

Shea

## Representation in Cognitive Science

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Our thoughts are meaningful. We think about things in the outside world; how can that be so? This is one of the deepest questions in contemporary philosophy. Ever since the 'cognitive revolution', states with meaning-mental representations have been the key explanatory construct of the cognitive sciences. But there is still no widely accepted theory of how mental representations get their meaning. Powerful new methods in cognitive neuroscience can now reveal information processing in unprecedented detail. They show how the brain performs complicated calculations on neural representations. Drawing on this cutting-edge research, Nicholas Shea uses a series of case studies from the cognitive sciences to develop a naturalistic account of the nature of mental representation. His approach is distinctive in focusing firmly on the 'subpersonal' representations that pervade so much of cognitive science. The diversity and depth of the case studies, illustrated by numerous figures, make this book quite unlike any previous treatment. It is important reading for philosophers of psychology and philosophers of mind, and of considerable interest to researchers throughout the cognitive sciences.

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