



# **The Elm and the Expert: Mentalese and Its Semantics (The Jean Nicod Lectures 1993)**

*Jerry A. Fodor*

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**The Elm and the Expert: Mentalese and Its Semantics (The Jean Nicod Lectures 1993)** Jerry A. Fodor  
This text provides a discussion of semantic issues about mental representation, with special attention to issues raised by Frege's problem, twin cases, and the putative indeterminacy of reference. The book extends and revises a view of the relation between mind and meaning that the author has been developing since his 1975 book "The Language of Thought". There is a general consensus among philosophers that a referential semantics for mental representation cannot support a robust account of intentional explanation. Fodor has himself espoused this view in previous publications, and it is widespread throughout the cognitive science community. This book is largely a reconsideration of the arguments that are supposed to ground this consensus. Fodor concludes that these considerations are far less decisive than has been supposed. He offers a theory sketch in which psychological explanation is intentional, psychological processes are computational, and the semantic properties of mental representations are referential. Connections with the problem of "naturalizing" intentionality are also explored.

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