

are bad. For reasons necessarily not only evaluate but have force in forming, changing, confirming attitudes in accord with the reasons. All reasons that thinkers have are reasons-to, not merely rational appraisals...I mean that to understand reasons one must know how to use reasons, and indeed actually use them, to support or change one's own attitudes in one's own thinking practice. To understand the notion of reason, one must be susceptible to reasons. Reason must have force for one and one must be able to appreciate that force. (Burge 1998:250)

Regardless of whether you espouse dualism, materialism, disembodied, or embodied minds, I think that no one can ignore the question of whether we can shut off our thought from our senses completely? I see no way in which it can be demonstrated that we have some thoughts that remain unaffected by sensory perception.

This brings me back to the idea of multiple selves. Because we may have many levels of ethical metaphor and gut reactions occurring out of the unconscious, it is not enough to try and trap the unconscious once, or twice or three times. It is necessary to try and catch it as much as possible. Call it mindfulness, extreme sports, in the zone or whatever, the more we are connected, the better we can understand how to live our philosophy. We will better know when to let go of ourselves and when to control ourselves.

Evidence will never be 100% in science. Views will change and while there can be overwhelming evidence it may not be enough. But we can take ideas such as disembodied and embodied and actually live them. They don't have to be strictly one or the other. Maybe an embodied view helps when we are working or playing sports and then we switch when we go to church or pray. This conception, not just of multiple selves, but a living philosophy that changes to the weather of the moment will never satisfy those who cannot live without the idea of one truth, one universal way. I think they will live forever dissatisfied with this world.

## References

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input while in deep thought. I think that the environment around us must affect all thoughts because I see no way of demonstrating or experiencing total lack of sensory input.

While I think phenomenology is right in that we are trying to find something in our self and that the proper method is observance, they have it all wrong in the context of an embodied mind, for there is no transcendence, no pre-packaged or still reality, only a world of perception which constantly changes, albeit often times minutely. Phenomenology also went wrong in that the search only existed in the conscious level. What I propose is a trapping of the unconscious—a hunt. We must be able to knock ourselves down like Humpty Dumpty so we can put together the conscious and unconscious.

I find in my personal life that there are moments of clarity and change. These are often spurred on by momentous occasions such as graduation, weddings, birth, death, and moving. Sometimes they are tragic and accidental and other times rites of passage. It could result from a near death experience or depression. Often times these events cause a change, usually an almost imperceptible or gradual change. Other times we try to make changes like on New Years but fail. We may not realize that one of these points of change has happened until we reflect on them years later. Here is material we can work with! Can one hone these experiences to make changes in our ethical selves? In other words can I purposefully enact points of change?

I also wonder whether the event is necessary or is it just that these points of change shake us or create such a large difference between how we normally live that our conscious is forced to be more aware and take control of parts that our unconscious would normally handle? I don't think we can imagine such events either. They must be felt. Philosophical statements from now on must be a visceral act of the body. It should be worn as our skin, massaged into our muscles and breathed into our blood. A philosophy that cannot live, cannot be experienced has no worth. In the end a philosophy is nothing but what we have allowed to change within ourselves.

The spook of such an idea is the great mistrust of personal experience as a valid philosophical statement. And I agree that it would be suspect if approached as a one-way street. But just as our thought and experience are all reflected, refracted, and projected continuously between self and environment, so too any personal philosophy. The validity of personal experience, sometimes known as life narrative, exists only when we begin to share and allow fellow humans to reflect on them their own sympathetic experience. Humanity, through the looking glass of other humans, finds its self. This is what can make a personal philosophical statement a universal, but in contrast to the old conception of universal as existing outside of body, outside of earth, forever and forever unchanging. It is universal because it is felt in the everyday life of a multitude of bodies that empathize and relate. I don't think truth exists outside of a body. In defense of the I in philosophy as a valid point of reference, Tyler Burge writes:

To understand reasons and reasoning fully, it is not enough to understand abstractly that some purported reasons are good and others

a situation or environment. (ibid., 8) You have a philosophy of life begging for consilience, cross contamination and role-playing extravaganzas. So besides the possibility that we are always the same person the same self, we have the idea that we are continually exchanging selves in a vast wardrobe. We cannot know unless we pay more attention to the unconscious and our entire bodies in everyday experiences. This dilemma of the self leads into the same unknowing in our ethics.

The main problem with ethics in the results from Lakoff and Johnson are if 95% or more of our thought, including rational decision making, is unconscious, how can we devise moral treatises and expect to live by them in our day to day lives? Johnson himself pondered on this, and proposes a shift in our conception of ethics.

We will see that this traditional picture of morality as rule-following presupposes a view of concepts and reason that has been shown by empirical studies in the cognitive sciences to be false. Such problems with our traditional conception of ethics often result in the deep tensions many people encounter between their inherited view of their moral task, on the one hand, and the way they actually experience their moral dilemmas on the other. (Johnson 1993:1)

As a point of clarification, I take the part "inherited view of their moral task" to be not only our cultural, familial, human ideas of what is right, but also any pure philosophical treatise, or personal philosophy whether rigorous or not. What Johnson suggests in a strict sense is that we give up on the idea of rule-following ethics, probably even utilitarian style ethics. But practically and pragmatically as a society, what seems to be working best is something in between; neither a completely dogmatic rule bound ethics or a strict humanitarian anarchist ethics. Both personally and as a society I think that we need the idea of perfection, whether it be merely an idea or actual rules. However, we need to review our actions against that perfection.

Mere review, however does not solve the problem of how we can actually change into the ethical self we all want to be. Phenomenological attempts to trap the being come close, for in fact trying to find what it is that makes changes within is part of solving this problem. However, most phenomenological work merely documents being and thoughts as if the self and the environment come prepackaged to the scope of our reason, or our writing hand. I find them too observational and not at all interactive.

As cognitive science seems to be showing, thought is a highway of stimulus, electricity, multi-connectedness and continuous feedback of sensory perception. We are connected to the universe surrounding us even in self-reflection. Lakoff and Johnson make this point very clear and attack not only phenomenology but also all disembodied conceptions of the mind. "What disembodied realism... misses is that, as embodied, imaginative creatures, we never were separated or divorced from reality in the first place. What has always made science possible are our embodiment, not our transcendence of it, and our imagination, not our avoidance of it." (ibid., 93)

We dupe ourselves further by believing that our focus can block out all sensory

hidden hand of the unconscious mind uses metaphor to define our unconscious metaphysics—the metaphysics used not just by ordinary people, but also by philosophers to make sense of these concepts.” (ibid.:14)

So many of the metaphors we use in living our lives rely on sensory imagery and actions of our body, that the mind cannot be a transcendent and separated from the body. “In summary, reason is not, in any way, a transcendent feature of the universe or of disembodied mind. Instead, it is shaped crucially by the peculiarities of our human bodies, by the remarkable details of the neural structure of our brains and by the specifics of our everyday functioning in the world.” [4] Lakoff and Johnson feel confident in this statement because as they cite many times in their book, too many for me to catch, that opponents of an embodied mind simply have no empirical evidence to show and until they do, one cannot ignore the idea of an embodied mind. (ibid.:79,81,99)

What follows from their depiction of recent studies in cognitive science is that our mind is not separate from the body; there is a direct connection. Most of the thoughts we have occur at a level that we are not aware of in the unconscious, though they do not establish any strict boundaries between the conscious and subconscious. Reason and decision making often occur at the unconscious level. Metaphor binds the knowledge of our being and without it we would have no understanding and no meaning.

Immediately questions arise from Lakoff and Johnson’s view of the results. Question one is, how do we understand the self in not only an embodied mind structure but a mind and body whose inner workings we are often not privy to? The second question is what do ethics look like when rational decision-making occurs without our conscious knowledge? How can we ensure that as individuals we are living up to our own ethical codes and standards?

Some directions from the past have helped, mainly in the realm of self-interaction. Two psychologists J.J.Gibson & Ulrich Neisser delectably described a picture of the human with their idea of the ecological self. This is the self (part of many, perhaps infinite selves that humans have) that through constant interaction is changed by an environment that also constantly changes by our perceptions of that environment. They saw at least one dimension of being human as a symbiotic relationship with the environment. What I really enjoy about Neisser and Gibson’s ideas is the buffet style conception of humans having many different selves that we wear sometimes consciously and other times unconsciously like Clark Kent changing into Superman at a phone booth. (Neisser 1993:1-8)

Gibson further explains that “a self is not a special part of a person (or of a brain); it is a whole person considered from a particular point of view.” (ibid., 4) Besides the ecological self, we could have multitude of selfhood, i.e. the child self, the mother self, the work self, the play self, etc. If we link this idea to the structure of the unconscious, we could be playing different roles according to different circumstances each based on metaphors we have culled from experience. Combine this with Gibson’s idea of affordances, “any given situation affords some action and not others” and as sensing bodies connected to an embodied mind, the self may be continually changing according to what it perceives as possible in

## Discussion

**William Hofman**

Philadelphia University

My ideas ride the shockwave of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's book *Philosophy in the Flesh* (Lakoff & Johnson 1999). This book describes their findings in the realm of Cognitive Science and the implications recent research has on philosophy. While they argue that the results throw out theories of a disembodied mind, I think their findings cannot be ignored even if one disagrees with their interpretation of the results. Furthermore, as a philosopher it is not my duty here to critique the scientific merits of their experiments. I trust that the journals publishing their work as well as others that they cite have done their job as well as the cognitive science community. I want to establish a vision for how we understand and live better lives in the wake of their work.

The main point of Lakoff and Johnson's work is the demonstration of convergent evidence in the field of Cognitive Science that human thought is connected directly to how our bodies sense the environment around them. They emphasize that meaning in our reason and abstract thought is connected to our direct experience of the environment in a foundational way no matter how unconcerned the subject of thought is with the outside environment. Lakoff and Johnson explain, "Reason is not disembodied as the tradition has largely held, but arises from the nature of our brains, bodies, and bodily experience." (ibid., 4) Furthermore, much of our thinking happens at a hidden level in the unconscious. Hidden in the sense that if we were to pay attention to all the processes of thought, we would be unable to live through the day. Lakoff and Johnson elaborate on the strength of the unconscious as described:

Conscious thought is the tip of an enormous iceberg. It is the rule of thumb among cognitive scientists that unconscious thought is 95 % of all thought--and that may be a serious underestimate. Moreover, the 95% below the surface of conscious awareness shapes and structures all the conscious thought. If the cognitive unconscious were not there doing this shaping, there could be no conscious thought." (ibid.:13)

It is not known why in any empirical sense that there is a conscious/subconscious divide. It can be assumed that the sheer amount of categorization and sensory input would distract whatever purpose there is for conscious thought. It only seems natural that to understand, we use a metaphor of our time, the hierarchical organization. In fact, metaphor is what Lakoff and Johnson's results show as the link between conscious and unconscious. Metaphor glues everything with meaning. "What is startling is that, even for these most basic of concepts, the