

The Contents of Visual Experience



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著者:Susanna Siegel

出版者:

出版时间:2012-8

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780199931248

What do we see? We are visually conscious of colors and shapes, but are we also visually conscious of complex properties such as being John Malkovich? In this book, Susanna Siegel develops a framework for understanding the contents of visual experience, and argues that these contents involve all sorts of complex properties. Siegel starts by analyzing the notion of the contents of experience, and by arguing that theorists of all stripes should accept that experiences have contents. She then introduces a method for discovering the contents of experience: the method of phenomenal contrast. This method relies only minimally on introspection, and allows rigorous support for claims about experience. She then applies the method to make the case that we are conscious of many kinds of properties, of all sorts of causal properties, and of many other complex properties. She goes on to use the method to help analyze difficult questions about our consciousness of objects and their role in the contents of experience, and to reconceptualize the distinction between perception and sensation. Siegel's results are important for many areas of philosophy, including the philosophy of mind, epistemology, and the philosophy of science. They are also important for the psychology and cognitive neuroscience of vision.

Features

Provides a new framework for understanding the contents of visual experience and investigating what we see

The author develops a new method of discovering the contents of visual experience

Explores the role of high-level properties in visual consciousness

Defends a controversial thesis: high-level contents of consciousness

Interprets and defends the idea that conscious experiences have contents

Lays out a new theory of the difference between sensation and perception

Reviews

"Siegel's book is an important contribution to the contemporary literature on the nature and structure of perception, particularly on the topic of what is sometimes called 'the admissible contents of experience' (the question of which properties we experience in perception)."--James Genone, Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews

"This is one of the most significant books in philosophy of mind for many years. There are three big ideas in it. One is a novel argument for the conclusion that perceptual experiences have representational content. Siegel makes a persuasive case that this argument applies even to all but the most radical of those who take themselves to be opposed to representational views of perception. The second is a set of arguments that these contents of perception are 'rich' in that they go beyond color, shape, illumination, motion, and space. Perceptual experiences represent such properties as being a dog, being a pine tree and even being John Malkovich. The third big idea is a method for adjudicating the contents of perception, the method of phenomenal contrast. This method is of considerable value whether or not one accepts Siegel's conclusions. This book is illuminating, convincing and also wonderfully clear and fun to read."--Ned Block, New York University

作者介绍:

Susanna Siegel is Edgar Pierce Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University. She has been named 2012 Walter Channing Cabot Fellow.

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标签

知觉哲学

哲学

perception

mind

评论

Boring...

虽然不完全赞同（特别对知觉作为命题态度的部分处理方案），但是清晰易懂，值得好评。

书评