Dominic Gregory. *Showing, Sensing, and Seeming: Distinctively Sensory Representations and Their Contents*. Oxford University Press 2013. 256 pp. $55.00 USD (Hardcover ISBN 9780199653737).

Dominic Gregory's *Showing, Sensing, and Seeming* is a timely, insightful, and individual examination of the nature and contents of 'distinctively sensory representations'. In the introduction and the first three chapters, he gives a theory of such representations at a 'relatively rarefied and abstract' level (70). Chapters four to eight explore a number of extensions and applications of the theory. The book is sometimes dense, but never dull; the prose is clear and lively, with some nice touches of personality. The discussion ranges widely over literature in philosophy, psychology, and art history.

Perhaps the most original thing about this book is the target phenomenon. Various kinds of sensory representation have attracted a great deal of philosophical attention. There's plenty of literature on mental images, for example, and on depiction. But though work on one kind often adverts to work on another, the links are mostly intimated rather than examined. Gregory's approach is to treat all sensory representations as a kind, and to ask what unites them as such. His initial adumbration of his target, in the introduction, depends on a sort of intuitive taxonomy (though this isn't how he puts it). We have at our disposal a number of ways of using content to convey information, where 'content' is just whatever is grasped by someone who understands the information conveyed (6). Call these ways of informing *representations*. Some representations are not sensory: languages are the most obvious example. Some representations are sensory: pictures, recordings, mental images. There are manifest differences among these kinds of sensory representation, and so we often treat them separately, but there's something to be gained from asking what they have in common. The simple answer is that they're sensory, whatever that means. Gregory aims to improve on that simple answer by explaining what makes a representation ('distinctively') sensory: that is, what contents such representations have.

This approach of growing fruitful, complex ideas from simple thoughts is both a deliberate method and a characteristic style. Speaking of method, Gregory's theory is intended to offer 'illuminating elaboration of simpler things that we already believe', which can then be usefully applied (3). So throughout the book, he starts with 'simple', 'humdrum' observations about sensory representations and their contents, and ends up with sophisticated developments of them. This method risks losing readers at the very beginning of the argument: if you don't find the simple observations compelling, you won't be sympathetic to the project of elaborating on them. On the other hand, if you do buy them, their elaborations are naturally persuasive. As for style, the preoccupation with simple starting points reflects Gregory's agreeably modest tone. By and large, he lets his claims speak for themselves, and aspires to give 'decent' theories and arguments. He is also quick to acknowledge points at which more could be said, or at which his theory doesn't (yet) do work we might hope. For example, he says that the theory 'cannot pretend to be a complete account of the nature of distinctively sensory contents' (93).

This acknowledgement makes salient an important feature of the book. I've talked so far, as Gregory often does, of a 'theory' of sensory representations. But it's best to treat his work here as a 'theoretical framework', as he also calls it (vii). A theoretical framework gives us a way of structuring our thinking about a topic, without prescribing in minute detail how that framework should be fleshed

out. Taking the book this way, it's no real objection to point out that more could be said, or that the theory is incomplete. For example, Gregory makes heavy use of the notion of a 'type of sensation', but makes no sustained effort to say what a sensation is. If we're looking for a comprehensive analysis of sensory representations, this is problematic; but if we're after a useful way to think about them, it's not.

Accordingly, the first three chapters organize and elaborate thoughts about the content of sensory representations. The starting point is the idea that sensory representations show us things in a manner related to a sensory modality. Gregory argues that this showing has three distinctive aspects: sensory representations are 'perspectival' if the relevant sensory modality is (15-16); they involve 'sensibilia' linked to that modality (16-18); and they are 'relatively specific': if they show us something that falls under a fairly general concept, they often must also show us something more specific (8-20). They can't, for example, show us a coloured ball without showing us a ball of a specific colour (while languages, for example, can represent coloured balls of no particular colour). Gregory also distinguishes two kinds of sensory representation (20-22). 'Subjective' representations show things 'from the inside': they represent an experience of the thing being shown. 'Objective' representations just show things, rather than representing experiences of them. For example, you might imagine seeing a sunset, or you might just visualize a sunset. A recurrent theme in the book's theoretical chapters is the defence of this distinction against variations of the 'No Lookerless Looks' argument, according to which all sensory representations are subjective (23-6; 41-4; 64-9).

Gregory then develops these aspects of showing into a theory of the content of sensory representations. In chapter two, he addresses preparatory matters of perspective, both in representations and in sensations, and uses ideas about perspective to fill out the notion of a type of sensation. The thoughts about perspective are important for what follows, but are also independently interesting. Chapter three presents the full theory. The crucial thought is that showing is 'subjectively informative' (46-50). This means that to show something is to identify a type of sensation by picking out what it's like to have a sensation of that type. What representations show by picking out sensations is a scene, and scene-showing corresponds to seeming: that is, a representation shows a scene just in case it picks out a sensation such that anyone who had that sensation would seem to encounter the scene (50-3). Gregory distinguishes two modes of showing things as standing in certain ways that match the two kinds of sensory representations (53-67). Subjective representations are those whose contents characterize sensations: they single out a sensation type, and characterize a certain sensation as an instance of that type. Objective representations are those whose contents single out a sensation type and characterize its appearance as true, relative to a perspective.

As this summary might indicate, the theoretical half of the book requires some application. The ideas come quickly and need careful consideration, but patience is rewarded. The hard work really pays off when we get to applications of the theory. Though of course a framework needs to be plausible, and to put intuitions in order, the main test of its success is whether it has fruitful applications. By this measure, the theory Gregory gives is a success. Chapter four explores some types and features of sensory representations that the theory can illuminate, particularly by employing the notion of types of sensation. These include considerations of generality and specificity, familiarity and unfamiliarity, and indeterminacy. The next four chapters address mental images, depictions and pictures, and 'sensory records' (photos, recordings, and perhaps sensory memories). Each of these chapters is relatively independent of the rest of the book, and contains much of value for those interested only in the topic addressed. For example, the chapter on mental

images employs the theoretical framework in a clear and clever discussion of the debate in psychology over whether various pieces of empirical evidence tells us anything about what mental images consist in.

Besides the applications Gregory notes, it's easy to think of more ways the framework could be used. For example, Gregory's interesting idea that some paintings are 'irresolvably ambiguous' in terms of the sensations they characterize (181-3) could be usefully applied to debates over how best to interpret artworks. More generally, though Gregory does better than many at remembering to consider modalities besides the visual, the chapters on applications are mostly concerned with images, pictures, and so forth; so there are many interesting questions about touch, sound, and smell to which the framework could be applied.

The biggest potential application of the framework is to perception itself; and in some sense, it's surprising that Gregory doesn't take this on. In fact, in some of the theoretical chapters, one gets the sense that some firmer commitment to ideas about perception is underpinning the theorizing. After all, if perception involves sensory representations, the theory has to accommodate perception. On the other hand, if perception doesn't involve sensory representations, there's work to be done in bridging the gap between a non-representational account of perception and an account of sensory representations premised on relations to sensory modalities. In his conclusion, Gregory does give an indication of how his ideas might be applied to perception. Perhaps we can look forward to this in future work.

For now, what we have is an interesting, illuminating book on sensory representations that brings welcome clarity and structure to both abstract theorizing and concrete applications. The book comes recommended for any philosopher interested in sensory representations generally, and any of the applications mentioned specifically.

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