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Person perception

Axel Seemann*

Department of Philosophy, Bentley College, Waltham, MA, USA

Peter Strawson holds that on a proper conception of personhood, the problem of Other Minds does not arise. I suggest that the viability of his proposal depends on a particular account of person perception. I argue that neither the theory theory nor the simulation theory of mindreading constitutes a suitable basis for this account. I then go on to defend Peter Hobson's notion of 'feeling perception' as an intersubjectivist alternative that, if properly developed, delivers a basis for a viable account of person perception. In developing that alternative, I draw on John Campbell's suggestion that self-understanding is constituted, in part, by an understanding of oneself as a cause of many events.

Keywords: Other Minds; person perception; intersubjectivity; mindreading; feelings

Strawson and Other Minds

The problem of Other Minds is often taken to present two questions. On the one hand, there is an epistemic difficulty: how can we *know* that others have minds? On the other hand, there is a conceptual issue: what entitles us to take it that mental predicates are general – that the predicates one ascribes to oneself are identical in meaning to those one ascribes to others? It is sometimes suggested, for instance by Anita Avramides (2001, 218f.), that the real problem, the one that ought to interest us, is conceptual rather than epistemic. She is sympathetic to Peter Strawson's approach, which she takes to address the conceptual problem.

Strawson (1959) argues that on a viable account of personhood, the conceptual problem does simply not arise. He suggests taking the notion of a person as a basic concept that cannot be analysed further: it is the concept of an entity to which one ascribes both predicates that can also be applied to material bodies, and predicates that are properly ascribed only to persons. These 'P-predicates', varied though they are (Strawson gives 'is smiling', 'is going for a walk', 'is in pain', 'is thinking hard', 'believes in God', as examples), possess the essential characteristic that they have both first- and third-person ascriptive uses. Strawson is adamant that neither of these uses is logically prior to the other: it isn't that one can say of another that he is in pain on the grounds of the knowledge of what it is to be in pain oneself, or vice versa. Understanding a P-predicate means acknowledging that it is ascribable both on the basis of observation *and* independently of observation.

> To put the point – with a certain unavoidable crudity – in terms of one particular concept of this class, say, that of depression. We speak of behaving in a depressed way (of depressed behaviour) and we also speak of feeling depressed (of a feeling of depression). One is inclined to argue that feelings can be felt but not observed, and behaviour can be observed but not felt, and that therefore there

*Email: aseemann@bentley.edu

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> must be room here to drive in a logical wedge. But the concept of depression spans the place where one wants to drive it in . . . X's depression *is* something, one and the same thing, which is felt, but not observed, by X, and observed, but not felt, by others than X. (Strawson 1959, 108f.)

The problem of Other Minds does not arise, on this account, because really there is no gap between the introspective access to one's own mental life and the observational grasp of another person's. To posit such a gap is to misconstrue the meaning of P-predicates, and ultimately the concept of a person: in order to grasp the meaning of such a predicate, one has to understand that it can be applied equally in one's own and another observed person's case. Having the very concept of a person rests on understanding this, since persons are just the kinds of entities to whom certain properties can be ascribed both on the grounds of the observation of their behaviour (by others), and on non-behavioural grounds (by themselves).

Whether one finds this proposal compelling will depend, to some extent, on whether one can explain how the concept of a person is *acquired*. And one may suppose that a satisfactory account of person perception will tell us more about the acquisition of that concept. There is, then, a connection between the conceptual and the epistemic aspects of the problem of Other Minds: a suitable account of person perception may strengthen Strawson's conceptual case.

There are at least two requirements a Strawsonian account of person perception has to meet. First, the account must not explain the understanding of an observed person's mental life in terms of an attribution of psychological states to that person which are, in one way or another, modelled on one's own. For in this case, one would take the self-ascriptive use of P-predicates to be logically prior to their other-ascriptive use; and it is just this stance that Strawson is arguing against. What is needed to avoid the conceptual problem is an approach to person perception that allows us to account for our ability to ascribe P-predicates to others without relying on a conceptually prior capacity to ascribe such predicates to ourselves. Let us call this the 'symmetry requirement'. It is this requirement that Strawson is mainly concerned with, and it is obviously related to what Gareth Evans calls the 'Generality Constraint': the idea that if one is to have a thought (that John is happy, for example) about an object (John), then one must both be able to conceive of the object (John) as having different properties (such as being sad), and of the same property as being ascribed to a different object (Mary, for example) (Evans 1982).

The second requirement, though rather less explicit, is no less important. Notice that Strawson's list of relevant P-predicates includes not only expressions by means of which one ascribes intentional states to someone (such as 'believes in God'), but also expressions by means of which one says of another that she is engaged in activities with both psychological and bodily components (such as 'is smiling' and 'is going for a walk'). This is no accident: it is an essential aspect of Strawson's thought about persons that the concept of a person is logically prior to, and hence cannot be fully elucidated in terms of, bodily or mental characteristics alone. It is thus in line with his general outlook that he should allow for this second kind of P-predicate. One is not smiling unless one is *both* in a particular psychological state *and* displays a particular facial configuration expressive of that state. One could not be smiling if one's relevant facial muscles were handicapped, for instance, even if one were perfectly capable of the psychological experience usually expressed by the facial configuration in question. By the same token, the distinction between a 'real' and a 'fake' smile is precisely that the latter only pretends to express a particular psychological attitude. And it is implicit in Strawson's account that such 'embodied' activities (as we may call them) are to be conceived as directly perceivable: one ought not to account for one's grasp of their mental aspect in terms of an inference from observed

behaviour. For if one were to take it that one's understanding of an organism as a person comes about as a result of such an inferential process, the primitiveness of the concept of a person would be jeopardised. So a satisfactory account of person perception has to explain what enables us to non-inferentially ascribe such P-predicates to persons. For lack of a better term, I shall call this the 'embodiment requirement'.

For the purposes of this paper, I shall simply take Strawson's approach as my starting point. His approach is of current relevance because it suggests a position that has direct implications for the debate about what is often called 'mindreading'. In particular, it proposes a stance towards the problem of Other Minds that sheds a critical light on the idea that an ability to grasp others' mental states requires one to deploy a theory of mind. And even though I will not propose any argument to the effect that a Strawsonian approach is on the right track, I do think that a convincing account of person perception has to meet both the symmetry and embodiment requirements. My aim in this paper is to roughly sketch a way in which these two requirements might be met.

Theory theory and simulation theory

The most prominent accounts of what is often called 'mindreading' are the theory theory (TT) and the simulation theory (ST). Insofar as theories of mindreading are thought of as descendants of the problem of Other Minds (Goldman 2006, 5), they quickly run into the Strawsonian objection that they address a pseudo-problem. Since, on his account, the existence of the problem depends on a misconception of the meaning of P-predicates, one might be tempted to say that the very demand for a theory of 'mindreading' can arise only if one neglects the fact that a correct understanding of P-predicates depends on having acknowledged that such predicates have conceptually independent self- and other-ascriptive uses.

But this may be too swift: for there is the consideration, introduced in the previous section, that the plausibility of Strawson's proposal is tied to a convincing account of person perception. If we cannot make sense of the idea that it is possible to perceive relevant aspects of another's mental life, it is hard to see how we could ever *acquire* a Strawsonian understanding of P-predicates. And a good account of person perception will have to take a stance on the epistemic aspect of the Problem of Other Minds. This problem comes in two varieties: a sceptical version that asks how we can know *that* another person is thinking or feeling, and a non-sceptical version that is concerned with the question how we can know *what* another person is thinking or feeling. For reasons that go beyond the scope of this paper, I don't think we need to be overly concerned with the sceptic's worry. It is the non-sceptical version that a good account of person perception needs to address. And since it is this version that TT and ST are descendants of, they remain in the field as candidates for the kind of account of person perception that we are looking for.

On the face of it, TT appears to be the more promising alternative, since it stresses the parallelism between the ascription of mental states to self and other (Zahavi 2007, 31). One does not, at least not on Alison Gopnik's (1993) 'pure' version of that approach, model another's intentional states on the basis of one's own, or vice versa. Rather, grasping *anyone's* intentional states – one's own *or* another person's – depends on the deployment of a theory of mind. The argument is, very roughly, that improvements in performance on belief tasks in children between three and four years of age attest to a change in theoretical outlook. This warrants the conclusion that all attributions of intentional states, to oneself or to others, are executed by theoretical reasoning. It is a conclusion which can accommodate Strawson's consideration that a grasp of P-predicates depends on the understanding that they have both self- and other-ascriptive uses. But it is less

obvious whether it meets the embodiment requirement: whether it can explain what puts us in a position to ascribe the relevant kind of P-predicates to others without making an inference from observable behaviour to unobservable mental state.

Gopnik (1993, 12) stresses that she does not take her approach to apply to *all* psychological states. In fact, she explicitly says that she does think there are cases in which psychological states may be directly perceived, but that intentionality is not such a case. We may thus speculate that she would not take her version of TT to account for our understanding of such P-predicates. So the possibility remains open that a subscriber to some version of TT might also accept that a comprehensive account of person perception has to accommodate the embodiment requirement – it is just that TT, though part of such a comprehensive account, remains silent on the matter.

But this compatibilist proposal is threatened by the very foundation on which TT rests: namely the idea that the mental and bodily aspects of a person's behaviour ought to be treated as conceptually distinct. After all, TT starts from the question how it is possible to *ascribe* mental states to organisms that display a particular kind of behaviour. Simon Baron-Cohen, who is a prominent defender of TT, gives this account of how the 'Intentionality Detector' enables one to ascribe intentional states to behaviour-displaying organisms:

> First, the mechanism must be one that can take input via any modality in which it might come (vision, touch, and audition being the principal ones here) and from stimuli which vary hugely in form. The visual input might look as shapeless as an amoeba, as weird as a giraffe or an elephant, or as minimal as a stick insect. Because of their self-propelled motion, all these are instantly interpretable as agents with goals and desires, despite the great variety of their forms. (Baron-Cohen 1995, 33f.)

This may serve as an example of the assumption on which TT builds: what enables one to ascribe intentionality to an object is a module that allows one to make sense of one's observation of the object's self-propelled motion. One observes an organism's behaviour and interprets it by ascribing beliefs and desires to the organism. But the very concept of a P-predicate is undermined by the idea that one acquires an understanding of an organism's intentionality by observing its movements: the intentional aspect of activities such as 'smiling' or 'walking' really is *embodied* in the activity. You cannot interpret the facial movement of someone as 'smiling' if you start from the assumption that the movement attests to an underlying mental state: it isn't that what allows you to interpret someone's facial expression as a smile is an inference to an expressed mental state. Rather, the intentionality inherent in the facial expression itself is what puts you in a position to recognize that expression as a smile. So it turns out that TT, even if it is not taken to supply the conceptual basis for a comprehensive account of person perception, is not compatible with the embodiment requirement.

I am not aware of any attempt to account for persons' capacity to grasp another's embodied activity in ST terms. One reason for this may be that defenders of ST tend to think of mental states and their bodily expressions as causally related. In that respect most versions of ST resemble TT: the two theories share the fundamental presupposition of a conceptual divide between bodily activity and underlying mental state. But there is one simulationist way of explaining face-based emotion recognition that does not necessarily start from the assumption of this divide. This is what Alvin Goldman (2006, 127f.) calls the 'unmediated resonance' model.

> According to this model, perception of the target's face "directly" triggers (subthreshold) activation of the same neural substrate of the emotion in question. "Directly" here implies some form of mediation different from any of those postulated by the other models [which start from the assumption of a causal relation between mental state and its bodily expression, AS].

Of course, everything in this quote depends on how the 'direct' triggering of the emotion's neural substrate is conceived. Goldman stresses that no detailed account of this mirroring process is currently available. But one suggestion would be that on a suitable such account, one ought not to stipulate a causal relation between the perception of the other's face and the experience of her emotion. Rather, the emotional experience is to be conceived, in a way that would have to be explained, as a *component* of the perceptual event. In that case, ST could avoid the problem that makes TT unsuitable as a model for Strawsonian person perception: it could, in principle, account for our understanding of P-predicates such as 'is smiling'.

But ST runs into trouble on other grounds. What makes the Unmediated Resonance model an instance of ST is that it displays this feature: it constitutes a case of an emotion that is produced in an observer and matches the triggering emotion in the target (Goldman 2006, 128). So the observer acquires an understanding of the observed person's emotional experience through an experience of his own that is then projected on to the observer. Thus, it is an important characteristic of ST that it presupposes the logical priority of self- over other-ascription of particular kinds of P-predicates. It is, after all, on the basis of *one's own* emotional experience that one is able to project it on to others, and thus gain access to their mental lives. This stress on the asymmetry of self- and other-ascription of mental states is typical for simulationist accounts. And it is this feature that makes the model unsuited as a candidate for a Strawsonian account of person perception, since it is incompatible with the symmetry requirement.[1] So ST fails as a Strawsonian alternative on grounds that are quite different from TT: TT meets the symmetry requirement but cannot accommodate P-predicates. On at least one reading of ST, however, the theory may meet the embodiment requirement; but it is incompatible with the idea that the self- and other-ascriptive uses of P-predicates ought to be conceived as symmetrical.

Intersubjectivism

Peter Hobson explains humans' capacity to perceive others as persons through an engagement with their *feelings*. His is a developmental account: it builds on the consideration that we ought to take seriously the interactions between infants and their caregivers in the study of social cognition. He suggests that infant and caregiver, when focusing on one another, enjoy a perceptual experience that can be characterized as intersubjective. Such an experience is available to very young infants through interaction with their caregivers:

> In our own view, perception is relational, and to perceive a smile as a smile (to take the simplest example) is to respond with feeling, in such a way that *through* the smile one apprehends the emotional state of the other . . . In other words, there is a mode of feeling perception that is critical for establishing intersubjective relations between people, and it is a kind of perception that establishes a special quality of relatedness between the individual and what is perceived – in most natural circumstances, a person. (Hobson 2005, 199)

Thus, what fundamentally distinguishes the perception of a person from the perception of another kind of object is a certain *phenomenal* aspect: to perceive another person (under conditions of mutual attention) is to grasp a particular aspect of that person's psychological life – namely her subjective attitude. It is crucial that the perceiving person is not confined to the role of an observer: it is through an *interaction* – one person responding in kind to a smile directed at him – that the psychological life of the smiling person is apprehended. The interactive element of person perception is so important because it is through the adoption of the other person's facial expression, and the thus expressed subjective attitude, that her psychology is understood.

This approach (for lack of a better term, I will call it 'intersubjectivist') clearly is incompatible with and hence constitutes an alternative to TT: apprehending another's feeling is not accomplished through the deployment of a theory of mind but through the enjoyment of a particular experience. By contrast, Hobson's approach and the Unmediated Resonance version of ST might, at a first glance, seem to be quite closely related: after all, both accounts agree that it is through the adoption of another's facial expression, and the experience of the feeling it expresses, that the access to another's mental life is brought about. What they might disagree on, however, is that on an intersubjectivist account, the shared perspective is both developmentally and conceptually prior to the differentiation between self and other.[2] It is, on Hobson's account, not that one grasps the mental life of another by projecting one's own experienced feeling on to the other person. Rather, the suggestion is that the intersubjective perspective enables an infant to develop an understanding of the distinction between self and other that *then* makes it possible for him to engage in this kind of perspective-taking. It is precisely the *sharing* of feelings that puts one in a position to think of oneself and other persons *as selves* (see Hobson 2006).

This approach, then, may meet both requirements imposed by a Strawsonian approach to person perception. It preserves the idea that the ascription of P-predicates to oneself and others is symmetrical: since the ability to distinguish between self and other is a consequence of a shared intersubjective perspective, self-ascription of mental predicates is not to be thought of as prior to other-ascription of such predicates. At the same time, it also meets the embodiment requirement. A person's smile, on this account, is not to be conceived as an expression of a (hidden) mental state: rather, it embodies a particular kind of intentionality. Taking up another's smile is not, on the intersubjectivist account, to infer the mental life of the observed person: it means to share in, and thus to grasp, an embodied activity. So the intersubjectivist proposal, if it can be made to work, may constitute an alternative to both TT and ST that meets both Strawsonian requirements.

The social aspect of common cause thinking

Hobson insists that '(i)f infants are to share experiences with someone else, then their experiences of the other's feelings need to include a sense of the otherness of the other' (Hobson 2006, 134); but there is a legitimate concern whether his account can, in fact, explain what endows us with this sense. If feeling perception is immediate in the sense described, and if another's psychology is apprehended through an interaction in the course of which feelings are *shared*, then the question arises what enables us to grasp the other's feelings *as* her feelings: what enables one to distinguish between her feelings and one's own. It is thus a key question how to account for the grasp of the respective perspectives, of 'self' and 'other', within Hobson's framework. Dan Zahavi writes:

> That I have an actual experience of the other, and do not have to do with a mere inference or imaginative simulation, does not imply, however, that I can experience the other in the same way as she herself does, nor that the other's consciousness is accessible to me in the same way as my own is. The second- (and third-) person access to psychological states differs from the first person access, but this difference is not an imperfection or a shortcoming. Rather, the difference is constitutional. (2007, 35)

So we need to say more about what, on an intersubjectivist approach, constitutes the difference between first- and third-person access. And one obvious aspect of that difference is the perceptual grounding of the latter. One feels that one is in pain, but one sees that another person is in

pain. This is so quite regardless of whether or not one accepts that the perceptual experience itself is characterized by feelings – it still remains a *perceptual* experience. Since experiences of one's own mental life are typically not grounded in this way – since I enjoy what is sometimes called a 'direct access' to my own mental life – the suggestion is powerful that an account of the constitutional difference between self- and other-experiences might start with an investigation into the difference between the modes of access to one's own and another person's mental life.

Consider John Campbell's (1995a, 1995b) work on self-awareness. He begins with the thought that the concept of an object is a causal notion. It has two dimensions: on the one hand, one's grasp of an object depends on one's awareness of the thing as causally connected over time. On the other hand, it depends on one's awareness of the thing as a common cause of many events: a cause of both mental and physical happenings. He suggests that it is these two dimensions that also enable us to think of persons as concrete objects. But what is characteristic of people is that it is the causal role of their *mental* states that puts us in a position to do that. It is partly because one has an understanding of oneself as causally connected over time, of one's later psychological states being dependent upon one's earlier ones, that one possesses the kind of self-awareness that makes possible first-person judgements. And it is partly because one has an understanding of oneself as a cause of many events that one possesses this kind of awareness. So what enables one to use common cause reasoning, and thus partly makes possible one's use of the first person as a singular term, is the ability to exert causal influence over *mental* events. Since it is only this ability I am going to focus on, and since I am going to do this in very brief terms, the following should not be understood as a comprehensive account of Campbell's argument.

Crucially for Campbell, the kind of common cause thinking that grounds self-awareness has a *social* dimension. It is because of an understanding of others' psychological states as causally dependent on one's own that one acquires a conception of oneself as a common cause. So the ability to ascribe mental predicates to oneself, to think of *oneself* as happy or sad, is partly grounded in the recognition of one's capacity to bring about changes in *others*' psychological lives – in the recognition of the power of one's mental states to make others happy or sad. It thus follows that one's capacity for self-ascription of mental predicates ('I am *F*') depends on one's capacity to ascribe them to others ('He is *F*'), and vice versa. It is what enables one to move beyond subjectless Lichtenbergian reports on mental states ('There is thinking!'). In other words, it secures one's grasp of the generality of mental predicates.

Campbell explains the social dimension of common cause thinking by considering a paradigm by Andrew Meltzoff that explores the relation between self-consciousness and social interaction. One of Meltzoff's suggestions is that an awareness of others is rooted in the perceiver's primitive capacity to imitate another person's facial expression, which in turn leads to his experience of that person's emotional state. Campbell renders Meltzoff thus:

> So the hypothesis is that when the infant sees someone with a particular facial expression, he uses his innate capacity to imitate it, and this in turn leads to having the emotion in question, so the infant now knows what is going on in the other person. (Campbell 1995, 38)[3]

It is the adoption of another's facial expression that provides one with the experience of her thus expressed mental state. The capacity for imitation that makes available that experience is grounded in the possession of an image – a representation – of one's own body. What enables one to bring one's own facial expression in tune with that of the perceived person is the ability, which is at the core of Meltzoff's research, to cross-modally match one's own body image with the representation of another's expressed mental state. And it is this feature of Campbell's argument that makes it

relevant to the purposes of the present enquiry: it grounds self- and other-awareness in the difference between modes of access to one's own and another perceived person's body states.

Since the grasp of the perceived person's mental life is explained in terms of a cross-modal matching of body representations, the account presupposes a causal relation between the mental and bodily aspects of person perception. By adopting Meltzoff's suggestion that access to another's mental life is procured through a cross-modal matching of body images, Campbell implicitly endorses a version of ST that Goldman (2006, 125) calls the Reverse Simulation model. This model is based on the idea that an attributor of mental states runs a standard emotional process, which roughly may be thought of as an emotion giving rise to a facial expression, in reverse: adoption of the observed person's facial expression causes the corresponding emotion in the attributor. It is a version of ST that, in contrast to the Unmediated Resonance model, is necessarily committed to the idea that mental states and corresponding facial expressions are causally related. It hence stipulates a conceptual divide between a person's body state and the mental life it expresses. And it is this divide that puts Campbell's account at odds with the embodiment requirement. To repeat, this requirement must be met by any account of person perception intended to accommodate Strawson's idea that the concept of a person is logically prior to, and hence cannot be fully elucidated in terms of, either her bodily and psychological properties. That idea is incompatible with the supposition of a conceptual divide between a person's mental life and its behavioural expression on which the Reverse Simulation model builds: if our understanding of a person's mental life is a causal consequence of an imitation of her facial expression, then we could, in principle, account for that understanding reductively – we could, in principle, explain our grasp of her mental states in terms of the causal properties of her bodily features. So we could fully account for our understanding of persons in functionally specified physiological terms. But then it is hard to see how we could ever acquire a grasp of the concept of a person as primitive in Strawson's sense.

There is the further worry that the approach may ultimately not be able to accommodate the symmetry requirement either, since the explanation of one's grasp of another's mental life in terms of a cross-modal matching of body representations assumes, and hence cannot explain, the person's awareness of himself as subject of a particular experience. I cannot project my feelings onto you, with the aim of understanding *your* psychological state, if I don't already possess an understanding of them as *mine*. But in that case it is a condition of the possibility of other-ascription of a subjective experience that I can ascribe it to myself. And so the symmetry requirement comes under threat.

The Strawsonian defender of the notion of feeling perception, who seeks to explain, in terms of an intersubjectivist outlook, how self- and other-awareness comes about, ought to build on Campbell's insight that an explanation of the ability to distinguish between self and other has to take seriously the social dimension of common cause thinking. But since he needs to accommodate the symmetry and embodiment requirements, he is ill-advised to stipulate a conceptual divide between a person's body state and the mental life it expresses. Hence the intersubjectivist ought to resist the idea that person perception can be conceived in terms of a cross-modal matching of body images with represented mental states. Campbell himself suggests, in *Past, Space, and Self*, that the notion of a body image will eventually have to be abandoned when accounting for the conceptual role of the first person (1995a, 146).[4] So the proposal is that if one wants to build on the social dimension of common cause thinking to explain self- and other-awareness in intersubjectivist terms, one might, more profitably, start from the consideration that perceptual experiences of other persons come with a particular phenomenology. What characterizes person perception is the experience of particular kinds of feelings.

Simple feelings

More needs to be said about the kinds of feelings whose sharing constitutes the intersubjective perspective. There is something very basic to these feelings. Certainly they are not feelings whose experience presupposes an elaborate *conception* of whatever they are directed at. The smile the infant perceives in the mother's face and that he takes up, thus experiencing a resonance of the mother's expressed psychological life, would not be appropriately described as somehow involving *thoughts*. In order to get a better idea of the feelings at stake, I will begin with a general reflection on feelings that are 'simple' in this way – feelings whose experience does not draw on conceptual resources – and will then say something about what this implies for the sorts of feelings shared in an intersubjective interaction.

Consider philosophers' favourite feeling, pain: a feeling as simple as they come.[5] It is, presumably, of the kind that can be shared between persons in the way outlined above: the perceptual experience of seeing another's face contorted in pain might very well be described as painful in its own right. And just like any other feeling, pain comes in many different varieties: it can be a mild tingle or a sharp pang, it can be a pain in your head or your foot, and it can be a bodily or a mental pain. We think of both the sensation one experiences when pinching a finger and the feeling of losing a loved person as painful. But surely the differences between the experiences I just mentioned are enormous: their degrees of intensity (comparatively mild or absolutely overwhelming), their sources (the impact of some object on your finger, or the death of a person) and even their situatedness, if you want (mind or body) vary dramatically. Yet there is something all of these experiences have in common that entitles us to describe them as pain.

I suggest that we think of this common element as a kind of experiential *meaning*. This meaning is to be understood not in semantic but in phenomenal terms. What it means to be in pain is to undergo a particular kind of experience that one can crudely characterize in the following way: what the above-described feelings have in common is that it is part of the experience that one has that I will call an 'avoidance attitude' towards it. Pain is the kind of experience that feels awful, and its awfulness makes the sufferer want it to go away, quite regardless of whether it is in her power to do so. That's why we speak of *sufferers* of pain.

Two points have to be stressed immediately. First, the description of an episode of pain in terms of the subject's avoidance attitude towards it does clearly not, as long as nothing further is said, provide an exhaustive characterization of any such episode: fear and disgust, for instance, presumably also feel awful and involve some kind of avoidance attitude. So one ought not to think of the behavioural attitude that constitutes a feeling's meaning in terms of something akin merely to a propensity to act: the attitude involves the entire body, including facial expression, posture, and so on. Imagine perceiving an event that could strike you as painful *or* as disgusting. For instance, suppose you are watching video footage of a real-life violent shootout on TV. You may be disgusted by the violence, or pained by the bullet wound someone suffers in the course of the event, or both. Both feelings may involve an impulse to look away. But your facial expression will be quite different depending on whether you turn your face away in disgust or in pain. So what I called a 'behavioural attitude' above must be understood in fully embodied terms if it is to allow for a characterization of the feeling at stake.

Secondly, what is vital about this attempt to characterize the meaning of pain experientially is that it not be read as the suggestion that the experience *causes* an attitude of the sufferer towards it, or the idea that the experience be *reduced* to a propensity to behave. The proposal is emphatically not meant as some sort of latter-day behaviourism: it is not the attempt to get a grip on the mental by looking at a person's behaviour. Rather, the embodied attitude is to

be seen as an *integral part* of the experience. To be in pain, to go through that awful experience, is to adopt a particular embodied attitude: as William James famously pointed out, the experience is *in* the attitude (James 1889, 189f.). It follows that one could not be in pain without, in principle, being able to adopt such an attitude. The qualifier is in order because of course one needs to allow for exceptional cases – physical handicaps, for instance, or the stoic mien behind which perhaps a Victorian in great pain might have hidden her feelings. But these cases really are exceptions: the point remains that the experiential meaning of simple feelings, as long as we are not concerned with handicaps or Victorians, is *in* its embodied expression.

This leads to the suggestion that experiences of simple feelings have an intentional aspect: they display a particular kind of stance of the subject towards the world. Often this intentionality is multi-faceted: it can involve an outward as well as an inward directedness. The pain you experience in your hand after having touched a hot stove tells you something both about the world *and* yourself: it involves an awareness of the state of your body and the state of the stove. It may be illuminating to compare this to Peter Goldie's suggestion that bodily feelings can have what he calls 'borrowed intentionality'. He describes his view of the feelings involved in emotions thus:

> . . .our entire mind and body is engaged in the emotional experience, and all feelings are 'united in consciousness' in being directed towards its object: united 'body and soul', 'heart and mind'. For example, sexual desire is felt with the whole being – body and soul – *for* the one we desire. And, likewise, our whole being aches in grief *for* the one we have lost. (2000, 55)

What makes the intentionality of such bodily feelings 'borrowed' is that they are the result of feelings directed towards the emotional object in the world which involve no bodily component: bodily feelings alone cannot reveal to us the object our feeling is directed at. So the 'association of ideas is, initially *from* the feeling towards *to* the bodily feeling, and thus, if you do not know what your thoughts and feelings are directed towards, you cannot find out merely through introspection of your bodily feelings' (Goldie 2000, 59).

Goldie's description of bodily feelings captures much of the character of the kinds of 'simple feelings' I am concerned with: the idea that such feelings are experienced with one's whole being, and that the sensation, though bodily, can in some way be directed at the outside world, is of great relevance for my account. But at the same time there are essential differences between Goldie's 'bodily' and my 'simple' feelings: the intentionality of simple feelings, though embodied, is not derived from another kind of non-embodied experience; the embodied sensation really is primitive. Goldie gives the example of someone becoming frustrated with a philosophical problem and, as a result of his increasing frustration, coming to have a confined feeling in his chest. This feeling of confinement is clearly bodily, but it integrates the intentionality of the previous frustration towards the philosophical problem. This case is quite different from a scenario that gives rise to an intersubjective perspective. In order to feel confined, the struggling philosopher already has to have experienced frustration. But the feelings that are shared in the particular kinds of basic interactions between persons that Hobson is concerned with are not the consequence of a previous intellectual engagement: they *constitute* a particular attitude towards the world. Goldie's notion of bodily feelings, I think, is what one may call 'sophisticated': the feelings he has in mind build on a previous conception of the world. Simple feelings, however, can be experienced in the absence of such a conception: an organism can be in pain without having any conception of the world. And yet, an adequate characterization of the experience must pay tribute to its intentional dimension. In the case of pain, the experience is such that the sufferer has an avoidance attitude towards it, and hence is apt to behave in ways that are likely to result in the diminishment or disappearance of the feeling. This attitude is not a *consequence* of

the experience: rather, characterizing the experience adequately – describing it as being of a particular *kind* – makes it necessary to account for its intentional component. It would not make sense to try to reduce the experience to a feeling, plus the experiencing person's attitude towards it. Take the attitude away, and it is very unclear what would be left. There is an intentional aspect to the experience *itself*.

It is an immediate consequence of this way of thinking about simple feelings that the subject of the experience really is an *agent* – that the experience is embodied in a way that involves an activity of sorts. This activity is part of the possibility of experiencing feelings, brain-in-a-vat fantasies notwithstanding. If you could not act on an experience – such as a feeling – whose very characterization rests on a behavioural attitude, it is doubtful whether the experience could even be had. So we might summarise this brief discussion of simple feelings by describing them as *intentional, embodied, and enacted*.

We ought to think of the kinds of feelings whose sharing constitutes the intersubjective perspective as simple in this way. One may be tempted initially to conceive of these feelings as either sympathy or empathy. But both of these presuppose a quite sophisticated understanding of self and other: to sympathise or empathise with someone you have to have a conception of who she is, and what situation she is in.[6] An intersubjective perspective, however, is available to infants who cannot possibly have such a complex understanding of another person. I will argue later on that the feelings whose sharing constitutes that perspective give rise to an understanding of self and other: they don't presuppose it.

So we need to distinguish between what I called 'sophisticated' feelings such as sympathy or empathy, by means of which one takes a stance towards the other person's mental life – or, more generally, feelings by which one takes a reflective stance towards the outside world – and the kinds of feelings that give rise to the intersubjective perspective. It is at the heart of the intersubjectivist account that such feelings can be experienced both what I will call 'proprioceptively'[7] and perceptually.[8] In an episode of mutual attention between infant and caregiver, the access to the other's mental life is secured by a sharing of feelings: in an exchange of smiles, you can, in the perceptual act, experience a resonance of the other's facially expressed (or perhaps better, embodied) feeling – an experience that may bring about a feeling of the same kind in yourself. We may thus say that the *type* of feeling at stake is not constitutively tied to the mode in which a token of it is presented: the feature allowing us to classify simple feelings as being of one type – of involving the same kind of behavioural attitude – is the same across what I just called 'modes of presentation'. I realize this is a potentially misleading way of putting things, since it suggests the idea of a 'content' that is being presented. But as I said above, this is fine as long as we think of that content in experiential and not semantic terms. What is presented, when experiencing a feeling of the kind in question, is just the experience itself. Correspondingly, 'modes of presentation' are nothing like Fregean senses but really just the experiential channels through which such feelings are made available – their perceptual or a proprioceptive character. When one attends to a person who has pinched her finger, and thus accesses her pain perceptually, one is experiencing the same avoidance attitude as when pinching one's own finger: the sensation has the same experiential meaning. Nevertheless, a perceptual experience of pain is of course different from a proprioceptive one: but this doesn't alter the fact that it is an experience of *pain*.

It is this characteristic of intersubjective feelings that allows us to think of them as 'simple' in the sense outlined above. The key is to see that what an episode of pain that is proprioceptively experienced has in common with one that is perceptually accessed is its experiential meaning. To that extent, a situation in which instances of experiences of the same type are presented in different modes is comparable to a situation in which experiences that are of the same type and mode

of presentation are different in strength, bodily location, or situatedness. And once one accepts this view, one is in a position to spell out the experiential meaning of such feelings in terms of what I called a 'behavioural attitude' of the experiencing organism: an attitude that is intentional, embodied, and enacted.

Simple feelings and reidentification

The hope now is that the particular characteristics of simple feelings may explain how the ability to think of self and others as common causes gets off the ground. The core move really is to accept that episodes of simple feelings can be of the same type while differing in modes of presentation. For one has then reason to take it that an organism which is capable of experiencing differently presented episodes of the same type of feeling is able to primitively re-identify such episodes.

It is tempting to hear this suggestion as expressing the idea that organisms capable of such comparisons are in a position to entertain indexical *thoughts* of the kind, 'This (perceptually experienced) event is like that (proprioceptively experienced) event'. But this idea would put us immediately on the wrong track. The point is precisely to explain the possibility of a particular kind of self- and other-awareness in terms of primary intersubjectivity, and hence in terms of feelings that, despite their intentionality, do not involve conceptual capacities. So one cannot explain this awareness in terms of the ability to entertain thoughts of a particular kind.

Daniel Hutto draws on Ruth Gareth Millikan's work to make the point that a basic capacity for reidentification need not involve representations of the reidentified items.[9] Rather, the capacity to reidentify something is to exhibit 'a kind of basic embodied know-how' (Hutto 2008, 72). While Hutto/Millikan are concerned with the capacity to reidentify 'individuals, stuffs and kinds within circumscribed historical domains', I am proposing that a similar idea can be made to work in the case of the reidentification of feelings that have the same experiential meaning but are presented in different experiential modes. The suggestion is that a perceptually presented feeling can be reidentified as being of the same type as a previously experienced proprioceptive feeling (and vice versa) in terms of the organism's embodied knowledge how to enact the intentional attitude that characterizes the experience.[10]

The thing to realize here is that re-identification is not just an intellectual but also an embodied skill. It is not just that I can recognize this poodle as being an animal of the same kind as that pitbull, despite their differences in size, shape, and inclination to bite me. It is also that my body recognizes a new action context as being of the same kind as a previously encountered action context. If I step on a slippery surface, my body will draw on previous experiences with slippery surfaces to cope with the situation: it will draw on a motor knowledge that I master due to past exposure to slippery surfaces. In order to cope with the action context by drawing on such a repertoire, I need not invoke conceptual capacities – on the contrary, as soon as I start thinking about the situation the opportunity for spontaneous coping will probably be lost. But since motor knowledge is acquired through experience, some kind of reidentification must be taking place when one draws on one's motor repertoire to master a new situation.

I suggest that we think of simple feelings as giving rise to such a practical repertoire: as non-conceptual action guiding experiences that result in a certain kind of embodied know-how. You might, after having been exposed to an electric shock when operating a light switch, henceforth display a non-reflective avoidance attitude towards that kind of light switch. Coming close to this sort of light switch now *feels* uncomfortable. Even though you know there is nothing wrong with this particular switch that you are about to operate, you experience a kind of intuitive reluctance to touch it. But this reluctance is not due to the *thought* that one ought not to touch that sort of

light switch – it is rather that the body has incorporated the painful experience into its practical repertoire. And it can do that because it is capable of reidentifying action contexts in terms of the feelings they give rise to.

If the intersubjectivist approach is on the right track and simple feelings can be both proprioceptively and perceptually experienced – that is, if their experiential content can be presented in different modes – the non-conceptual capacity for reidentification ought to span modes of presentation. It would then be the case that an organism is capable of comparing proprioceptively experienced with perceptually presented feelings of the same type. And there is, in fact, evidence that such a comparison takes place. Consider the development of infants as they continue to engage in interactions with other persons: as they keep taking up their caregiver's facial expression, responding to smiles with smiles and frowns with frowns, they master an increasingly sophisticated behavioural repertoire. A newborn infant's initial response to the caregiver's facial expression is much less skilled than a comparable interaction taking place a few months later: while the initial imitation of the caregiver's facial expression is only very approximate, it gives rise to an ever closer matching of the sorts of embodied feelings whose sharing constitutes the intersubjective perspective. The infant thus acquires a practical skill – a know-how – that is at the very heart of his capacity for social interaction. He seems to be *learning* from the repeated engagement in intersubjective interactions. And it is at least plausible to suppose that what makes this learning possible is his ability not only to re-identify a variety of feelings presented in the same mode at different times, but also to draw an embodied comparison between feelings of the same type that are presented in *different* modes: this capacity for a cross-modal matching of embodied feelings is what enables him to respond in kind, with increasing aptness, to the feelings a caregiver expresses towards him.

From the reidentification of simple feelings to common cause thinking

Between seven and ten months of age, infants begin to engage in a repeated performance of acts that elicit laughter, attention, or praise, with gaze to others' faces (Reddy 2005, 96). One may suppose that they *experiment* with the power to affect their social environment: that they are, in effect, exploring the connection between their own embodied mental lives and those of the persons surrounding them. There is a purposive aspect to this sort of engagement: the infant seems to carry out such performances in order to develop a grasp of the causal relation between his own embodied psychology and that of others.

Possession of the practical knowledge that, or so I have argued, results from the experience of cross-modally experienced simple feelings is insufficient to explain the experimental character of this kind of involvement with others. Simple feelings, their intentional character notwithstanding, are essentially *reactions* to events in the organism's environment: but a repeated performance of acts that express these feelings, and that seem to be specifically geared towards testing the causal role of these acts, are not appropriately described as reactive. These acts really appear to involve *intentions* of some (however primitive) sort.

The capacity to act on intentions rests on the deployment of conceptual skills, even if they are as rudimentary as in the case of an infant exploring the causal role of activities expressing embodied feelings. In order to test the effects of such activities on his social environment, an infant has to be in a position to entertain a crude kind of thought – a thought along the lines of 'I will try *this* (and see what happens)'. In other words, he has to operate with some indexical conception not only of the facial expression (and the thus expressed feeling) he is adopting, but also of the *subject* of the feeling: he has to have a minimal conception of self.

This conception of self can be substantiated, I think, in Campbell's terms: it involves (amongst other things that I am not commenting on here) a grasp of the subject of 'I'– thoughts as playing a particular causal role – as being in a position to deliberately affect his environment. The referent of the subject term in the (rudimentary) thought 'I will try *this*' simply is the organism who possesses the power to affect his social environment by adopting *this* proprioceptively experienced and facially expressed embodied feeling. And on the account presented here, this understanding of the first person is generated by a cross-modal matching of simple feelings.

There are really two strands to the explanation of the transition from the experience of simple feelings to common cause thinking. First, one acquires an understanding of one's power to affect one's social environment by a repeated experience of the effects of expressing a simple feeling. One's social environment has the particular characteristic that it can be *modified* by one's own simple feelings: my enactive feeling will change the feelings I perceive in another. When I smile at another person, I do not only express an aspect of my subjective life: I also affect that person's psychology, and I am immediately aware of that fact. So I grasp, on a practical level, that there is a particular causal role played by my enacted feelings – a causal role whose scope extends to the perceptually accessed subjective life of others.

Secondly, one's increasing awareness of being affected by *others*' embodied feelings results in an understanding of *oneself* as being part of a social environment. One grasps that one is on a par with the members of one's social surroundings because one understands that the causal relation obtaining between one's own embodied psychology and that of others is symmetrical: just as one is in a position to affect others' psychological lives by expressing particular kinds of feelings, so they are capable of affecting one's own. And to be part of that environment means to be part of the object (if you want) of others' intentional attitudes that is inherent in their simple feelings.

So the suggestion is that at least one aspect of what gives rise to the capacity to entertain 'I'-thoughts is the experience of being able to affect one's social environment through one's embodied feelings, and the recognition that one is causally on a par with other members of that environment. Both of these factors together substantiate Campbell's proposal that a grasp of the conceptual role of the first person involves an understanding of oneself as a common cause of many events. And on the account promoted here, these factors in turn are explicable in terms of an intersubjectivist outlook which stresses the importance of shared simple feelings.

It is an account that satisfies both the symmetry and the embodiment requirements. It fulfils the symmetry requirement because it maintains that self- and other-understanding develop conjointly; and it meets the embodiment requirement because it starts from the notion of simple feelings – feelings that involve *both* an intentional attitude and an embodied, behavioural disposition. By fleshing out Campbell's idea that self- and other-awareness involves common cause thinking in terms of an intersubjectivist perspective, one can thus motivate an approach to person perception that meets both Strawsonian requirements.

Simple feelings and representations

I have maintained that the experience of simple feelings, and the resulting practical knowledge, ought not to be thought of as involving conceptual capacities. Such capacities swing into play only once we are concerned with the capacity for thoughts involving the first-person pronoun, which, or so I suggested, is a *consequence* of the experience of simple feelings. So the ability to experience such feelings, and to acquire the resulting practical knowledge, does not depend on a conceptual repertoire – rather, if I am right, it is the precondition of such a

repertoire. But all of this is, as yet, compatible with a *representational* account of such feelings and such knowledge. So the question arises whether we ought to conceive of simple feelings in representational, though non-conceptual, terms. Elisabeth Pacherie and Jérôme Dokic introduce two criteria that have to be met for a mental state to qualify as representational.

> The first criterion is the possibility of *misrepresentation*. A state is a representation only if it is produced by a system that is also capable of misrepresenting the world. The second criterion is the possibility of *contrast*. A state represents an aspect of the world only if it is produced by a system that is also capable of producing contrasting aspects. Something is always represented, at least implicitly, *as opposed to* something else. (Pacherie and Dokic 2006, 103)

These criteria, in particular the first one, are widely accepted. For instance, Campbell (2002, 117) and Jacob and Jeannerod (2004, 5) – to mention two amongst many examples – both suggest that it is a necessary condition of a representational account of mind that misrepresenting be possible. And it makes good sense to suppose that sophisticated feelings involve representational capacities in this sense: in order to experience sympathy or empathy, abhorrence or fear of the other's feelings, one has to be in a position to ascribe those feelings to the other person. This requires one to entertain a representation of the other person: one needs to be in a position to think of the other person *as* the subject of these feeling – one needs to be in a position to *represent* her as entertaining them. This capacity is dependent on one's ability to represent her as entertaining another feeling. To be able to sympathise with another's pain, one needs to be able to *ascribe* the predicate 'is in pain' to her; but this is possible only if one is in a position to ascribe other predicates to her – 'is happy', perhaps. And with this comes the possibility of getting things wrong – of thinking of her as being in pain when she is not (maybe she's just annoyed). Further, the generality constraint requires that in order to be able to think of her as being in pain, one also needs to think of someone else as being in pain, and thus to contrast two propositions with the same predicate but different subject terms.

Now it is tempting to take my above suggestion that part of the experience of simple feelings is the organism's intentional attitude towards them to imply that they involve mental representations – of the world, or perhaps of one's own body. As a first immediate objection to this idea, remember that I have characterized simple feelings in *enacted and embodied* as well as intentional terms. They are not, on my account, purely mental states, which already provides a challenge for a representational account.[11]

If this point fails to convince you, consider Antonio Damasio's position. He understands feelings as particular kinds of perceptions (and thus as, presumably, purely mental states): 'Experiencing a certain feeling, such as pleasure, is perceiving the body as being in a certain way', he writes (Damasio 2003, 88). He argues that feelings are *reports* on body states, and that they can be functionally characterized. The pleasant feeling of lying on a sun-drenched beach in a mild breeze is a signal that one's bodily systems are operating smoothly. Conversely, an unpleasant feeling such as pain indicates injury or some other bodily defect. The perceptual object of a feeling is the brain's body map: just as visual perceptual experiences are caused by external objects, so feelings are caused by internal objects – the sensory maps persons have of their own bodies. And body maps are representations of sorts: they depict the body as being in a certain way.

But notice just how implausible such an account is. On Damasio's approach, feelings of the kind I have called 'simple' are body- rather than world-directed. They do exhibit intentionality, and they do so in very strong representational terms: the feeling is representing one's body as being in a certain (functionally defined) state. Since it is a core feature of any representational account of perception that the representations involved are truth-apt, they may, or may not, adequately depict reality. Consequently, body maps, on Damasio's account, have to be

conceived as truth-apt: as being correct or not in representing body states. So it follows that feelings such as pain, which are conceived as feedback mechanisms on such body states, can report on accurate or inaccurate representations of body states. And thus we ought to be in a position, on Damasio's account, to accommodate the possibility of feelings that are reports on inaccurate body maps. It is possible, on this account, to experience a feeling of pain that *doesn't* report (though it purports to) that some bodily function is impaired. There would be room, in effect, for groundless pain.

I suggest that the notion of a 'groundless feeling', pain or otherwise, ought to be resisted. It would be a mistake to conceive of feelings as veridical: they are not reports on what state one's body is in independently – they do not have a mind-to-world fit in the same way beliefs do. As any sufferer will attest, pain is never groundless: the very fact that it is awful (what I called its experiential meaning) gives rise to the sufferer's avoidance attitude towards it. There are no 'groundless feelings' because there simply is no independent bodily reality to be reported on: the phenomenal dimension is an integral aspect of the complex physio-psychological organism that experiences the feeling. The mistake is to stipulate a conceptual divide between the feeling (a supposedly mental item) and its intentional object, the body. The body is not appropriately thought of as part of the world on which the feeling is supposed to report: it is what *constitutes* access to the world. Denying this means embracing a tacit (or perhaps not-so-tacit) dualism.

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Notes

1. One reply (pointed out to me by Marc Slors) that may be available to the defender of what Goldman calls a 'low-level' version of ST is this. The 'resonating' of the emotion that gives rise to the capacity for the ascription of particular mental predicates to others is not conceptually mediated itself; conceptual resources only come into play once one actually ascribes predicates to oneself and others. So the Unmediated Resonance model may be able to meet the Symmetry Constraint after all. I am, in fact, sympathetic to this sort of view; but the question then arises what entitles us to think of it as an instance of ST. I don't want to argue about labels, however; if defenders of a low-level account of ST can, in fact, deflate the worry expressed in this section, such an account may remain a candidate for the approach to person perception I am sketching in this paper.
2. Again, if you think that some versions of low-level ST are compatible with Hobson's approach, I don't see a problem here. What I wish to argue against is the idea that in order to be able to understand another's psychological life, you have to operate with a grasp of the conceptual role of the first person that your ability to ascribe mental predicates to others depends on.
3. He stresses that he has not given a complete review of Meltzoff's account. It is worth noting that Meltzoff himself defends a version of TT rather than ST. See Stueber (2006, 118).
4. This is suggested, firstly, by the factual consideration that there are persons without proprioception who are nevertheless self-conscious. Secondly, such a move is supported by a conceptual reason: an account of common cause thinking that builds on the notion of a body image cannot respond

appropriately to the suggestion that one might think of judgements about psychological states along the lines of 'this body is thinking'.

5. By 'simple' I mean that an experience of pain may be had without the deployment of conceptual resources: I can be in pain without having a conceptual grasp of the source of the pain, while I may not be able to empathize with someone without possessing a range of concepts that allow me to entertain thoughts about her. But this is not to say that pain is monolithic: it may still comprise a sensory and an affective component (see Prinz 2004, 177).
6. Consider Decety and Chaminade's (2003) proposal to conceive of the neural correlate of feeling sympathy in terms of activity in a 'shared representation network'. The thought is that sympathy is the result of a matching between the subject's own emotional reaction to the story with that of the story-teller: a story-teller who communicates a sad story with an expression of joy will be found less sympathetic than one who communicates the same story with an expression of the same feeling of sadness experienced by the subject herself. So the experience of sympathy is possible only if one operates with a quite sophisticated conception of self and other. This resonates with a commonsense understanding of sympathy: in order to feel sympathy with another person, I have to be in a position to experience feelings directed at that person. But if this is right, the kinds of feelings that constitute the intersubjective perspective cannot be described in terms of sympathy. A similar point holds with regard to the feeling of empathy. Peter Goldie (2000, 195f.) argues, convincingly I think, that the capacity for empathy also presupposes a sophisticated grasp of the person one is empathizing with, since 'empathy is a process or procedure by which a person centrally imagines the narrative (the thoughts, feelings, and emotions) of another person'.
7. This use of the term 'proprioception' is unusual, given that it is commonly employed to describe the experience of the relative position of neighbouring parts of one's body. Obviously I am not concerned with spatial bodily positions here. But since I am seeking to describe simple feelings as embodied, the term seems better suited than the alternative notion of 'introspection'.
8. Barbara Montero (2006) argues that we can be said to 'proprioceive' someone else's movements. This, of course, is a position that runs directly counter to the view I am advocating here. It seems obviously true to me that there is an experiential difference between movements performed by oneself and perceived movements of other persons. And by the same token there is an experiential difference between one's own and other's perceived feelings, even if these feelings can be directly accessed in the perceptual act.
9. In the rest of this section I am concerned with the question whether the reidentification of simple feelings involves conceptual (rather than representational) capacities. Since I take it, however, that it is a necessary condition of conceptual skills that representational capacities are in place – since I take it that one could not operate with concepts unless one was able to entertain representations of objects, or state of affairs – Hutto's proposal is of relevance for my enquiry: if his strong (anti-representational) claim holds, my parallel weaker (anti-conceptual) claim should hold too.
10. One worry this proposal might provoke is that the practical knowledge how to enact intentional attitudes is first-person knowledge: it is knowledge that is immediately accessible only to the agent. But this worry can be deflated, I think, by stressing the intersubjective outlook that primitive interactions between infant and caregiver give rise to: it is through such interactions that the practical knowledge at issue is acquired in the first place. And it is through such interactions that a grasp of the conceptual role of the first and third person is made possible. So the idea is that first-person knowledge is not available prior to the kinds of interactions at issue. I am grateful to John Campbell for this point.
11. I leave open the question whether there is a way of conceiving of representations that are not purely mental in this sense. Pacherie's and Dokic's notion of 'motor representations' (Pacherie and Dokic 2006, particularly 151f.) may offer such an alternative. The question arises, however, whether such 'representations' can still be said to be truth-apt in the sense discussed.

Notes on contributor

Axel Seemann is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Bentley College in Waltham, MA. He is interested in issues related to Social Cognition. Most recently, he has published on the relevance of the intersubjective perspective for the notion of common knowledge (*Social Epistemology*, 2007) and the relation between person perception and trust (*Inquiry*, Special Issue on Other Minds and Moral Agency, forthcoming).

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