

Armchair Speculation and Contingent Truths in the Philosophy of Mind

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Philosophers of mind habitually support empirical hypothesis about e.g. perception, representation, or action by pure armchair argument, even though these hypothesis clearly are answerable to empirical scientific research. Herman Cappelen and Josh Dever have recently argued that such armchair speculation is methodologically illicit. I argue that there is nothing methodologically wrong with armchair speculation *per se*. Just like Cappelen and Dever, I focus on Perry's well-known armchair case for the hypothesis that intentional action by agents like you and me requires indexical belief. I argue that Perry's armchair speculation satisfies the stringent methodological standards at the heart of Cappelen and Dever's argument. So there is nothing methodologically wrong with Perry's case. On the contrary, Perry's overall argument arguably provides an illuminating model as to how armchair speculation about the mind may prove methodologically sound, and may thus well be epistemically successful.