THE PLACE OF PICTURING IN SELLARS' SYNOPTIC VISION

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I

In his article "Representation, Social Practice, and Truth," Richard Rorty claims that the topography of recent philosophy of language can be best understood by recognizing two schools of thought.[1] The first school, the representationalist school, takes it that the main function of language is to represent the world. As such, truth is "the basic concept in terms of which a theory of meaning, and hence a theory of language, is to be developed."[2] The second school, on the other hand, thinks that a philosophy of meaning, and hence a philosophy of language, should start by considering how a language functions as a social practice. For the social practice theorist, truth is not the key concept. Rather, one should start with the notion of assertibility and then "squeeze the notion of truth in as best one can."

The first school, even if it only came into its own with Frege, is a product of the classical tradition insofar as it is underwritten by the concept of truth. The second school is of a later vintage, emerging with Dewey and Wittgenstein. The thinker that we are interested in, Wilfrid Sellars, has an equivocal place in this landscape. On the one hand, it is extremely important for Sellars that "semantical statements of the Tarski-Carnap variety do not assert relations between linguistic and non-linguistic items."[3] Instead of capturing a relation between linguistic and non-linguistic items, semantical statements (that attribute truth) indicate whether

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[1] Rorty takes the distinction between these schools from Robert Brandom. See Robert Brandom, "Truth and Assertibility," *Journal of Philosophy* 73 (1976): 137.

[2] Quoted from Brandom in Richard Rorty, "Representation, Social Practice, and Truth," *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991) 151.

[3] Wilfrid Sellars, *Science and Metaphysics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968) 82.

a linguistic utterance is *assertible* in light of the formal and material rules of inference that constitute the linguistic framework in which the utterance is made. Sellars "squeezes" the notion of truth in by claiming that a proposition is true when it is *correctly* assertible in accordance with the relevant rules. " 'True', then, means semantically assertible (S-assertible) and the varieties of truth correspond to the relevant variety of semantical rule."[4] On the other hand, Sellars is not content with this picture because relativizing truth to S-assertibility provides no way to adjudicate whether the semantical rules of one linguistic framework are more adequate than the rules of another. After all, any adjudication of whether one framework is "more true" than another must take place within a framework of S-rules and thus within a framework in which the propositions of that framework are already taken to be true (S-assertible). Because of this deficiency, Sellars introduces his notion of "picturing." Picturing is a relation between two natural objects, linguistic tokens considered as events in nature and physical objects in the world. Although picturing is a relation, it is not rule-governed and so does not express a semantic relation. Instead, the picturing relation is to be specified in causal terms. A linguistic framework or conceptual structure is more or less adequate to the extent that its first-order atomic statements—that is, those statements of a framework that are concerned with factual truth—causally map the world in a correct fashion.[5] It is with picturing that we get "the extra dimension which relates social practices to something beyond themselves, and thus recapture the Greek problematic of humanity's relation to the non-human (of *nomos* vs. *physis*)."[6]

Because picturing reintroduces the problematic of how our linguistic practices hook onto the world, it is for Rorty an "unfortunate slide back into representationalism."[7] On his view, we should be happy with a notion of truth that is indexed to the socio/linguistic practices of a community and should not worry about whether they mirror the "true" nature of reality. What is important is that our linguistic practices cohere with one another such that we can cope with the world both theoretically and practically. Sellars himself often talks in this coherentist way. For a "leftwing" Sellarsian like Rorty, we should accentuate this aspect of Sellars' thought and "sluff off" the throwback notion of picturing. This can be

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[4] Ibid: 101.

[5] Picturing is thus concerned with the truth of statements that are at the "edge" of a conceptual framework, that is, perceptual and introspective statements, and those statements which "though 'empirical' in the broad sense that their authority ultimately rests on perceptual experience, involve the complex techniques of concept formation and confirmation characteristic of theoretical science." See Sellars (1968): 116.

[6] Rorty (1991): 152.

[7] Ibid.

done, so Rorty thinks, because picturing is only an "accidental accretion" and not an essential element of Sellars' theoretical edifice.[8]

In this article, we will contest this conclusion by demonstrating that the notion of picturing, far from being an "accidental accretion," is in fact "the heart of [Sellars'] enterprise."[9] Rorty can take the position he does because he examines the notion of picturing only from the semantic point of view, that is, from the point of view of how social practices empirically hook up with the world, how they can be empirically true.[10] This, of course, *is* a crucial aspect of picturing insofar as it allows Sellars to escape the idealism implicit in his coherentist theory of meaning. But the concept of picturing plays another, even more vital role in Sellars' system: It underwrites Sellars' particular brand of *naturalism*. As Sellars puts it in the introduction to *Science and Metaphysics*, the notion of picturing adds "a decisive step to the series of attempts I have made over the past ten years to evaluate the comparative claims to reality of the 'manifest' and 'scientific' images of what there is."[11] In this article we are going to examine how the notion of picturing underwrites the claims of the scientific image with respect to the intentionality of the mental. We shall attempt to demonstrate that if the concept of picturing is jettisoned, then so is Sellars' naturalism vis-à-vis the mind and its intentional capacities. This might be an acceptable cost, but we should certainly understand what it is before paying it.

II

It is often taken to be the case that Sellars' thought stands in the way of naturalist accounts of the mental.[12] This is ironic since it can plausibly be claimed that Sellars invented functionalism in the late forties precisely to secure this naturalistic result. Sellars seems to be a threat to naturalism because he takes it that the mental is pervaded by normativity. For Sellars, a content cannot express itself as an awareness that something is the case unless it is part, or potentially a part, of a proposition which can itself enter into normatively governed inferences.

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[8] Richard Rorty, "Introduction," in Wilfrid Sellars' *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997) 8n.

[9] Sellars (1968): ix.

[10] Lawrence BonJour's influential account of picturing similarly concerns itself with the semantic dimension of picturing at the expense of its role in grounding Sellars' naturalism. See Lawrence BonJour, "Sellars on Truth and Picturing," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 13 (1973): 243–65.

[11] Sellars (1968): vii.

[12] This charge is usually made by those who are only familiar with Sellars' epistemology and take it that Sellars' internalism and stress on the normativity of knowledge is not consistent with a naturalized epistemology and a naturalistic philosophy of mind.

For an episode to have intentional purport, it cannot be just characterized in terms of its occurrent properties but must also be semantically assessable in the "logical space of reasons." On Sellars' view, the space of reason is *sui generis*, meaning that the "epistemic" or intentionally contentful episodes within it cannot be reduced to or accounted for by episodes or processes that are not. To think that they can is to commit a kind of naturalistic fallacy. "Now the idea that epistemic fact can be analyzed without remainder—even 'in principle'—into non-epistemic facts [. . .] is, I believe, a radical mistake—a mistake of a piece with the so-called 'naturalistic fallacy' in ethics."[13]

A functionalist account, on the other hand, wants to identify mental states not by their place within a normative structure but by their place within a causal network. It wants to understand them exclusively in terms of the way they causally interact with other mental states, are caused by environmental stimuli, and in concert with certain conative states, have causal effects on action. As I mentioned above, Sellars *has* a causal story like this to tell about mental states. In his words, a mental episode is to be understood in terms of its place within a nexus of patterned governed behavior: language–entry transitions, language–language moves, and language–entry transitions.

One of the difficulties in interpreting Sellars is that he tells both stories about intentionality—the normative story[14] and the causal/functionalist story—without clearly demonstrating how they go together. In a broad sense, Sellars attempts to solve this problem through his notion of the scientific and manifest image. Briefly, Sellars wants to claim that normativity pervades the mental only in what he calls the manifest conceptual framework, the framework that we use to cognize middle-sided objects in space and time.[15] In the scientific image, however—an image that only countenances as real the microphysical entities and processes posited by the most advanced physical sciences—the normativity of the mental is an illusion. Ontologically, the objects of the manifest world and the cognitive norms that think them are not real, even if they are pragmatically indispensable. This "solution,"

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[13] Sellars (1997): 19.

[14] As we shall see, the normative story that Sellars tells about the mental is also a type of function-alism, but it is a normative functionalism as opposed to the causal variety.

[15] As an anonymous referee of a previous version of this article has pointed out, this account of the manifest and scientific image is misleading insofar as one cannot simply equate the manifest image with the normative and the scientific image with the causal. The manifest image also contains a causal thesis concerning the interaction of manifest objects in space and time. But this does not touch the point we are trying to make because in the manifest image the causal modalities depend upon the normatively governed material moves of inference that one's language contains (see Wilfrid Sellars, "Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities," *Concepts, Theories, and the Mind–Body Problem*, ed. Herbert Feigl, Michael Scriven, and Grover Maxwell [Minne-apolis: U of Minnesota P, 1958]). Thus, for manifest objects to appear requires that the thinking agent utilize inferential norms, while this is not the case in the scientific image.

however, just pushes back the question, for now we want to know how the two stories told about these images fit together such that one of the images comes to overrule the other. To account for this, Sellars, in his book *Science and Metaphysics*, extends the meaning of his concept of picturing, a concept that he first developed to account for empirical truth. As we shall see, in this new role, picturing becomes the lynchpin which holds together the scientific and manifest image and thus Sellars' synoptic vision.

<div align="center">III</div>

Before examining the logic of picturing specifically, however, we must briefly address a question that naturally arises: Why did Sellars, if he was interested in giving a naturalistic account of intentional mindedness, bother to give a normative account of the mental at all? Why not take the advice of eliminative materialism and skip the manifest image entirely? Sellars takes it that while the eliminativist is right that "the world is in principle what scientific theory says it is,"[16] one cannot, on pain of simply ignoring what needs to be explained, disregard the methodologically indispensability of the manifest image, as least as things stand *now*. To do so would be to substitute an ontological claim about what there is all things considered for a descriptive claim about the vocabulary we use now. To accept both the methodological indispensability of the manifest image and the cognitive capacities that are its conditions of possibility, while also accepting that they are ultimately false, sets up a challenge for Sellars: It requires that one interpret the manifest image and the cognitive capacities that intend its spatiotemporal objects in such a way that they can, in principle, be overcome. It is to meet *this* explanatory burden that Sellars introduces a normative account of the mental. For Sellars the "normative turn"—that is, his claim that mental episodes must be situated in the logical space of reasons not only to be knowledge but also to have intentional content—*is an essential ingredient in his strategy to naturalize the mind*. To *not* take this turn, so Sellars thinks, is to accept the myth of the given which itself rests upon a metaphysical or "Platonist" conception of content that is recalcitrant to naturalistic forms of explanation.[17] The myth of the given can be specified as the notion that the content of a mental item can be specified

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[16] Wilfrid Sellars, *Philosophical Perspectives: Metaphysics and Epistemology* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1977) 173.

[17] Sellars thus thinks that any position, for example, classical empiricism or information-theoretic accounts of the mental, that attempts to account for intentionality by only countenancing the occurrent properties of a mental episode is a version of Platonism. Proponents of these positions would of course not recognize this, but Sellars thinks he can show, through an internal critique, that these positions do not fully account for their own grounds and so have not achieved full self-consciousness about their commitments. See especially Sellars (1997).

pre-conceptually—that is, without reference to its place within a normative structure—and yet still play a role in the mental life of a person by expressing itself as an awareness *that* something is the case. This leads to a Platonist theory of content because this awareness, insofar as it does not require normatively governed linguistic/conceptual capacities, must rest upon "pre-symbolic abilities to recognize items as belonging to *kinds*."[18] For Sellars, however, this places one "squarely in a classic 'mental eye' type of position according to which the human mind has the innate ability to be aware (given some contextual focusing) of abstract entities."[19] Sellars elaborates a type of conceptual role semantics or normative/functionalist account of the mental to avoid positing such abstract entities.

In giving his normative/functionalism Sellars attempts to argue "that it is in principle possible to describe and causally account for the episodes and dispositions singled out by such sentences as 'John believes that it is raining,' without positing a 'perception' or 'awareness' of abstract entities."[20] To enact this program, Sellars tries to undercut the idea that there is "any *relation*, between minds and abstract entities"[21] by claiming that the meaning of a concept or term is determined by its role in reasoning rather than its place in a representational system. To give the meaning of a concept or term is not to assert a relation between a linguistic and non-linguistic item but to classify its *functional role* within a linguistic framework. Spelled out at the meta-level, to classify a term's functional role is to give the *rules* that determine the function or use of that term within a linguistic economy. The term "means" thus does not pertain to the mind and its psychological acts but rather to the *normative proprieties* that govern the linguistic tokens the mind uses in its thinking. As Sellars put it in an early article, " 'meaning' [. . .] is a term belonging to language *about* languages [. . .] Its primary employment is therefore in connection with linguistic expressions as norms, and consequently cannot concern a psychological relation of language expressions to objects of acquaintances (even essences)."[22]

Once this account of linguistic meaning is in place, Sellars extends it to include the aboutness of thoughts. Thoughts are the internalized expression of the patterns and normative proprieties that characterize overt linguistic behavior. Just as the meaning of a term is specifiable in terms of its functional role and not in terms of

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[18] Wilfrid Sellars, "Some Reflections on Language Games," *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991e) 335.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Wilfrid Sellars, "Empiricism and Abstract Entities," *Essays in Philosophy and Its History* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing, 1974a) 259.

[21] Ibid: 285n.

[22] Wilfrid Sellars, *Pure Pragmatics and Possible Worlds* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1980) 60.

a relation between minds and abstract entities, the content of our thought can be understood in terms of functional roles rather than in the qualitative terms avowed by the classical tradition. Sellars illustrates with the example of chess. For a game of chess to be played does not depend upon the qualitative "substance" of the board and pieces, that is, whether they are wood or marble, etc. Rather, the game and our ability to play it depend upon the permissible and impermissible patterns and moves that constitute it as a game. Perhaps a thought is like a chess move insofar as they are both constituted by the structural moves that are permissible and impermissible within the game one is playing.

> [O]ur concept of "what thoughts are" might, like our concept of what a castling is in chess, be abstract in the sense that it does not concern itself with the *intrinsic* character of thoughts, *save as items which can occur in patterns of relationships which are analogous to the way in which sentences are related to one another and* to the contexts in which they are used.[23]

As it stands, this functional account of intentionality is normative insofar as the mental patterns of relationship that are analogous to overt verbal behavior are rule-governed. However, Sellars is very careful in this passage to leave open the nature of "the pattern of relationship" that is at issue. Perhaps it is possible to interpret this pattern in terms that make no mention of the normative proprieties that govern an item's functional role or use. Perhaps it would be possible to specify this pattern in causal/functional terms. As we shall see, picturing makes this possible.

IV

As we mentioned above, Sellars first introduced the concept of picturing in a semantic context to underwrite his theory of empirical truth. While the sense of an empirical term is determined by its inferential role or conceptual status within a particular linguistic economy (e.g., German), its full meaning must include its correct empirical application. For while

> the conceptual status of descriptive as well as logical—not to mention prescriptive—predicates, is constituted, *completely* constituted, by syntactical rules [. . .] "*rot* means *red*" can be true only if in addition to conforming to syntactical rules paralleling the syntax of "red," it is *applied* by Germans to red objects; that is if it has the same *application* as "red." Thus, the "conceptual status" of a predicate does not exhaust its "meaning."[24]

[23] Wilfrid Sellars, "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man," *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991a) 34.

[24] Wilfrid Sellars, "Is There a Synthetic A Priori?" *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991d) 316.

From within a system of rules, the application of Rot to red objects is subject to semantic standards of correctness insofar as an application can be correct or incorrect. However, this standard of correctness is internal to the linguistic system already in use. It does not *constitute* the semantic relatedness of Rot to an actual red item in the world. As Sellars puts it, "the hook-up of a system of rule-regulated symbols with the world is not itself a rule-governed fact."[25] Rather, the application of a linguistic item to a non-linguistic item in the world is a matter of causal uniformities. Sellars therefore distinguishes "between the rule-governed aspects of a language, and the causal tie between linguistic and non-linguistic events which constitutes its application. The latter is not a matter of *rules*, though it is, of course, a matter of *uniformities*."[26] The causal hookup between language and world that takes place through our being inculcated into certain non-conceptual uniformities is one of *picturing* while the rule-regulated aspect of a language is one of *signifying*. While signifying is a relation between items in the intentional order, picturing is an *isomorphic* relation between two types of *objects*—"natural linguistic objects" and natural objects—*in the causal or real order*. Here we again come across Sellars' two parallel stories: one concerning the rule-governed assert-ibility of semantically significant items, and the other concerning the way *these same items* are naturalistically related to one another and to natural objects in the real order. As such,

> linguistic episodes have not only logical powers but also, and necessarily, matter-of-factual charac-teristics, e.g., shape, size, color, internal structure, and that they exhibit empirical uniformities both among themselves and in relation to the environment in which they occur. They can be compared as objects in nature with respect to their matter-of-factual characteristics. I mention this, because the fact that we tend to think of conceptual acts as having *only* logical form, as lacking matter-of-factual characteristics [. . .] makes it difficult to appreciate that the ultimate point of all the logical powers pertaining to conceptual activity in its epistemic orientation is to generate conceptual structures which as objects in nature stand in certain matter-of-factual relations to other objects in nature.[27]

What Sellars wants to argue is that not only do linguistic episodes (and by analogy mental tokens) have, besides logical powers, matter-of-fact character-istics, but that these matter-of-fact characteristics are the "necessary condition of the intellect's intentionality as signifying the real order."[28] Picturing is a neces-sary condition for signifying in three different dimensions. First, the ability to signify is learned through acquiring non-conceptual habits or uniformities.

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[25] Sellars (1980): 150.

[26] Wilfrid Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991) 292n.

[27] Wilfrid Sellars, *Essays in Philosophy and its History* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing, 1974) 52.

[28] Wilfrid Sellars, "Being and Being Known," *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991b) 50.

Second, *each* signifying act, insofar as it is an event in nature, is itself a picturing act. Third, the conceptual framework of which this signifying act is a part is itself an object in nature that stands in certain matter-of-fact picturing relations to other objects in nature.[29] The ultimate goal of our conceptual activity is to create a second-order picture of ourselves as beings who picture in these three ways.

<p style="text-align:center">V</p>

For this project to have viability it is necessary to first demonstrate that a mind can picture or map its environment without drawing upon the normative proprieties internal to the signifying relation. To demonstrate this, Sellars, in a pioneering analysis in "Being and Being Known," develops a form of machine functionalism in which a robot has the capacity to picture its environment in this way. If this can be demonstrated with respect to a robot, then perhaps this analysis can be extended to the linguistic behavior of persons.

If we step out of the "framework of intentionality" and take the "standpoint of the electronic engineer,"[30] we can imagine a robot that sends out high-frequency radiation that reflects back patterns of configuration from the environment. The patterns that are returned would then be "recorded" mechanically by "sentences" that only utilize terms from the logic of relations. It records these sentences by *physically* inscribing them on a piece of tape. Next,

> [s]uppose that, again by virtue of its wiring diagram, it makes calculational moves from "sentences" or sets of "sentences" to other "sentences" in accordance with logical and mathematical procedures (and some system of priorities) and that it prints these "sentences" on the tape. Suppose, furthermore, that in addition to logical and mathematical moves the robot is able to make inductive moves, i.e., if its tape contains several "sentences" pairs of the form
>
> > lightning at p, t   thunder at $p + \Delta p$, $t + \Delta t$
>
> and no "sentence" pair of the form
>
> > lightning at p, t   peace at $p + \Delta p$, $t + \Delta t$
>
> it prints the "sentence" whenever lightning at p, t; thunder at $p + \Delta p$, $t + \Delta t$.
>   Clearly the wiring diagram must provide for the cancellation of such "inductive generalizations" when a subsequent pair of "observation sentences" turns up inconsistent with it.[31]

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[29] A conceptual framework is at first an object in nature because it, at least initially, is a linguistic framework. When this framework is internalized as a system of thought, the thought tokens are objects in nature insofar as they are also neuro-physiological events that have matter-of-factual relations to other mental events and to events that take place outside the organism.

[30] Sellars (1991b): 53.

[31] Ibid: 52.

Because the robot can make inductive moves, it can acquire "information" about its environment. If we give the robot physical mobility, it will record on its tape "an ever more complete and perfect map of its environment" and therefore "contain an increasingly adequate and detailed *picture* of its environment."[32] An adequate picture is created when the patterns on the tape are *functionally arranged* in ways that are isomorphic to the way the environment is arranged. To elaborate this isomorphism does not require taking recourse to meanings, contents, or abstract entities insofar as it is achieved through patterns of relations that are completely formal. Thus,

> the robot would contain a picture of the occurrence of a particular flash of lightning *not* by virtue of the absolute nature *lightning* existing immaterially in the robot's electronic system, but by virtue of the correspondence of the "place" of a certain pattern on the tape in the system of patterns on the tape to the "place" of the flash of lightning in the robot's spatiotemporal environment. Since this isomorphism is an isomorphism in the sense of contemporary relation theory which falls completely within the real order, there would be no temptation to say that the robot's environment has "immaterial being" in the physical *habitus* of the robot.[33]

Sellars recognizes the force of the familiar Davidsonian point that any interpretation of the robot's output, insofar as it attempts to make *sense* of its behavior (including, most importantly, its linguistic behavior) must utilize certain interpretive norms like coherence, charity, etc. Here we project onto the robot's output normatively governed patterns of intelligibility. As such, in this interpretation we take or treat the robot's output to be semantically significant. However, this does not impugn Sellars' point that the robot can picture its environment without calling upon the norms internal to the signifying relation because any interpretation or translation of robotese is a translation of it *as a linguistic system that is isomorphically related to its environment*. Thus, even though the isomorphism between pattern and environment (in the real order) is distinct from the isomorphism between that selfsame pattern *accepted* as a language and our own language (in the conceptual order),

> there is nevertheless an intimate connection between them which can be put by saying that our willingness to treat the pattern [. . .] as a symbol which *translates* into our word "lightning" rests on the fact that we recognize that there is an isomorphism in the real order between the place of the pattern [. . .] in the functioning of the robot and the place of lightning in its environment. In this sense we can say that isomorphism *in the real order* between the robot's electronic system and its environment is a presupposition of isomorphism *in the order of signification* between robotese and the language we speak.[34]

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[32] Ibid: 53.
[33] Ibid: 54.
[34] Ibid: 57.

If we did not assume *from within our interpretive practice* the isomorphism in the real order between the functioning of the pattern ". . ." and environmental objects, we would not be able to *explain* the robot's behavior. Thus, to understand this behavior we not only attribute to the robot states that play the same functional roles that they play in our language, but also translate the robot's output into functional roles that make no mention of semantical norms at all.

> In this sense, to ask What is the role of "—"? is not to ask about the role of an *expression*. It is to ask about the *causes* and *effects* of a certain empirically definable stimulus configuration. Here the word "role" is used as in What is the role of HCL in the electrolysis of H2O? And it is the thesis of psychological nominalism that the questions as to the role of "—" *thus understood* requires no use of *semantical* or *syntactical* terms in the answer.[35]

Here, statements are viewed as natural linguistic objects rather than as meaningful linguistic expressions. Now we should take what would otherwise be a semantical statement "the tape pattern '. . .' signifies *lightning*" to read: "The design '***' in (L1) plays the role played in (L2)—our language—by the design '—' and refers to two designs as role players."[36] When we refer to the two designs as role players (". . ." for the robot, "lightning" for the interpreter), we are referring to them not as tokens with conceptual content, but as empirically defined stimulus configurations that play the same role in the causal order.

VI

Taking such a stance with respect to the robot is relatively easy because we know that the robot is an intentional being only to the extent that *we* interpret it or treat it that way. Hence, it is easy to drop the "intentional stance" and take an objectivating "design stance" that only countenances functional roles. This switching of stances is not so easy, however, when the *object* of explanation is a human organism. This is because human organisms are *persons* who have *characters*.

Persons, while subject to pre-personal processes and events, are beings who have states and intentions that are normatively governed. Persons do not just *conform* to rules (ought-to-be-rules) that regulate their (linguistic) behavior in a mechanical fashion from the "outside," they also rationally respond to these rules. Persons thus not only act in accordance with these rules, but at lease for some of them, have a conception of the rules *as* guiding their behavior. As Sellars put it:

> One isn't a full-fledged member of the linguistic community until one not only *conforms* to linguistic ought-to-be's (and may-be's) by exhibiting the required uniformities, but grasps these ought-to-be's and may-be's themselves (i.e., knows the rules of the language). One must, therefore,

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[35] Sellars (1974a): 275.
[36] Sellars (1991b): 57n.

have the concept of oneself as an agent, as not only the *subject-matter* subject of ought-to-be's but the agent subject of ought-to-do's. Thus, even though conceptual activity rests on a foundation of *conforming* to ought-to-be's of *uniformities* in linguistic behavior, these uniformities exist in an ambience of action, epistemic or otherwise.[37]

Persons have characters because they must "conceive of themselves as agents subject to rules." For insofar as persons can take a stand on the rules that govern their behavior, can take responsibility for following or rejecting them, their behavior does not just eventuate from settled dispositions. It also eventuates from what Sellars calls their "intellectual vision," that is, the *aims and norms that they take to be binding*. Sellars calls this a person's character.

What makes interpreting a person from the design stance so difficult is that a person's character is mediated socially, that the norms and aims that make up a character are conferred by our participation in a linguistic community. It is this mediation and participation in intersubjectively ascribed norms ("community intentions") that provides the "ambience of action" that surrounds and arises out of the linguistic uniformities into which we are habituated. In this way, the norms that we take to be binding are not just our own norms, but the norms of the community. "We recognize that there is no thinking apart from common standards of correctness and relevance, which relate what *I do* to what *anyone ought to* think. The contrast between 'I' and 'anyone' is essential to rational thought."[38] The important point introduced by sociality is that when we conceive of ourselves as agents subject to rules, the force of the correctness of these rules transcends *our* application of them. While we internalize norms as habits or dispositions, these norms also face us (from the "outside" as it were) as obligations. Because norms face us as obligations, a person often finds "himself confronted by standards (ethical, logical, etc.) which [. . .] conflict with his desires and impulses, and to which he may or may not conform."[39] The fact that a person can be a responsible agent who can make choices in accordance with a rule or go against a rule is thus bound up with his being a member of a community that shares a common "network of rights and duties."

The fact that a person's character essentially involves the aims, norms, and reasons that they take to be binding, as well as the fact that the obligatory force of these norms has a social component, makes any interpretation of human behavior that tries to drop the intentional stance enormously difficult. This is because any *description* of human behavior *by itself* is, in principle, insufficient to explain it.[40] To

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[37] Sellars (1974): 101.
[38] Sellars (1991a): 16–17.
[39] Ibid: 38.
[40] This blanket statement will be amended shortly. I am here trying to sharpen the difficulty that Sellars puts himself into before giving his account of how it is possible to formulate a picture, that is, a pure description, of the human organism.

say, in giving one's explanation, "that a certain person desired to do A, thought it his duty to do B but was forced to do C, is not to *describe* him as one might describe a scientific specimen. One does, indeed, describe him, but one does something more."[41] Habermas gets at this "something more" in an enlightening passage:

> The *description* of reasons demands *eo ipso* an *evaluation*, even when the one providing the description feels that he is not at the moment in a position to judge their soundness. One can understand reasons only to the extent that one understands *why* they are or are not sound, or why in a given case a decision as to whether reasons are good or bad is not (yet) possible. An interpreter, cannot, therefore, interpret expressions connected through criticizable validity claims [. . .] without taking a position on them. And he cannot take a position without applying his *own* standards of judgment.[42]

The point is that even to describe the norms taken as binding by the interpreted person, the interpreter is drawn into a type of interchange with those norms that takes place not only at the third-person level of description but also at the second-person level of evaluation. An explanation of a person's behavior cannot be a pure description because to formulate a bare description requires that the interpreter draw upon knowledge that can only be gained by also being subject to the norms described. In other words, to have the level of understanding necessary to even describe, an interpreter, like the person being interpreted, must be part of the community of those who say "We," that is, the community that accepts the same fundamental norms as binding on its members. If we call these "fundamental principles of a community [. . .] the most general common *intentions* of that community," it follows that to recognize a being as subject to norms requires that the interpreter "think thoughts of the form 'We (one) shall do (or abstain from doing) actions of kind A in circumstances of kind C'. To think thoughts of this kind is not to *classify* or *explain*, but to *rehearse an intention*."[43] In rehearsing an intention the interpreter gains access to an object that not only follows a typical pattern, but also, like themselves, responds rationally to reasons taken as binding.[44]

VII

But if it is necessary that one rehearses shared intentions in order to interpret a person's behavior, how is it possible to create a picture of a person by

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[41] Sellars (1991a): 39.

[42] Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. I. trans. T. McCarthy (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1984) 116.

[43] Sellars (1991a): 39–40.

[44] In Davidsonian terms, an interpretation of another being who is part of the community of those who say "We" can only be undertaken in light of the "constitutive idea of rationality." See Donald Davidson, "Mental Events," *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980) 223.

"abstracting" from the normative proprieties that govern the linguistic practices that both interpreter and object share? Obviously, this interpretive context is quite different from that of the robot insofar as it does not seem possible to interpret a person correctly by making this type of abstraction. Our goal is to demonstrate that Sellars *does* think that we can abstract from the norms and principles that make up a person's character and consider them "in terms of [the] empirical properties and matter-of-factual relations [. . .] pertaining to the language user and his environment."[45]

But before doing so we must address a preliminary criticism. One could claim that I am being unfair to Sellars insofar as he himself admits at the end of "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" that the framework of persons is not something that can be reconciled with or integrated into the scientific image but can only be "joined to it." This is so because the framework of persons is primarily concerned not with describing and explaining what is the case, as the scientific image is, but with the actions we intend to do. Because the principles and standards that underwrite the intentions that guide action are not amenable to being pictured, the scientific image, if it is to account for the framework of persons, must enrich itself "*not* with more ways of saying what is the case, but with the language of community and individual intentions."[46] The criticism of my strategy would claim that since my presentation assumes that for the concept of picturing to be successful it must capture in its net the framework of persons, that I am requiring something of picturing that Sellars himself does not, thereby setting Sellars up for failure. But my claim about picturing is more modest. To grasp my more modest claim, we need to understand that Sellars thinks that we can take two meta-theoretical points of view on the framework of persons: the point of view of practice in which indeed there is no way to abstract from the espoused norms and principles that lard the framework of persons, and the point of view of theory, of description and explanation, in which this abstraction is possible. My more modest claim is that picturing underwrites Sellars' strategy to show that *from the theoretical point of view* the intentional states of persons can be captured within the explanatory net of the scientific image and that *even from that point of view* his argument fails.[47]

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[45] Wilfrid Sellars, "Truth and 'Correspondence'," *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991c) 212.

[46] Sellars (1991a): 40.

[47] To fully account for this issue would require an investigation into how Sellars in fact joins the practical intentions of the framework of persons to the scientific image. Although Sellars wrote voluminously on ethics and the theory of action, he did not say much on how this "joining" is to be effected. In fact, he says much more on the topic of how ideal descriptions of persons can be generated. This article takes up what Sellars says on this latter topic, leaving for another occasion the former more difficult issue.

Let us then, demonstrate how Sellars wishes to vindicate his thesis that we can, at least form the theoretical point of view, abstract from the norms and principles that make up a person's character. He thinks this is possible owing to an important interpretive principle:

> The principle is as follows: although to say of something that it ought to be done (or *ought not* to be done) in a certain kind of circumstance is not to say that *whenever* the circumstance occurs it *is* done (or is *not* done), the statement that a person or group of people think of something as something that ought (or ought not) to be done in a certain kind of circumstance entails that *certerus paribus* they actually *do* (or refrain from doing) the act in question whenever the circumstance occurs. [. . .] I shall put the principle briefly as follows: Espousal of principles is reflected in uniformities of performance. [. . .] I am not claiming that to *follow* a principle, i.e., act on principle, is identical with exhibiting a uniformity of performance that accords with the principle. I think that any such idea is radically mistaken. I am merely saying that the espousal of a principle or standard, *whatever else it involves*, is characterized by a uniformity of performance. And let it be emphasized that this uniformity, though not the principle of which it is the manifestation, is describable in matter-of-factual terms.[48]

Sellars claims that this principle does not involve a "naturalistic reduction of 'ought' to 'is' nor an emotivist denial of the conceptual character of the meaning of normative terms"[49] because it does not deny that the linguistic behavior of the person being described is "subject to rules and principles—[is] fraught with ought."[50] But while one could concentrate on the espoused norms or standards that inform linguistic behavior, the principle, in stipulating that uniformities of performance, *ceterus paribus*, follow from such espousals, allows the interpreter to "bracket" these norms and describe the uniformities of behavior that result from them in matter-of-factual terms.[51] Because for Sellars "*describing* is internally related to *explaining*, in the sense of 'explanation' which comes to full flower in scientific explanation—in short, *causal* explanation,"[52] to describe these patterns of behavior in matter-of-factual terms is to explain them in terms of their causal role in a functional system.

What is important to recognize is that the principle at issue *governs the assertions of an interpreter about an object* and not the object itself. The question is not whether the person *interpreted* uses normative vocabulary—for in an assertion governed by the principle this vocabulary loses its force and is merely

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[48] Sellars (1991c): 215–16.

[49] Ibid: 215.

[50] Ibid: 212.

[51] One way to question Sellars here would be to examine the plausibility of this interpretive principle. We, however, are going to assume the principle so as to demonstrate its systematic place in Sellars' thought.

[52] Sellars (1974a): 265.

mentioned—but whether the *interpreter* uses such vocabulary. Thus, even if the linguistic behavior of the person being described is "fraught with ought" the principle allows for a description that is in a robust sense *naturalistic*.

> The naturalistic "thesis" that the world, including the verbal behavior of those who use the term "ought"—and the mental states involving the concept to which this world gives expression—can "in principle," be described without using the tern "ought" or any prescriptive expression, is a logical point about what it is to count as a description *in principle* of the world. For, whereas in ordinary discourse to state what something *is*, to describe something as [Ω] (e.g., a person as a criminal) does not preclude the possibility that an "unpacking" of the description would involve the use of the term "ought" [. . .] naturalism presents us with the ideal of a *pure* description of the world (in particular human behavior), a description which simply says what things *are*, and never, in any respect, what they *ought* or *ought not* to be; and it is clear (as a matter of simple logic) that neither "ought" nor any other prescriptive expression *could* be *used* (as opposed to *mentioned*) in such a description.[53]

VIII

The question is: Why should one accept the interpretive framework that, by including the relevant principle, can return a pure description or picture of the world? One might want to say that this framework should be accepted because it is *more true*, all things considered, than the manifest framework that utilizes normative notions. But one wonders whether Sellars' theory of truth allows for this result. Truth for Sellars is always relative to the material and formal rules that define what is unconditionally assertible in a particular conceptual framework. Here, truth is not only "language relative, relative to *our* language,"[54] but also absolute because a "statement in our conceptual structure is either S-assertible [semantically assertible] or it is not."[55] But if truth is language-relative and absolute in this way, it cannot be a criterion which adjudicates whether one conceptual framework is more adequate than another. The adequacy of a framework must be established on other grounds.

From the point of view of our current conceptual framework—which is the manifest conceptual framework—interpreting a person in light of an ascribed character is required in order to achieve the best and most coherent explanation. In this sense, the principle given above (that espousal of principles is characterized by uniformity of performance) is not one that is generated by our current conceptual framework. However, from *within* our conceptual framework it makes sense to speak of conceptual structures that *picture* a domain of objects in a more

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[53] Sellars (1958): 283.
[54] Sellars (1968): 132.
[55] Ibid: 134.

adequate way than other structures. For Sellars, this makes sense because our conceptual structure is one among others that have arisen through time. This temporal aspect allows us to make a meta-induction to the effect that just as our conceptual framework is more adequate than past structures, future conceptual structures will be more adequate than ours. Now it is meaningful to say "that our current conceptual structure is both more adequate than its predecessors and less adequate than certain of its potential successors."[56]

In using the concept "adequate" we have shifted from a discussion of the truth of conceptual frameworks, something that can only be decided from within a system of S-rules, to a discussion of how well certain frameworks map the world. This mapping or picturing, because it is "a relation between two relational structures, [. . .] can be more or less adequate."[57] As such, adequacy pertains not to frameworks considered as systems of S-assertible statements, but to the way those statements, *now considered as natural linguistic objects*, map onto the world. It is statements considered in the latter way that in fact provides the *criterion* for the correctness of S-assertible statements.

> Linguistic picture-making is not the performance of asserting matter-of-factual propositions. The *criterion* of the correctness of the performance of asserting a basic matter-of-factual proposition is the correctness of the proposition *qua* picture, i.e. the fact that it coincides with the picture the world-cum-language would generate in accordance with the uniformities controlled by the semantical rules of the language. Thus the *correctness* of the picture is not defined in terms of the *correctness* of a performance but vice versa.[58]

But how can a picture of the world be the criterion for anything? After all, a criterion is a normative notion, and a picture of the world, if it is *taken* in this way, is transformed back into a statement that is S-assertible. To solve this problem, Sellars, in a Peircean spirit, posits a distinction between our current conceptual structure and the conceptual structure that will stand at the end of inquiry, that is, Peirceish. This latter framework allows us to "form *ideall*y adequate pictures of objects"[59] and is the "regulative idea which defines our concepts of ideal truth and reality."[60] It is *this* framework that will allow us to formulate a pure description or picture of the world. It is thus this framework that will make it possible to explain persons without taking recourse to the normativity that characterizes semantic and hence mentalistic discourse.

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[56] Ibid: 138.
[57] Ibid: 135.
[58] Ibid: 136.
[59] Ibid: 140.
[60] Ibid: 148.

IX

In a Kantian spirit, Sellars renders the difference between our current manifest conceptual framework and Peirceish as the difference between a framework that gives us a phenomenal picture of objects and a framework that gives us a picture of objects as they are in themselves. Because Peirceish is just the scientific image in its most ideal form, Sellars claims that "the real or 'nouminal' world which supports the 'world of appearances' is not a *metaphysical* world of unknown things in themselves, but simply the world as constructed by scientific theory."[61] As Sellars wrote:

> As I see it, a consistent scientific realist must hold that the world of every day experience is a phenomenal world in the Kantian sense, existing only as the contents of actual and obtainable conceptual representations, the obtainability of which is explained not, as for Kant, by things in themselves known only to God, but by scientific objects about which, barring catastrophe, we shall know more and more as the years go by.[62]

For Kant, the distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves is a distinction between a cognition of objects that requires utilizing the finite forms of human cognition (the pure forms of intuition, space, and time) and a divine type of cognition that does not utilize such finite forms.[63] Instead, this latter type of cognition utilizes intellectual intuition so as to cognize the infinite predicates of an object. An object cognized in such a manner is a thing-in-itself. By replacing things-in-themselves with the world as constructed by scientific theory, one trans-fers the criteria by which we judge the "really real" from a type of intellectual intuition situated outside the world to the intersubjective practices of a scientific community inside the world. However, to avoid embracing a thoroughgoing social conventionalism concerning truth—that is, the view that what the scientific com-munity says *now* is true—this transference must be accompanied by holding onto a *relativized* distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves. As rela-tivized, the distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves becomes the distinction between the objects posited by our conceptual framework *at a particular time* and the objects posited by the framework that stands as *the ideal outcome of scientific inquiry*. As Sellars puts it:

> Kant's account implies indeed that certain counterparts of our intuitive representations, namely God's intellectual intuitions, are literally true; but these literal truths can only be indirectly and

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[61] Sellars (1991): 97.

[62] Sellars (1968): 173.

[63] This claim that the appearance/thing-in-itself distinction is epistemological as opposed to meta-physical is of course controversial. However, besides my thinking it is right, this interpretation has the merit of perspicuously introducing the views of Peirce and Sellars, which is the point of this section.

abstractly represented by finite minds, and there is an impassible gulf between our *Erkenntnisse* and Divine Truth. If, however [. . .] we replace the static concept of Divine Truth with a Peircean conception of truth as the "ideal outcome of scientific inquiry," the gulf between appearances and things-in-themselves, though a genuine one, can in principle be bridged.[64]

For Peirce, truth as the ideal outcome of scientific inquiry is a regulative idea that always outruns the mundane conceptual practices that are undertaken in its light. As such, the gulf between appearances and things-in-themselves is unbridgeable.[65] For Sellars, on the other hand, the distinction can in principle be bridged because the scientific community, in having the notion of picturing, *already possesses* what Sellars calls an Archimedean point outside the series of beliefs toward which inquiry approximates.

> Notice that although the concepts of "ideal truth" and "what really exists" are defined in terms of a Peirceian conceptual structure they do not require that there ever be a Peircian community. Peirce himself fell into difficulty because, by not taking into account the dimension of "picturing," he had no Archimedean point outside the series of actual and possible beliefs in terms of which to define the ideal or limit to which members of this series might approximate.[66]

Because the scientific community already posits this point, it has a perspective— even if only in theory—from which *the distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves collapses*. It collapses because this theoretical perspective allows us to project ourselves into the framework—Peirceish—that at the end of inquiry discovers things-in-themselves through formulating a picture or pure description of the world. From this perspective, appearances can be seen to be *mere* appearances. It is this move that allows Sellars to claim that picturing can serve as a criterion for a system of S-assertible statements and which thus allows him to formulate ontological conclusions about reality, for example, that the objects of the manifest image do not exist because they are not posited by the framework that stands at the ideal outcome of scientific inquiry.

One might rebel from ascribing to Sellars a view that licenses itself to posit in the present philosophical results that seemingly could only be substantiated at the end of inquiry. But his view must be something like this, for otherwise his position would be subject to a serious criticism.[67] As we know, a picture of the world (including ourselves as part of the world) is generated by a causal relationship

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[64] Sellars (1968): 50.

[65] Peirce, in fact, says contradictory things concerning whether truth is an unachievable regulative idea or a state that could actually be instantiated. The important point is that he never, unlike Sellars, posits a pre-established endpoint to which inquiry is heading. Sellars can do so because picturing gives us an Archimedean point outside the series of beliefs.

[66] Sellars (1968): 142.

[67] This criticism was raised by an anonymous referee of this article.

between the mind (understood as a causal functional system) and the world. But since an adequate picture of the world will not be in until the end of inquiry, our current picture of the world must be the result of a causal relationship between the mind and an unknown reality. This is because we are not yet in a relation to things-in-themselves (which will only come at the end of inquiry) but only to appearances. These, in turn, are related to the unknown things-in-themselves in an indeterminate fashion. But if this is right, the picturing relationship that we have within time is always a causal relationship to something fundamentally indeterminate. But then how could we ever specify the nature of this relationship and so the nature of reality if the end of inquiry is something that is always around the corner?

Peirce would argue that we could avoid this skeptical conclusion by taking recourse to a fallibalism about inquiry. Fallibalism claims that what is important is not so much the truth of each of our beliefs at any given moment, many of which will be replaced as inquiry goes on, but the rationality of the procedures that we use to gain knowledge. If our procedures are in good order—if they assuage "real" or "living" doubt as opposed to Descartes' "paper" doubt—then we can have high degree of assurance that most of our beliefs are true. However, for fallibalism this truth is always a conditional truth, at least until the hypothetical end of inquiry. Sellars thinks that this position is irredeemably flawed because without the concept of picturing to provide it with a ground it tips into skepticism. Picturing, according to him, provides the "missing ingredient, the absence of which from Peirce's account of truth leaves the 'would-be' of the acceptance 'in the long run' of propositions by the scientific community without an intelligible foundation."[68] For Sellars, skepticism can only be avoided if the conditional truth of propositions in the long run is guided and judged by an antecedent standard of correctness. An adequate picture of the world provides this standard.

Now one could claim with justice that we currently—within the series of our actual and possible beliefs—have access to this standard because we do not have to wait around for the Peircean framework to formulate ontological conclusions about the manifest image. The manifest image, Sellars thinks, undermines itself from within because it gives rise to questions that it cannot answer on its own terms. As such, we already have an early preview of what things-in-themselves are like. However, Sellars takes it that the demonstration of the manifest image's insufficiency, while necessary, is not sufficient to secure the ontological primacy of the scientific image. One must not only undermine and replace the manifest image piecemeal from the inside, but also vindicate, from a philosophical or *transcendental* point of view—that is, from the point of view of a second-order categorical analysis—that one conceptual framework can in principle replace

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[68] Sellars (1968): vii.

another.[69] It is important, for example, that the famous claim "that the common-sense world of physical objects in space and time is unreal" is offered by Sellars "*speaking as a philosopher*."[70] Sellars is not content with the *de facto* possibility that one framework, through a type of conceptual feedback, will replace another; he wants a demonstration *de jure* that this replacement, and the ensuing unreality of the manifest framework, is ontologically justified. With the concept of picturing, Sellars thinks that he has the means to demonstrate this.

X

The question is whether the account given above licenses Sellars' claim that a picture or pure description of the world can abstract from the normativity of the mental. To see whether this so, let us continue examining Peirceish. As we mentioned above, Peirceish is the regulative idea that "defines our concepts of ideal truth and reality." As such, it is something posted from *within* a community's conceptual practices (i.e., from within the space of formal and material rules of inference) to guide those selfsame practices. If we accept *this* notion of a regulative idea, then Sellars' claim is that our concepts of ideal truth and reality are posited from within, and so assume, the rational relations that make up the space of reasons. The purpose of posting Peirceish, however, is to provide a standpoint that can deliver a pure description or picture of the world that does not utilize normative—and so mentalistic—expressions at all. As Sellars puts it, "*no picture of the world contains as such mentalistic expressions functioning as such*. The indispensability and logical irreducibility of mentalistic discourse is compatible with the idea that in *this* sense *there are no mental acts*."[71] Sellars can hold the seemingly contradictory theses that mentalistic discourse is irreducible and that there are no such things as mental acts because of his interpretive principle that the espousal of principles can, in a meta-language, be characterized by uniformities of performance. While from the second-person point of view within the space of reasons normative and therefore mentalistic vocabulary is irreducible, from the point of view of a meta-language that utilizes the relevant principle, this vocabulary is neutralized. Peirceish is such a meta-language. So even if Peirceish is the *product* of the conceptual practices of the scientific community insofar as it is a regulative idea, as a meta-language that includes the relevant principle it can "detach itself" from its origin and deliver a picture or pure description not just of the "objective world," but also of the conceptual conditions of possibility that posit Peirceish in the first place.

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[69] Sellars explicitly equates philosophical knowledge with transcendental knowledge at Sellars (1968): 38.

[70] Sellars (1997): 83.

[71] Sellars (1968): 143.

The necessity of forming a picture not only of the objective world but also of the conceptual conditions of possibility of Peirceish itself is an important desideratum. For even if Peirceish does not contain normative or mentalistic expressions functioning as such, its ability to *describe* in matter of factual terms is itself *constituted by* the use of formal and especially material rules of inference. As Sellars says, it "is only because the expressions in terms of which we describe objects locate these objects in a space of implications [a space of material and formal rules of inference, SL] that they *describe* at all."[72] In other words, even if a descriptive discourse does not *use* normative *vocabulary* (expressions like "should" or "ought"), it is still *structured* by norms.[73] If a picture of the world is to be sufficiently general to deliver the type of ontological conclusions that Sellars wants, then Peirceish must reflexively neutralize this constitutive normativity.

In our view, this type of general picture is impossible because Peirceish cannot reflexively formulate a second-order picture of its own conceptual conditions of possibility. This impossibility is not logical but rather "performative."[74] The classic example of this type of impossibility is Descartes' argument that one cannot doubt one's own existence as a thinker while performing an act of doubt (due, lets say, to the evil demon having deceived us completely). This is a "performative self-contradiction" because in the act of doubting ones own existence one *enacts* that existence by thinking. Our point in giving this example is not to endorse the specifics of Descartes' thesis; rather, we are interested in the argument's *form*. The argument that we are going to unfold operates with a notion of thoughts or mental acts conceived of in Sellarsian and non-Chisholmian or Cartesian terms, that is, as inner episodes modeled on normatively governed linguistic performances. What is important is not the intrinsic character or makeup of mental acts, but their necessary normativity. What is this argument? In the act of denying the normativity of the mental by providing a picture of our mental life that does not include within it normative terms, that selfsame picture can only be formulated by calling upon the *constitutive* normativity which informs our language. To avoid assuming and utilizing *this* constitutive normativity one must (as Sellare recognizes) jump to a meta-language like Peirceish. Presumably, this framework will not utilize the constitutive normativity of the object language and so can formulate a picture of it and the world to which it is isomorphically related. But Peirceish is not a framework we can use *now* to deliver the result that there are no mental acts—

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[72] Sellars (1958): 306.

[73] Much more would have to be said about this complex area, especially about Sellars' account of causation which attempts to show that even this basic type of synthetic knowledge depends upon our ability to make normatively governed material inferences. See Sellars (1958).

[74] For this concept, see J. Hintikka, "*Cogito, Ergo Sum*: Inference or Performance," *Descartes*, ed. W. Doney (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1967).

there is presently no framework that is not structured by norms—but a future ideal framework that we project ourselves into. But the problem of self-contradiction iterates for us or for any future community that is situated within time. If we, from within inquiry, project ourselves into Peirceish by imagining or conceiving it, then one has posited a future picture of the world that does not countenance mental acts through an act of imagining or conceiving themselves surely mental acts. Similarly, a future community—in the process of generating a picture that abstracts from their constitutive conceptual practices—will at the same time undertake conceptual activity by positing the regulative framework, Peirceish, that generates this picture.[75]

For Sellars' view to make sense there must be a way of formulating a picture of the world that is not within time, that is, one that is truly undertaken at the *end* of inquiry. In his parlance there must actually be an "Archimedean point outside the series of our actual and possible beliefs," a point not underlain by the normative proprieties that constitutively structure our linguistic framework. But for finite beings within inquiry there is no such point. What Sellars should conclude is that while our conceptual practices have conditions of possibility in the real order (insofar as we are living beings), these practices, once they have emerged philogenetically, have—like their practical counterparts—a *sui generis* logic which must be countenanced in any *theoretical account* of this world.

University of Arkansas, Visiting Professor

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[75] It should be clear by now that the performative self-contradiction that is enacted by denying the normativity of the mental does not pertain to an individual subject, but to an intersubjective community of minds whose language is governed implicitly by normative proprieties of practice. I realize that the charge of performative self-contradiction can seem to be a philosophical parlor trick. Challenge truth and I will demonstrate that the challenging propositions only have sense by being internally related to truth, question rationality and I will show that you must assume rational norms to formulate the question, and so on. Very often this type of argument misses its target because it is too blunt an instrument to countenance the fact that most philosophers (not all) are questioning certain *conceptions* of truth, rationality, etc., and not denying them outright. But this is not the case with Sellars. After defining mindedness in terms of normativity he then goes on to *deny*—at least from the perspective of Peirceish—that mental acts so understood exist. What I am trying to do is to point out that even from this perspective the denial of normativity assumes what it denies.