

Minds and Mechanisms: Philosophical Psychology and Computational Models. By MARGARET A. BODEN. Brighton: Harvester Press. 1981. Pp 311. £20.00.

This is a selection of thirteen papers from Professor Boden's publications in philosophy, artificial intelligence, and cognitive psychology. They are concerned with the nature of mind, the adequacy of psychological explanation, the material embodiment of mind, and the ethical implications of scientific theories. Without exception, the various articles are written in a lively and interesting style, and they discuss central issues in cognitive science in an informed and cogent manner. The individual papers are readily obtainable in their original form, and there is some overlap and repetition, both among the various chapters and with Professor Boden's earlier books. However, this is redeemed by an excellent introduction which locates each of the selected papers within a rich and coherent philosophical structure.

Professor Boden's work rests upon the idea that a computational approach to cognitive science involves specifically philosophical questions. Unfortunately, she does not convincingly demonstrate two crucial assumptions, that philosophical discussions are relevant to cognitive science, and that philosophical problems can be resolved by a computational approach. Nor does she adequately handle several other issues of importance. First, the concept of a representation is undoubtedly important in a computational approach, yet Professor Boden does not acknowledge that it is philosophically problematic, nor that theories of cognitive representation are intrinsically untestable without a specification of the processes involved. Second, she does recognize that the concept of intentionality is both central and problematic, but her own account does not go beyond previous philosophical analyses, and is unclear over basic questions such as that of the ontological category to which intentionality is correctly ascribed, and that of the shareability or inalienability of intentions. Third, both cognitive processes and representations are described as 'inner' or 'internal', yet this spatial metaphor is never unpacked, and one is left uncertain as to whether 'inner' mental episodes are open to conscious introspection. Fourth, by regarding descriptions of hardware as essentially unimportant and incomplete, Professor Boden seems to underestimate the value of neuropsychological and psychopharmacological evidence in constructing and testing theories of cognitive function. Finally, it is claimed that the artefactual nature of computers

means that they cannot be regarded as having moral dignity, but the assumption that an organism's ethical status is dependent upon its origin is most questionable: are domestic cattle or laboratory rats less deserving of moral consideration than their wild counterparts?

In short, this is a somewhat inconclusive and unsatisfying book. Moreover, considering the degree of overlap and the complex ramifications of Professor Boden's arguments, it is most surprising that it contains no index. Those who have read her previous books may find further discussion of interesting issues and topics in this collection of papers. Those who have not may find the ideas and examples enlightening and instructive, but they are unlikely to be convinced of the general value of a computational approach to cognitive science and the philosophy of mind.

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Child Maltreatment: A Handbook for Mental Health and Child Care Professions. By ARTHUR H. GREEN. New York and London: Jason Aronson. 1980. Pp 314. \$25.00.

This book tackles one of the most distressing child care problems in an eminently sure and positively constructive manner. It is in part based on research results from Professor Green's own department, therefore upon the population for which his service is most easily available. However, his conclusions and suggestions both for developing further helping facilities and research should prove helpful to anyone working in this field, whether as administrator, planner or therapist.

Professor Green has confronted all the relevant aspects of child maltreatment in their full reality, a painful exercise and a test of courage for all of us however experienced. Based on reality his objective concerned approach has enabled him to put forward practical constructive suggestions for organizing community and hospital helping services. I do not think that this planning brief could be bettered in our present state of knowledge.

This book should be standard reading for all the helping professions working in this field and available in departmental libraries for reference.

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