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On Constancy in Spatial Perception

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Abstract: The perceptual constancies are at the heart of the scientific and philosophical study of perceptual experience, for they are responsible for our enjoying stable percepts despite fluctuating proximal stimulation. For some time, it has therefore seemed natural to appeal to the constancies as a way of explaining the factivity of perception - how (in veridical cases) we present or represent our environments as they are. Notably, a number of theorists now reject the suggestion that color constancy straightforwardly allows us to track mind-independent physical properties, such as surface spectral reflectances. In the spatial literatures, however, the constancies remain tasked with accounting for the perceptual presentation or representation of objective values as they are independent of perceivers. In this presentation, I outline the unacceptable normative consequences of these latter views, and sketch an alternative, more ecologically plausible understanding of veridicality in spatial perception.