

Phil 397  
The Mind/Body Problem

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Fred Dretske: *Mind and Brain*  
[Handout # 5]

§ Dretske's Main Argument

1. If there is any point in saying that we do have a mind, then the following principle must be satisfied: The mind must be good for something over and above what the brain is good for. [Dretske's principle]
2. If the set of facts that makes it true to say that a person thinks and knows, sees and remembers, etc., has an *explanatory place* in the explanation of why that person behaves the way he does (i.e. facts about the brain do not provide *sufficient* information), then Dretske's principle is satisfied.
3. If a physical system has no way of *representing* the external conditions on which its survival and well-being depend, nothing inside to indicate what is going on outside, then it cannot act when, where, and how it must in order to flourish and survive.
4. Hence, coordinating behavior with external conditions requires a *representational* function within the physical organism.
5. Mind = the representational mode of the brain.
6. But neuroscience only studies the brain in terms of its intrinsic (electrical and chemical) properties, not its external relations.
7. Psychology, on the other hand, studies this physical organism in its (informational) relation to its external surroundings; i.e., it studies the representational mode of the brain.
8. Therefore, psychology gives the mind an *explanatory* role which neuroscience cannot give.
9. Therefore, the talk about "the mind," as well as psychology itself, cannot be eliminated.

§ Two Tasks for Philosophers

A. To give a satisfactory theory of representation:

\_\_\_ i) representation  $\neq$  resemblance

\_\_\_ ii) representation  $\neq$  correlation

[Argument against the correlational view of representation]

1. There are correct beliefs and false beliefs just as there are correct representations and *misrepresentations* in our daily experiences.

**2. If belief, as a form of internal representations, has simply a (token) correlation with whatever that causes that belief, then there would never be any false belief or misrepresentation.**

**3. Therefore, representations cannot be based simply on a (token) correlation with the outside world.**

\_\_\_ iii) representation = ?

**B. To show that the facts that comprise the mental (at least the cognitive) life of an organism, are facts that help explain something about its behavior.**

\_\_\_ To show that internal representations, *qua* representations, cause the behavior they do *in virtue* of their representational (mental) properties.