The Mechanical Mind

How can the human mind represent the external world? What is thought, and can it be studied scientifically? Does it help to think of the mind as a kind of machine?

Tim Crane sets out to answer questions like these in a lively and straightforward way, presuming no prior knowledge of philosophy or related disciplines. Since its first publication in 1995, *The Mechanical Mind* has introduced thousands of people to some of the most important ideas in contemporary philosophy of mind. Tim Crane explains some fundamental ideas that cut across philosophy of mind, artificial intelligence and cognitive science: what the mind–body problem is; what a computer is and how it works; what thoughts are and how computers and minds might have them. He examines different models of the mind from dualist to eliminativist, and questions whether there can be thought without language and whether the mind is subject to the same causal laws as natural phenomena. The result is a fascinating exploration of the theories and arguments surrounding the notions of thought and representation.

This edition has been fully revised and updated, and includes a new chapter on consciousness and new sections on modularity and evolutionary psychology. There are also guides for further reading, a chronology and a new glossary of terms such as *Mentalese*, *connectionism* and *intentionality*. *The Mechanical Mind* is accessible to the general reader as well as students, and to anyone interested in the mechanisms of our minds.

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But how is it, and by what art, doth the soul read that such an image or stroke in matter . . . signifies such an object? Did we learn such an Alphabet in our Embryo-state? And how comes it to pass, that we are not aware of any such congenite apprehensions? . . . That by diversity of motions we should spell out figures, distances, magnitudes, colours, things not resembled by them, we attribute to some secret deductions.

Joseph Glanvill, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661)