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The Sources of Intentionality  
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The Phenomenal Basis of Intentionality  
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*The Quality of Thought* develops and defends the thesis that thinking is a kind of experience, characterized by a *sui generis* ("cognitive") phenomenology, determinates of which are thought contents—what David Pitt calls the phenomenal intentionality of thought thesis. It draws out the implications of this thesis for issues in philosophy of mind, philosophy of language and metaphysics. The view defended is radically internalist and intensionalist, and thus goes against received doctrines in philosophy of mind (externalism) and language (extensionalism). It also advocates for a metaphysically neutral, non-naturalistic approach to the philosophical study of mind—what Pitt calls "Analytic Phenomenology"—in combination with agnosticism about the nature of the relationship between consciousness and physical reality.

The book identifies persistent problems with Dretske-inspired causal-informational-teleological theories of conceptual content, and diagnoses them as due to leaving out what it's like to think a thought—to entertain or grasp a propositional (conceptual) content. It is thus a contribution to the increasingly influential Phenomenal Intentionality Research Program. It includes refutations of classic externalism (Putnam and Burge) and arguments that standard motivations for direct reference theories of names (Kripke), indexicals and demonstratives (Kaplan) are not inevitable, and alternative accounts of their (and their conceptual equivalents') semantics. It also addresses outstanding challenges to the phenomenal intentionalist view of thought content, including the existence of unconscious thought, the elusiveness of conceptual phenomenology, the matching content problem, phenomenal compositionality, and the determination of conceptual reference.

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DAVID PITT is professor of philosophy California State University, Los Angeles. He received his PhD in philosophy from the City University of New York Graduate Center. He has held visiting professorships at Swarthmore College, Hunter College, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Brooklyn College, Iowa State University and Central European University, Budapest, where he was a Fulbright Scholar in 2014–15. He has also held research fellowships at Australian National University, the Institute for Advanced Study at Central European University and Cambridge University. His published work includes papers on philosophy of mind, philosophy of language and philosophy of linguistics.