

DOES EXPERIENCE PROVIDE REASONS FOR BELIEF?

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Some philosophers argue that only the good cases of successful perceptual experience can provide reasons for belief. In my talk I argue that they are right that the good cases have a certain primacy over the bad ones, but propose a fundamentally different way of understanding this primacy: it consists in the fact that if experience presents a situation, I do *not* need a reason to believe it actually obtains, but would rather need a reason even to doubt this, much more to conclude that this is really a bad case. Since to take myself to be in possession of such a reason is to take myself to be in possession of a fact, bad cases are only conceivable as deviations from the good case of successful representation. I further argue against disjunctivism that experiences can only be properly understood as mental states when it is also acknowledged that the bad cases involve intentionally contentful misrepresentations. The key here is to understand the relation between our notions of mind and world. Then we can be naïve realists about both.