

Philosophy 132
Philosophy of Mind
Handout 9
Wednesday, 26 September 2007

1. *Subjectivity of sensation*

There are (at least) two different conceptions of *subjectivity* in philosophical discussions of the contrast between *subjective* and *objective*:

(I) Perspectival conception of subjectivity:

To know what pain is, you have to know what it is like to feel a pain

(II) Metaphysical conception of subjectivity:

- a. Pain exists only if one feels pain
- b. To feel pain is sufficient for there to be pain

Contrast:

One can see a table, but also have an illusion of seeing a table (when one sees something which isn't a table but misperceives as one), or even have an hallucination of a table (when one is aware of nothing at all in the world around us).

If pain is metaphysically subjective, then illusion or hallucination of pain is ruled out; and because of the explanation of that, it makes no sense to suppose there may be unfelt pains.

2. *Is Pain Metaphysically Subjective?*

- a.) What of misclassified pains? (Paul Churchland, *Matter & Consciousness*, an example of hazing)
- b.) What of the soldier wounded in battle?
- c.) What of being woken up by a pain in your left shoulder?

What is the connection between privacy and subjectivity?

3. *The Adverbial Conception of Bodily Sensation versus The Mental Object Conception*

If a sensation of pain is just a painful sensation, then feeling pain may just be

(i) to have a certain sort of sensation, a painful one,

or

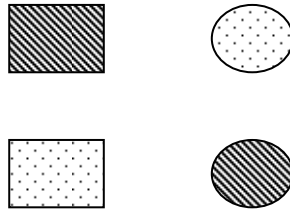
(ii) to feel in a certain way, painfully

What is felt exists just in case one has the feeling (subjectivity), because it is a way in which one feels. (Compare: when one dances a tango, is there a particular entity a tango, that one dances, or does one move in a particular manner, dancing tango-ly.)

Adverbial conceptions of sensation are applied more widely than just to bodily sensation, for example to visual experience. According to an adverbialist to have a visual hallucination of an expanse of red is to sense in a red manner, or redly.

Can an adverbialist give an adequate account of the variety of our sensations?

In the case of vision (G.E. Moore and Frank Jackson):



How does 'sensing rectangularly, ovally, slantily and spottily' distinguish between these two situations? A role for objects: gathering up properties together.

Question: how does this apply to the case of bodily sensation?

4. *The Location of Sensation*

Sensations are located in parts of one's body: one feels an itch in one's ankle; or a sore part on one's left knee; an area of tenderness on the back of your left arm; or a warm tickling sensation in the middle of one's back.

It is conceivable that one can have qualitatively exactly the same pain in one's left hand as in one's right. The difference between feeling it in one's left hand and in one's right hand is just that it is felt to be in the one place, one's left hand, rather than the other, one's right hand.

So the situation of feeling the pain in one or other of these places, or in both at once are different kinds of situation experientially. How does an adverbialist deal with this?

As with spatial location in the visual case, location of bodily sensation can play an *individuating* role.

Does this show that individual pains are objects? What is the role of bodily location here?

5. *Is a Pain Like a Marble in your Pocket?*

- (1) There is a marble in my jacket pocket
- (2) My jacket pocket is in Surrey Street
- (3) There is a marble in Surrey Street

- (4) There is a pain in Ellen's ankle
- (5) Ellen's ankle is in Surrey Street
- (6) There is a pain in Surrey Street

- (7) There is a hole in the button
- (8) The button is in the drawer
- (9) There is a hole in the drawer

What is it for a pain to move?

Suppose your knuckle is grazed and aches, and you move your hand is that a moving pain? Compare: you have an itch just below your wrist, and the itchiness is then gradually in each place between your wrist and your elbow.

michael.martin@ucl.ac.uk
mgfmartin@berkeley.edu