

Exam 3

Alvin Lin

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Describe old detectivism.

Old detectivism is a concept stating that there is an unchallengable and “infallible” nature to our own state of mind. The ability to authoritatively determine one’s state of mind is granted only to the individual.

Describe new detectivism.

New detectivism challenges the old detectivism concepts by noting that our sense of self-awareness is fallible. We have better access to our own states of mind, but that access is by no means perfect. New detectivists deny that one’s relation to their state of mind is anything special or divine.

Why, according to Finkelstein, do both old and new detectivism prove unsatisfactory?

Old and new detectivism assert the existence of some mechanism that allows us to perceive our own mind. Both grant that there is a uniqueness and “aspectual richness” to personally sensing something, and Finkelstein argues that this leaves much to be desired because it fails to explain how such a mechanism of authority can exist.

Describe constitutivism. What are Finkelsteins main objections to it?

Constitutivism is the idea that stating one’s state of mind makes it into what we stated. We control our state of mind via our intention to feel or do something. Finkelstein argues that this misrepresents our role in our

own mind when we “feel” something since it does not provide a satisfactory explanation of the unconscious.

Describe the Middle Path Account, making sure to reference the Myth of the Given.

The Middle Path Account is a combination of ideas from both detectivism and constitutivism. It states that there is an outer sense, outside of which objects can exist, and it is independent of one’s inner sense. Objects such as pain or emotion only exist in one’s inner sense because of one’s conscious awareness of it. Like the Myth of the Given, this posits that there is a distinction between sensory stimulation and what we actually experience in our mind. This distinction makes the two categorically different.

Why is it that case that, normally, the best person to ask when it comes to your thoughts, feelings, attitudes, sensations, and experiences is you? That is, why should first-person authority be routinely granted?

Though detectivism has its flaws, it is correct in stating that you have the most privileged access to your own mental state. It makes the most sense to ask the person actually experiencing the thoughts, feelings, and sensations because the person who is having the experiences has the most accurate form of description for the experience.

In contrast, it is more logical to be skeptical of a person’s assertion about someone else’s state of mind because they do not have privileged access to that person’s emotions and experiences.

In general first-person authority is routinely granted because one has no reason to doubt the authority of a person asserting a claim on their state of mind. Someone claiming that they feel upset has nothing to gain by lying (unless they have a motive, which is a separate discussion) about it and thus it does not make sense to demand evidence for the reason behind the person’s state of mind. In our day-to-day conversation, we grant first-person authority to a person about their state of mind because we have no reason otherwise.