

Projective aspect: My prior grasp of “green” is supposed to dictate which of infinitely many objects the word applies to today. Does it, though? I also applied “green” to *grue* things. Normative aspect: My prior grasp of “green” is supposed to *justify* me in using the word a certain way today.. What could that prior grasp possibly consist in that it has this normative consequence?

Millikan agrees that Kripke’s “straight” solutions won’t work, but thinks she has an alternative. Rather than reaching out to the community, she wants to reach back to evolutionary history.

A function or purpose of X is to Z if and only if

1. X has a long line of ancestors that Z’d,
2. It was thanks to their Z-ing that they survived to pass on the Z-ing trait to X

The heart is there to pump blood because (i) earlier hearts pumped blood and (ii) present hearts wouldn’t exist if earlier hearts had not succeeded in pumping blood. The beaver tail’s slapping is to warn other beavers of danger because similar slappings in the past enabled beavers to survive and create new slappers. *Interesting*, because functions have inherent normativity; a thing is *supposed* to fulfill its function.

*Distal Hoverfly Rule*: If you see a female hoverfly, catch it.....that’s a biological purpose by the test

*Proximal Rule*: Fly  $180^\circ$  away from the target minus  $1/10$  the angular velocity of its image across retina.

Conformity to the proximal rule facilitates conformity to the distal rule, which functions to perpetuate the species. But the proximal rule sometimes leads the hoverfly astray, depending on wind conditions, etc. The rat’s distal rule of avoiding poison vs its proximal rule of never again eating what it ate prior to getting sick. Nevertheless hoverflies and rats are under an evolutionary imperative to follow the proximal rules, lest they be weeded out.

“If knowing a language involves having a competence in following certain rules for construction and interpretation of sentences, the purpose that informs this competence...is a biological purpose” (642)

Rules of use are proximal rules. They function to enable language users to follow the distal rule of having lots of true beliefs about reality and not too many false ones. You’re supposed to follow the proximal rules even though they sometimes lead you astray.

Why not say hoverflies are following the “bent” rule that differs from the proximal rule only in that the hoverfly is supposed to destroy itself if the angular velocity is in a small never-instantiated range?

“The proximal quoverfly rule...fits all past actual cases of successful female encounters. But it is not a rule the hoverfly has as a biological purpose to follow. For it is not because their behavior coincided with *that* rule that they hoverfly’s ancestor’s managed to catch females...” (644).

The suggestion is that following the quus rule is not one of our biological purposes; it is not because our predecessors followed the quus rule that they survived to pass it on.

Millikan and Kripke agree that we mean plus rather than quus for “external” reasons, not because of what is going on in our head. The difference is that Millikan’s external reasons have a normative aspect. The hoverfly “means” to follow the proximal rule and is misbehaving if it doesn’t.

This all rests on strong claims about what “really” explains reproductive success. Why exactly isn’t the quoverfly rule explanatory?

“Whether this biological purposing is innate... or whether it is derived via learning, mechanisms of concept formation, etc., it must *ultimately* derive its content from the details of our evolutionary history. So, unless doing arithmetic results from a total breakdown of the cognitive systems... then *whatever* you mean to do when you encounter “plus,” that content has been determined by your experience coupled with evolutionary design (648-9).

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