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Mind in practice : a pragmatic and interdisciplinary account of intersubjectivity

Bruin, L.C. de

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Mind in Practice

a pragmatic and interdisciplinary account of intersubjectivity

Leon Corné de Bruin

Mind in Practice

a pragmatic and interdisciplinary account of intersubjectivity

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door
Leon Corné de Bruin
geboren te Nijkerk
in 1979

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Promotor	Prof. dr. G.Glas
Overige leden	Prof. dr. J. Den Boer Prof. dr. S. Gallagher Dr. J. Sleutels Prof. dr. M. Slors

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To all who cared without actually knowing what I was doing, and one of them in particular

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Acknowledgments

The Greek poet Archilochus famously wrote in one of his fables that ‘the fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing’. This book can be seen as an attempt to cross a fox with a hedgehog, in the sense that it articulates a story about intersubjectivity by combining specific empirical findings from various scientific disciplines with a more general philosophical insight about how these findings should be interpreted and what they tell us about our everyday interactions with others. This was not an easy task, and I am very thankful for the many helping hands I received during this process.

I owe much to Gerrit Glas, who arranged a PhD position for me at the University of Leiden, where I began my work in August 2005. Gerrit has been an inspiring teacher and caring tutor, and gave me a lot of freedom to find my own path in philosophy. I am also very grateful to Shaun Gallagher and Daniel Hutto for providing me with the opportunity to spend several months at respectively the University of Central Florida in the USA and the University of Hertfordshire in Great-Britain. Although their philosophical backgrounds are quite different (Gallagher is very much rooted in the phenomenological tradition, whereas Hutto takes a more analytic approach to philosophy), this tension has been one of the main motivational forces responsible for the realization of this book. Many of the ideas I put forward are inspired by their writings and/or extracted from my conversations with them. Another key figure has been Marc Slors, who gave me a warm welcome to his Nijmegen research group, which is arguably one of the most promising philosophy of mind communities in the Netherlands. Especially my collaboration with Derek Strijbos has been very fruitful: not only did it help to structure my thinking, but we also managed to produce several good articles together. This is also true for my collaboration with Sanneke de Haan (University of Heidelberg), who I very much enjoyed working with and hope to continue doing so in the near future.

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I have attended several research groups during my research over the last years, and this book has much benefited from the many helpful discussions and opportunities to present my work for various audiences. I already mentioned the Nijmegen research group lead by Marc Slors. I have also very much enjoyed my regular meetings with a small circle of psychiatrists from the Dimence Institute for Mental Health. I am particularly grateful to Ewoud de Jong, who gave me the opportunity to be involved in a very interesting EEG-experiment, and Bram Sizoo, who allowed me to sit in on his ASD diagnostic sessions. I also want to thank the participants of the Utrecht research seminar for analytic philosophy (organized by Herman Philipse and Rik Peels) for their vigorous and constructive comments on my work.

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Philosophy of mind, paradoxically enough, became an interesting area of philosophy only when philosophers began to stop taking the notion of 'mind' for granted and began asking whether it was a misleading locution

- Rorty 1982