

Whilst the conceptual may involve our parochial sensibilities, truth or falsity is fixed by the state of the non-conceptual – the single reality on which the incomparable human and Martian ‘thought-worlds’ are both stances. In defending himself in this way, it however seems to me, Travis opens himself up to a third idealist/relativist charge, a charge that what we can say, and indeed know, belongs not to the world but to us. The complaint here is not simply that sayables/knowables must be ‘out there’, that our capacities for thought must at every theoretical turn be radically external to what we think – for one might well reject such an idea of externality as incoherent. The complaint is rather that once one endorses the idea, as Travis does with his notion of a non-conceptual reality, then anything without similar objectivity will by comparison be subjective. Travis appears at times to consider concerns of something like this kind, but it remains unclear to me how his two dominant ideas, when put together, can avoid an idealism in which what we know is merely ‘our world’, facts born in our community, and not ‘the world’, the world in itself.

These are large issues and Travis obviously has much more to say on them than can be addressed in a short review. Several further, related matters are also covered. With his correspondence theory of truth, for example, goes a rejection of excluded middle: the non-conceptual might fail to play ball with our thinking. And beside Frege, Wittgenstein and Austin, Putnam also figures large – as do empiricism, psychologism, the argument from illusion and moral relativism. On all these matters there is very interesting and fruitful discussion with much to be learnt and to be provoked by. So in sum: whilst these papers are difficult and at times frustrating, they richly reward serious engagement and should be widely read.

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*The Waning of Materialism.* EDITED BY R. KOONS AND G. BEALER. (Oxford UP, 2010. Pp. xxxi + 490. Price: £62.50 (hardcover), £24.00 (paperback).)

This collection brings together papers by a wide range of authors, united in the view that certain serious and persistent problems for materialist theories of mind and self weigh in favour of anti-materialist alternatives. In an introductory survey, the editors note that materialism seems to face a large number of serious problems compared to anti-materialism (hence the alleged waning of the former), which loses out to materialism only on ontological complexity. They speculate that “the very features that make anti-materialism ontologically more complex than materialism enable it to deal with the various phenomena that materialism finds difficult to accommodate,” (p. xx). This is somewhat uncharitable. The materialist’s problems in accommodating phenomena such as intentionality and consciousness stem from a commitment to explaining those phenomena in materialistic terms. Anti-materialists typically define their position by denying that any such explanations are possible, so it is little wonder they face fewer such problems. Even if the target phenomena can ultimately be explained in materialistic terms, there is no reason to

expect that process to be unproblematic. If materialism is well-supported, then so is the belief there are materialistic explanations of mental phenomena, however difficult it may be to supply them, and the burden of proof rests with those who think the difficulties sufficiently severe as to warrant its rejection.

Laurence Bonjour argues that the key motivation for materialism – the causal closure of the physical – is not supported by the available evidence, so that (and many of the subsequent authors agree) various a priori, intuitive arguments against materialism are not trumped by empirical evidence for it. Bonjour suggests that, given the obvious causal efficacy of conscious states, the truth of causal closure cannot be decided without first knowing whether consciousness is physical. Materialists, however, think that causal closure can be decided by observing that the effects we ordinarily attribute to conscious states – bodily movements, speech acts, etc. – have fully sufficient neural causes. Bonjour doubts that any experiment could possibly establish the truth of this latter claim, but unless by ‘establish’ he means ‘prove beyond doubt’, it is difficult to see why. Contemporary materialists often hold that (i) if causal closure were false, then its falsity would be due to non-redundant *sui generis* mental causes of physical effects, (ii) evidence from neuroscience renders it very unlikely that there are any such causes. It is a shame that none of the contributors explicitly addresses the case for causal closure just sketched, because if it is sound, materialists can argue that materialism is the best way to make sense of mental causation given closure.

Some authors question whether materialism can account for mental causation. Terence Horgan argues that non-reductive materialists must treat mental causation in Humean terms (e.g., some form of counterfactual dependency). Emergentists who embrace causal closure can also help themselves to Humean accounts of mental causation, but have an advantage over non-reductive materialists in that they can make sense of the persistence of the explanatory gap without appealing to phenomenal concepts, which Horgan considers problematic. Horgan’s challenge to non-reductive materialists is to come up with an account of mental causation that is not also available to emergentists – no easy task. A more obvious, if somewhat unpalatable, reply on behalf of the materialist is to reject the multiple realizability intuitions that lend *prima facie* support to non-reductive materialism over type identity theory. Timothy O’Connor and John Ross Churchill go further than Horgan, arguing that the best way to make sense of the seemingly non-material nature of mental features such as intentionality and phenomenal consciousness, together with the robust (i.e., not merely Humean) causal efficacy of such features, is a form of emergentism that rejects causal closure. Much depends here on whether there is a compelling case for closure. If there is, then surely the best way to make sense of mental causation is to reject the *prima facie* non-materiality of mental features. Whether or not this also requires us to reject multiple realisation depends upon whether Horgan’s challenge can be met.

Several other papers detail intuitive cases against materialism. Stephen White defends property dualism based on a Fregean semantic premise to the effect that property identities linking conceptually independent concepts are true only if

those concepts pick out the property they do by connoting contingently co-extensive properties of that property. But if there is a compelling empirical case for identifying material and conscious properties, those identities ought themselves to be seen as counterexamples to such semantic premises. William Hasker argues for a radical form of emergent substance dualism as the best way to make sense of the intuitive unity of consciousness, together with the dependence of consciousness on the brain. But inferences to best explanation require a principle of total evidence, and should therefore include the evidence for causal closure. If, on balance, the total evidence available favours materialism, and materialism cannot accommodate the unity of consciousness, then so much the worse for unity. Martine Nida-Rümelin argues from intuitive attitudes towards perfectly symmetrical fission cases to the conclusion that that our concept of personal identity over time presupposes ‘subject-body dualism’ – the view that persons are neither identical to nor constituted by their bodies, and whose persistence over time is not determined by any material facts. If we are in error, it is argued, then so are most of our everyday thoughts about ourselves and others. Armed with a compelling causal closure argument, however, a materialist who accepts Nida-Rümelin’s arguments can take them to show that materialism requires significant revision of our ordinary ways of thinking.

While I cannot agree that materialism is on the wane, it is certainly not without its problems, and the contributors to this volume do an excellent job in highlighting them and suggesting anti-materialist solutions. Although the book is unlikely to persuade committed materialists to recant, it will certainly give them pause for thought, and will be of considerable value to students and scholars working in this area.

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*Disagreement.* EDITED BY RICHARD FELDMAN AND TED A. WARFIELD. (Oxford UP, 2010. Pp. 291. Price \$35.00.)

Suppose that you and a friend are each presented with a certain body of evidence and that you are each as rational and attentive to the body of evidence as the other is. Suppose further that you and your friend arrive at different and incompatible judgments regarding the truth value of some proposition that the body of evidence bears on and that neither of you base your judgments on any additional, unshared evidence. If you recognise that your friend is as good an evaluator of the evidence as you are, are you justified in continuing to believe as you do or does the disagreement render your belief unjustified? This is one of several connected epistemic questions under scrutiny in Richard Feldman and Ted Warfield’s engaging anthology *Disagreement*. The volume comprises ten original papers and a helpful introduction each by some of the most influential philosophers writing on the epistemology of disagreement. It is a welcome addition to the discussion of a relatively new and popular niche issue in epistemology and would make an excellent core text for a graduate level course.