

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

In this book, Mark Rowlands challenges the Cartesian view of the mind as a self-contained monadic entity, and offers in its place a radical externalist or environmentalist model of cognitive processes. Cognition is not something done exclusively in the head, but fundamentally something done in the world. Drawing on both evolutionary theory and a detailed examination of the processes involved in perception, memory, thought, and language use, Rowlands argues that cognition is, in part, a process whereby creatures manipulate and exploit relevant objects in their environment. It is not simply an internal process of information processing; equally significantly, it is an external process of information processing. This innovative book provides a foundation for an unorthodox but increasingly popular view of the nature of cognition.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

The body in mind

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

General editor ERNEST SOSA

Advisory editors

JONATHAN DANCY *University of Reading*
 JOHN HALDANE *University of St Andrews*
 GILBERT HARMAN *Princeton University*
 FRANK JACKSON *Australian National University*
 WILLIAM G. LYCAN *University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*
 SYDNEY SHOEMAKER *Cornell University*
 JUDITH J. THOMSON *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

RECENT TITLES

WILLIAM G. LYCAN *Judgement and justification*
 GERALD DWORKIN *The theory and practice of autonomy*
 MICHAEL TYE *The metaphysics of mind*
 DAVID O. BRINK *Moral realism and the foundations of ethics*
 W. D. HART *Engines of the soul*
 PAUL K. MOSER *Knowledge and evidence*
 D. M. ARMSTRONG *A combinatorial theory of possibility*
 JOHN BISHOP *Natural agency*
 CHRISTOPHER J. MALONEY *The mundane matter of the mental language*
 MARK RICHARD *Propositional attitudes*
 GERALD E. GAUS *Value and justification*
 MARK HELLER *The ontology of physical objects*
 JOHN BIGELOW & ROBERT PARGETTER *Science and necessity*
 FRANCIS SNARE *Morals, motivation and convention*
 CHRISTOPHER S. HILL *Sensations*
 JOHN HEIL *The nature of true minds*
 CARL GINET *On action*
 CONRAD JOHNSON *Moral legislation*
 DAVID OWENS *Causes and coincidences*
 ANDREW NEWMAN *The physical basis of predication*
 MICHAEL JUBIEN *Ontology, modality and the fallacy of reference*
 WARREN QUINN *Morality and action*
 JOHN W. CARROLL *Laws of nature*
 M. J. CRESSWELL *Language in the world*
 JOSHUA HOFFMAN & GARY S. ROSENKRANTZ *Substance among other categories*
 PAUL HELM *Belief policies*
 NOAH LEMOS *Intrinsic value*
 LYNNE RUDDER BAKER *Explaining attitudes*
 HENRY S. RICHARDSON *Practical reasoning about final ends*
 ROBERT A. WILSON *Cartesian psychology and physical minds*
 BARRY MAUND *Colours*
 MICHAEL DEVITT *Coming to our senses*
 SYDNEY SHOEMAKER *The first-person perspective and other essays*
 MICHAEL STOCKER *Valuing emotions*
 ARDA DENKEL *Object and property*
 E. J. LOWE *Subjects of experience*
 NORTON NELKIN *Consciousness and the origins of thought*
 PIERRE JACOB *What minds can do*
 ANDRE GALLOIS *The world without, the mind within*
 D. M. ARMSTRONG *A world of states of affairs*
 DAVID COCKBURN *Other times*
 MARK LANCE & JOHN O'LEARY-HAWTHORNE *The grammar of meaning*
 ANNETTE BARNES *Seeing through self-deception*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The body in mind

Understanding cognitive processes

Mark Rowlands

University College, Cork



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521652742

© Mark Rowlands 1999

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1999

This digitally printed version 2008

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Rowlands, Mark.

The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes / Mark Rowlands.

p. cm. – (Cambridge Studies in Philosophy)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 65274 X (hardback)

1. Philosophy of mind. 2. Mind and body. 3. Cognition.
4. Externalism (Philosophy of mind) I. Title. II. Series.

BD418.3.R78 1999

128'.2 – dc21 98-45620 CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-65274-2 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-04979-5 paperback

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page ix</i>
1 Introduction: ‘A picture held us captive’	1
PART I PSYCHOTECTONICS	
2 Introduction to Part I: ‘Don’t work hard, work smart’	21
3 Environmentalism and what it is not	31
4 Environmentalism and evolution	64
5 Perception	100
6 Memory	119
7 Thought	148
8 Language	172
PART II PSYCHOSEMANTICS	
9 Introduction to Part II: the need for and the place of a theory of representation	205
10 Two theories of representation	212
11 Environmentalism and teleological semantics	230
<i>References</i>	258
<i>Index</i>	267

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

Philosophy since Kant has been, well, neo-Kantian. Indeed, neo-Kantianism in philosophy arguably predates Kant by a considerable time. Locke, Berkeley, and Hume were all neo-Kantians. Kant was a neo-Kantian. Hegel was a neo-Kantian, as was Marx (at least the Marx of the first and second Internationals). Nietzsche, that most professedly anti-Kantian of thinkers, was a neo-Kantian. The linguistic turn in philosophy is essentially a linguistic form of neo-Kantianism. Mainstream twentieth-century philosophy of science has been about as neo-Kantian as you can get. Structuralism is neo-Kantian. And anybody, but anybody, who writes about literary theory is neo-Kantian to their intellectual core. As you might have already gleaned, I am using the expression 'neo-Kantian' in a somewhat broad sense. Indeed, the way I am using the expression makes it difficult to imagine anyone who is not neo-Kantian. Neo-Kantianism is the view that there are activities of the mind whose function is to structure the world. At least some aspects of the world that is presented to us, therefore, are mind-dependent in that they depend for their existence or nature on the structuring activities of the mind. The significance of recent strands of thought that have been labelled *externalist*, or *anti-individualist* is that they effectively invert this picture of the relation of mind to world. What is essential to externalism, or, as I shall call it here, *environmentalism*, in all its forms, is the idea that the contents of the mind are, in some sense at least, *worldly*: they are environmentally constituted. This does not, of course, provide a *refutation* of neo-Kantianism, but it does, in effect, turn neo-Kantianism on its head.

This book was written over a period of time that straddled life both in the USA and in Ireland. My philosophical debts incurred on both sides of the Atlantic have been many and large. Colin McGinn first started me thinking about externalism. Max Hocutt helped me realize that commonalities between anti-Cartesian positions were more

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-04979-5 - The Body in Mind: Understanding Cognitive Processes

Mark Rowlands

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

important than the differences. Of a more immediate nature, my thanks to Maeve Crowley, Eoin O'Kelly, and Paul Rothwell who read earlier versions of this book, and to staff and students at University College Cork, Trinity College Dublin, Queen's University at Belfast, and the University of Ulster at Coleraine where proto-versions of some of the individual chapters were presented. John Post and Pierre Jacob, as readers for Cambridge University Press, made several very useful suggestions which greatly improved the final version. Also at Cambridge, my thanks to Hilary Gaskin for her help and quiet efficiency, and to Gillian Maude for some outstanding copy-editing.

A much earlier version of chapter 5 appeared as 'Against methodological solipsism: the ecological approach', in *Philosophical Psychology*, 8, 1, 1995, 1–24. An earlier version of chapter 11 appeared as 'Teleological semantics', in *Mind*, 106, 422, 1997, 279–303.

Before his sad and untimely death, Edward Reed was kind enough to read, in its entirety, an earlier version of this book. His suggestions greatly improved the eventual result, particularly with regard to the chapter on memory. An abiding regret is that I never got to meet Ed, and so could not benefit from talking to him as I have benefited from reading him. This book is dedicated to his memory.