

Marsilio's Reading Group

Led by	Marsilio Gagliano
Title	Critique of Daniel Dennett's "Intentional Systems" Part I
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INTRODUCTION

I have written the following little essay to aid us in discussing together a reading graciously provided by Daniel Dennett entitled "Intentional Systems Theory" (2009) available at the Tuft University Website in pdf format.

Follow this link: <http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/papers/intentionalsystems.pdf>

Our previous discussions of Nagel's "What it is like to be a Bat?" and Whitehead's "Nature Lifeless" went very well, but you may have noticed from the transcripts that our discussions departed rather rapidly from a consideration of the texts themselves. One of the useful features of a reading group, in contrast to other sorts of discussion groups, is that reading groups owe consideration of the texts themselves. So, I wanted to delay our departure from Dennett's text by what may at first appear to be an odd means – by attacking it. Based on what I hope is a careful and accurate consideration of Dennett's thesis in sections I and II of the following essay, I argue, in sections II and IV, that Daniel Dennett is an ironic metaphysical chicken, a cowardly beast whose theory of intentional systems theory is logically consistent but incomplete. My argument can be summarized in four steps:

STEP ONE: Dennett defines 'stances' as methods of predicting the behavior of some object in order to inform our practical reasoning, that is, reasoning in order to achieve something good (or apparently good) for the one who reasons practically.

STEP TWO: Dennett argues that, from an epistemological point of view, it is reasonable to apply the intentional stance to an object whenever it is reasonable to consider that object as autonomous, that is, as acting in such a way as to achieve something good for itself rather than as something to be used to achieve the good of another.

STEP THREE: From a metaphysical point of view, Dennett's position is ironic: Dennett thinks that it is reasonable to consider things as autonomous, as having ends in and for themselves, only if it renders them more useful as a means to accomplish goods or ends extrinsic to themselves – or – why Dennett makes me feel like a deontologist stranded on a desert island with a utilitarian.

STEP FOUR: Dennett's Intentional Systems Theory is not logically inconsistent, but it is incomplete because it cannot account for intentional differences. Intentional differences exist between two intentional states A and B when ascribing either A or B to an object does not yield significantly different predictions about the future behavior of the object but does yield significantly different assessments of the meaning of that behavior – or why Daniel Dennett is an ironic metaphysical chicken.

My hope is that you will give Dennett the benefit of the doubt and read his essay carefully with an eye towards defending him against the charge of being an ironic, metaphysical, chicken. The only rule is that any defense you may offer must be based on the text itself, or your thoughts about it, rather than, for example, an appeal to some other text by Dennett or by some other author. Since Dennett responds to some objections to his theory later in the essay, this essay may provide the starting points for a defense against my objection. They may even provide

Marsilio's Reading Group

ammunition for going on the offensive and arguing that I am a confused metaphysical bull, a reckless beast devoid of due philosophical caution.

What side you take doesn't really matter for present purposes: you may be a pro-Daniel Denettian or a pro-Marsilio Ganglianian. Again, my hope is that, by making a direct attack on this specific reading based upon specific passages in the reading, we will, as a group, be motivated to read Dennett more closely than we otherwise might outside of this context. If someone called me an ironic, metaphysical chicken, I hope that someone would take up my cause if I were not there to respond in person. (How dare that Gagliano for dissing that decent Dennett dude!)

Whether you read Dennett's or my essay first is up to you. My suggestion would be to review quickly the four steps in my argument so that you can be on the lookout for potential responses to my charges. That is, knowing the four steps will help you read with a purpose. Having read Dennett, you can then read the rest of the essay that follows to see who wins, the ironic metaphysical chicken or the confused metaphysical bull.

Reading both the bull's and the chicken's essays may prove a bit much; so, I hope to stretch this discussion over two periods. In any event, I have tried to tie this material to the previous materials we have read and also with the wonderful discussion of intentionality held in *Second Philosophy* a few weeks back.

May the history of our little linguistic community grow deeper. Take care.

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** PART ONE **

STEP ONE: Dennett defines 'stances' as methods of predicting the behavior of some object in order to inform our practical reasoning, that is, reasoning in order to achieve something good (or apparently good) for the one who reasons practically.

As practical, we reason in order to act, to do, or to make something. Practical reasoning requires that we make predictions about the future behaviors of other persons and things. In order to be useful, these predictions must be not only correct but also timely, that is, if one cannot make the prediction in time, the information contained in the prediction may become useless. Often the demand for timeliness competes with the demand for correctness.

The more quickly one makes a prediction, the greater is the risk that it will be incorrect in one or more respects.

In "*Intentional Systems Theory*," Daniel Dennett refers to the basic methods we use to predict behavior as "stances," of which there are three: the physical stance, the design stance, and the intentional stance. Using the physical stance, we predict an object's future behavior on the basis of the "laws of physics and the physical constitution of the things in question." (p.2) Using the design stance, we assume that the object in question is designed for a certain purpose, that it is sufficiently well designed to accomplish that purpose, and that it will not malfunction or break.

Marsilio's Reading Group

Imagine, for example, a child asks you what will happen when she presses the buttons on a calculator she found in her desk drawer in the following order: 2, x, 2, and =. Adopting the physical stance would require that you 1) apply the relevant laws of physics, 2) comprehend the physical characteristics of the calculator's various components and 3) having carefully gathered current data about this particular device, calculate the future of particular groups of electrons as they wend their way through the circuitry of the machine. Adopting the design stance, requires that 1) you assume that the device was designed to correctly perform mathematical operations and that it was in good working order and 2) you know that multiplying 2 by 2 is four.

The physical stance is less risky and less timely than the design stance. If you have a thorough knowledge of physics and of the physical properties of the components of the particular calculator that the child found in her desk, then the average future of the millions of electrons, which are responsible for causing the elements of the liquid crystal display to darken and form the conventional symbol for the number four, can be known with statistical certitude. The design stance is more risky: the calculator may be broken or poorly designed. But from a practical point of view, the advantages of timely prediction outweigh the increased risk of making a false prediction.

Now suppose we select at random 500 human beings who have completed 12 years of education and are between the ages of 25 and 35. We want to predict how many of these individuals will resort to the design rather than the physical stance in predicting what will happen when the buttons on a calculator are pressed in the following order: 2, x, 2, and =. They are permitted to push any sequence of buttons before they make the decision except for the sequence 2, x, 2, and =. Each of them firmly believes a) that the calculator in question is a made by Casio, 2) that it has been recently purchased at Wal-Mart, and 3) that he or she will receive a \$10 reward for making a correct prediction. They are given access to a well equipped physics lab and three days in which to make their final decision, but they cannot drink or eat until they have made their decision. Offhand, I would predict that the vast majority of our test subjects would either say "four" right away or say it after having made a few practice calculations and that they would make this prediction based upon the design stance.

Note that in making this prediction, I do not adopt the physical stance towards these people; I have no idea what might be happening in their central nervous systems. I do not adopt the design stance; I make no assumptions about what these individuals may or may have not been designed to do. Rather, I adopt an intentional stance. I assume that they have certain beliefs and desires and that they will act rationally. I assume few of them will have the requisite knowledge for adopting the physical stance, which would be error prone for anyone not well versed in electronics.

I also assume that even if adopting the physical stance were less risky, the cost of its application (time without food and water) would outweigh the benefits of its application – a lousy ten dollars. In adopting the intentional stance, I treat these tests subjects as "an agent of sorts, with beliefs and desires and enough rationality to do what it ought to do given those beliefs and desires." (p. 3) I make a lot of assumptions. My prediction is risky, but timely – very, very timely.

The intentional stance is a very fruitful way of predicting the behavior of things other than humans. Chess-playing computers, robots used in manufacturing, dolphins, flatworms and amoebas, even self-replicating macromolecules can be successfully handled using the intentional stance – that is to say, their behavior can be more or less successfully predicted if one thinks about them as agents with beliefs and desires that act rationally so as to achieve what is good for themselves.

Marsilio's Reading Group

** PART TWO **

STEP TWO: Dennett argues that, from an epistemological point of view, it is reasonable to apply the intentional stance to an object whenever it is reasonable to consider that object as autonomous, that is, as acting in such a way as to achieve something good for itself rather than as something to be used to achieve the good of another.

Dennett says that applying the intentional stance is sometimes “well-nigh obligatory – when the artifact in question is much more complicated than an alarm clock” (p. 3) In predicting the future behavior of a chess-playing computer, it would be impractical to resort to their physical stance or design stance. If you assume that the computer knows the rules of chess and can pick out those moves which are tactically and strategically useful for achieving its desire, victory, your predictions would be less certain than those that fall back upon the design stance (which requires sifting through millions of lines of computer code) or the physical stance (which requires calculating the flow of electrons), but practically speaking, if your purpose in predicting the computer's move is to win a fun game of chess, then the intentional stance is the only stance that is reasonable to adopt. (p. 4.) Of course, if your purpose is to design a better chess playing computer, the story might be different.

Sometimes applying the intentional stance is silly. Though I can successfully predict that wood cutting implements will have sharp edges of some sort, it would be unreasonable to make this prediction on the basis of their having a desire to cut wood. So we might ask ourselves, when is it reasonable to apply the intentional stance. Here is what Dennett has to say:

“Whereas our simpler artefacts, such as painted signs and written shopping lists, can indeed be seen to derive their meanings from their functional roles in our practices, and hence not have any intrinsic meaning independent of our meaning, we have begun making sophisticated artefacts such as robots, whose trajectories can unfold without any direct dependence on us, their creators, and whose discriminations give their internal states a sort of meaning to them that may be unknown to us and not in our service.” (p. 8)

Please note, then, that in order reasonably to apply the intentional stance to some objects requires that it be reasonable to consider that object as capable of entertaining something that is intrinsically meaningful to it independently of any meaning it may have for us. To underscore this point, look at what Dennett has to say about flatworms and amoebas:

“Consider a simple organism – say a planarian or an amoeba – moving non-randomly across the bottom of a laboratory dish, always heading to the nutrient-rich end of the dish, or away from the toxic end. The organism is seeking the good, or shunning the bad – its own good and bad, not those of some human artefact user.” (p. 9)

In this passage, the phrase “its own good” does the same work as the phrase “intrinsic meaning independent of our meaning” did in the first passage. Having one's own meaning or “seeking one's own good is a fundamental feature of any rational agent.” (p. 9) Elsewhere, Dennett refers to the capacity to possess intrinsic meaning or one's own good as autonomy: “What matters in the identification of the agent to whom beliefs and desires are properly attributed is autonomy, not specific structures.” (p. 16.) To identify something as an agent, and thus as an object to which the intentional stance may be applied, requires that there be something good for that object in itself and apart from the purposes of an extrinsic user. The goodness of a hammer is summed up in its usefulness to the one who hammers; there is no good for the hammer in itself. But there is something good for an amoeba, regardless of its utility for us. The amoeba is autonomous (from the Greek *autos* = itself; *nomos* = law); it is in some sense a law unto itself.

Marsilio's Reading Group

It has its own purposes and ends; and, it is in virtue of this autonomy, argues Dennett, that it is reasonable to treat it as an intentional system (as a rational agent with beliefs and desires seeking rationally to secure its own good) when we want to predict its future behavior.

In short, then, here is the answer to our previous question about when it is reasonable or not to apply the intentional stance: it is reasonable to apply the intentional stance in predicting some object's behavior iff it is reasonable to attribute some degree of autonomy to that object, and it is reasonable to attribute autonomy to an object iff there is something that can be described as intrinsically good for it, as opposed to its utility for another.

Note that this question was an epistemological one. It was a question about how we go about knowing things, about when it is reasonable to apply this or that kind of explanation to this or that object.

** PART THREE **

STEP THREE: From a metaphysical point of view, Dennett's position is ironic: Dennett thinks that it is reasonable to consider things as autonomous, as having ends in and for themselves, only if it renders them more useful as a means to accomplish goods or ends extrinsic to themselves – or – why Dennett makes me feel like a deontologist stranded on a desert island with a utilitarian.

What about the metaphysical questions? Are chess playing computers really rational agents, are they really things that have beliefs and desires and for which some things are intrinsically good or bad? Intentional terms, Dennett points out, "are spread across the spectrum" and are applied to things as diverse as evolution, cuckoo chicks, computers, male drivers, female bakers, and fictional detectives. (See pp. 11-12) Do all such things really have beliefs and desires? Are they really intentional systems? Or do they simply behave "as if" they are intentional systems?

Dennett answers the metaphysical question in the first paragraph of our reading. The main thesis of "Intentional Systems Theory" is: "Anything that is usefully and voluminously predictable from the intentional stance is, by definition, an intentional system." (p. 1) If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it's a duck. If treating something as an intentional system leads to a lot of useful (that is more or less accurate and timely) predictions capable of guiding our practical reasoning, then it is an intentional system. If it is useful to think about something as if it were some sort of thing called X, then it is an X. To quote Dennett again: "the intentional stance works (when it does) whether or not the attributed goals are genuine or natural or 'really appreciated' by the so-called agent . . . Does the macromolecule really want to replicate itself? The intentional stance explains [predicts] what is going on, regardless of how we answer that question. . . Seeking one's own good is a fundamental feature of any rational agent, but are these simple organisms [planarians and amoebas] seeking or just 'seeking'? We don't need to answer that question. The organism is a predictable intentional system in either case." (p.9)

Note the irony of Dennett's main thesis, a thesis that relies on the implicit claim: if it is useful to think about something 'as if' it were some sort of thing called X, then it 'is' an X. In the present context, the claim is more specific: If it is useful to think about something 'as if' it were an intentional system, then it 'is' an intentional system. But 1) to say that something is useful is to say that it serves my practical purposes, and 2) to say that something is an intentional system is to say there is an intrinsic good for it regardless of how it might be good for me. So the irony is this: it is reasonable to think of something as having intrinsic purpose only if thinking so serves some purpose extrinsic to it, some purpose which is not its own, some purpose that is to be defined in terms of its utility for me or my kind.

Marsilio's Reading Group

In calling Dennett's position ironic, I stop short of calling it logically inconsistent. If there is something wrong about what he is saying, it is more subtle than an error in logic. In order to better express this irony, I want to turn to meta-ethics for a moment. Meta-ethics is the study of moral theories. Moral theories are theories which lead to conclusions about what ought or ought not to be done. Two moral theories are especially prominent in our culture: utilitarianism and deontology – theories associated with John Stuart Mill and Immanuel Kant respectively. Roughly speaking, Mill enjoins us to act always in such a way as to promote the greatest good for the greatest number. Kant enjoins us to never treat other persons as a mere means to our own ends, but as ends in themselves – that is, as autonomous rational agents whom we must respect as good in themselves and as enjoying goods for themselves.

In the case of act utilitarianism, circumstances may render it permissible to take the life of an innocent person as long as that action maximizes the greatest good for the greatest number; in the case of deontology, taking the life of an innocent person is always forbidden, for it is to treat that person as a mere means.

Now suppose you and I were stranded on a desert island, and you ask me whether I believe it would ever be permissible for me to take your life. I respond that I believe it is not permissible. You are a Kantian and conclude that I am a Kantian; I respond that you are mistaken. I argue instead that in present circumstances, the greatest good for the greatest number – the two of us – will be achieved only if we can rely on one another not taking the other's life and that the only way we can rely on that is by adopting the rule that, regardless of our future circumstances, neither of us ought to take the life of the other.

I do not promise not to take your life because I believe that I would be treating you as a mere means; rather, I promise not to take your life precisely because you and I are the best means to each other's survival. As a Kantian, you would agree with my conclusion – it would be wrong for either of us to take the other's life. You may be satisfied that you can reliably predict my behavior in regard to taking your life. I will never take your life under any circumstances; but you may find the reasons I have for not taking your life highly ironic. From your point of view, I vow never to treat you as a mere means to an end because such a vow is the best means to secure an end, survival.

In reading Dennett, I sometimes feel like a Kantian who has been stranded on an island with a utilitarian. Dennett is willing to consider me an intentional system (who can enjoy intrinsic goods that are somehow independent of his aims and purposes), but he does so only on the grounds that considering me as an intentional system allows him to make useful, that is timely and reasonably accurate, predictions about my behavior as he pursues his aims and purposes. I would not fear for my life if I were marooned on a desert island with a utilitarian of the sort I have described. Given this utilitarian's beliefs about the way things work and given his or her moral theory, I can reasonably predict his or her future behavior. Take it as a near certainty that he will not kill me, no matter what the circumstance.

Practically speaking, I can regard him as if he were a Kantian who respected me as an end in myself, and not a mere means in his survival project; but as to the meaning of his actions towards me, whether or not he is a utilitarian or a Kantian seems to make a really big difference. Let me call this difference 'the intentional difference'. Intentional differences exist between two intentional states A and B when ascribing either A or B to an object does not yield significantly different predictions about the future behavior of the object but does yield significantly different assessments of the meaning of that behavior.

Marsilio's Reading Group

** PART FOUR **

STEP FOUR: Dennett's Intentional Systems Theory is not logically inconsistent, but it is incomplete because it cannot account for intentional differences. Intentional differences exist between two intentional states A and B when ascribing either A or B to an object does not yield significantly different predictions about the future behavior of the object but does yield significantly different assessments of the meaning of that behavior – or why Daniel Dennett is a metaphysical chicken.

I take it for granted that I know what it means to talk about meaning, until, of course, I ask myself explicitly what it means for something to have meaning. Dennett has insisted that some of our more sophisticated artefacts, like robot poker players, can engage in activities that have "intrinsic meaning independent of our meaning . . . whose trajectories can unfold without any direct dependence on us."

So whatever the meaning of "meaning," both Dennett and I must account for it in some fashion. Dennett has argued that it is reasonable to consider objects as intentional systems (that is, systems for which meanings can exist independently of those ascribed to it by external agents) whenever considering them as such systems yields rich and voluminous predictions about their behavior for the sake of accomplishing our own ends. Though ironic, Dennett's position is not logically inconsistent; it is, however, incomplete. It fails to account for intentional differences, where intentional differences are defined as different intentional states that lead one to the same conclusions about the future behavior of a system but different assessments of the meaning of that behavior.

So I do not disagree with Dennett because I think it is wrongheaded to ascribe intentional states like desire to things like macromolecules; such ascriptions would be wrongheaded only if one adopts some version of matter like that described in Whitehead's "Nature Lifeless", which we read a few weeks ago. I do not think matter is necessarily lifeless. But I do think Dennett's account is incomplete because some objects seem to be the kinds of things for which things can matter and others do not.

Either winning doesn't really matter to a chess computer because it is not the sort of thing to which winning can matter, or winning does matter to the chess computer, in which case the computer is the sort of thing to which winning can matter, that is, for which winning can mean something. If something can mean something to a computer, then there must be something that it is like to be a computer; the autonomy which Dennett ascribes to intentional systems implies that there must be some point of view, called the chess computer's point of view, from which point of view winning has meaning and matters.

If computers are or can be the sort of thing to which something can mean something, then computers are or really can be quite different in themselves than from how I conceive them to be. I don't think things could matter to a computer; I could be wrong. But then I would be really wrong and my error would not consist in or manifest itself as an error in my predictions about the computers future behavior in so far as it is relevant to my own practical projects; I would be really wrong about what computers are or can be in themselves.

Pausing to consider how things might be in themselves apart from the predictions we make about their future behavior for the sake of accomplishing our own goals is the essence of metaphysical speculation. Metaphysical speculation requires a certain amount of courage; we are on risky grounds when we attempt to transcend, however briefly, the narrow confines of our day to day pragmatism.

Marsilio's Reading Group

Dennett is willing to assert that all sorts of objects in the world are the sorts of things to which other things can matter and for which they can have meaning; but he reduces what being an intentional system means to its cash value in our practical dealings with the world. He lacks the courage to go the next step and ask "what must something be in itself if something else can have meaning for and/or matter to it". Daniel Dennett is a metaphysical chicken.

Marsilio Gagliano, Aka. KMS
9 August 2009

Marsilio's Reading Group

DISCUSSION:

Marsilio Gagliano:

If you've looked at my intro, you already know what I am up to today. I want us to take a close look at Dennett's text. I guess the best place to begin would be with his notion of a stance and the differences between the physical, design, and intentional stances.

- ✦ Are they really distinct?
- ✦ Does it really reflect the way we go about understanding the world?
- ✦ Is it complete?

Those are the sorts of questions with which we should begin.

Any ideas?

[12:13] Simulat Almendros: I think that they aren't really a way of understanding the world - instead they are ways of understanding how we act in the world

[12:13] Vajra Raymaker: I would think that they are really distinct IF they issue in different predictions

[12:13] Marsilio Gagliano: ok

[12:13] Simulat Almendros: the stances are stances that we take towards the world; not facts about the world

[12:13] Marsilio Gagliano: two questions: what are the stances about -- us or the world; second, what makes them different?

[12:13] Oswy Gothly: He seems in the first paragraph to take a step back even from stance and talks about mind which he says can be attributed to anything that appears to have behaviour

[12:14] Oswy Gothly: He then says well behaviour can be dealt with in three stances[?]

[12:14] Marsilio Gagliano: I should think they are about the world, as relevant to our action -- of course -- but they predict the behavior of things other than us, sim

[12:15] Simulat Almendros: I think that what he is talking about is how we need to predict what is going on around us in real time - and that when we predict what people will do that we take the intentional stance

[12:15] Marsilio Gagliano: and what it is to have a mind is broadly construed, Oswy

[12:15] Vajra Raymaker: I would think that they are about the world. Not really about us, because we aren't automatically in any one of them, can shift around between stances at will

[12:15] Simulat Almendros: his example of driving is at the core of the idea I think

[12:15] Marsilio Gagliano: even when we predict what some animals and machines will do too, Sim

[12:15] Oswy Gothly: He then seems set again in the first paragraph to be on a purely behaviouralists course. Stance becomes three ways of dealing with behaviour.

[12:16] Simulat Almendros: that we couldn't drive unless we took the intentional stance about the other drivers on the road

[12:16] Marsilio Gagliano: stances are about predicting the behavior of human and non-human things then?

[12:16] Vajra Raymaker: Oh, driving is a good example : -)

[12:16] Jake1 Silvercloud: "intentional systems theory" is like intelligent design? I didn't do the reading

[12:16] Oswy Gothly: Marsilio, that's how it seems to me?

[12:17] Marsilio Gagliano: that's the way it seems to me too

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [12:17] Vajra Raymaker: Not really Jake. It is about treating systems as having intentionality. Mars, that okay?
- [12:17] Simulat Almendros: Agree Vajra
- [12:17] Marsilio Gagliano: but I don't think he is a behaviourist in the strict sense of the term -- the Skinnerian sense -- or at least he need not be
- [12:17] Marsilio Gagliano: action could replace the term 'behavior' without changing his position much
- [12:17] Jake1 Silvercloud: treating systems as having consciousnesses?
- [12:18] Oswy Gothly: His reference to voluminous predictions seems to imply he is the practical man cutting through all the issues to get to a core we can use in no nonsense way.
- [12:18] Marsilio Gagliano: and behaviorists -- strict ones -- would never appeal to intentions
- [12:18] Vajra Raymaker: Maybe, Jake, if consciousness entails representation
- [12:18] Simulat Almendros: He is pretty explicit about that Oswy - that is exactly what he is doing
- [12:18] Marsilio Gagliano: no Jake, consciousness need not accompany intention, as Dennett understands intention that was the point of the striving example
- [12:19] Oswy Gothly: His sense of the practical seems to come from saying well we have behaviour let's see how we can use that with different categories of things.
- [12:19] Marsilio Gagliano: see page 14 top, Jake
- [12:19] Jake1 Silvercloud: you mean if consciousness *only* requires representation? By representation I'm assuming you mean a physical entity
- [12:20] Marsilio Gagliano: yes, Oswy, but he denies (on page 14, bottom) that his position is an instrumentalist one
- [12:21] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - he is listing various ways that we make predictions about our situation so we can act on it in real time - I don't think he's making a metaphysical statement at all
- [12:21] Marsilio Gagliano: look at 14 Jake, he allows for unconscious representations, lines 6 & 7
- [12:21] Vajra Raymaker: Mars, is Dennett a realist about intentionality, where we find that it works to take the intentional stance? If not, then perhaps he would allow us to associate the having of consciousness with the having of real intentionality (if that goes beyond success of stance)
- [12:21] Marsilio Gagliano: If you look at page 1, Vajra, he says what is predictable from an intentional stance IS an intentional system; whether the "is" means really is --- that's another question
- [12:22] Vajra Raymaker: Or does he say that success of intentional stance in regard to a system is all there is to that system having intentional states
- [12:22] Marsilio Gagliano: but he wants to get away from having to draw a line between real and "as is" intentionality
- [12:22] Marsilio Gagliano: see page 8, point 1
- [12:23] Oswy Gothly: I agree Sim he wants to avoid those issues and deal with what we have in practice. He says his position is purely epistemological.
- [12:23] Marsilio Gagliano: perhaps purely epistemological....BUT....he does say IS an intentional system
- [12:23] Simulat Almendros: But I do like how he uses the intentional stance to link our behaviour to the action of our brain - ie, that we can take an intentional stance about systems that make up our minds, and then take the intentional stance about systems within those systems until we get to systems that are simple enough that its possible to take the design stance and then the physical stance
- [12:23] Jake1 Silvercloud: if he's making a discernment between "as is" and real intentionality then he's talking about free will
- [12:24] Marsilio Gagliano: I don't think he is, Jake
- [12:24] Jake1 Silvercloud: free will is the only thing that can separate those

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [12:24] Marsilio Gagliano: and I would contend that if he is trying to avoid metaphysical claims all together, he doesn't do it --- but that would be for later in the convo
- [12:24] Jake1 Silvercloud: the difference between computation and having a soul
- [12:25] Marsilio Gagliano: the intentional stance can be applied to thermostats
- [12:25] Vajra Raymaker: He doesn't like that way of speaking? I wonder why? How can he not draw a line between "as if" intentionality and real intentionality and yet not be a behaviourist in the Ryle sense?
- [12:25] Marsilio Gagliano: bimetallic springs which expand and contract to turn heat sources on and off
- [12:25] Oswy Gothly: Marsilio I agree he cant get away with his position because it ignores the metaphysical. But more later?
- [12:25] Simulat Almendros: As you know Oswy - I think its a good idea not to deal much with metaphysics - metaphysics generally isn't helpful for understanding anything other than what assumptions we make
- [12:26] Marsilio Gagliano: that is an assumption as well, Sim, and you presume that you yourself operate with no metaphysical assumptions of your own
- [12:26] Marsilio Gagliano: careful
- [12:26] Oswy Gothly: Sim I don't agree but lets not cloud Marsilio's argument too much yet?
- [12:26] Vajra Raymaker: Oh Sim : -) Metaphysics is the study of the world. How can the world not give us understanding of itself?
- [12:27] Marsilio Gagliano: good question Vajra
- [12:27] Vajra Raymaker: the earlier one you mean, I think Mars 12:27?
- [12:27] Marsilio Gagliano: I think he is not a classical behaviorist because classical behaviorists would avoid referring to non-perceptible, interior states in explaining anything
- [12:27] Simulat Almendros: That's not what I'm saying Marsilio - its that we can use metaphysics to reveal our own assumptions which is very useful - but that we can't use it to tell us much about the world
- [12:28] Vajra Raymaker: okay Mars.
- [12:28] Marsilio Gagliano: "He doesn't like that way of speaking? I wonder why? How can he not draw a line between "as if" intentionality and real intentionality and yet not be a behaviourist in the Ryle sense?" <--that one
- [12:28] Vajra Raymaker: gotcha : -)
- [12:29] Marsilio Gagliano: well, those assumptions are about the world Sim
- [12:29] Oswy Gothly: Marsilio, in his three way subdivision I take it we have inanimate physical objects natural objects, then constructed objects clocks computers , and then the rest including us?
- [12:29] Simulat Almendros: Vajra - I think that metaphysics is an attempt to understand the world using logic alone - and yes of course Marsilio - the assumptions are about the world
- [12:30] Oswy Gothly: Mars And our ability to predict gets chancier as we move from one to the other.
- [12:30] Marsilio Gagliano: any given thing, Oswy, is amenable to treatment according to each of the three stances, Oswy. So the distinction among stances does not divide up the world in the same way.
- [12:30] Simulat Almendros: but I think that with the idea of the three stances Dennett provides us with a pretty clear idea about how we understand things - that is, how we work
- [12:31] Marsilio Gagliano: yes, the stances are distinguished by degrees of riskiness; in principle riskiness, that is
- [12:31] Simulat Almendros: Yes Oswy - but the riskiness of the stances is worth it because of the speed and ease of understanding that they provide
- [12:31] Marsilio Gagliano: a non-physicist would probably make fewer errors using the design stance, still the design stance is riskier

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [12:32] Oswy Gothly: Mars but a natural object eg a rock means we have only one stance towards it. With a human we can take all three depending on our perspective?
- [12:32] Simulat Almendros: if we tried to understand the world from a position of requiring absolute knowledge we would never know anything
- [12:32] Sage Hartmann: is what 'is' really a question about the 'world' at all? I'm inclined to think of the 'universe' as consisting of facts/relationships/constraints, not nouns, so what's wrong with him letting us interpret the nouns as is convenient?
- [12:32] Marsilio Gagliano: look at what you need to know to predict the behavior of a calculator in my intro
- [12:32] Marsilio Gagliano: Sage, I don't think he would have a problem with that
- [12:33] Simulat Almendros: I agree sage
- [12:33] Marsilio Gagliano: Sim, I would not define metaphysical knowledge as absolute
- [12:33] harmoniasophia Scribe: excellent point Sim! "What the bleep do we know?"
- [12:34] Simulat Almendros: We actually know quite a lot I'd say Harmonia - its pretty silly to say that we don't know anything because we don't know everything
- [12:34] Marsilio Gagliano: wouldn't it be odd, given the success with which we apply the three stances, that they would not be about the world at all?
- [12:35] Simulat Almendros: well - we are in the world - and so if the stances reflect how we actually function then they are facts about the world too
- [12:36] Sage Hartmann: 'actually function'? :)
- [12:36] Vajra Raymaker: Neat idea, Mars
- [12:36] harmoniasophia Scribe: what we know supports a certain system, a system we have established a purpose for to aid our needs, whether this knowledge has any real purpose outside this system and in regards to absolute truth, hmmm the world may never know!
- [12:36] Simulat Almendros: hmmm - denying that we function somehow Sage ? :-)
- [12:37] Marsilio Gagliano: so it is a fair question to ask -- what is this world such that these three stances work for it? Are there any other stances? Are there modes of knowing the world that do not involve prediction of behavior for the sake of practical activity? If there is, what would that imply about the world?
- [12:37] Simulat Almendros: Agree Harmonia
- [12:37] Sage Hartmann: seems like depends on what we mean by 'world' mars. In a Heideggerian sense it would include intentionality, but in a strict empiricist's sense, that could be left out (the 'universe')
- [12:38] Marsilio Gagliano: empiricists did try to leave it out; and Dennett's contention --- and I think he and Heidegger are right here -- one cannot reasonable leave it out
- [12:38] Marsilio Gagliano: look at the last sentence of the reading; there Dennett departs radically from radical empiricism; unlike Heidegger, however, Dennett's world does seem to be constituted by relations of practicality -- everything in Dennett's world is in Heidegger's jargon -- ready to hand
- [12:40] Simulat Almendros: Marsilio - we live in a physical reality that has living things and the intentional stance is a stance that first was used to understand what living things are doing and why - its only very recently that we've had non living things like computer chess games toward which we could take the intentional stance
- [12:40] Marsilio Gagliano: ancient science is full of intentional explanations of physical realities
- [12:41] Simulat Almendros: OK - I agree with that :-)
- [12:41] Marsilio Gagliano: Ptolemy's universe was an intentional system
- [12:42] Simulat Almendros: but that indicates that its a fact about us - how we understand - it doesn't mean that is a property of reality apart from us
- [12:42] Marsilio Gagliano: So, perhaps we can move on to Part Two of my argument: Dennett's notion of autonomy
- [12:42] Marsilio Gagliano: the relevant passage, the main one, is on page 9

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [12:43] Sage Hartmann: I'm not certain what we are asking when we asking whether it's part of the 'world' or not. What do we mean by world; which properties of a 'world' are we trying to preserve that are in conflict?
- [12:43] Sage Hartmann: (err describing the world, not part of it, sorry)
- [12:43] Marsilio Gagliano: "its own good and bad"
- [12:43] Marsilio Gagliano: for the moment, let's define the world as "us and the things/events around us"
- [12:44] Marsilio Gagliano: Dennett doesn't say much about "the world", but he does say some things about autonomy and its relation to intentional systems
- [12:44] Simulat Almendros: Mars - Dennett only uses good and bad in the context of living creatures - he doesn't apply it to things like robots or chess games
- [12:44] Oswy Gothly: Marsilio I have lots of problems with the idea of good and bad as here defined ie seeking things and shunning others.
- [12:45] Marsilio Gagliano: note, on page 9, such a notion is at the heart of his theory
- [12:45] Marsilio Gagliano: what problem?
- [12:46] Simulat Almendros: He just says that we can usefully understand what other things are doing by thinking of them as intentional systems - but he doesn't say that its somehow good for the chess computer to win a game
- [12:46] Marsilio Gagliano: the notion of autonomy is mentioned again on 16, btw
- [12:46] Sunshine Bernard: I don't think he's trying to define good and bad.. just explain it in relation to the animals he's talking about
- [12:46] Oswy Gothly: Mars problem in the sense that how an a computer be really said to have a sense of good and bad in the sense he is using it?
- [12:47] Marsilio Gagliano: he says that there is no theoretically motivated reason to draw a distinction between real and 'as if' intentionality, Sim
- [12:47] Sage Hartmann: I think the most interesting question is regarding completeness. his position seems pretty safe if its interpreted conservatively
- [12:47] Marsilio Gagliano: that's my problem too, Oswy
- [12:47] Simulat Almendros: it doesn't seem to me to be a problem to say that food is good for an amoeba - why do you think it is Oswy?
- [12:47] Oswy Gothly: How can anything that does not have self awareness have a sense of good and bad?
- [12:48] Simulat Almendros: Right Mars - but why do we need to draw the bright line?
- [12:48] Vajra Raymaker: well, if good = useful, it can
- [12:48] Marsilio Gagliano: What must something be in order for something to be good for it, intrinsically meaningful for it --- Dennett ascribes these sorts of properties to ALL intentional systems (it's a matter of degree of difference, not difference in kind)
- [12:48] Sunshine Bernard: Oswy.. I don't think he's defining the sense of "good" or "bad"
- [12:48] Marsilio Gagliano: I am will to draw a dim line
- [12:49] Simulat Almendros: I thought that in the text that Dennett was being quite careful not to apply the notion of good and bad to non-living systems
- [12:49] Oswy Gothly: mars I cant see that any inanimate object or constructed object ie constructed by us eg robots or computers could have good and bad?
- [12:49] Marsilio Gagliano: I just want to know, what must something be in order for something to matter to it
- [12:49] Sunshine Bernard: useful?
- [12:49] Marsilio Gagliano: well, Oswy, perhaps that is just an assumption -- a wrong headed one, on your part
- [12:49] Simulat Almendros: Agree Sunshine
- [12:50] Marsilio Gagliano: can you justify it in some way?
- [12:50] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - Dennett doesn't

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [12:50] Marsilio Gagliano: why is 'being animate' a necessary condition for something to matter to the thing in question?
- [12:51] Marsilio Gagliano: yet assumes, Sim, that something can matter to let's say, a robot poker player
- [12:51] Oswy Gothly: Sunshine he says Page 9 Good =seeking Bad =Shunning.
- [12:51] Sunshine Bernard: nods.. yes, I've seen it Oswy
- [12:51] harmoniasophia Scribe: wouldn't that be directly related to intentionality as it relates to the self and not the thing in itself? Surely the thing in itself outside what "good or bad" idea the self applies to it is erroneous to the thing in itself
- [12:51] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - he is saying that food is good for a living thing - what's wrong with that usage?
- [12:51] Marsilio Gagliano: he also says winning is good for the chess computer and replicating itself is good for the macromolecule
- [12:52] Oswy Gothly: Sim my main beef is with computers and robots having a sense of good and bad. I am not sure about the degree of self awareness of amoeba?
- [12:52] Simulat Almendros: I don't think he does Mars - I scanned the text looking for that usage of good and I couldn't find it
- [12:52] Marsilio Gagliano: what about a macro-molecule, Oswy?
- [12:52] Sage Hartmann: I think it gets interesting when different people have different stances toward the same thing and/or each other - how are such perspectives be integrated?
- [12:53] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - the point is that he doesn't say that robots have a sense of good and bad - so you are accusing him of something he doesn't do
- [12:53] Marsilio Gagliano: "Seeking one's own good is a fundamental feature of any rational agent" p. 9
- [12:53] harmoniasophia Scribe: they cannot in reality
- [12:53] Marsilio Gagliano: and all intentional systems are "rational agents" in the sense in which he uses the phrase there, Sim
- [12:53] Thoth Jantzen: replication is something that just happens through chemistry. if there is any 'good' involved it's for the pattern, not the molecule itself, but that's even a stretch.
- [12:54] harmoniasophia Scribe: I totally disagree with that comment
- [12:54] Simulat Almendros: Mars - he also says that we can treat things as if they were rational agents without them actually being rational agents
- [12:54] Oswy Gothly: Mars I don't know where the dividing line is for self awareness but it seems to me to be the line for a sense of good and bad.
- [12:54] Vajra Raymaker: Har I see what you mean about "good" connecting to the issue of what the intentional stance is "about"
- [12:54] Marsilio Gagliano: He denies that, Harmonia, on page 8, point 2)
- [12:55] Marsilio Gagliano: sim, he says that there is ultimately no real distinction between "as if" and real intentional systems; that's the point of his argument
- [12:55] Simulat Almendros: Agree with Thoth on that
- [12:55] Marsilio Gagliano: note that Thoth has allowed for things that are patterns for which good and bad can exist --- he is becoming more of a Platonist every day!
- [12:56] Sage Hartmann: lol mars
- [12:56] Marsilio Gagliano: Patterns are agents too?
- [12:56] Simulat Almendros: I don't agree that that's quite what he says Mars - he is looking at a continuum with as if at one end and is at the other and is saying that there is no sharp boundary along that continuum and no reason to want one
- [12:56] Oswy Gothly: Sim " Page 9 The robot poker player that bluffs seems to be guided by internal states that function just as a human poker players intentions do, and if that is not original intentionality , it is hard to say why not." That seems to contradict you .
- [12:57] Simulat Almendros: no - he says its hard to say why not - but my clear sense is that we don't need to say why not

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [12:57] Marsilio Gagliano: if it is not, hard to say why notbecause there is no criterion on the basis of which to make the distinction, that is, the distinction is not real -- there is no principled way to make it
- [12:57] Marsilio Gagliano: that's why I call him a chicken, Sim; he runs from the big question
- [12:58] Oswy Gothly: If that is all that Dennett can say then he seems to be missing a lot out of the equation.
- [12:59] Marsilio Gagliano: thus, intentional systems theory is incomplete; Q.E.D.
- [12:59] Oswy Gothly: Mars I think he has a sort of semi workable theory for dealing with behaviours at a practical level it fails when self awareness comes into it and so it fails to explain intentionality.
- [13:00] Vajra Raymaker: Oswy, you are assuming that self awareness is required for intentionality; This is controversial
- [13:00] Marsilio Gagliano: and I think he is right not to restrict intentionality to only human agents
- [13:00] Sage Hartmann nods
- [13:00] harmoniasophia Scribe: where the eye sees incompleteness the onus is on the eye and not that which a thing in itself
- [13:00] Marsilio Gagliano: so I would not make self-awareness, at the high level at which we possess it, is a necessary condition for being an intentional system
- [13:00] Oswy Gothly: Vajra Yes at some level? I don't think computers are ever intentional. Come on blast me out of the water?
- [13:01] Simulat Almendros: hehe Mars - he is pretty plain that he isn't interested in the metaphysical question of drawing the bright line between real intentional systems like us and as if intentional systems like chess computers
- [13:01] Marsilio Gagliano: planaria are surely intentional systems, but I don't think flatworms are self-conscious in the way in which we are self-conscious
- [13:01] Simulat Almendros: he says there is no well motivated reason for drawing that boundary
- [13:01] Vajra Raymaker: The issue whether they are intentional is quite different from the issue whether they have self-awareness, Os. That's all I'm saying. Animals low on the phylogenetic scale probably have intentionality to some degree without having self-awareness
- [13:02] Marsilio Gagliano: I agree with Vajra there
- [13:02] Sage Hartmann: if a broader metaphysical distinction/generalization was useful or important to us, would the distinction not then become accessible to us through the model he is using?
- [13:03] Oswy Gothly: Vajra Well I have admitted I don't know how far down the animal chain we have to go. But are you saying computers have intentionality except in the sense that they are great complex mimics.
- [13:03] Simulat Almendros: I do too - but also there is no good reason to draw a sharp boundary about self awareness either - it seems to me to be a continuum of gradually increasing awareness and there is no reason to draw a sharp boundary
- [13:03] Marsilio Gagliano: the model may systematically cloud it; that's the difficulty with all models....they clarify some things by hiding others
- [13:03] Sage Hartmann nods
- [13:03] Marya Blaisdale: Doesn't the concept of intentionality only come into it when you apply meaning to a functional system?
- [13:04] Marsilio Gagliano: self-awareness can be cashed out in the terms of this discussion by looking at page 12,
- [13:04] Vajra Raymaker: Os, I'm not saying anything about computers. I certainly think that no current software has consciousness, and not intentionality either, because for me, to have intentionality you must be long to a kind with a evolutionary history
- [13:04] Marsilio Gagliano: and page 10; the notion of first, second, third, fourth and fifth order intentional systems

Marsilio's Reading Group

[13:04] Sage Hartmann: ranks would be nice :)

[13:04] Marsilio Gagliano: what we call self-awareness is, in intentionality talk, at least a third order intentionality

[13:05] Marsilio Gagliano: if by functional you mean having a function within a course of practical action, Marya, then the answer is maybe not -- that is Dennett's assumption, the one I ultimately question

[13:06] Marsilio Gagliano: as we come to the end here, it seems to me that most have an issue with thinking that something could be good to/matter to something like a molecule or a computer?

[13:07] Sage Hartmann: For those who don't have the reading: "A first-order intentional system is one whose behavior is predictable by attributing (simple) beliefs and desires to it. A second-order intentional system is predictable only if it attributed beliefs about beliefs, or beliefs about desires, or desires about beliefs, and so forth." This is where I would like to leave it for the moment. As I said, it seems to me that most have an issue with thinking that something could be good to/matter to something like a molecule or a computer?

[13:08] Simulat Almendros: In other places he discusses how until you have replicating entities it makes no sense to talk about things having a purpose and once you do have replicating systems it does - and so something can 'matter' to the system if its required for the replication

[13:09] Vajra Raymaker: Marya, I think you're right that a system would have to have pretty complex functions to have anything like the intentionality we are thinking of here, but I wonder if it would be enough. Depends on which functions, involving which aspects of the world I guess

[13:09] Marsilio Gagliano: can I get some sense of what people feel about that question? It seems to me that most have an issue with thinking that something could be good to/matter to something like a molecule or a computer?

[13:09] Simulat Almendros: would love to follow up on this

[13:09] Sage Hartmann: I'm still trying to understand Marsilio's objection

[13:16] Sage Hartmann: I think a very interesting question would be, if we put aside the question of primitive intentional systems and take them as he states, then what kinds of relationships between first-order systems are needed to get a second-order system by his definition

[13:17] Simulat Almendros: yes - that is an interesting question Sage

[13:17] Marsilio Gagliano: an intentional state about an intentional state; a belief about a belief; if I believe that all my beliefs are suspect, then I am at least a second order intentional system; that's all he means by it, anyway

[13:18] Sage Hartmann: yes it might be you can't start composing things meaningfully until you get up to 3rd-order

[13:18] Marsilio Gagliano: that is an even more interesting question

[13:18] Sage Hartmann: they might be fundamental leaps in interpretation prior to that

[13:19] Marsilio Gagliano: animals seem to be at least second order systems

[13:19] Sage Hartmann nods

[13:19] Marsilio Gagliano: they see (and intentional state), and are aware of they're seeing (second order)

[13:20] Sage Hartmann: many animals understand the distinction between a predator seeing them and not seeing them

[13:20] Marsilio Gagliano: a good read on the early roots of orders of intentional systems is in Augustine's, On Free Choice of the Will, Book 2; one could backtrack to the earlier sources from there

[13:20] Simulat Almendros: the idea of emergence may work in this context - that the second order system emerges from the interaction of many beliefs in a first order system

[13:21] Vajra Raymaker: yes, Marsilio : -)

[13:21] Sage Hartmann: maybe Sim... not clear to me, but it is interesting. I think it might require a fundamental change in interpretation, to identify a simpler way of thinking about it

Marsilio's Reading Group

[13:21] Marsilio Gagliano: and if reality is somehow intentional from the ground up, then the emergence of higher order intentional systems from lower ones would not be such a big mystery, Sim. To be is to be intentional. All causal interaction involves one thing 'being about' another in some fashion

[13:22] Sage Hartmann: it seems to me that it might be necessary to presuppose the existence of 3rd-order systems in order to get any others.

[13:23] Vajra Raymaker: well, causal interaction implies one thing carrying information about another. Information is related to intentionality

[13:23] Marsilio Gagliano: so, Vajra, the mistake to date has been to look at causality as if it could be devoid of intentionality

[13:23] Simulat Almendros: I wonder if Dennett is using intentional in the same way that the phenomenologists do - seems to me that he isn't

[13:23] Sage Hartmann: I agree Marsilio!

[13:23] Marsilio Gagliano: good question, Sim

[13:24] Vajra Raymaker: Sage, what did you mean by "compose" here: [13:18] Sage Hartmann: yes it might be you can't start composing things meaningfully until you get up to 3rd-order

[13:24] Simulat Almendros: Dennett is using intentional in the sense of thinking that something wants to do something - ie intends to do something

[13:24] Marsilio Gagliano: that's kinda where I have come to be -- namely, holding the position that reality -- things, events, whatever you want to call them -- are intrinsically intentional (broadly construed)

[13:24] Vajra Raymaker: Intentions are one type of intentional state, Sim. Dennett is also talking about beliefs, since they are required for action too

[13:25] Vajra Raymaker: So Sim, I would say Dennett using intentionality in the regular sense, not in the sense of intending to do something

[13:25] Simulat Almendros: OK

[13:26] Marsilio Gagliano: but emotions are intentional in that they are about something

[13:26] Simulat Almendros: I'll re-re-read the paper

[13:26] Marsilio Gagliano: intentional: 1) on purpose, 2) being about something

[13:26] Marsilio Gagliano: 2) is supposed by 1)

[13:26] Vajra Raymaker: Mars interesting to me: [13:23] Marsilio Gagliano: *so, Vajra, the mistake to date has been to look at causality as if it could be devoid of intentionality*

[13:26] Marsilio Gagliano: but not the other way about

[13:27] Sage Hartmann: Vajra, well I was thinking of a world-model/view that could describe higher-order intentionality levels by defining purely logical relationships between lower ones. I don't think you can describe higher ones if you try to assemble ones under 3rd-order

[13:27] Simulat Almendros: hmmm - can't on purpose mean "for a reason" rather than mean about something?

[13:27] harmoniasophia Scribe: same thing semantics

[13:28] Vajra Raymaker: I love the idea: Everything means something, everything is about something. "The world is rife with meaning" sweet. But it will be hard to get people to bite, I suspect, Mars.

[13:28] Marsilio Gagliano: for a reason implies something being about another as well

[13:28] Simulat Almendros: ie - for a purpose invokes 'because' instead of 'about'

[13:28] Marsilio Gagliano: y, as a reason for x, is about X in some way

[13:28] Vajra Raymaker: Yes, it can mean that for sure, Sim. But perhaps Dennett is focussing on the fact that intentions have aboutness

[13:29] Simulat Almendros: because talks about action while about talks about representation

[13:29] harmoniasophia Scribe: intention opposes purpose

[13:29] Marsilio Gagliano: well, Vaj, "aboutness" doesn't seem to figure prominently in the essay we just read

[13:29] harmoniasophia Scribe: in ALL cases

Marsilio's Reading Group

- [13:29] Marsilio Gagliano: some people use the terms to mean the same thing, Sophia
- [13:29] Simulat Almendros: maybe Vajra - but it seems to me he's talking about because and not about
- [13:30] Marsilio Gagliano: my purpose or intention is to do x, he said
- [13:30] harmoniasophia Scribe: intention and purpose are in opposition
- [13:30] Marsilio Gagliano: perhaps, but then you are using the terms in an extra-ordinary way
- [13:31] harmoniasophia Scribe: I don't care what he said , why reason what is ineffective, if it to fit move on, is my "stance"
- [13:31] Vajra Raymaker: Hmmm Mars, not sure how your statement at 29 fits with all the earlier discussion
- [13:31] Simulat Almendros: which will give a bit of structure to my re-re-reading - to see if I can discover whether he's talking in terms of because or in terms of about
- [13:31] harmoniasophia Scribe: I am all about finding the "absolute" there is where purpose will be found
- [13:31] harmoniasophia Scribe: no where else
- [13:32] Marsilio Gagliano: A big to-do about "about" <--- the title of my next great play
- [13:32] Sage Hartmann: heh
- [13:32] Vajra Raymaker: He MUST be talking in terms of because, since he is talking about the causation of action. I am not denying that. But the whole issue about "as if" vs. real intentionality is an issue about aboutness/meaning/representation
- [13:32] Simulat Almendros: hehe
- [13:32] Vajra Raymaker: lol Mars
- [13:32] harmoniasophia Scribe: intention always intends to meet its purpose so in "doing" it actually opposes the purpose
- [13:33] Marsilio Gagliano: I simply want to catch sight of the absolute by seeing it glimmer amidst the details, soph. :)
- [13:33] Taliesin Freund: what absolute?
- [13:33] harmoniasophia Scribe: purpose is awareness of self intention is self aware, positionally intention looks where it is not therefore it never "sees" itself
- [13:33] Marsilio Gagliano: that One, Herr Freund
- [13:34] Simulat Almendros: I think that absolute is an adjective not a noun and that its just confusing to talk about "the absolute"
- [13:34] harmoniasophia Scribe: the only reason why an effect occurs is because intention is an opposing force
- [13:34] Sage Hartmann: Does anyone know a good study of the phenomenology of intentionality?
- [13:34] Taliesin Freund: Brentano
- [13:34] Marsilio Gagliano: Husserl
- [13:34] Sage Hartmann: sorry, which work?
- [13:35] Marsilio Gagliano: An Introduction to Pure Phenomenology is a good place to start, for Husserl, that is, but Medieval Philosophy is full of intentionality stuff too; Brentano was trying to revive some of it