

Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Memory

Memory and Perspective

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1. Introduction

In an essay in the *London Review of Books*, the late Jenny Diski describes a remembered scene from her childhood. Aged 6 or so, she is seated on her father's knee. Her father, she tells us, looks just like he does in the pictures she has of him: 'silvery hair, moustache, brown suede lace-ups'. Diski doesn't have many pictures of her childhood self but she's pretty sure her remembered image of herself at that age is accurate. The layout of the room is also correct: 'Door in the right place; chair I'm sure accurate, a burgundy moquette; patterned carpet; windows looking out onto the brick wall of the offices opposite'. Indeed, Diski had even gone back to the block of flats and 'sat in the living-room of the flat next door' just to verify the layout and confirm its accuracy. Nonetheless, for Diski, there is still something rather 'odd' about this particular memory. She writes:

Here's the thing, though: I can see the entire picture. I can...see myself. My observation point is from the top of the wall opposite where we are sitting, just below the ceiling, looking down across the room towards me and my father in the chair. I can see me clearly, but what I can't do is position myself on my father's knee and become a part of the picture, even though I am in it. I can't in other words look out at the room from my place on the chair. How can that be a memory? And if it isn't, what is it? When I think about my childhood, that is invariably one of the first 'memories' to spring up, ready and waiting: an untraumatic, slightly-moving picture. It never crossed my mind to notice the anomalous point of view until I was middle-aged. Before then it went without saying that it was a

‘real’ memory. Afterwards, it became an indicator of how false recollection can be. (2012: 12)

The scene Diski describes is recalled from what’s known as an ‘observer perspective’. In this external visual perspective, Diski views herself in the remembered scene. For Diski, the falsity of this memory stems solely from this ‘anomalous point of view’. In all other respects the memory is accurate: her father’s appearance; the layout of the flat—a fact which she even verified in adulthood; and the phenomenology of the mental image is such that it presents as a memory, not merely imagination. The only reason Diski doubts this memory is that she is recalling the episode from an external visual perspective. As we will see, the allegedly ‘anomalous point of view’ of observer perspectives is often taken to show that such memories simply cannot be genuine.

In this chapter we discuss the phenomena of perspectival memory. While surveying the field, we suggest that visual perspective alone is not a guide to the truth or falsity of memory, and that genuine memories can be recalled from an observer perspective. Such memories can satisfy conditions placed on genuine memory. Observer perspectives can satisfy factivity constraints, and can stand in appropriate causal connections to the past. In the first section we identify the phenomena and provide an overview of some of the empirical evidence related to point of view in personal memory. We articulate some doubts about remembering from an observer perspective, before responding to these worries. We suggest that observer perspectives may retain other forms of internal imagery: there is no neat division between internal and external perspectives. We suggest that external perspectives may help in understanding the past, and question the primacy of egocentricity.

2. Field and observer perspectives

The imagery involved in remembering past episodes in one's life often involves visual points of view. When we recall a past event we usually adopt the same perspective that we had at the time of the original experience. We see the scene as we originally saw it from a first-person or 'field' perspective. Sometimes, however, we recall the past event from an external visual perspective, from a position we didn't occupy at the time of the original episode. In such cases we view ourselves in the remembered scene, as from a third-person 'observer' perspective. Nigro and Neisser conducted the first systematic experimental studies on visual perspective in memory, and their terms 'field' and 'observer' memories became part of the vocabulary of memory studies.

Since Nigro and Neisser's paper, empirical research has produced a number of consistent findings concerning these differing points of view. The field perspective is more common. Observer perspectives are more common, though, in certain circumstances. One robust empirical result is that observer perspectives are more common for older memories, such as memories of childhood (Nigro and Neisser 1983). Observer perspectives are also more common for events that involve a high degree of emotional self-awareness (Nigro and Neisser 1983; Robinson and Swanson 1993). Field perspectives seem to be related to remembering the emotional details, feelings, or psychological states associated with an event; in contrast, observer perspectives tend to include less sensory and affective detail but more information related to concrete, objective details (Nigro and Neisser 1983; McIsaac and Eich 2002; Rice 2010).

Another study looking at emotion and visual perspective in memory found that although there was no difference in reports of emotional intensity between field and observer perspectives, when subjects switched from a field to an observer perspective there was a resulting decrease in reported emotional intensity. There was no corresponding change in

emotional intensity, however, when switching from an observer to a field perspective (Robinson and Swanson 1993; see also Rice 2010: 233-234).

This last point also suggests that these visual perspectives in memory are not fixed. In Robinson and Swanson's (1993) study, participants recalled an event from a particular perspective (eg field), and sometime later recalled the same event from the alternate perspective (eg observer). However, evidence indicates that one can often *switch* between perspectives within a *single episode* of remembering a past event. That is, remembering a past event may involve adopting not just a field *or* an observer perspective, but may involve adopting *both* perspectives in the same retrieval attempt (Rice and Rubin 2009).

Even if the term 'perspective' bears a visual bias, it refers more generally to the range of imagery or 'standpoints' in distinct modalities that informs one of one's body, the world, or even other perspectives (Behnke 2003: 52). There are many different kinds, domains, and modes of 'perspective'. Perspectives can be cognitive, embodied, emotional, or evaluative in nature; they occur in many domains, including imagination, perception, and memory; and they can be first-, second-, or third-personal. These distinct perspectives and forms of perspective stand in many different relations to each other. By initially insisting on such distinctions between different kinds, domains, and modes of perspective, we can then investigate their coexistence, fusion, integration, and coordination.

The distinction between field and observer perspectives in episodic memory is paralleled in other cognitive domains: in imagination (eg Vendler 1979; Walton 1990; Williams 1973; Wollheim 1984); in dreaming (eg Cicogna and Bosinelli 2001; Rosen and Sutton 2013; Windt 2015). Even in the domain of spatial cognition one can adopt points of view that are internal or external to the subject. Spatial information can be processed and communicated from egocentric (route or embedded) points of view and allocentric (extrinsic or survey) perspectives. In fact, just as an episodic memory may involve both field and observer

perspectives, spatial information is often interpreted and conveyed by integrating and blending these distinct points of view (Tversky 2011).

3. Remembering from an observer perspective: truth and authenticity

In most studies on visual perspective in memory, the observer perspective is simply taken as one particular instance of remembering a past event. These studies do not normally question the authenticity of such memories in which one sees oneself from an external perspective. Some psychologists studying the phenomena of point of view in memory are interested in the question of whether, as a matter of fact, more observer perspectives than field perspectives tend to be false. This is quite distinct from the question of whether there can *in principle* be genuine or veridical memories in which one adopts an observer perspective.

We saw that Diski casts doubt on her childhood observer perspective memory solely because of its anomalous point of view. But if one takes oneself to be remembering, and one is accurately representing some past event in all aspects other than occupying the original point of view, what motivates the claim that such representations are not ‘real’ memories?¹ Why would an external perspective entail a false memory? Diski seems to assume an idea which is also apparent in some philosophical work, the idea that memory should *preserve* the content of perception. In perception one sees an event unfold from a particular point of view. And because memory preserves the content of perception, the remembered event should be recalled from the same point of view one had at the time of the original experience.

The idea that memory exactly reproduces a past experience seems to put pressure on the status of observer perspectives as genuine memories. Since ‘remember’ in relevant senses

¹ Context and pragmatic considerations change the goals and functions of remembering. Whether one is testifying in a court of law or reminiscing round the dinner table affects how we think about the truth of a memory. See Sutton (2003), Campbell (2014), Harris et al. (2014).

is typically used as a success word, memory implies truth: this is a factivity constraint on remembering. On the view we are here describing, truth in memory is taken to require duplication of the past. But observer perspectives are not duplicates of the past event, because they present the event from an 'anomalous' point of view. Thus, on this line of thought, observer perspectives cannot appear in genuine remembering. On such a preservationist view genuine memories should be recalled from a field perspective.

Yet this cannot be the whole picture. It is possible to accept the factivity constraint on memory, yet deny that memory involves strict preservation; a degree of change may still be compatible with truth. This is a point accepted, for example, by Sven Bernecker, a moderate preservationist: 'Memory implies truth, but it does not imply that the memory content is an exact duplicate of the past thought content. Sometimes memory allows for moderate transformations of the informational content' (2008: 155).

Further, the preservationist account of memory is itself called into question by reconstructive models of memory, which emphasise the flexible and dynamic nature of remembering (eg Schacter and Addis 2007). For Bartlett, who conducted pioneering work on reconstruction in memory, 'Remembering is not the re-excitation of innumerable fixed, lifeless and fragmentary traces. It is an imaginative reconstruction, or construction, built out of the relation of our attitude towards a whole active mass of organised past reactions or experience' (1932: 213). But construction in memory should not be equated with error or invention: malleability is not in itself unreliability (Barnier et al. 2008). Memories can be influenced, 'worked over', constructed, compiled, and still be functional, faithful, accurate, true.

A broadly preservationist line of thought lies behind Richard Wollheim's rejection of the possibility that I might see myself in a (genuinely) remembered scene. Wollheim claims that 'would require that I be represented as from the outside, but the fact that it is an event memory forbids this, for this isn't how I experienced myself in the course of the event' (1984:

103).² Zeno Vendler articulates a similar worry: ‘one cannot remember seeing oneself from a different perspective simply because it is impossible to *have seen oneself* from an outside perspective’ (1979: 169, original emphasis). And, Vendler explains, this conclusion simply follows from the truism that ‘one cannot remember doing something that one has not done’ (1979: 170).

On such views, because one did not (indeed cannot) see oneself from an external perspective at the time of the original experience, one cannot have a memory in which one sees oneself from an external perspective: one cannot recall from an observer perspective. But perhaps this is to set an unrealistic standard for what a genuine observer perspective in memory would have to be—a requirement of having visually perceived oneself during the original event. We suggest, in contrast, that in order to ‘see’ oneself in memory from an observer perspective, one does not need to have visually perceived oneself from an external perspective at the time of the original event. Even if we grant that one cannot see oneself from an external perspective, one can still have a memory in which one ‘sees’ oneself from an external perspective.

This point is nicely made by Dominic Gregory:

my own observer memories do not involve its seeming to me that things once looked to me the ways that the visual mental images show things as looking; I do not seem to be recalling episodes in which I somehow saw myself. Rather, they involve its seeming to me that there were once past scenes in which I played a certain part and which looked—‘from

² On Wollheim’s conception, event-memory as a species of memory for events that one experienced is closely related to episodic memory. Wollheim stresses that it is an exaggeration to say that in event-memory one must remember the event *exactly* as one experienced it. Rather, in a genuine memory one should *broadly* remember the event as one experienced it (Wollheim 1984: 103-104). But these broad limits to the mnemonic content must not include ‘gross deviations’, which include ‘structural deviations, or deviations in identity’ (1984: 103). The external visuospatial representation of the self in observer perspectives would, on his view, amount to such a deviation. In response, we suggest that observer perspectives need not involve structural deviations or deviations in identity.

somewhere' rather than 'to someone'—the ways that the visual mental images show things as looking. (2011: 2)

Discussing the impact of present context on the content of memory, Peter Goldie argues that what one *now* knows, thinks, or feels may infuse the memory of a past event. For Goldie, the content of memory can be influenced at the point of retrieval by present knowledge and emotion. He tells us that 'in effect, I remember it as I now feel it' (2012: 52). According to Goldie, observer perspectives are more likely to occur when there is an epistemic, emotional, or evaluative gap—what Goldie terms a triply ironic gap—between past and present. In other words: what one *now* knows, thinks, and feels, is different to what one *then* knew, thought, and felt. It is the (ironic) gap that opened between the past and the present that affords the possibility of a memory from an observer perspective.

Goldie provides the example of remembering drunkenly singing at the office party: feeling at that time a 'heady delight' but now shamefully realising that his colleagues were laughing at him and not with him. For Goldie such a memory will typically be recalled from an observer perspective: 'I can see myself now, shamefully making a ridiculous fool of myself in front of all those people, getting up on the table and gleefully singing some stupid song' (2012: 52). Importantly though, 'field episodic memories—memories of what happened "from the inside"—can also be infected with irony, with what one now knows, and how one feels about what one now knows' (Goldie 2012: 52).

That both field and observer perspectives memories involve constructive elements is a point acknowledged by Dorothea Debus (2007). Debus also argues that observer perspective memories are consistent with a causal theory of memory: observer perspectives can maintain an appropriate causal connection to the past. Debus argues that, despite the external visual perspective of observer memories, the information involved in such imagery has its *source* in

the original experience. For Debus, the shift in point of view between the original perceptual experience and the subsequent observer memory results from a *systematic* modification of the spatial information available at the time of encoding. Spatial information available at the time of the original experience—and hence appropriately causally connected to the past—is systematically manipulated into an observer perspective image. This seems to be the case for Jenny Diski’s memory, in which spatial relations between the elements of the remembered scene appear to be maintained through the shift in visuospatial perspective.

Nonetheless, a further related preservationist argument may be levelled against observer perspective memories. Even if it is accepted that perfect preservation is unrealistic, it could be claimed that memory should still broadly preserve the content of a past perceptual experience. Aspects of the original perceptual content may be *lost* from the memory—memory degrades with time and forgetting is natural—but nothing should be *added* to the content of a genuine memory. In just such a moderate departure from strict preservationism, Bernecker argues that ‘In the process of remembering, the informational content stored in traces may stay the same or decrease (to a certain degree); but it may not increase’ (2008: 164).³

An argument against observer perspective memory can then be formulated thus: genuine memory involves only content that was available at the time of the original experience. Observer perspectives seem to involve a representation of the self that was not available at the time of perception. Therefore observer perspectives involve additional content and cannot be genuine memories.

³ This idea reflects a distinction in psychology between errors of omission and errors of commission. When memory fails it can do so by way of either errors of omission—typically errors of forgetting or memory failures, or errors of commission—when details are remembered that were not part of the original event. Errors of commission are often called *false memories*, in which one ‘falsely remembers details, words, or events that weren’t actually experienced’ (Intraub & Dickinson 2008: 1007).

One response to this argument is to urge that genuine memory can be generative. Kourken Michaelian argues that on a (re)constructive model of memory new content can be generated. According to Michaelian:

The generation of new content occurs when memory produces content in addition to that which it took as input; this can occur either before retrieval, by means of transformation of content received from other sources, or at retrieval, by means of transformation of content stored by memory. (2011: 324).

Memory processes allow that new content can be *added* to genuine memory. Therefore, even if observer perspectives have an additional representation of the self they can still count as genuine memories. In a recent paper, Bernecker (2015) addresses visual memory and the extent to which its content can differ from the content of a previous perception. Bernecker discusses the possibility that observer perspectives may be counted as genuine cases of *inferential* memory. Inferential memory is ‘remembering with admixture of inferential reasoning involving background knowledge or fresh evidence’ (Bernecker 2010: 77). For example, one may see a particularly beautiful bird in the park without knowing what type of species it is. Being something of an amateur ornithologist, one then consults one’s book on Australian birds and finds out that the bird was a Kookaburra. In saying that one remembers seeing a Kookaburra one is inferentially remembering, because one did not know it was a Kookaburra at the time of the original experience (adapted from Malcolm 1963: 223; Bernecker 2010: 25). Non-inferential memory does not involve such inferential reasoning.⁴ Importantly, and in line with Michaelian’s proposal for generative memory, Bernecker holds that ‘While non-

⁴ Non-inferential and inferential memory are sometimes referred to a ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ memory respectively. Bernecker finds these labels unfortunate because they imply that inferential memory is somehow inferior even though it is a pervasive form of memory (2010: 25). Nonetheless, Bernecker’s analysis of memory (2010) concentrates predominantly on non-inferential memory.

inferential memory allows only for the decrease of information, inferential memory also allows for the increase or enrichment of information' (2015: 457).

Bernecker writes:

Should observer memories count as genuine memories? The main reason to answer in the negative is that observer memories contain information that wasn't available to the subject at the time of the original representation. But then all inferential memories are admixed with inferential reasoning involving background knowledge or fresh information. What, if anything, distinguishes observer memories from other inferential memories? To not count observer memories as inferential memories it would have to be shown that the fresh information contained in observer memories is false or unreliable. However, there is no evidence to suggest that memories from the observer-perspective are any less reliable than memories from the field-perspective. (2015: 461)

Bernecker suggests that the main difference between field and observer perspectives lies in their emotional content and concludes that 'given that memories from the observer-perspective are not less reliable than memories from the field-perspective I see no reason to not count them as instances of inferential memory' (2015: 461-462). Observer perspectives are therefore permissible as *inferential* memories because such memory allows for the generation of content.

But even if observer perspectives can be classed as genuine (inferential) memories, and hence not outright false memories, they are sometimes still taken to be examples of 'distorted memories' (e.g., De Brigard 2014; Fernández 2015).⁵ Again, the thought is that because the event remembered did actually happen the memory is not false, and the factivity condition is satisfied; but because that event is remembered from an observer perspective, and so the

⁵ De Brigard says that distorted memories 'present the remembered content in a somewhat distorted way, that is, as a distortion of the content encoded during the original experience' (2014: 160). Fernández distinguishes two types of distorted memories corresponding to 'storage' (preservationist) and 'narrative' (reconstructivist) conceptions of memory. The former is important in this context: 'On the storage conception of memory, a subject's faculty of memory has produced a distorted memory when the content of that memory does not match the content of the subject's past experience on which the memory originates' (Fernández 2015: 539).

content of the memory is different from that of perception, the memory is distorted. This understanding reflects a distinction Bernecker appeals to between truth and authenticity: ‘a memory state must accord not only with objective reality but also with one’s initial perception of reality’ (Bernecker 2010: 214). For Bernecker, a moderate preservationist, genuine (non-inferential) memory must satisfy *both* conditions—truth and authenticity (2010: 39). We suggest that observer perspectives need not be considered distorted memories. Observer perspectives can satisfy *both* truth and authenticity conditions.

How can observer perspectives accord with one’s initial perception of reality? We suggest that observer perspectives may be constructed in part from external perspectival information available during perception. Emotions, thoughts, and images which are experienced during the original episode may be used in the construction of observer perspective memories of the past event. Even though these experiences are internal, they can involve adopting an external perspective on oneself. Recall that observer perspectives are more common for events that involve a high degree of self-awareness. We suggest that during such emotionally charged events, one’s literal (visual) perspective is internal, but one may adopt an external thoughtful or emotional perspective on oneself. And it is from this ‘external’ perspectival information that observer perspectives can be constructed.

During perceptual experience an agent may make use of both egocentric and allocentric spatial information. Observer perspective memories may be constructed from this non-egocentric information available at the time of encoding. Mohan Matthen tells us that:

Field-perspective memory presents scenes in egocentric terms—how they look through the eyes of the observer. Observer-perspective memory is in allocentric terms: it is an expression of observer independent spatial relations in the remembered scene...Now, we know that visual perception incorporates both forms simultaneously...In view of this, many cognitive scientists hypothesize that visual content contains allocentric information as well—perhaps we have a map or model stored away in visual memory. The point to

take from easy switching between field and observer perspectives is that in episodic memory, the egocentric and allocentric forms are somehow separated out and expressed in two different, alternating perspectives. (2010: 13)

In most cases one attends to egocentric visual information available during a perceptual experience. But non-egocentric perspectives are available during perceptual experience too, and sometimes one's attention is focused on this non-egocentric information.⁶ These different perspectives provide different information on the same scene: they provide different ways of thinking about the same episode. Distinguishing episodic from semantic memory, Mark Rowlands remarks that 'What is distinctive of episodic memory is the way in which facts are presented: they are presented by way of experiences. And these experiences, in turn, are presented as ones that the subject had at the time of the episode' (2009: 337). We suggest that field and observer perspectives involve different ways of thinking about the same past event, presenting the same event in different ways. They involve different forms of information that are both available at the time of encoding (see also McCarroll and Sutton 2016).

Rowlands suggests that in observer perspectives 'you may well be accurately remembering the episode itself...However, you do not accurately remember the experiences that presented the episode in its occurrence. You seem to be remembering visual experiences that you could not have had' (2009: 340-341). In contrast, we suggest that observer perspectives can be both true and authentic: they can both represent an event that occurred and the experiences occurring at the time of the event. Further, not only can observer perspectives make use of allocentric information that was available at the time of the original experience: such memories can also maintain perspectival information in distinct modalities. In this way

⁶ It is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into detail on how non-egocentric information may be constructed into an observer perspective. For a fuller exposition, including a discussion of the cross-modal translation of non-visual to visual information, see McCarroll (2015).

observer perspectives may accurately represent the experiences (kinaesthetic, emotional, even imaginative) that one had during the original event, and that are recalled in genuine episodic memory.

4. The plurality of perspectives

In many cases of memory imagery, one may adopt an *external* visual perspective and yet maintain an *internal* perspective in relation to other embodied, emotional or cognitive modalities. Yet there is often, albeit implicit, an exclusive association between kinaesthetic, embodied, or emotional imagery and an *internal* visual perspective. This is coupled with the parallel position that an external visual perspective is (necessarily) isolated from such forms of embodied imagery (Vendler 1979; Williams 1973). In this section we discuss the complex relations between internal and external perspectives in distinct modalities.

Perspectival imagery need not be consistently either internal or external across all modalities. An external visuospatial perspective on a past experience is compatible with an internal embodied (kinaesthetic or emotional) perspective. We can underline the way different perspectival modalities can thus come apart in memory by considering the parallel case of film. In film, point of view (POV) shots represent the visual perspective of a character involved in the action; even though they are removed from the domain of memory they may be roughly analogous to a field perspective. It has been argued that such POV shots invite the viewer to take up the position of a character in the narrative the film portrays, perhaps through imagining from-the-inside, or empathising with the character (Messaris 1994: 33). The visual perspective invoked in POV shots may sometimes thus invite the spectator to adopt, or empathise with, the character's perspective in other respects or modalities too: but this is not necessarily so. As Murray Smith notes:

POV may be particularly effective in rendering how a character sees, and so enabling our imagining from the inside how the character sees, but it is not particularly useful in evoking, say, a character's joy or humiliation or anxiety. Emotional simulation certainly does not need a POV shot in order to be prompted. (1997: 418)

Consider POV shots that represent an evil or monstrous character in the film, stalking or lying in wait for another character. In such cases, even though one shares or adopts the visual perspective of the monster, say, one's emotional and kinaesthetic perspectives may be far from in harmony with that creature. One may feel the emotions of the individual the beast is watching; one may feel the fear or terror of the victim rather than the excitement or bloodlust of the fiend. Here, different perspectives can come apart: one shares the (internal) visual perspective with one character, while at the same time not in any way sharing that character's affective perspective, and perhaps even adopting the external emotional perspective on that character which is held by the victim. The point of view may be *visually* internal, as if one were seeing the action through the eyes of one of the characters, but in other modalities—such as emotional or kinaesthetic—one's perspectives need not neatly align with those of that character. This example shows us how a visual field perspective can be coupled with an 'external' emotional perspective.

One powerful and disturbing example of the divergence of perspectives within cinematic point of view is found in Jonathan Demme's *Silence of the Lambs*.⁷ In the concluding sequence, Detective Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster) confronts the notorious serial killer 'Buffalo Bill'. We see Clarice, groping around in the pitch dark, wielding her gun but unable to see, visibly shaking and terrified for her life; but we *see* her from the terrible 'night goggles' perspective of Buffalo Bill. We are visually aligned with the killer, we see Clarice from *his*

⁷ Thanks to Robert Sinnerbrink for this example.

point of view through the eerie green of lens he is wearing: yet our emotional and even kinaesthetic perspectives are more aligned with Clarice: we feel *her* terror, *her* helplessness.⁸ One's visual perspective on a remembered, imagined, or filmed scene can diverge from or align with perspectives in other modalities: there is no simple internal/external dichotomy.

Sports psychology offers further indications of the multimodality of perspectives. There is evidence that embodied imagery is not exclusively tied to an internal visual perspective.

Morris, Spittle and Watt tell us that:

Researchers have found that participants are able to form kinesthetic images equally well with either [visual] imagery perspective...and more recent research even suggests that for some tasks, kinesthetic imagery may have a stronger association with external [visual] imagery than with internal imagery. (2005: 129-131)

This illustrates that an observer perspective in visuospatial imagery can be coupled with internal kinaesthetic imagery. The tasks which are purported to have a stronger association with external visual imagery are open rather than closed skills: football rather than darts, for example. In open skills, the external environment (the position of other players, say) may have an impact on successfully performing the action, and bodily form in movement may be important. In these open skills egocentric and allocentric information are integrated.

Consider the following example in which the professional footballer Wayne Rooney discusses his use of imagery in preparation for matches:

Part of my preparation is I go and ask the kit man what colour we're wearing – if it's red top, white shorts, white socks or black socks. Then I lie in bed the night before the game and visualize myself scoring goals or doing well. You're trying to put yourself in that moment and trying to prepare yourself, to have a 'memory' before the game. I don't know if you'd call it visualizing or dreaming, but I've always done it, my whole life ... when

⁸ The scene can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQZYz7qR0Fo>

you get older and you're playing professionally, you realize it's important for your preparation – and you need to visualize realistic things that are going to happen in a game (Winner 2012; see also Sutton 2012).

This 'memory before the game' appears to involve Rooney visualising himself performing from an observer perspective: note his attention to external details such as the colour of the kit. Rooney is using external visual imagery to prepare for professional football matches. As part of his preparation, Rooney cultivates internal kinaesthetic imagery which coheres with his external visual imagery, such that internal and external perspectives fuse.

To return to autobiographical memory, in their 1897 survey of earliest recollections Victor and Catherine Henri note that observer perspective memories are common in memories from childhood. But they suggest that while such memories present a visual representation of oneself as a child they are in a sense distanced from any internal *feeling* accompanying the memory:

A large number of responses contain the same affirmation about the way that rememberers see themselves in memory: they *see* themselves as children, they do not *feel* themselves children, they have a representation in which a child appears, and they *know* that they are that child: "I see myself in sickness like someone who is outside of me." "I'm at the seashore and my mother is holding me upon her arms; *this scene appears to me as though I were far away from it.*" Such are the observations that are found in many of the responses.⁹

Observer perspectives may *tend* to involve less emotion or embodied imagery: but this is not *necessarily* so, as the following response from the Henris' survey demonstrates:

⁹ The Henris' 1897 paper in French was partly translated in the American journal *Popular Science Monthly* in 1898. Our quotations are from the complete translation by Nicolas et al. (2013: 370).

I had the croup when I was 12 months old, and they had to burn all the lumps in my throat. I have a very clear visual image of the scene; I distinctly see four people holding me down by force, laid out on one side; what I see most of all is the scorching brazier where two red irons are heating until they are red-white; *right now, I still seem to feel that burning iron approaching my lips.* (2013: 370, original emphasis)

On one reading of this passage, it is a memory recalled from an observer perspective: the respondent *sees* him or herself in the scene, being pinned down to receive the gruesome treatment. But the memory is also infused with kinaesthetic and, perhaps, emotional elements. The memory articulates the external visual perspective as well as the simultaneous emotional and embodied perspectives: it evokes the fear of the searing heat as well the sense of danger looming towards the subject, invading personal space.¹⁰

So not all the features or qualities that are experienced from-the-inside are lost in the observer perspective. Visual, emotional, kinaesthetic, and other embodied perspectives may come apart: there is a plurality of perspectives (Sutton 2010). If we consider that ‘neither affect or kinaesthesia need be determined by visual perspective, or even inevitably follow it, we make room for a range of relations between these distinct modalities to operate in different contexts’ (Sutton 2014: 143).

The plurality of perspectives is not only restricted to embodied, experiential or emotional imagery. As Goldie (2012) argues, it may also involve cognitive or evaluative perspectives on the past which may be either internal (reflecting considerations at that time) or external (bearing knowledge that was not available in the past). These cognitive or evaluative perspectives may or may not align with visual perspective in personal memory: there is no neat internal/external divide.

¹⁰ Arguably the ambiguity between a field and an observer perspective inherent in this description points to the fact that both types of memories can be emotional.

The view we discussed above that genuine autobiographical memories can only involve field perspectives reflects the thought that egocentric perspectives are natural and primary. One example of this tendency to favour egocentricity can be seen in a study on the use of drawings as a means of lie-detection. Aldert Vrij and colleagues argue that people who draw a remembered scene truthfully are likely to sketch it from an internal perspective, as if from a shoulder-mounted camera, while ‘liars’ will draw it as from an overhead or external vantage-point. Truth-tellers use more direct phrases, phrases such as ‘I saw’ that imply direct perceptual experience, while ‘liars are more likely to convey indirect, hypothetical knowledge (eg ‘I would see ...’)’ (Vrij et al. 2010: 588). The authors hypothesise that this distinction will hold for scenes that participants draw, either

From a ‘shoulder camera’ (observer) position, where someone sketches what she/he could actually see, or from an ‘overhead’ (actor) position, where someone sketches the location as it could be seen from the air. The former is more direct and likely to be the result of actual first-hand experience than the latter, which ‘removes’ the participant from the scene. We thus predicted that more truth tellers than liars would sketch the drawing from a shoulder camera position. (Vrij et al. 2010: 588)

Yet this way of thinking arguably misses the ordinary mingling of route (internal, field) and survey (external, observer, overhead) perspectives in spatial cognition.¹¹

We argued above that we think about, process, and communicate spatial information from both egocentric and allocentric perspectives. Indeed, work on spatial cognition calls into question any notion of egocentric primacy: ‘The primacy of egocentric perspective has been

¹¹ While Vrij et al. did find that ‘significantly more truth tellers (53%) than liars (19%) sketched the drawing from a shoulder camera position’ (2010: 592), nonetheless almost half of the truth tellers drew the scene from the ‘anomalous point of view’ said to characterize liars. Indeed, we doubt that an ‘own-eyes’ point of view is intrinsically tied to reality. In a study on point of view in spontaneous waking thought, observer perspective thoughts were more likely to be memory reports, whereas field perspective reports included more fantasies such as seeing ‘a slice of ham hovering in space’ (Foulkes 1994: 682).

challenged by research showing that rats, monkeys, and people on first encountering an environment immediately form multiple representations of space, in particular, allocentric representations' (Tversky & Hard 2009: 124). In studies demonstrating how we often naturally adopt another's spatial perspective as a means to improve action understanding, Tversky and Hard conclude that 'the deep meaning of embodied cognition is that it enables disembodied thought' (2009: 129). The mind is not always bound by limitations of the physical world.

We suggest therefore that external perspectives offer another way to interpret the world. The intermingling of the multiple internal and external perspectives that one can adopt when remembering provides a way of understanding the past that goes beyond a purely egocentric point of view.

This intermingling of perspectives is seen in the anthropologist Bradd Shore's (2008) research on memory work at long-running annual religious camp meetings at Salem. At these camps, older adults spend time watching the younger campers engage in a range of activities: bible readings, sports, and arts and crafts:

Over time at camp meeting, people come to watch their kids doing exactly what they did.

This effects an alternation between field and observer memories and a kind of blurring that allows campers to 'participate' in the lives of their offspring at the same moment as they gain reflexive distance... In its subtle orchestration of memories of doing and of watching over time, Salem provides perfect conditions for the fusion of observer and field memory; conditions that ultimately inform narrative expression and create a powerful sense of identification in 'family' over the generations. (Shore 2008: 114)

This blurring of perspectives is a fusion that affords a greater degree of understanding of the past. It may take a mix of internal and external perspectives to fully understand and appreciate a past event.

5. Conclusion

The imagery of personal memory involves a plurality of perspectives. In remembering the past, we can adopt a range of viewpoints, internal and external, visual and non-visual, which can fuse or integrate in various ways. Even in the present moment we have ways of getting outside ourselves. Remembering from an observer perspective, from an external visual point of view, is but one way we have of thinking about and understanding our past. Sometimes adopting an external point of view can help put the past in perspective.

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