and justification, whose only relation is that one is a necessary condition of the other. If we are willing to go this far, why not further, into radical externalism, which detaches knowledge from evidence altogether? We can resist that slide, and preserve the unity of our topic, if we think of knowledge as a position in the space of reasons attained when one’s evidence is factive: as indefeasibly justified belief. (An obvious puzzle, not addressed in this volume, is how this picture could plausibly apply to inductive knowledge of, say, the existence of black holes, for which our evidence seems ineluctably fallible. If that appearance is not misleading, we must eventually solve the problem for the hybrid view, if not in the perceptual case.)

According to the second, semantic argument, empirical content is possible only if there can be direct perceptual contact with the world of the sort that disjunctivists allow (pp. 380–1). Although McDowell presents this as an argument for epistemological disjunctivism, the connection is not altogether clear.

It is experiential disjunctivism, with its conception of experience as world-involving, that seems most obviously relevant to the content of thought, and there is no simple inference from one to the other. At any rate, it is on the experiential reading that these semantic considerations figure in the essays by Sedivy and Millar, who argue for and against.

McDowell's own contribution adds three things to his previous work: a new way of framing its arguments as distinctively 'transcendental'; a response to objections by Wright; and helpful remarks on the relationship between perceptual disjunctivism and Moore's notorious 'proof of an external world'. The last two themes are taken up in the contributions by Neta and Pritchard, respectively, both of whom defend the integrity of McDowell's view. Neta also responds to a pressing question for experiential disjunctivists: if they involve quite different psychological states, how can the transition from veridical perception to mere appearance be entirely seamless? His subtle treatment of this problem relates it to another notorious failure of discrimination: the fake barn case devised by Carl Ginet. It is an exercise in fruitful synthesis.

The collection ends with Wright's response to McDowell. Unsurprisingly, Wright is not convinced. In criticizing McDowell, he takes two principal lines. First, he clarifies a complaint lodged in an earlier paper: 'to think of our perceptual faculties as providing, in the best case, means of direct cognitive awareness of the material environment is so far a commitment to no particular view about the justificational architecture of perceptual claims' (p. 397). He recognizes McDowell's commitment to factive perceptual warrants, but insists that 'for all his assertion to the contrary, nothing in the Disjunctive Conception per se enforces that view of the matter' (p. 398). In effect, Wright finds in McDowell a bad inference from experiential to epistemological disjunctivism. But as far I can tell, the attribution is a mistake. McDowell argues directly for his epistemological claims and does not purport to derive them from the metaphysics of perceptual states; at most, the metaphysics makes room for the epistemology.

Wright's second objection (pp. 398–400) is potentially deeper. He notes that veridical perception is not always sufficient for knowledge. Suppose that a secret coin toss determines whether I am given a hallucinatory drug. Knowing this, I realize that my perceptual faculties may be malfunctioning. This discovery seems to block the acquisition of perceptual knowledge, at least in the ordinary ways, even if my senses are working fine. Notably, what does the work here is not decisive evidence of unreliability, just warranted doubt. The question for McDowell is why the absence of antecedent justification to believe that one's senses are reliable is not equally bad. If it is, as Wright contends, we face a sceptical argument to which epistemological disjunctivism is no response. What can McDowell say to this? For one thing, he need not deny that we have a defeasible entitlement to trust our senses that does not depend on their specific deliverances. His claim is that

knowledge cannot be constituted by entitlements like this, not that they are impossible. In any case, why concede that the absence of prior justification is epistemically as bad as having positive grounds for doubt?

There is evidently more to say here, on both sides. Some of it should begin with the other contributions to this fascinating book. I regret that I have had no space to examine them all in detail; I have tried to give a picture, however selective, of the volume as a whole. The sections on perception, action, and knowledge are recommended reading for those who work on their respective topics, and their presentation together brings new clarity to difficult disputes.

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Describing Inner Experience? by Russell T. Hurlburt and Eric Schwitzgebel. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2007. Pp. 326. H/b \$34.00/£25.95.

This book addresses the question of whether we can accurately describe our own conscious experiences. One of its authors (Russell T. Hurlburt) thinks that we can, whereas the other one (Eric Schwitzgebel) thinks that we cannot. The accuracy of introspective reports is a matter of considerable dispute in recent philosophy and psychology. The first part of the book contains a chapter by Hurlburt and a chapter by Schwitzgebel where they summarize the most significant criticisms to the traditional method of introspection in psychology. They also highlight the methodological lessons that one should draw from those criticisms if one tries to come up with a new, more reliable method of describing inner experience. Hurlburt claims to have designed such a method: 'Descriptive experience sampling' (or 'DES').

The second part of the book contains an extremely detailed case study of one subject (who, for the sake of anonymity, Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel call 'Melanie'). Starting with the DES's methodology, but not entirely constrained by it, Melanie, Hurlburt, and Schwitzgebel explore Melanie's conscious experiences over the course of six days. Basically, they proceed as follows: Melanie is given a beeper that goes off randomly. She is instructed to take notes, at the time of each beep, on what her inner experiences were like immediately before the beep. She meets Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel and discusses those experiences with them regularly. This gives an opportunity to both proponent and sceptic of the DES method to ask Melanie for details of her experiences on the basis of her notes and her memory. The six central chapters of the book contain transcripts of these conversations. Finally, Schwitzgebel and Hurlburt reflect on these conversations in three chapters