Re: True Gems of Scientific Epistemology

Source: http://sci.tech−archive.net/Archive/sci.cognitive/2004−07/0532.html

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From: JXStern (*JXSternChangeX2R_at_gte.net*)
Date: 07/29/04

Date: Thu, 29 Jul 2004 16:35:35 GMT

On 29 Jul 2004 03:15:45 −0700, erayo@bilkent.edu.tr (Eray Ozkural exa) wrote:

> 1 Computationalism − The Next Generation, Matthias Scheutz, 1
> 2 The Foundations of Computing, Brian Cantwell Smith, 23
> 3 Narrow versus Wide Mechanism, B. Jack Copeland, 59
> 4 The Irrelevance of Turing Machines to Artificial Intelligence,
>Aaron Sloman, 87
> 5 The Practical Logic of Computer Work, Philip E. Agre, 129
> 6 Symbol Grounding and the Origin of Language, Steven Harnad, 143
> 7 Authentic Intentionality, John Haugeland, 159
>
>Beware, though, of Smith's article. It gave me a good stomach ache.
>
>The book overall is interesting. Look out for Scheutz's new work, he
>sounds like a very intelligent person.

http://www.nd.edu/%7Emscheutz/publications/scheutz02mitbook.html

Scheutz is a young guy, but five of the six other authors are old school − best of, perhaps, but even so, making it a bit funny to have them composing a "Next Generation" text. Agre is a bit less established and, hey, is right down the street from me at UCLA, who knew?

http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre/

This looks interesting:

http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre/shr.html

Hmm. Agre seems to come from the direction of critical theory, which puts him in pretty much a separate category from the other authors.

OK, I see, Scheutz himself tries to be the bridge between the technoids and the humanists. Dangerous stuff. Interesting indeed. I've downloaded a couple of pdf's from his site.

>I suspect our notion of truth is a convenience in the first place,
>truth itself may be a fiction to deal with the world effectively.

OK, now we're talking gems of scientific epistemology!

> Where is semantics in the theorems produced by
>a finite axiomatic system? (Do you think it is in the syntax?) Is
>semantics in the brain?

I think phrasing the questions this way is incoherent, if you're looking for a response and not just asking rhetorically here. Popular and traditional, maybe, but incoherent. I'm not sure any more what "semantics" means exactly, but whatever it is, I don't think it inheres in a theorem. For that matter, I'm not sure exactly what "theorems" mean in the context of computation. What I liked about Sloman's paper is that in order to deal with computationalism, it talks about computation. That, I think, is the key.

>If you'd like to discuss about articles in Computationalism: The Next
>Generation, we can talk on ai−philosophy group:
>http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ai−philosophy
>
>(It gets archived better, at least)
>
>I'm halfway through the book, and I think I've already formed some
>strong opinions on some of the thesises...

I'll warp on over to the yahoo group for a look−see, but I'll have to lay hands on a copy of the book, too (though I guess at least three chapters are available as draft downloads from various locations)(at least four ... hey, the first couple of pages of BCSmith's article I think are EXCELLENT − everything his "Origin of Objects" book failed to deliver, ... but this current tendency to disown Turing as a basis for computation, I'm afraid is badly mistaken. Turing needs to be further appreciated, and perhaps a little more creatively understood, not disowned, but I'm ranting beyond convention within parenthesis when I should be reading more of the paper!).

Thanks.

J.