

and Sankara repudiate Otto's identification, and that the whole concept of a mystical core of religion is having a rather bad press in scholarly work on mysticism. But it would be unfair to blame Almond unduly for what he did not discuss when that which he did discuss is as helpful as this book.

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D.M. ARMSTRONG and NORMAN MALCOLM, *Consciousness and Causality*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press 1984. Pp. 222. US\$24.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-631-13212-0); Cdn\$18.75 (paper: ISBN 0-631-13433-6).

This book is one of the two published so far in Blackwell's *Great Debates in Philosophy* series (the other one being *Personal Identity* by Sydney Shoemaker and Richard Swinburne). As such, it contains two substantial position papers, the first from Norman Malcolm, the second from David Armstrong, followed by a short reply from each.

Malcolm addresses himself primarily to certain views propounded by Armstrong in his *A Materialist Theory of Mind* and all his references to Armstrong are references to that work. But as the discussion proceeds he considers positions of other prominent writers in the area as well. Much of Armstrong's paper is a direct response to Malcolm's, though it isn't merely that; we are also provided with the outline of a rather comprehensive causal theory of mind. Armstrong begins his piece by presenting his theory as a contemporary materialist rendition of a very traditional interactionism. He then goes on to defend against Malcolm's criticisms the 'inner sense' or proprioceptive model of introspection and its counters to self-intimation and introspective infallibility. This is followed up with a development of the sorts of causal and reductionist views suggested in inchoate form in *A Materialist Theory of Mind*. Dispositions and analogies with physical capacities figure heavily here in the explanation of mental states and intentionality. These familiar views are then refined and augmented to yield a version of functionalism. He finishes with an account of qualities to go with this position, arguing that there are de facto no mental qualities, just qualities of objective physical phenomena.

Of the two, I found Malcolm the more fun to read. Delightfully negative, he is a genuine malcolment. W.C. Fields once remarked, 'I am free of all pre-

justice. I hate everyone equally.' Malcolm, too, flicks deprecations at all and sundry, although of course Wittgenstein, who gets a lot of reverential nods throughout (albeit this time no numbered paragraphs), is excepted.

Malcolm begins his piece, letting grammar be his guide, by distinguishing between *transitive* consciousness (i.e., object-taking, as in: 'conscious of ...,' 'conscious *that* ...') and *intransitive* consciousness (i.e., being conscious but not of anything, which Armstrong tells us later he doesn't believe in) and then proceeds to consider what the relationship of consciousness to its objects might be — or rather, is not. Namely, it is not such as to allow of a 'logical gap between pain and awareness of pain.' (Why do these discussions always focus on pain, anyway?)

So Armstrong's notion of a 'false awareness of pain' — a possibility required by his corrigibility claims — is wrong. But this does not show that the *esse* of pain is *percipi*, for the notion of consciousness as 'inner perception' adopted by Armstrong (and also Locke and Brentano) is itself wrong — indeed, unintelligible in the light of the way we talk about pain and awareness. Nor is there room to manoeuvre by means of a reply that ordinary pain talk is inconsistent (Dennett); that's wrong too. And while we're at it, those philosophers who talk of the 'subjective,' 'qualitative,' or 'phenomenological' character of experience (Nagel, Block, Fodor, Shoemaker) are talking through their hats. Moreover Armstrong and his ilk are all confused about what notion of causality is proper to the mental. (Surprisingly, the proper notion is one which does not assume that X is the effect of Y whenever Y is the cause of X.) Then there's also a claim the plausibility of which the reader may wish to confirm for himself. Say to yourself, 'I am conscious.' Is what you said true or false? (ου :α:μασσε) See what I mean by fun? And this is just a sampling.

Naturally Malcolm's philosophical M.O., being of a vintage heavily laced with what-can't-be-said and meaning-as-use presumptions, will not be found as persuasive as it once might have been. But, for all that, it can be quite illuminating to go through the details of Malcolm's criticisms, if only to reassure oneself that one could meet or at least circumvent them if one really wanted to. There's something to be said for nostalgia as well.

Between them the authors indulge in quite a bit of consciousness raising. Malcolm, as already noted, thinks there is intransitive consciousness. Armstrong thinks there are merely intransitive idioms but no intransitive consciousness. (His notion of intransitivity does not seem to match Malcolm's, for he takes 'he sees a horse' to be an example of an intransitive idiom.) Malcolm thinks that transitive consciousness coincides with awareness (so much the worse for the idea that one can be unconsciously aware of something, I s'pose); hence there's no intransitive awareness. Armstrong argues that we are not totally unconscious during REM sleep — there is 'minimal consciousness' then but no 'perceptual consciousness' nor 'introspective consciousness'; sleepwalkers, though, must have some perceptual consciousness to get about. (One wonders, does this mean that a conscious dog is roughly on a par with a sleepwalker, consciousness-wise?)

What is missing in all this, however, is some account of where and how understanding, judgement, propositional knowledge, and conceptualization get hooked up with consciousness, or indeed of whether they necessarily do so. Both Malcolm and Armstrong seem to take for granted the admittedly common view that (transitive) consciousness is epistemic (where I mean 'epistemic' to be suggestive of Dretske's contrast between epistemic and non-epistemic seeing). And that might just be the assumption standing in the way of progress in this area.

This book could happily be used as a text for a philosophy of mind class, whether introductory or advanced. Both writers have a clear, engaging, straightshooting style, and the exposition and criticism is accessible at various levels of philosophical ability. The issues and topics covered are representative of a major area of concern in contemporary philosophy of mind, and there is sufficient detail to allow for special emphases and tangential pursuits in accordance with diverse philosophical tastes.

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ALBERT BORGMANN. *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life: A Philosophic Inquiry*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1985. Pp. vii + 302. US\$25.00. ISBN 0-226-06628-2.

This book deserves credit for directing philosophic inquiry to topics of cultural and social significance in contemporary life. All too many philosophers of the English-speaking world have abandoned the task of critically examining their own civilisation — so conspicuous in the history of philosophy from Plato to contemporary French and German thinkers — in favour of disentangling verbal and logical puzzles. Borgmann analyses the chief characteristics of modern technology and their impact on human life in order to consider how the good life can be preserved and fostered within the context of a technologically based society.

Borgmann's analysis focuses on the fact that modern technology fills the world with 'devices' which we perceive and use entirely in terms of their function without knowing or caring what they are made of and how they operate. (TV sets provide entertainment, electric stoves heat; all we need to know in addition is which buttons to push.) This technology provides us with