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A Mark of the Mental: In Defense of Informational Teleosemantics (Hardback)

By Karen Neander

MIT Press Ltd, United States, 2017. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Drawing on insights from causal theories of reference, teleosemantics, and state space semantics, a theory of naturalized mental representation. In *A Mark of the Mental*, Karen Neander considers the representational power of mental states -- described by the cognitive scientist Zenon Pylyshyn as the second hardest puzzle of philosophy of mind (the first being consciousness). The puzzle at the heart of the book is sometimes called the problem of mental content, Brentano's problem, or the problem of intentionality. Its motivating mystery is how neurobiological states can have semantic properties such as meaning or reference. Neander proposes a naturalistic account for sensory-perceptual (nonconceptual) representations. Neander draws on insights from state-space semantics (which appeals to relations of second-order similarity between representing and represented domains), causal theories of reference (which claim the reference relation is a causal one), and teleosemantic theories (which claim that semantic norms, at their simplest, depend on functional norms). She proposes and defends an intuitive, theoretically well-motivated but highly controversial thesis: sensory-perceptual systems have the function to produce inner state changes that are the analogs of as well as caused by their referents. Neander...



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