

that one creates a working model of the mind of another person and that one feeds imaginary experiences into this model in order to mindread others.

I claim that neither theory theory nor simulation theory are adequate as they stand. Both suffer from “the input problem”.² Each of the dominant theories cannot account for the way in which an experienced object gets classed in such a way that the machinery of theory theory or simulation theory can be brought to bear on that object. Both theories need there to be a process other than those they posit that can track the presence of persons. Both theories need something like a perceptual mechanism to bridge the gap between the mechanisms they posit and sensory stimuli in which another person figures.

For our purposes, one can suppose that one or the other of these two views of mindreading would be sufficient when coupled with a mechanism that could handle the perception of the presence of persons and some of their mental states. Such a perceptual mechanism must provide the right kind of inputs to the cognitive machinery that theory theory and simulat

already, then one cannot use the conditional without some prior mindreading ability that can determine that the antecedent holds.

One might try to find a more fundamental candidate for a basic psychological rule. For example, one might think that the theory theorist Simon Baron-Cohen is on the right track when he posits an eye direction detector (EDD) that operates by a rule such as this, “If x looks like an eye (e.g. “has concentric circles of coloration”), then x is an eye and belongs to an agent that is aware of what is in front of that eye.”⁴ Baron-Cohen also posits an intentionality detector that operates by a rule such as, “If x moves and one does not detect something moving the object, then x is an agent, moving where it intends to go.”⁵

The problem is that whenever one tries to find a still more basic rule than the last rule that one tried, one either finds that the rule is false/ does not plausibly correspond to actual folk psychological practice or that mentalistic content has been snuck into the antecedent. For example, one needs a way of refining ED since even a moth’s wings can have concentric circles of coloration and blind persons have eyes but are not aware of what is in front of them. If, however, the origins of one’s representing others as visual attenders comes from ED, it’s not clear where the data is going to come from to refine ED.⁶ One needs some understanding of what it means to be an attender that can be decoupled from having eyes that can be used to refine the conditional in ED. One cannot posit the identification of false positives for free. Similarly, we do not observe anything moving a magnet or a plant. If ID is the origin of representing others as agents who

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intend things, it is not at all clear how we could rule out magnets and plants from this class. Likewise, it is not clear how ID could be modified to account for intentionally allowing oneself to be moved by another person, as when one takes a charge in basketball or when a cat mother patiently allows its kittens to climb over it and tug its tail.

A perceptual mechanism that can unlock the antecedents of the basic principles of a folk psychology is necessary in order for the mechanisms and abilities posited by theory to be of any use in identifying other agents and their mental states.

An unsupplemented simulation theory also cannot plausibly do the work of mindreading. To be a complete explanation of mindreading, the simulation theory has to claim that one somehow uses a model of another person without recourse to data that includes any mental features. For, if using a mental model of another person is a complete explanation of mindreading, then no mindreading ability should be required that is not a simulation ability. Input that is not conceived of as being of or about a person is used to somehow modify one's own mind so that a mental simulation can be run.

Notice, however, that an ability to use a working model or even to assemble a model is of no use in understanding the world unless something directs the creation of the model which tracks the nature of what is modeled. A computer simulation of a chess game between two masters, for example, is dependent upon being fed inputs that correspond to the nature of the game of chess and the strategic preferences of the chess players in question. Having the ability to host or carry out a chess simulation is of no use in understanding the world of chess if there is not some other ability or mechanism that allows one to set up and run a useful simulation.

Similarly, if George rounds a corner and encounters Suzie crying, the ability to run a simulation where George imagines what he would be thinking or feeling if he was crying is of no use in understanding what Suzie is going through unless George catches on to at least two different features of his environment. George has to have a non-simulation ability to recognize Suzie as a potential candidate for simulation and must recognize the features of Suzie that need to figure in a simulation of her. George needs an ability to process sensory stimuli in a way that allows his simulation abilities to be of use.

A full defense of the claim that theory theory or simulation theory cannot plausibly get around the input problem without supplement is not possible here. What has been said should be enough to illustrate what I have in mind. In the case of both theory theory and simulation theory, the best move available to them is to supplement what they already posit with a perceptual ability to identify persons and the mental states most closely tied to their sensible behaviour. In the next section, I will argue that the input problem applies to theories of self-knowledge as well and exerts a similar pressure for the inclusion of some perception-like ability in an account of self-knowledge.

The Input Problem and Self-Knowledge

I want to focus on cases of self-knowledge where one discovers new truths about oneself through the course of one's experience, where it is the quality of one's experience which serves as the evidence for what one discovers. Thus, we will set to one side self-knowledge one gains on the basis of testimony by others, and we will not concern ourselves with whatever self-knowledge one may gain in an a priori manner (e.g. Shoemaker REF). Somewhat more subtly, I will be setting aside cases where one

Consider, for example, the phenomena of thought insertion, often associated with schizophrenia. Someone suffering from thought insertion experiences some of their