

Third, sorely lacking throughout the book is any reference to aesthetic evaluation and criticism in architecture. But, how can we reach an adequate understanding of architecture unless this understanding takes into serious consideration the foundation of aesthetic judgment in architecture? Yet in spite of these shortcomings I think the book is useful and should attract the attention of both philosophers and architects. It is rich with insight and suggestive ideas. The reader emerges from it with a fresh understanding of some basic problems in the philosophy of architecture.

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**Kathleen Lennon**

*Explaining Human Action.*

La Salle, IL: Open Court 1990. Pp. 176.

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US \$14.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8126-9135-0).

Is this a book on *action*, as the title intimates? Yes and no. Clearly it starts out that way. Yet somewhere less than halfway through it looks to be more like good ol' philosophy of mind: thenceforth the discussion proceeds to deal with issues of mental-to-physical reduction, mental-on-physical supervenience, functionalism, and wide/narrow content. But hey, I'm not complaining. A virtue of Kathleen Lennon's monograph is that it integrates, via her leitmotif of intentional-cum-causal explanation, work in diverse areas of philosophy of mind and philosophy of action, effecting an overview that many will find availing. It is fair to add, though, that if one were to drop a single name for purposes of locating this essay in the intellectual landscape it would have to be Donald Davidson, who has set the terms of reference for many of the issues taken up (indeed the index credits him with 30 pages, almost twice that of the runner-up).

Lennon begins with an analysis of 'reason-giving' explanations for behavior, i.e., those which show behavior (*viz.*, intentional acts) to be rational given the agent's intentional states. Davidsonian wisdom has it that intentional states which provide reasons for an action may cause but never casually explain the action. Lennon departs from this, arguing that by virtue of the conditionals they sustain such explanations constitute a subspecies of casual explanation.

Lennon goes on to outline her conception of 'intentional theory', one of whose distinctive features is a core structure specifying the rationalizing and interdependent causal networks within which our intentional states are

located and which provides them with their individuating conditions (67). To counter worries that such a conception of intentional theory might not be genuinely causally explanatory, she considers three objections, viz., that intentional laws cannot be completed, that intentional kinds cannot be regarded as natural kinds, and that causal explanation requires an a posteriori link between explanans and explanandum (Hume's point). Very persuasively she shows these objections to be either overblown or off the mark.

'Yes, but ...' one hears from the wings. For Davidson (inter alios) would also require that, were intentional explanations causal explanations, reductive connections would have to obtain between the mental and the physical; that none are imminent leads him to his anomalous monism. Since Lennon too is an antireductionist, her response to this Davidsonian challenge is to decouple psychophysical law or law likeness from the notion of reduction (96-104).

Lennon also seeks to maintain a posture that is recognizably materialist and physicalist: 'It is materialist in assuming that psychological states are in some sense constituted out of physical states. It is physicalist, in the sense I am using this term, in assuming that all physical changes are susceptible to physical explanations' (85). The resultant nonreductive materialism, with the causal-explanatory role it allows to intentional descriptions, is *eo ipso* realist in construing intentional descriptions. So the big question is how do we (nonreductively, noneliminatively, noninstrumentally) characterize the way in which the physical 'supports' explanations at the intentional level? Enter supervenience.

Supervenience in *gist* is 'a relation of non-causal necessitation and dependency which falls short of reduction' (109) and which 'is interpreted as a relation of ontological determination and dependency between properties, the reality of each of which is accepted, but where the base properties are regarded as more fundamental' (107). Naturally this invites sundry further questions, some of which Lennon herself covers.

An interesting wrinkle to Lennon's materialism-cum-supervenience is her contention that it could be true independently of the truth of even token-token identity theories, the idea being that there is no guaranty the classification psychological theory yields will correspond neatly with the classification yielded by physical theory (117). She then suggests that a materialism free of identity claims might even be desirable: 'If we allow as a mental particular anything that is ... referred to in our true psychological descriptions, we seem committed to the existence of, for example, red after-images. In the past this has been an embarrassment for materialists, for even if we could find a plausible physical particular with which to identify the after-image, it is very unlikely that it would be red ... Within materialism characterised in terms of supervenience, however, we are under no constraint to give up our belief in after-images simply because we can find no physical particulars with which to identify them' (118). Quite. But the very idea of unreduced, uneliminated, and physically untokened mental existents prompts a rude ontological question: Why isn't all this just dualism *redux*?



A kindred challenge comes from the reductionist quarter, where a major contention is that supervenience is mysterious without some account of how psychological descriptions are made true by physical states. Functionalism would ostensibly make Lennon's brand of materialism intelligible by explaining psychological states in a way that makes manifest how they can be physically realized; in short, intelligibility demands reduction of intentional kinds to functional kinds. Furthermore, functionalist reduction is seen as vindicating intentional explanation (this line would seem to be a nonstarter, in the light of Lennon's aforementioned decoupling of psychophysical law from reduction). However Lennon again rises to the occasion, providing very compelling arguments against the practicability of functionalist reduction.

As a final afterthought, Lennon considers the position of intentional explanation vis-à-vis 'individualism' (roughly, the espousal of narrow content for psychological states). Here she argues that the explanatory goals of intentional theory — explaining the interactions of agents with their environment — can only be achieved with a world-dependent (wide content) characterization of thought, after the spirit of Putnam.

All in all, this is a helpful book, containing a number of fresh insights. Had I paid for my copy I would not have regretted it.

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**A.C. Lloyd**

*The Anatomy of Neoplatonism.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 1990. Pp. ix+198.

Cdn \$62.50: US \$45.00. ISBN 0-19-824229-8.

This is a book about Neoplatonism which might seem to have little to say about the more notorious features of the school: the ascent to the One, the 'mysticism', the discussions of the purification of the soul. But such an impression of Lloyd's work would be false. The truth is that he approaches his subject matter in a very unusual way, for what he writes about is the underlying substructure on which such 'notorious' features depend. But it is not about any particular Neoplatonist; it spans the school from Alexander of Aphrodisias in the late second century A.D. to Damascius in the sixth, Alexander being treated more or less as an honorary member. Its subject-matter falls more or less into two halves, the first of which is concerned with Neoplatonic attitudes to the place of logic in or before philosophy, the semantics of Porphyry, and the Neoplatonic alternative to classification by