

What reasons do we have for taking our own minds or experiences as "primary samples [= basic samples = privileged samples] of reality"?

Although Hartshorne has given different reasons in different places, the relevance of some of them (e.g., that it is only mind that either asks scientific and metaphysical questions or is able to critically validate answers to them) is not entirely obvious. *The* reason, in any event, seems to be this:

There is only one part of nature that we know in all possible cognitive ways, whether by our external senses or by introspection or retrospection. This is the part that each of us is, which we know from within by being it, whereas we know all other natural things only from without, through our external senses.

Therefore, as highly specialized and nonrepresentative as we may be among parts of nature, we are, for our knowledge, uniquely accessible to direct and well as indirect awareness and understanding. To this extent, or for this reason, we are, precisely, primary samples of reality

Cf., e.g., *Insights and Oversights*: 13 f.; also "The Rights of the Subhuman World": 52: "There are several considerations by which this approach may be justified. First of all, whereas we know ourselves in two basic ways, we know most of nature in but one of these ways. We know ourselves by being ourselves, by direct feeling or memory of what it has been like to be human animals. We know other things, at least so far as they are outside our bodies, only by visual, auditory, olfactory, or tactual observation. By such observation we can also examine ourselves and our human fellows. Thus, if we can know what any sample of natural forces is like, a fortiori we can know these samples that we ourselves are. ¶ "There is a second reason . . . for taking this closest-to-home sample seriously. It is that in ourselves the positive characteristics of animals generally, and for all we know of creatures at large, are present in highest degree, and therefore in most unmistakable form. . . . So we had better start at our own end where attributes are likely to be present in sufficient magnitude or intensity to be unmistakable.¶ "For the two reasons just specified, I hold that a cautiously positive form of anthropomorphism—that which attributes to other creatures neither the

duplication, nor the total absence, but lesser degrees and more primitive forms, of those properties exhibited in high degree, and more refined or complex forms, of those in us—is the only rational initial hypothesis for us to form."

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