**Perceptual Imagination and Perceptual Memory** edited by Fiona MacPherson; Oxford: Oxford University Press; Address; 2018; 272 pages; GBP 50; ISBN: 9780198717881

One odd feature of the discipline of philosophy is that not all original research is published in journals. Much of it is published in edited collections. This practice has some disadvantages – some important papers are difficult to access, and you will not get a full overview of cutting edge research just browsing the new issues of the top journals. But it also has some advantages – reading some edited collections can bring you up to speed on current and original research on a specific philosophical problem.

The volume *Perceptual Imagination and Perceptual Memory* covers two interconnected issues, both fairly grand: the relation between episodic memory and imagination and the relation between imagination and perception. Both of these questions would be of interest to the interdisciplinary readership of this journal. (There are also chapters that are not really on either of these themes and are also less interdisciplinary in outlook, two of the most impressive ones are Paul Noordhof’s piece on the content of imagining and Amy Kind’s on the epistemic role of imagination).

The question about the relation between episodic memory and imagination is an old one. In one of the most widely read texts in the history of philosophy, the *Leviathan* (1651), Thomas Hobbes said that they are really the same. Episodic memory is just another name for imagination. And since then philosophers have tried to either support Hobbes on this or argue against him. The present volume contains contributions of both kind – the two best examples are Robert Hopkins’s pro-Hobbesian argument and Dorothea Debus’s anti-Hobbesian one, which emphasizes the different narratives these mental episodes are embedded in.

These contributions are strictly philosophical; they do not take account of the vast empirical literature on mental time travel and the similarities and differences between episodic memory and mental imagery, for example. This is not representative of philosophers working on this topic, with, for example, Felipe de Brigand and Kirk Michaelian combining philosophy and the empirical sciences of the mind to draw conclusions about the relation between episodic memory and mental imagery. Nonetheless, even psychologists and neuroscientists working on mental time travel will find the discussions in Hopkins’s and Debus’s chapters elucidating as possible ways of framing the conceptual issues concerning the relation between episodic memory and imagination.

The second part of the volume might be of even more interest to the interdisciplinary readership of this journal as the chapters on the relation between perception and mental imagery make good use of the recent research on the ways mental imagery influences perception. The two key contributions on this topic are by Derek Brown (who defends the general idea that imagination colors ordinary perception) and Robert Briscoe (who is skeptical). Both use a fair amount of empirical findings to argue their case.

And a more specific field where they clash is that of amodal completion – the representation of occluded parts of perceived objects. Brown argues, very much in line with current research on amodal completion, that when we amodally complete the occluded tail of the cat behind the picket fence, we have mental imagery of it. And this is an important reason why mental imagery colors our ordinary perceptual experience. Briscoe, in contrast, argues that amodal completion is a purely perceptual phenomenon.

Some of this disagreement is terminological – and philosophical discussion of empirical phenomena are often a good way of clarifying terminological confusions. Mental imagery, at least according to psychologists and neuroscientists (maybe not according to philosophers), is a form of perceptual processing: it is early perceptual processing that is not triggered by corresponding sensory stimulation (Pearson et al. 2016, Nanay 2018). And amodal completion is just a form of this, early perceptual processing (we know it happens as early as the primary visual cortex) that is clearly not triggered by locally corresponding sensory stimulation (because we do not receive any sensory input from the occluded tail). So Briscoe is right in some sense: amodal completion is a perceptual phenomenon in the sense that it is constituted by early perceptual processing of a kind. But Brown is also right inasmuch as amodal completion would be a special form of mental imagery (in the sense specified above).

Brown’s and Briscoe’s papers are not the only ones in the volume on the interaction between perception and imagination. Gregory Currie’s chapter discusses our engagement with visual fictions (for example, a fiction film), where our engagement is an interesting mix between perception (as we see the actors, like Harrison Ford, in the film) and imagination (as we imagine them to be fictional characters, like Indiana Jones). A lot has been said about the way our engagement with literary fictions relies on imagination, but this is the first systematic philosophical discussion of how this happens in the case of visual fictions, where perception plays a constitutive role. And this provides a nice illustration of the importance of understanding how imagination and perception are intertwined – not just in everyday perception, but also in the movies.

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