it is characterized here. Also, Thomas Aquinas's doctrine of creation is
every bit as strong as the pantheismism recommended by Clouser, with
this difference: Aquinas thought creation was not just a matter
of belief, but could be established by natural reason. This brings me
to my second point. It does not seem to me that all ideas about what
is self-existent (what I would call metaphysical rather than religious
principles) are equally unjustifiable, and this for the very reasons
Clouser mentions. The reductionist positions which he criticizes all
lead to incoherence, whether self-referential, self-assumptive, or self-
performative. Only a view of reality which lets reality speak in all
its many aspects can avoid these incoherences. When reality is al-
lowed to speak this way, it shows itself to absolutely dependent on
God the creator.—Montague Brown, Saint Anselm College, Manches-
ter, N.H.

DENNETT, Daniel C. *Consciousness Explained.* Illustrated by Paul Weiner.
Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1991. xiii + 511. $27.95—
Dennett aims to develop an empirical, scientifically respectable theory
of human consciousness—one that demystifies the mind by showing
how the various phenomena that compose consciousness “are all
physical effects of the brain's activities” (p. 16).

The model of consciousness as “Cartesian theater,” where “a light-
and-sound show is presented to a solitary but powerful audience, the
Ego or Central Executive” (p. 227), is to be replaced by a “multiple
drafts” model of consciousness. Consciousness is not a single nar-
ritive, with an author of record, but rather the gappy product of many
processes of interpretation in the brain (p. 94).

Dennett's theory closes in on consciousness from “above” and “be-
low.” From above, the theorist begins with a subject’s “heterophe-
nomenology.” From below, the theorist studies underlying mecha-

nisms in the brain. A subject's heterophenomenological world is the
theorist’s third-person description of the world as it seems to the
(subject the world according to Garp; Sherlock Holmes's London).
The theorist relates the objects of the resulting heterophenomeno-
logical world to events going on in the subject’s brain at the time (p.
407). Whether or not the deliverances of introspection are true is an
empirical matter, to be determined by whether or not portrayed objects
bear a striking resemblance to the “real goings-on in people's brains”
(p. 85). (It is hard to see what in the brain could even count as bearing
a striking resemblance to the notion of Santa Claus expressed by “I
just can't stop thinking about Santa Claus.”)

The multiple drafts model of consciousness is supposed to solve, or
dissolve, the traditional philosophical puzzles of consciousness. Den-
nett acutely sets out the traditional puzzles, and meets some of them
head-on: on his model, there is no inner display, no “Boss neuron,” no
qualia. In other cases, however, it is unclear how Dennett thinks
that his view addresses the philosophical problems that he so vividly
lays out. For example, an initially compelling reason for dualism,
he says, is an intuition that nothing in the brain could “hate racism,
love someone, be a source of mattering” (p. 33). Yet even if dualism
is untenable, I do not see how Dennett’s overall argument either shows
that the intuition is false or gives a mechanistic account of the intuition
itself.

Dennett speaks of events of content-fixation in the brain (p. 365).
This is the point at which Dennett’s theory of consciousness must be
joined with his theory of intentionality, developed elsewhere. Despite
Dennett's cryptic remarks, it is not obvious how the pieces are sup-
posed to fit together. Is a person in a “contentful” state in virtue of
content-fixing events in his brain, as suggested here, or in virtue of
patterns of gross observable behavior, as Dennett’s intentional-stance
theory implies?

*Consciousness Explained* is written for a general intellectual audi-
ience, not just for specialists in philosophy or the cognitive sciences.
(For philosophers and scientists, Dennett provides two extremely short
technical appendices, which raise more questions than they answer.)
To induce the reader to think about consciousness from an exclusively
third-person, materialist perspective, Dennett employs surveys of sci-
entific literature, thought experiments, analogies, “just-so” stories,
and other devices. The book brims with provocative suggestions—
such as the idea of the self as a “center of narrative gravity”—that
others may want to develop (or refute) in detail.

This book is vintage Dennett. On the one hand, it is too swash-
buckling for those with a taste for close argument; on the other hand,
it is stimulating and suggestive, full of clever turns, and enjoyable to
read.—Lynne Rudder Baker, *University of Massachusetts at Amherst,*
and *Middlebury College.*

HILMAN, Ilham. *Philosophy and the Philosophical Life: A Study in Plato’s
Phaedo.* New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992. xii + 139 pp. $45.00—
The *Phaedo* is usually taken to be among Plato’s metaphysically richest
dialogues. Dilman argues that, at best, the views of Plato’s Socrates
are here free of the taint of metaphysics, or that worthwhile, non-
metaphysical theses are propounded alongside metaphysical ones. In
these cases, Dilman attempts to separate out “Socrates’ spiritual and
moral perceptions” from the metaphysical claims. The latter are “a
mystification of the grammar of the language in which such percep-
tions are expressed” (p. x). Dilman’s objection to such metaphysical
theses is Wittgensteinian. When philosophy goes beyond the attempt
to articulate the role that a certain discourse plays in our form of life
and, instead, attempts to provide some philosophical justification or
explanation for our form of life, it degenerates into incoherence. Such
language ceases to “do work” and is then “idle.”

Dilman interprets Socrates’ arguments for the soul’s indistruc-
tibility as investigations of the grammar of the language that Socrates