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Perception and the Dual Nature of Appearances

By

Umrao Sethi

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the
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in

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in the

Graduate Division
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University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge

Professor John J. Campbell, Co-chair
Professor Hannah Ginsborg, Co-chair
Professor Michael G.F. Martin
Professor Tania Lombrozo

Summer 2017

Perception and the Dual Nature of Appearances

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Umrao Sethi

2017

Abstract

Perception and the Dual Nature of Appearances

by

Umrao Sethi

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy
University of California, Berkeley
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It has been universally assumed that sensible qualities—colors, smells, shapes and sizes—must either be “out there” or “in here”: they must *either* be features of the external world *or* modifications of perceivers’ minds. Neither option is satisfying, because both force us to relinquish the striking intuition that there is something shared by a tomato and an after-image, a beach ball and a phosphene, when each is said to look red or to look round. The central insight of my dissertation is that the choice between sensible qualities being “out there” or “in here” is a false one: it stems from a misunderstanding of the metaphysics of sensible qualities. The mind and the material world play *distinct* roles in the instantiation of sensible qualities: material bodies are the *bearers* of sensible qualities; minds *perceive* these qualities. Each guarantees an instance of the quality, but does so in a way that does not exclude the other. These observations concerning the metaphysical nature of sensible qualities have expansive ramifications for the philosophy of mind; for at bottom, they reveal that the mind and the world play *supportive*, rather than antagonistic, roles in the constitution of conscious phenomenology.

In my dissertation, I develop a historically motivated account of two kinds of sensible instances. The redness of an ordinary tomato is a mind-independent sensible instance because *inherence* in the physical tomato is all that is required for this instance to exist. I trace this notion of in-

herence back to Locke, arguing that for him, inherence in a substance is what *explains* the instantiation of a sensible quality. But now consider an experience of a red after-image. We cannot describe the phenomenology of this experience by appeal to an uninstantiated universal; for this fails to capture how the redness that you experience is right there in front of you, not in Platonic heaven. So there must be an actual instance of redness present. But, unlike in the case of the tomato, there is no suitable object for redness to inhere in. There is no material body that is red; nor can the mind serve as the bearer of redness, for this would have the absurd implication that the mind, when perceiving, is itself literally red. Arguing that this is the real insight behind Berkeley's famous maxim *esse est percipi*, I defend the view that such an instance of redness exists, *not* in virtue of having any bearer (contra Locke), but rather as the *object* of a perceiver's *awareness*. Just as in the case of pains, the very fact that a perceiver enjoys an experience of a red after-image guarantees an instance of redness of which she is aware.

Thus, sensible qualities turn out to be an *ontologically flexible* kind—some instances inhere in material bodies, others are the objects of a perceiver's mental states. More importantly, however, the two modes of instantiation are not exclusive of each other even in the case of a *particular* instance. Consider, for example, a case in which one perceives a ripe tomato: in this situation, two conditions obtain, each of which is sufficient for the instantiation of redness. First, there is a material object—the tomato—that redness inheres in. But second, the perceiver is in a mental state whose existence guarantees an instance of redness. In such a case, given that there is only *one* instance of redness present, it must be *over-determined*. A perceived instance of redness, then, simultaneously inheres in a physical object *and* is the object of a perceiver's awareness.

I use this framework to develop a novel version of naïve realism—the view that ordinary perception is constitutively an awareness of the mind-independent world—which acknowledges the rich phenomenology of hallucinations. There has been unanimous agreement that this combination of features is impossible to secure. For given the absence of a physical object, if a hallucination makes the perceiver aware of redness, it must make the perceiver aware of a *mind-dependent* instance of redness. Many have argued, though, that if the hallucinated instance is mind-dependent, it seems as though the instance of redness in the veridical perception must be as well, thereby falsifying naïve realism.

First, I argue that representationalism—the view most commonly endorsed by those who accept the argument—is unable to do justice to the phenomenology of experience. But then, I go on to show that the argument is invalid, thereby defending naïve realism. I argue that both veridical and hallucinatory acts of awareness are individually *sufficient* for their items, but it is only the instances in the hallucination that are mind-dependent. For remember that the instance of redness in the veridical case is over-determined: despite the sufficiency of the perceiver’s state, the presence of a material body that is itself sufficient for the instance in question means that this instance can outlive the experience, continuing to inhere, now unperceived, in the tomato. This makes the items of veridical perception *mind-independent*. Nonetheless, veridical perception and hallucination have the same phenomenal character, because both comprise an awareness of the same sensible qualities. The contribution that particular instances of these qualities make to conscious phenomenology is unaffected by their ontological status—that is, by whether or not they are mind-independent. In paying close attention to the underlying metaphysics, then, we have established the world-involving nature of perception while nonetheless respecting the mind’s capacity to generate phenomenal character.

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I took philosophy classes for many years before I decided to commit to a more serious pursuit of the subject. It was ultimately the classes I took with Fred Neuhouser that convinced me that it was possible to engage in the most rigorous theoretical reasoning and, at the same time, to connect up that reasoning to our lived, sociopolitical reality. Fred remains the best teacher I have had—it was a privilege to learn from someone who treats the philosophers he works on and the undergraduates he teaches with similar seriousness and respect.

When I came to Berkeley, having decided only a short time earlier to pursue philosophy, I had little idea of what my interests were. It was a seminar on perceptual knowledge with Barry Stroud that first got me excited about the nature of perception and its role in securing our knowledge of the external world. I owe an invaluable debt to Barry for showing me—through his own work, his seminars on the nature of concepts and the unity of judgment, his undergraduate lecture on Wittgenstein, and in our conversations—how to connect up questions from the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of language, metaphysics, epistemology and the history of philosophy, but also how to take the utmost care at each stage in one’s thinking. I am honored to have had the chance to discuss my work with Barry in its earliest stages of development.

Berkeley has felt like a genuine intellectual home for me, and this is in the first instance a consequence of my dissertation committee. Through their own work, which remains a pleasure to read so many years later, each of my committee members has contributed to the genesis and development of my own views. This project, though still in its early stages, would not have been possible without them. To John Campbell, I owe gratitude for his unending ability to discuss a question anew and to never dismiss something on the grounds of received opinion (including his own). At times when it seemed like I was getting nowhere or getting stuck in the

eternal cycle of philosophical quarreling, John's sense of wondrousness for all questions philosophical and his ability to immediately go to the heart of an issue were an invaluable source of motivation.

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Finally, Mike Martin has had the most tangible impact on the actual content of my dissertation and current views. Much of this impact took the form of hours of conversation in Berkeley, London and over Skype, all of which were invaluable for me to clarify the content of my views and be able to ultimately present them in a convincing manner. There is no replacement for Mike's piercingly clear understanding of the fundamental dialectic underlying the philosophy of mind, nor for his generosity in sharing this understanding with his students. I will always be thankful for his advice, his criticism, and the respect that he has shown me over the years by placing only the highest standards on my work. Lastly, I remain touched by the support, empathy and friendship that Mike offered me through the nightmare that is the philosophy job market,

Berkeley was an incredibly stimulating place at which to work in the philosophy of mind. It will be hard to recreate the group of peers, with whom I have participated in many, many reading groups, shared my work, and most importantly, had so many philosophically stimulating conversations, all of which helped me refine my views in more ways than I can explicitly acknowledge. In particular, I am grateful to Austin Andrews, Adam Bradley, Caitlin Dolan, Peter Epstein, Jim Hutchinson, Richard Lawrence, Alex Kerr and Dave Suarez for their constructive feedback, for their willingness to share their own ideas with me, and most importantly, for their sustained friendship and support.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: The Epistemological Background

This project offers a novel account of the nature of perceptual experience. It does so by developing a new metaphysical framework for the sensible qualities—the paradigmatic objects of perceptual experiences. Before I embark on the metaphysical project, which will take up the entirety of the dissertation, I want to pause to provide something of an intellectual background against which the project might be evaluated. In so doing, I hope to provide the reader with some idea of the criteria by which to evaluate the success of the proposed account. In the course of this work, I will put forth some metaphysical proposals that may strike some as unnecessarily radical. My hope is that having a sense of the broader philosophical motivations and payoffs will help in the consideration of whether the contentious nature of some of the proposals is ultimately justifiable.¹

1.1 PERCEPTION AND THE SKEPTICAL HYPOTHESIS

In the *First Meditation*, after Descartes has put forth the form of external world skepticism that would come to underwrite the future of skeptical philosophy, he writes:

¹Given this aim, the introduction will be a somewhat breezy overview of some very complex issues, a serious discussion of which could take several entire dissertations. My goal is not to argue my way through these complexities, but rather to chart out an intellectual narrative.

But it is not enough simply to have realized these things; I must take steps to keep myself mindful of them. For long-standing opinions keep returning, and, almost against my will, they take advantage of my credulity, as if it were bound over to them by long use and the claims of intimacy.²

Hume, after also having shown our idea of material body to be illegitimate, examines the source of our idea, and makes the following observation:

So strong is the prejudice for the distinct continu'd existence of the former qualities [colors, sounds, heat and cold], that when the contrary opinion is advanc'd by modern philosophers, people imagine they can almost refute it from their feeling and experience, and that *their very senses contradict this philosophy*.³

He proceeds:

'Tis certain, that almost all mankind, and even philosophers themselves, for the greatest part of their lives, take their perceptions to be their only objects, and suppose, that the very being, which is intimately present to the mind, is the real body or material existence.⁴

Both Hume and Descartes, two philosophers responsible for formulating of some of the most radical forms of skepticism in the recent history of philosophy, are acutely aware of how difficult it is to adopt the skeptical conclusion in any kind of stable or long-lasting manner. Both philosophers offer striking arguments, the conclusions of which call into doubt whole bodies of knowledge; but then almost immediately after, go on to acknowledge how powerless these arguments are in making us relinquish our everyday beliefs.

There are different reasons that are given for *why* the arguments are so weak in their impact. Descartes blames habit, custom and a laziness of the mind. Hume, however, puts forth a more specific proposal for why we cannot help but believe in the existence of a material world. He describes the intuition that we can refute the skeptical conclusions just

²Descartes (1641/1993), AT 23.

³Hume (1738/1978), Bk. I, Part IV, Section II, my emphasis.

⁴*Ibid.*

from our *feeling and experience*, for it is as if our “very senses contradict this philosophy.” In these passages, Hume is remarking on the striking power that our perceptions have to dislodge the force of any philosophical argumentation that denies the existence of the material world. For the very deliverances of our senses seem, over and over again, to establish the reality of the very entities whose existence philosophy calls into question. Furthermore, Hume rightfully points out that it is not merely the weak-minded among us who are subject to this pull, but that even philosophers succumb, for “the greatest part of their lives” to this view of the senses.

In the twentieth century, yet again, we see that Moore’s infamous proof of the existence of the external world rests on asserting the simple truth, as one raises one’s hand, “Here is a hand.” Moore concludes from this premise the existence of at least one material object, and thereby the existence of a material world. This argument has frustrated many. Of course, *if* we could know that the object before us were in fact a hand, we may easily conclude that there existed material things. But, the frustrated response goes, the very point of the skeptical threat is to make us doubt that we *can* know that the thing before us is in fact a hand.⁵ For if we cannot prove that we are not dreaming, we cannot prove that this thing is a material object and not a figment of my imagination. Pre-empting this sort of response, however, Moore insists that being able to *prove* that the thing before me is a hand is distinct from *knowing* that it is. What the skeptic forces us to realize is that we cannot *prove* that the thing before us is a hand:

How am I to prove now that “here’s one hand, and here’s another”? I do not believe I can do it. In order to do it, I should need to prove for one thing, as Descartes pointed out, that I am not now dreaming. But how can I prove that I am not?⁶

Nevertheless, Moore writes:

I can know things, which I cannot prove; and among things which I certainly did know, even if (as I think) I could not prove them, were the premises of my two proofs.⁷

⁵For a sophisticated discussion of how the failure of this style of argumentation rests on the failure of transmission of warrant, see, Wright (1985, 2002)

⁶Moore (1962), 148.

⁷*Ibid.*

Again, we have a case of a philosopher who admits that he cannot offer a *proof* that refutes the skeptical hypothesis, nevertheless insisting that he *knows* with certainty that what he sees before him is a hand. I will not argue that the actual source of Moore's certainty is, as Hume suggests, the verdict delivered by his senses—he never does say what the source of his conviction is—but at a minimum, we can take Hume to provide at least one plausible explanation of Moore's flat-footed certainty.⁸

So, it seems to be universally granted that we cannot prove on any particular occasion that we are not dreaming. It also seems true that if we cannot prove that we are not dreaming, we cannot *prove* that the experience currently being enjoyed is an experience of the material world. Yet, we have seen that these concessions rarely result in our actually doubting that our senses reveal to us the material world. This is a strange phenomenon, especially if it affects not only “the vulgar,” but strong-minded philosophers who normally swear by the unassailable role of argumentation. Should we conclude that we have, yet again, evidence of the practically ineffective nature of an overly abstract philosophy, or is there something special about the stubbornness of sensory experience in the face of rational argumentation?

By far the most pervasive response to Cartesian skepticism about the external world has been to insist that it operates with an inappropriate threshold for knowledge. Fallibilists about knowledge argue that we can *know* we are not dreaming, even if we cannot prove, with absolute certainty, that this is the case.⁹ Contextualists about knowledge argue that everyday contexts place a lower threshold on justification than the more rarified contexts philosophers operate within.¹⁰ But one problem with these generalized epistemic strategies is that they fail to acknowledge the unique role that *sensory experience* plays in rendering our beliefs about the external world so immune to refutation. It is not merely the case that sensory knowledge, like *all* knowledge, is fallible, nor that a sensory context is just one of the many everyday contexts with lower thresholds for

⁸It is unlikely that Moore traces this certainty to the deliverances of his senses. Moore did, for most of his career, think that we knew with certainty that all our perceptions had as their objects, sense-data, but he remained uncertain about whether the sense-datum was the surface of a material object or some entity that was distinct from any entity in the material world.

⁹See, for example, Feldman (1981), Cohen (1988).

¹⁰See, for example, Lewis (1996).

justification. Rather, our senses in particular seem to, in Hume's words, "contradict" the skeptical hypotheses. Our senses, then, seem to provide us the very kind of certainty in regards to the falsity of the skeptical hypothesis that the epistemologists deny is necessary for knowledge.

Some have offered *distinctive* analyses of the kind of justification we receive from sensory experience. Jim Pryor, for example, has argued that sensory experience in particular, provides us *prima facie* entitlement to believe that the world is how it seems, unless we have actual counter-vailing evidence otherwise.¹¹ We cannot point to something that is the reason for our having this entitlement, but it is nonetheless the case that we have it. This sort of view starts to do justice to the observation that the deliverances of the senses, if taken at face value, seem to deliver a negative verdict on the truth of the skeptical hypothesis. But, one might worry that the response is still too weak to satisfy us. For it continues—and self-avowedly so—to work with a picture of perception on which perception alone never does put us in direct contact with the external world. And given that admission, it remains mysterious *why* perception provides the kind of dogmatic entitlement that Pryor suggests it does. If all we are ever given in perception are mere seemings, and never the actual world, why should we ever be entitled to conclude *anything* about the world on the basis of these seemings? In Barry Stroud's words:

The most we could know is that if we are to have any reason to believe what we do about the world there must be some such connections between what we can perceive and what is unperceivably so, and we must have some reason to believe in some such connections. But that is only a conditional statement. It says what we have to have reason to believe, but it gives no independent reason to believe anything of that kind. It just shows how desperately some such additional reasons would be needed, on this understanding of the limits on what we can know by perception alone.¹²

This "restrictive" picture of perception—on which perception always stops short of the world—is one that most epistemologists explicitly endorse. Most begin with the assumption that every perceptual experience

¹¹See Pryor (2000).

¹²Stroud (2009).

may be delusive. And this implies that perception, by its very nature, never actually includes constituents of the external world. For if it did, even sometimes, put us in direct contact with the external world, then there would be a class of perceptual experiences that could *not* be delusive. Of course, we may not be able to tell whether we are enjoying an experience that belonged to this privileged class; but if we were in fact so privileged, we would in fact be in direct contact with the external world.

Recently, philosophers like John McDowell and Barry Stroud have questioned the effectiveness of the strategies described above. They have argued that the *only* effective response to skepticism requires us to question the restrictive picture of perceptual experience that most epistemologists have taken for granted. McDowell writes:

What shapes [external world] skepticism is the thought that even in the best possible case, the most that perceptual experience can yield falls short of a subject's having an environmental state of affairs directly available to her. . . The idea is that even if we focus on the best possible case, her experience could be just as it is, *in all respects*, even if there were no red cube in front of her. . . Suppose skepticism about our knowledge of the external world is recommended on these lines. In that case it constitutes a response if we can find a way to insist that we *can* make sense of the idea of direct perceptual access to objective facts about the environment. That contradicts the claim that what perceptual experience yields, even in the best possible case, must be something less than having an environmental fact directly available to one. And without that thought, this skepticism loses its supposed basis and falls to the ground.¹³

On this approach, what we need is not more sophisticated accounts of justification or knowledge, but rather, a renewed look at the *metaphysical* structure of perceptual experience. As McDowell argues, if we can defend an account of the metaphysics of perception on which *some* perceptual experiences constitutively involve the external world, then skepticism, though not refuted, is seriously undermined. A straightforward refutation of skepticism would require us to *prove* that we are in fact in contact with

¹³McDowell (2008), my emphasis.

the external world. McDowell, along with Stroud and Moore, agrees that this kind of proof is impossible.¹⁴ But if instead, we can show that it is *possible* for a kind of perceptual state to exist that essentially includes constituents of the external world, we can undermine the skeptic's reason for doubt before it gets off the ground. The reason external world skepticism is so threatening is because it seems as though we must build up to knowledge of the external world from a set of resources that do not themselves include the external world. By working with an account of perception that stops short of the world, it is clear that we must provide *positive* justification for any beliefs about the external world, on the basis of these perceptions. But if world-involving perceptions are possible, then there is no motivated reason to doubt that we can sometimes enjoy some of these privileged experiences. Of course, we must grant that we are fallible—that sometimes we think we are enjoying an experience of this privileged sort when we are not—but this fallibility only gives rise to ordinary doubt, not the kind of radical doubt that global skepticism requires. As McDowell puts it:

If we can recapture the idea that it is so much as possible to have environmental states of affairs directly presented to us in perceptual experience, we can recognize that such ground rules [requiring us to establish that we are in a favorable epistemic position] reflect a misconception of our cognitive predicament. And then our practice of making and assessing claims to environmental knowledge on particular occasions can proceed as it ordinarily does, without contamination by philosophy. There need no longer seem to be any reason to discount the fact that in real life the assessment is often positive.¹⁵

In this prologue, I will not argue that this is a compelling approach to the skepticism. Rather, I merely record my agreement with the thought that this is the best route to saving our knowledge of the external world. My goal in presenting this epistemological narrative is, at least in part, to motivate a shift in focus from the nature of justification or knowledge, to the metaphysical nature of perception. On this narrative, if we are to avoid

¹⁴See Stroud (1994).

¹⁵*Ibid.*

skepticism, what we need to do is examine whether it is in fact possible for perception to have this world-involving nature.

1.2 A STANDSTILL

Both Stroud and McDowell offer transcendental arguments for the conclusion that we *must* in fact allow for such world-involving perceptions if we are to even make sense of what it could mean for the world to *seem* some way to us. Given that the skeptic assumes the possibility of the latter in framing the skeptical hypothesis—that the world may not be the way it seems—these transcendental arguments aim to establish that we must allow the possibility that we are sometimes in direct contact with the world. John Campbell, in his recent work, has adopted a related but distinct strategy—arguing that our very ability to *refer to*, or have a *concept of*, the mind-independent world requires a view of perception on which it is at least possible for us to be in direct contact with that mind-independent reality.¹⁶ Again, given that the former cognitive tasks are unquestioned, the argument, if successful, establishes the possibility of world-involving perceptions.

Let us assume that these transcendental arguments are effective. That is, let us assume that they establish that we must allow for the possibility of world-involving perceptual experiences. The proponents of such arguments still owe Descartes an answer: if veridical perceptions are subjectively indistinguishable from delusive ones, *how can it be* that the former essentially incorporate parts of the external world? The proponents of a transcendental style of argumentation have largely ignored this question—given that they take themselves to have shown that we *must* allow for the possibility of world-involving perceptions, they take their task to be complete.

This last step I consider to be a mistake. For it ignores the very reasons that led to the restrictive view of perception in the first place. Proponents of a restrictive view argue that we *must* adopt such a view on the basis of considerations about delusive perceptions. Remember Descartes' starting point: dreams or hallucinations are *just like* ordinary perceptions, from a conscious perceiver's perspective. Most have interpreted this to imply that hallucinations and ordinary perceptions must have the same

¹⁶Campbell (2002); Campbell & Cassam (2014).

phenomenology. But how can this be—how can an experience that constitutively involves an awareness of material objects be phenomenally just like an experience in which any objects of that sort are entirely absent? More pressingly, if the conscious nature of the privileged experiences is to be *explained* by the external states of affairs they make us aware of—and surely this is required for the epistemic and conceptual payoffs discussed—how can the very same conscious nature obtain in the absence of those states of affairs.

Insofar as we do not have an answer to this question, we find ourselves in a difficult situation—we have, on the one hand, a transcendental argument which, in its strongest form, shows that we must allow for a class of world-involving perceptions; on the other hand, we have an alternative set of considerations stemming from considerations from delusive perceptions that seem to deny the possibility of any such experiences. We are at a standstill. One of the arguments must be rejected.

A recent response, on behalf of the transcendental approach, has been to outright deny that hallucinations and ordinary perceptions are in fact phenomenologically identical. On this kind of “disjunctivist” approach, it has been argued that hallucinations or dreams are indeed subjectively indistinguishable from ordinary perceptions, but that we need not explain this indistinguishability in terms of phenomenal identity.¹⁷ But this has the unfortunate consequence of alienating us from our own phenomenology—if we cannot be said to know, even with idealized discrimination abilities, what our own phenomenology is, what grip can we be said to have on our own minds at all? At this stage, one might rightfully conclude that we have made room for the world in our epistemic and conceptual lives only by excluding our own conscious minds. This kind of skeptical scenario seems, at best, equally disastrous to the one that Descartes originally put forth. If we are to give up access to our own phenomenology in order to save knowledge of the external world, many recommend giving up the world. On the other side, most have largely ignored the transcendental arguments described above. Some have suggested that the transcendental arguments fail; and that we must either accept the skeptical threat or try to resuscitate our knowledge by tweaking our concepts of knowledge and justification.¹⁸

¹⁷See, for example, Martin (2004); Fish (2008); Logue (2012).

¹⁸See, for example, Wright (2008).

The goal of my dissertation is to confront head-on the challenge from delusive experiences. My conclusion will be that the subjective indistinguishability of ordinary perceptions and hallucinations does *not* threaten the world-involving nature of ordinary perception. Importantly, my approach is *not* to be confused with that adopted by the disjunctivists—unlike them, I grant as a central, unchallenged assumption that hallucinations do in fact have the same phenomenology as our ordinary perceptions. I will argue that this fact can be respected just so long as we provide different metaphysical *explanations* for the very same phenomenology that the two kinds of experience have.

This introduction serves to give the reader a sense of *why* I insist on maintaining a world-involving view of perceptual experience. At different stages of the dissertation, a reader might find themselves with the following thought: “Many of the puzzles you raise just go away if you give up on a world-involving view—so why not just relinquish it?” Within the dissertation itself, I briefly motivate this view of perception on broadly phenomenological grounds. My hope is that the introduction provides a thicker, more authentic response to that question. While phenomenological considerations do indeed provide strong *prima facie* support for a world-involving view, my primary reasons for defending such a view stem from the broadly epistemological concerns mentioned here. To some extent, this sets my project apart from many in the philosophy of mind. Most projects on sense-perception fall into one of two categories—those who are concerned with the skeptical challenges alluded to here largely sidestep discussions of the phenomenology of sense-perception, focusing instead on an epistemic characterization of perceptual states. Others approach the case of sense-perception as just one of a plethora of mental states that have rich phenomenology, thereby offering unified accounts of phenomenology that apply to perception in the very same way that they apply to pains, itches or moods. This latter tactic largely ignores the *unique* epistemic role that sense-perception plays in securing our knowledge of the external world. This project, in contrast, places sense-perception at the center of the philosophy of mind because of its unique epistemic status, while nonetheless treating the phenomenological considerations as equally significant constraints on the resulting account.

1.3 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

To turn to the content of the dissertation, then, let us start by considering the universal assumption that sensible qualities—colors, smells, shapes and sizes—must either be “out there” or “in here”: they must *either* be features of the external world *or* modifications of perceivers’ minds. Notice that neither option is satisfying, because both force us to relinquish the striking intuition that there is something shared by a tomato and an after-image, a beach ball and a phosphene, when each is said to look red or to look round. The fact that sensible qualities seem to be instantiated even in experiences of phosphenes, after-images or total hallucinations, drives the insistence that veridical and delusive perceptions can have the very same conscious character: in both kinds of experiences, colors, shapes, sizes and smells seem to be present in exactly the same way. If we are to make sense of how this is possible, we must get clearer on the nature of the sensible qualities themselves that seem to show up in these experiences.

The central insight of my dissertation is that the choice between sensible qualities being “out there” or “in here” is a false one: it stems from a misunderstanding of the metaphysics of sensible qualities. In chapter 2, I argue that the mind and the material world play *distinct* roles in the instantiation of sensible qualities. The redness of an ordinary tomato is a mind-independent instance of redness because *inherence* in the physical tomato is all that is required for this instance to exist. I trace this notion of inherence back to Locke, arguing that for him, inherence in a substance is what *explains* the instantiation of a sensible quality.

But now consider an experience of a red after-image or a hallucination of a red tomato. We know that such experiences can in principle be subjectively indistinguishable from an ordinary perception of redness. So, it seems that we cannot describe the phenomenology of these delusive experiences merely in terms of the perceiver being aware of the uninstantiated universal, redness; for this fails to capture how the redness that is experienced is right there in front of the perceiver, not in Platonic heaven. So there must be an *actual instance* of redness present. But, unlike in the case of the tomato, there is no suitable object for redness to inhere in. There is no material body that is red; nor can the mind serve as the bearer of redness, for this would have the absurd implication that the mind, when perceiving, is itself literally red. Arguing that this is the real insight behind Berkeley’s famous maxim *esse est percipi*, I defend the view

that such an instance of redness exists, *not* in virtue of having any bearer (contra Locke), but rather as the *object* of a perceiver's awareness. Just as in the case of pains, the very fact that a perceiver enjoys an experience of a red after-image guarantees an instance of redness of which she is aware.

If we are to allow for both kinds of instances—and this seems like the only way to do justice to our intuitions about both material bodies and phosphenes being colored and shaped—sensible qualities must be an *ontologically flexible* kind. That is, they must have a nature that is compatible with some instances inhering in material bodies, and others serving as the objects of a perceiver's awareness. We can still continue to categorize *instances* of sensible qualities as material or mind-dependent, based on the actual conditions that secure their existence, but we no longer explain this categorization in terms of the nature of the sensible *kind*, of which they are particular instances.

Once we recognize that there are disjunctive conditions on sensible instantiation, we must consider the possibility of both conditions simultaneously obtaining. Consider, for example, a case in which one perceives a ripe tomato: in this situation, two conditions obtain, each of which is sufficient for the instantiation of redness. First, there is a material object—the tomato—that redness inheres in. But second, the perceiver is in a mental state whose existence guarantees an instance of redness. In such a case, given that there is only *one* instance of redness present, it must be *over-determined*. A perceived instance of redness, then, simultaneously inheres in a physical object *and* is the object of a perceiver's awareness.

This key insight—that the sensible items of ordinary perception are over-determined—forms the backbone of the remainder of the dissertation. In chapter 3, I use this metaphysical framework to mount a defense of the world-involving nature of ordinary perception. Let us introduce the name *naïve realism* for the view that ordinary perception constitutively involves an awareness of the mind-independent world. The view is “naïve” because it aims to capture the pre-theoretical account of ordinary perception. The key pre-theoretical thought is that ordinary perception is just a matter of being aware of objects in the external world—change the objects and you change the experience. As I have already suggested, naïve realism has a hard time acknowledging the rich phenomenology of hallucinations. In fact, there has been unanimous agreement that this combination of features is impossible to secure. The basic reason is this: given the absence of a physical object, if a hallucination nevertheless makes the perceiver

aware of redness, it must make the perceiver aware of a *mind-dependent* instance of redness. Many have argued, though, that if the hallucinated instance is mind-dependent, it seems as though the instance of redness in the veridical perception must be as well, and so we cannot conceive of ordinary perception as putting us in touch with mind-independent reality.

The argument is complex and requires a series of subtle moves. I present the strongest version of the argument in chapter 3, and then go on to argue that it is ultimately invalid. I argue that both veridical and hallucinatory acts of awareness are individually *sufficient* for their items, but it is only the instances present in the hallucination that are mind-dependent. For remember that the instance of redness in the veridical case is over-determined: despite the sufficiency of the perceiver's state, the presence of a material body that is itself sufficient for the instance in question means that this instance can outlive the experience, continuing to inhere, now unperceived, in the tomato. This makes the items of veridical perception *mind-independent*. Nonetheless, veridical perception and hallucination have the same phenomenal character, because both comprise an awareness of the same sensible qualities. The contribution that particular instances of these qualities make to conscious phenomenology is unaffected by their ontological status—that is, by whether or not they are mind-independent. In paying close attention to the underlying metaphysics, then, we have established the world-involving nature of perception while nonetheless respecting the mind's capacity to generate phenomenal character.

In chapter 4, I shift my focus to consider an alternative, widely accepted approach to perception. Representationalism is the view that the conscious phenomenology of a perceptual experience is just a matter of how one represents one's environment as being. Crucially, the representationalists deny the observation I start chapter 3 with, namely that in perceptions—veridical or delusive—we must be aware of *instances* of sensible qualities for our experiences to have the character that they do. The representationalist instead argues that it is sufficient for our experiences to be phenomenally rich that it *seems as if* there are instances of sensible qualities present. They have a straightforward answer to how the phenomenology of delusive and veridical perceptions can be identical—in both cases, it seems as if they are presented with a mind-independent state of affairs. So, not only does this kind of view give a unified account of perception, perceptual experiences, by their very nature, represent a mind-independent world.

Many have concluded that giving a mind-independent world an essential role to play in the *content* of our perceptions is sufficient to avoid the worst forms of skepticism. According to the representationalist, we do not need experience to actually make us *aware* of bits of material reality, as long as our perceptions essentially represent such a material reality.

In chapter 4, I adopt a somewhat unusual approach in my criticism of the representationalist view. I present two constraints on an adequate account of phenomenal properties and then argue that representationalism, once it commits to a substantive conception of content, fails to respect either constraint. Pre-theoretical reflection on our own perceptual states reveals that the phenomenal properties instantiated in experience must be properties that are a) occurrent and b) categorical. Both these constraints emerge from a reflection on the *here-and-now* nature of perceptual phenomenology. As it turns out, the leading accounts of representation—the causal-historical account and the inferentialist account—violate both of these criteria. This suggests that any attempt to treat phenomenal properties as essentially representational will be necessarily revisionary. Towards the end of the chapter, I suggest that the representationalist cannot take refuge in a primitivist conception of representation. A primitivist account of representation is no account at all—the observation that in perception, things *seem* a certain way (a way that sometimes they are *not*) is something that no plausible view of perception will deny. The only way to get a substantive thesis out of such a weak claim is to offer an account of *what it is* for things to seem some way or another. So the failure of substantive accounts of representational content, when applied to the phenomenology of perceptual experience, implies a failure of the representational thesis about perception in general.

There is one final step to take before we can conclude our defense of naïve realism. Up until this stage of the dissertation, I have assumed that the qualities we are aware of in ordinary perception are the ordinary colors, shapes and sizes of mind-independent objects. In Chapter 5, however, I argue that this claim is called into question by the possibility of conflicting appearances. Most who have been swayed by such considerations have falsely concluded that we are only ever aware of mind-dependent entities. Instead, I argue that we can acknowledge the force of these considerations while still insisting that we are in direct contact with the mind-independent world, just so long as we acknowledge the robustly *objective* nature of sensible appearances.

In the first half of the chapter, I engage in a historically driven defense of the argument from conflicting appearances. Focusing on a variation of the argument presented by Berkeley in the *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, I argue that this argument is more potent than is normally assumed and that as a result, most of the standard forms of evasion are unappealing. The argument, if sound, demonstrates—just like the argument from hallucination—that the immediate objects of awareness must be mind-dependent entities. I argue that the most effective way to avoid this conclusion is to treat the immediate items of awareness as sensible appearances, rather than ordinary sensible qualities.

In the second half of this chapter, I develop a view on which sensible appearances are properties that ordinary mind-independent objects possess relative to a set of environmental conditions. This relativity to viewing conditions is key to avoiding the threat from the argument—when for example, a straight stick looks bent, we are aware of an objective appearance that the stick has relative to environmental conditions in which it is submerged in water. Mind-independent objects can possess multiple shape or color appearances just so long as they possess them relative to distinct external conditions.

The goal of my dissertation is to offer a metaphysical account of the sensible qualities that in turn makes room for a metaphysical account of sensory experience. The account of experience I develop satisfies two desiderata. First, it treats ordinary perception as essentially world-involving—we are made aware of instances of the sensible appearances of mind-independent objects; second, it analyzes hallucinations as involving an awareness of mind-dependent instances of the very same kinds of sensible appearances.

We can now see that both the naïve realists and the skeptics they were trying to refute made the same mistake: both assumed that if ordinary and delusive perceptions were phenomenologically identical, *neither* could put us in direct contact with the mind-independent world. This faulty reasoning is what gave rise to the restrictive view of perception on the one hand, and disjunctivism on the other. But it should now be clear that avoiding the restrictive view of ordinary perception does *not* require us to deny delusive experiences their phenomenal character. For the ontologically flexible nature of sensible qualities allows us to give distinct metaphysical explanations of the very same qualities being instantiated in the two cases.

Where does this leave us? We have the resources for a striking response

to the skeptical threat—we can embrace the very phenomenological considerations that motivated Descartes to posit his skepticism in the first place, but argue that the skeptical posture he adopted in response was unwarranted. So long as we can continue to treat the ordinary case of perception as placing us in direct contact with the external world, we have found no reason to be bothered by the mere possibility of delusive perceptions. We can investigate whether we are in one of these delusive states in the ordinary ways that all of us in fact do—by looking more closely, checking our eyesight, and making sure no one has slipped us a suspicious drug. As McDowell writes, “now it is perfectly proper to appeal to cases of ordinary perceptual knowledge in ruling out the skeptical scenarios, or—better—in justifying a common-sense refusal to other with them.”¹⁹

¹⁹McDowell (2008), 385.

Chapter 2

Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities

This chapter relies on two starting points. The first concerns the relation between properties and substances. It is a widely accepted claim that properties depend, for their instantiation, on members of a distinct category of ontologically independent entities. Aristotelians link the very existence of properties—universals—to their instantiation by substances. Platonists, who are committed to the independent *existence* of the universals themselves, nevertheless grant that for those universals to be *instantiated*, there must exist entities that secure their instantiation. So while Aristotelians and Platonists disagree about the ontological status of universals themselves, both agree that the particular *instances* of a universal are such that their existence depends on their ontological bases. In the early modern period, too, this idea remains dominant. Locke, for instance, suggests that our very ideas of the particular color, shape and size of a cherry are ideas of entities that cannot exist by themselves:

All the ideas of the sensible qualities of a cherry come into my mind by Sensation. . . . The ideas of these qualities. . . are perceived by the mind to be *of themselves* inconsistent with existence. . . . Hence the mind perceives their necessary connection with inherence, or being supported.¹

This idea that particular instances of a property do not enjoy an independent existence remains widely accepted in the contemporary metaphysical literature. Even a trope theorist, as long as she is not committed to

¹Locke (1689/1894), Part I, Bk. II, Ch. 2, §2.

an ontology that is *exclusively* comprised of tropes, can accept that tropes require for their existence, bearers.²

The second starting point is, at least in part, a sociological observation. There has been much disagreement in the history of philosophy over the nature of the *sensible* qualities in particular; that is, over whether the above-mentioned support for the instantiation of sensible qualities comes from material substances or from minds. Many philosophers, especially in the second half of the twentieth century, have adopted a materialist approach, insisting that sensible qualities are the kinds of qualities that depend, for their instantiation, on material substances. But this widespread agreement is a recent phenomenon. While the following may be a minority view in more recent discussions, many philosophers in the past have insisted that the sensible qualities are in fact essentially mind-dependent. To get a flavor for the most radical version of this kind of view, consider the following passage from Berkeley:

Let it be considered, the sensible qualities are colour, figure, motion, smell, taste, and such like, that is, *the ideas perceived by sense*. Now for an idea to exist in an unperceiving thing is a manifest contradiction; for to have an idea is all one as to perceive: that therefore wherein colour, figure and the like qualities exist, must perceive them; hence it is clear there can be no unthinking substance or *substratum* of those ideas.³

Note that Berkeley extends the thesis of mind-dependence or ideality not only to the secondary qualities—a widely accepted thesis in the early modern era—but to the primary qualities as well. On Berkeley's view, *all* sensible qualities are nothing but ideas. Furthermore, they are not mind-dependent just in virtue of being powers that objects have to cause experiences (as Locke was sometimes willing to grant of the secondary qualities); rather, they are nothing more than ideas or mental objects themselves. A commitment to this view of the mind-dependence of the sensible qualities remains compelling to many sense-datum theorists, who argue that sensible properties like color, shape and size are, in the first

²The only view that explicitly rejects the claim of dependence is a bundle view that inverts it and builds substances out of already existing tropes. I will not consider this kind of view in this chapter.

³Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), §7, my emphasis.

instance, properties that can only be instantiated by mental entities called sense-data, and are therefore dependent on minds in just the way that Berkeley suggests.⁴

The basic set up for this chapter is as follows: we can assume that sensible qualities depend on substances for their instantiation. But there is significant disagreement over which kinds of substance they depend on, i.e. mental or material. My central goal in the first part of the chapter is not to adjudicate the disagreement, ultimately choosing one side over another, but to get clearer on the metaphysics of the two views. In the course of the chapter, I will argue that a unitary notion of dependence will not suffice if we are to understand the central claims of both sides. Instead, we will need two distinct notions of dependence, one that applies to the relation between sensible qualities and material bodies, the other to sensible qualities and minds. Sensible qualities, if they depend on material substance, do so in virtue of *inhering* in material substances. On such a view, instances of sensible qualities depend for their existence on the material substances that they inhere in. But, it will turn out that inherence *cannot* be the notion that a philosopher like Berkeley had in mind when he argued for the mind-dependence of the sensible qualities; for this would attribute to him an independently implausible view that he explicitly rejects, namely that the mind itself must be literally shaped, colored and tasty. Instead, I will argue that what is meant by the thesis of mind-dependence is that a sensible quality depends for its instantiation on a perceiver's *awareness* of it. Dependence on inherence and dependence on awareness, then, are distinct relations that sensible qualities may stand in to particular kinds of substances.

The second part of the chapter engages in some exploratory metaphysics. It has always been assumed that only one of the two views described above is salvageable: it must *either* be material bodies or minds, which provide the ontological ground for the sensible qualities. But what would the ramifications be if we were to be permissive and allow for the instantiation of both kinds of dependence relations? If there is no *prima facie* reason to deny that both material bodies and minds can be implicated

⁴Note, though, that many sense-datum theorists of the early twentieth century insisted that sense-data were neither material nor mind-dependent. This was driven by their combined commitment to perception being a source of knowledge and their insistence that one could only have knowledge of entities that are independent of the knower.

in the grounding explanation of *distinct* instances of sensible qualities, I will go on to investigate whether these two relations of dependence can also co-obtain in the case of a *particular* sensible instance. Once the mind and material bodies play distinct determining roles, there are no in principal obstacles to cases of joint dependence *and* over-determination. There turn out to be some striking consequences for the philosophy of mind: The notion of over-determination allows us to secure the mind-independence of the ordinary objects of seeing while nonetheless doing justice to the rich qualitative character attributable to the mind. The notion of joint dependence, on the other hand, allows us to treat sensations like pains, itches and tickles as simultaneously mind-dependent yet physically located in parts of our bodies, thereby doing justice to the essentially *bodily* nature of such sensations.

2.1 INSTANTIATION DEPENDENCE

Before we examine the particular case of sensible qualities and the dependence relations they stand in to material and mental substances, it is important to define the general notion of dependence that we will make use of. It helps to begin with the more generic notion of ontological dependence, which is a notion that concerns the relation between particular entities. This notion is traditionally construed as follows: x ontologically depends on y iff x depends for its existence on y . In the past, the notion of ontological dependence has been given a modal interpretation; on this interpretation, x ontologically depends on y iff it is necessarily the case that if x exists, y exists.

More recently, though, in a series of papers by Fine, Lowe, Correia, Koslicki and others, it has been convincingly argued that a merely modal gloss on ontological dependence is unsatisfactory.⁵ Crucially, modal notions are non-explanatory: they merely posit the existence of a necessary connection between two entities, without the resources to indicate the source of necessity. The notion of ontological dependence, in contrast, is an asymmetrical, *explanatory* notion— x 's being ontologically dependent on y implies that y explains x and is therefore, ontologically prior to x . Consider, for example, someone who thinks that there are bi-directionally necessary connections between the mental and the physical, and as a re-

⁵See Fine (1995); Lowe (1994); Correia (2008); Koslicki (2012).

sult is committed to a claim of the following sort: “It is necessarily the case that mental state m exists if and only if physical state p exists.” This bi-conditional leaves open which, if any, of the two states explains the existence of other. Both a non-eliminativist physicalist who thinks that the fundamental level of reality is physical and a non-eliminativist idealist who believes that the fundamental level of reality is mental could endorse the above bi-conditional. But there is a stark disagreement between the proponents of these two positions. The disagreement concerns which of the two states is more ontologically fundamental. Merely working with a modal notion of dependence is not fine-grained enough to distinguish between such radically distinct metaphysical views.

To accommodate the asymmetrical, explanatory aspect of ontological dependence, Fine and others have recommended that the modal operator be replaced by an essence- or identity-based operator (where this operator is primitive and is not itself to be given a modal interpretation). On such an essentialist construal, if x is ontologically dependent on y , it is true in virtue of the identity of x that if it exists, y exists. We can define this identity-based notion of existential dependence as follows:

Existential Dependence: x existentially depends on y iff \Box_x (if x exists, then y exists); where \Box_x is a primitive operator that stands for ‘it is true in virtue of the identity of x ’.⁶

Introducing this essence-based operator gets us the explanatory asymmetries we were interested in capturing—in Fine’s well-known example, it is true in virtue of the essence of the singleton set containing Socrates that it can only exist if its member, Socrates, exists, but it does not seem essential to Socrates’ existence that abstract entities like sets exist, so we get an explanatory asymmetry even in the face of a true modal bi-conditional. As for the case described above, a non-eliminativist physicalist can now state her position explicitly: it is true in virtue of the essence of pain that

⁶Rather than interpreting this in terms of a primitive relation between the identity of x and propositions that are made true in virtue of it, Fine suggests that there is an unanalyzed relation that holds between x and a set of propositions, such that the identity of x is to be derivatively understood in terms of the propositions rendered true, not the other way around. In his 2015 paper, though, Dasgupta develops the compelling thought that this approach will not be able to do justice to role that essences play in securing non-propositional forms of knowledge, such as knowledge by acquaintance.

it exists only if a certain kind of neural firing exists but not vice-versa—for given the priority of the neural state, its essence cannot be defined in terms of the mental states that depend on it. This is a more informative claim than the mere modal claim, which establishes nothing more than a necessary covariance between the mind and the physical world. A non-eliminativist idealist can distinguish her position from that of the physicalist by clarifying the ontological priority of the mental state, positing it as the metaphysical *explanans* of the neural firing.

Fine, in his work on dependence, has recommended a further modification to the notion on which we replace the notion of existence entirely with the notion of essence. Rather than define ontological dependence as a relation between the existences of x and y that obtains due to the essence of x , Fine recommends that we define the relation in terms of the role that y plays in constituting the essence of x . He implements this modification by introducing the notion of real definitions—definitions, which as the ontological counterpart of nominal definitions, serve to define entities rather than terms. On his final analysis, we get the following definition:

Essential Dependence: x essentially depends on y iff y is a constituent of the real definition of x .

Fine's transition from an existence-based notion of dependence to an essence-based one stems from his interest in cases of necessary existents and non-existents. Fine is keen to accommodate the possibility of relations of ontological explanation even in the case of such entities, and in order to capture these cases, we must have a notion that is not necessarily tied to existence.

Which, if any, of these notions is suitable for our discussion of the relation between substances and properties? Implicit in the repeated endorsement of the claim that properties are dependent on substances is the view that it is of the *nature* of a property that it requires something that is ontologically prior to secure its instantiation. So, in exploring the relation between substances and the properties that depend on them, it is clear that we need an asymmetrical, essence-based notion of dependence. On the other hand, the asymmetrical relation between properties and substances that we are most interested in pertains neither to the existence of properties, nor to their unrestricted essences. If we are to state a thesis that is compatible with Platonism, for example, we cannot define the relation of

dependence between properties and substances in terms of conditions on the former's *existence*. Furthermore, instead of just including a substance in the unrestricted real definition of the universal, it is more perspicuous for our purposes to implicate it specifically in that aspect of the property's essence that pertains to the *instantiation* of the property. On the Finean notion, if the ontologically prior entity is a constituent of the essence of the ontologically dependent entity, this presumably has wider ramifications than the notion we are interested in. On the basis of these observations, we can define the following notion of instantiation dependence:

Instantiation-Dependence: A property F instantiation-depends on substance iff \Box_F (if F is instantiated, $\exists s$ (s is a substance)).⁷

In its current formulation, this notion of dependence is quite vague. It says nothing about *why* it is the case that the existence of a substance is required for the instantiation of a property. An explanation of this claim will be the focus of the next two sections of the paper. I will first consider (in section 2.2) the way in which sensible qualities are thought to depend on material substance. Having characterized the relevant notion here as inherence, I will argue (in section 2.3) that inherence cannot be the notion in play when philosophers argue that sensible qualities are mind-dependent. This will lead us to explore the notion of mind-dependence in more detail.

2.2 INHERENCE

In the passage already quoted above, Locke describes sensible qualities as qualities that are "of themselves inconsistent with existence." We should interpret this passage, given our framework, and given Locke's suspicion of universals in general, as a claim about particular *instances* of sensible qualities being incapable of an independent existence. In another passage in the *Essay*, Locke restates this point, this time defining substance as that

⁷Koslicki, in her 2012 paper, makes use of Fine's notions of real definitions to introduce a notion of feature dependence. It may seem as though this notion is very close to the notion I have defined here. But in section 2.3, I will argue that a substance can be implicated in the instantiation of a property, without that property being a feature of the substance. For this reason, we need a notion of instantiation-dependence that is more neutral than Koslicki's notion.

which provides support to particular instances of qualities that cannot subsist by themselves:

If anyone should be asked, “What is the subject wherein colour or weight inheres?” he would have nothing to say, but the solid extended parts; and if it were demanded, “What is that solidity and extension inhere in?” he would not be in a much better case than the Indian mentioned before. . . [who] replied, Something, he knew not what. . . The idea, then, we have, to which we give the general name substance, being nothing but the supposed, but unknown support of those qualities we find existing, which we imagine cannot subsist *sine re substante*, without something to support them, we call that support *substantia*; which according to the true import of the word is, in plain English, *standing under*, or *upholding*.⁸

It is clear, in this passage, again, that Locke is pointing out that property-instances depend, for their existence on the existence of substances. Given *our* willingness to allow universals into our ontology, we can capture Locke’s insight in terms of the instantiation, if not the existence, of properties requiring the existence of substances. We can then move quite naturally from the claim that properties depend for their instantiation on substances, to the claim that particular instances of a property depend, for their existence, on particular substances. This is a transition I will help myself to in this chapter.⁹ But here, I want to draw two further points from Locke’s text. First, notice how Locke’s focus here is on the sensible qualities in particular. He asks of color and weight in particular, what secures their instantiation and his answer is “the solid extended parts.” Given that we know that Locke thinks that our idea of material substance is an idea of an extended, solid thing, we can conclude that for Locke,

⁸Locke (1689/1823), Part I, Bk. II, Ch.23, §2.

⁹At this point, someone might point out that a sensible quality depending on a substance for its *instantiation*, does not imply that the resulting instance depends, for its *existence*, on the particular substance that instantiates it. For example, one might think that instances can survive while moving from one substance to another. Given the very strange nature of such a view, and given that most philosophers straightforwardly endorse the entailment, I will put aside this complication and continue to move from the dependence of a universal for its instantiation to dependence of an instance for its existence.

the kind of substance that secures the instantiation of sensible qualities is *material* substance.¹⁰

Second, Locke also makes clear that the way in which material substances secure the instantiation of sensible qualities is by these qualities *inhering* in material substances. This is also echoed in the first passage, in which the term “inherence” is used to illustrate how sensible qualities need to be supported. So, redness requires, for its instantiation, the existence of a material substance that it can inhere in. Furthermore, the particular redness of the tomato on my kitchen counter depends, for its existence, on the particular tomato that it inheres in. Similarly, roundness requires, for its instantiation, the existence of material substances that roundness can inhere in; and the particular instance that inheres in Jupiter depends for its existence on the existence of Jupiter itself.

Making use of the notion of inherence, then, we can define a more determinate notion of instantiation-dependence, one that applies directly to the relation between sensible qualities and material substance:

Dependence_{INH}: A sensible quality F instantiation-depends_{INH} on material substances iff \Box_F (if F is instantiated, then $\exists s$ (s is a material substance and F inheres in s)).¹¹

We now have a clearer sense of the way in which sensible qualities are thought to depend on material substances. Inherence in such substances is what enables the qualities to be instantiated. Before we go on to look at the relationship posited between sensible qualities and the mind, I want to focus in some more detail on the notion of inherence in the case of sensible qualities. At a minimum, inherence is that relation that sensible qualities

¹⁰Some have interpreted the passage from the *Essay* quoted above, in particular when Locke asks what it is that solidity and extension inhere in, as evidence that Locke was committed to a view on which substances are metaphysically prior to *all* properties, essential and accidental. However, as Ayers (1975) and Yolton (1970) argue, the more plausible reading here is that Locke is asking about *observable* solid and extended parts, that is, the observable primary qualities, and asking about what it is that these observable qualities inhere in. On this reading, the passage quoted above presents the view that *all* sensible qualities—primary and secondary—require for their existence, a substance that they inhere in.

¹¹Inherence is a notion that likely applies to a broader class of properties than the sensible qualities. I will restrict the definition to the sensible case, however, to keep our discussion more streamlined.

stand in to their bearers. If a quality inheres in a particular substance, the substance bears or possesses that quality. But can more be said about *why* it is the case that a quality like redness, say, requires a material bearer for its instantiation? Part of Locke's insight is that having a material bearer—or inhering in a material substance—is meant to *explain* the possibility of a sensible quality's being instantiated.¹² This reveals that the notion of inherence is thicker than the mere notion of instantiation, given that the former is meant to explain the possibility of the latter. But what kind of explanation does inherence in a material substance provide?

If we look back to the early modern period, we find strong evidence for a reductive explanation of the instantiation of sensible qualities.¹³ For both Descartes and Locke, for instance, the instantiation of both primary and secondary qualities by a medium-sized, material object—a tomato, for example—are to be explained in terms of the primary qualities of the tomato's microscopic parts, its corpuscles.¹⁴ In the case of such qualities, if one asks *why* redness is instantiated by the tomato—or why *this* particular instance of redness exists—our initial explanation is merely that redness inheres in the tomato. But the early moderns offer us a more fleshed out response—for them, the explanation for why redness or roundness is instantiated by the tomato is that redness is reducible to the more fundamental properties of the tomato, namely the shape, size and arrangement of its corpuscles. So, on this proposal, what it is for a particular sensible quality to inhere in material substance is for that quality to be explained by or reducible to the more fundamental properties of the substance. The

¹²Again, we will restrict our explanation to sensible qualities. If we extend the notion of dependence_{INH} to other properties of a material substance—including perhaps the essential properties—the explanatory account I go on to offer will have to be substantially tweaked. But offering a unified account of inherence takes us beyond the confines of this chapter.

¹³Note, though, that in my use of the term “reduction,” I do not assume identity. Given the more fine-grained resources provided us by the notion of ontological dependence, we can maintain the distinct identity of the two properties in question, while appealing to an asymmetrical, explanatory relation between them.

¹⁴The view that *all* observable qualities of material bodies must reduce to more fundamental properties led both Descartes and Locke to sometimes assert that we must either deny that the secondary qualities inhere in material bodies, or concede that we have only confused ideas of these qualities given our inability to comprehend how qualities that correspond to our ideas of color, smell, or taste could be explained by the size and shape of microphysical corpuscles

fact that the tomato's redness is reducible to a particular arrangement of corpuscles *explains* why redness is instantiated by the tomato.

Now, an account of sensible inherence in terms of property reduction is a view that many will find compelling even today, despite differences in the particular reductive accounts one may offer. If however, we disagree with Descartes and Locke about whether sensible qualities are straightforwardly reducible to more fundamental physical properties, what can we say about sensible inherence? Here, a distinction made by Elizabeth Barnes between ontological dependence and fundamentality can be quite useful in understanding how a primitive property can also be said to inhere in material substance. In the case of primitive properties, we can treat inherence in a material substance as providing a *partial* explanation of why the property is instantiated in terms of the more fundamental properties of the substance, while maintaining that the instantiation of the property is not *fully* explained by these fundamental properties, and therefore counts as itself fundamental or primitive. Any account on which color, say, is a primitive property, must nevertheless incorporate the fact that pounding an almond can change the color of the almond.¹⁵ The natural way to make room for this fact is to acknowledge that primitive properties are still dependent on the fundamental properties of the object, even if they are not fully explained by these properties. On such a view, what makes it the case that primitive properties still *inhere* in a material substance, then, is that there is such a partial explanation that can indeed be given. If it were in fact the case that *no* explanation could be given of the primitive property in terms of the essential nature of the substance that it inheres in, it would be mysterious why we thought the primitive property was attached to, or possessed by, that particular substance in the first place.¹⁶

¹⁵See Barnes (2013).

¹⁶In later sections of the *Essay* (Part. II, Book IV, Ch. 3, §6), Locke considers the intriguing possibility that thought might be "superadded" to material substance. If superaddition is the addition of a property to a substance that cannot be metaphysically explained (even partially) by the essence of the substance to which it is added—and this is the standard interpretation—we must conclude that superadded properties do not in fact inhere in the substance. Locke himself never uses the term "inhere" when describing the relation between superadded properties and material substances. He does describe these properties as "in" the substance, but as the following section will prove, this is not to be straightforwardly identified with a thicker notion of inherence. Note, though, that Ayers (1981), in his interpretation of these passages, argues that superadded properties are merely properties that *we* cannot explain in terms of the essence of material substance,

So far, I have made use of the notion of inherence to capture the particular way in which sensible qualities are related to material substance. This section, then, has more precisely stated the most common view of the sensible properties in the contemporary context. Our next task is to focus on those philosophers, admittedly in the minority, who have denied this claim; namely, those philosophers who have insisted that sensible qualities are in fact mind-dependent. In particular, I am interested in exploring whether the notion of inherence already discussed is suitable to capture the view on which sensible qualities are ontologically dependent on minds.

2.3 AWARENESS

The view on which sensible qualities inhere in the material world is indeed the most common view in the contemporary, philosophical literature. But repeatedly, in the history of philosophy, this conception of sensible qualities has been challenged. In this section, I want to look more closely at how to make sense of the view proposed by these critics, on which sensible qualities are mind-dependent.

One might think that this will be a straightforward task. We have relied on the notion of inherence in order to make sense of the way in which sensible qualities can depend on material bodies. Perhaps, then, we can make use of the very same notion of inherence to explain what relation is being posited between sensible qualities and minds when it is asserted that sensible qualities are mind-dependent entities. If the very same notion is in play, then the disagreement between the two sides can be neatly explicated—proponents of both views have the very same kind of dependence in mind, but they disagree about which substances sensible properties depend on in this way.

At first glance, one might think this can indeed be done. For it is often the case that philosophers like Berkeley, in describing the mind-dependence of the sensible qualities, speak of the qualities as being *in* the mind. Consider, for example the following passages:

but which do in fact flow from the essence of material substance. On such a reading, superadded properties, just like any other properties can be said to inhere in material substance, either as ordinary accidents or as primitive properties (depending on the kind of explanation provided). For an example of a non-epistemic reading of the phenomenon of superaddition, see Stuart (1998).

May we not therefore conclude of smells, as of the other fore-mentioned qualities, that they cannot exist *in* any but a perceiving substance or mind?¹⁷

If you can frame in your thoughts a distinct abstract idea of motion or extension, divested of all those sensible modes, as swift and slow, great and small, round and square, and the like, which *are acknowledged to exist only in the mind*.¹⁸

In passages like these and many others, Berkeley repeatedly refers to sensible qualities as “in” the mind. But this does not by itself imply that Berkeley thinks that the mind is literally the bearer of sensible qualities. And sure enough, in the following passage, he explicitly considers and rejects such an interpretation of his view:

It may perhaps be objected that if extension and figure exist only *in the mind*, it follows that the mind is extended and figured, since extension is a mode or attribute which (to speak with the Schools) is predicated of the subject in which it exists. I answer, those qualities are in the mind *only as they are perceived by it*—that is, not by way of mode or attribute, but only by way of idea, and it no more follows that the soul or mind is extended, because extension exists in it alone, than it does that it is red or blue, because those colors are on all hands acknowledged to exist in it, and nowhere else.¹⁹

This passage provides incontrovertible evidence that Berkeley has some notion other than inherence in mind when he speaks of the qualities as “in” the mind. Furthermore, looking beyond the particular details of Berkeley’s views for a moment, no philosopher who has plausibly argued that colors or smells or tastes are mind-dependent can intend that the

¹⁷Berkeley, (1713/1948-1957), 181

¹⁸Berkeley, (1713/1948-1957), 193

¹⁹Berkeley, (1710/1948-1957) §49, my emphasis. Some commentators have tried to interpret this passage as consistent with a view on which ideas are inherent in the mind. Cummins (1963), for instance, suggests that Berkeley is making a point about linguistic predication, rather than inherence. But given the explicit statement that qualities are neither mode [n]or attribute,” coupled with the other passages in which Berkeley treats ideas as objects of the mind, such a reading is difficult to defend.

mind itself bears these features, that the mind itself is colored, smelly or sweet-tasting. Just as ludicrous would be to attribute to them the claim that primary qualities like shape, size and motion are literally features that inhere in the mind - most philosophers who have argued for the mind-dependence of the primary qualities are themselves committed to a non-extended conception of mental substance; they *cannot* then assume that the mind itself is shaped or sized in any determinate way. Furthermore, regardless of one's view of the non-material nature of the mind, no one would argue that the mind itself has those shapes that we mistakenly take material bodies to have during a sensory experience.²⁰

What does a philosopher like Berkeley mean, then, when he describes both primary and secondary qualities as literally *in* the mind? Already in the passage described in the first section, Berkeley gives us a clue—even there he states there that for a mind to *have* an idea is for the mind to “*perceive* the idea”. Elsewhere he writes that ideas are “immediate *objects* of the understanding.”²¹ At first glance, this suggestion is unhelpful. We perceive all sorts of entities, most of which are normally mind-independent, so how could the relation between a mind and the objects it perceives be helpful in understanding the notion of mind-dependence?

Reconstruing Berkeley's suggestion with the help of the general notion of instantiation-dependence will provide the requisite insight here. It is not just the case that sensible qualities, according to Berkeley, are perceived by minds—that would indeed leave their ontological status untainted; rather, the claim is that colors, shapes and sizes, depend *for their instantiation* on being perceived by minds. This is categorically not true of the objects we normally perceive—their existence is entirely independent of being perceived. In contrast, Berkeley's infamous maxim *esse est percipi*, or “to be is to be perceived”, reveals itself as providing a clue to a distinct kind of dependence, on which a particular instance of a sensible quality, depends for its very existence, on being perceived. We can define this novel kind of instantiation-dependence as follows:

Dependence_{AWA}: A sensible quality *F* instantiation-depend_{AWA}

²⁰Furthermore, it would be surprising if Berkeley were to retain a model on which qualities inhere in an underlying substance. His attack against the Lockean view isn't just an attack on the notion of matter, but against the mere notion of a substratum that provides some kind of existential support to its qualities.

²¹Berkeley, (1713/1948-1957), 237.

on minds iff \Box_F (if F is instantiated, then $\exists m$ (m is a mind and F is the object of m 's awareness)).

Dependence on awareness provides us a fundamentally different way in which instances of a sensible quality can be granted existence. In the most straightforward terms, Berkeley is denying that for there to be an instance of redness, there must be some substance that is itself red. Of course, we can always nominalize the instantiation of a sensible property and speak of there being something red there—Berkeley is not concerned with how we speak—but in so doing, we must not assume that the thing we are calling red is a metaphysically weighty substance whose existence is ontologically prior to the existence of the sensible quality instance that we predicate of it. Rather, Berkeley is suggesting that entities of a specific sort, i.e. minds, play a very different role in supporting the instantiation of sensible qualities, in virtue of these qualities being the objects of the mind's conscious states.

We now see that the way in which sensible qualities are thought to depend on the mind is quite different from the way in which they are thought to depend on material bodies. If sensible qualities depend for their instantiation on material bodies, it is in virtue of these qualities inhering in those bodies. If, on the other hand, a sensible quality is dependent for its instantiation on a mind, it is in virtue of its instantiation being secured by the mind's awareness of it. In the remainder of the paper, I will explore what the philosophical ramifications are if we hold on to both notions, rather than presuppose that we must pick only one.

2.4 OVER-DETERMINATION AND SENSIBLE QUALITIES

Most have assumed that we must *either* think of sensible qualities as inhering in material substance *or* as being the objects of perceiver's awareness. But is there genuine reason to adopt this kind of exclusive approach? Abstractly, if we are to make room for qualities to have a nature that is compatible with both inherence *and* awareness playing a role in the instantiation of these qualities, there are two ways this could be achieved. First, we could think of the qualities in question as having a nature that places *disjunctive* conditions on instantiation, such that the sensible quality in question can be instantiated *either* in virtue of inhering in a material body

or in virtue of being the object of a perceiver's awareness. Alternatively, we could think of qualities as having a nature that imposes *conjunctive* conditions on instantiation. On such a view, for a quality to be instantiated, the sensible quality would have to both inhere in a material body *and* be the object of a perceiver's awareness. In the remainder of this chapter, I will argue that *sensible* qualities like color, smell, shape and size are best thought of as having disjunctive conditions on instantiation, while *sensuous* qualities like pains, itches and tickles, ought to be given a conjunctive analysis. In this section, I will focus on the case of sensible qualities, before moving on to the case of the sensuous.

In his recent book, *Berkeley's Puzzle*, John Campbell describes two uncomfortable descriptions we are led to when describing the peculiar experience that most of us have when we exert pressure on a closed eyelid—an experience of a moving patch of color, or a phosphene:

- (1) It is just a denial of reality to say there is nothing there that is yellow, square and moving. That is the only vocabulary we have to describe what the subject is experiencing. . . you are not talking figuratively when you say that the thing is a vibrant yellow.
- (2) It's crazy to say there is something there that is literally yellow, square, and moving. We can search all of space and time and there is nowhere to be found anything literally occupying space that has these characteristics. There is nothing that is yellow, square and moving.²²

The two descriptions that Campbell provides seem straightforwardly incompatible: the first insists on the presence of something yellow, which the latter explicitly denies. And so it seems we must give up one or the other. But what is uniquely compelling about Campbell's description of the phenomenon is how he makes vivid that *both* descriptions seem equally compelling.

Let us start with the intuition expressed in (1). When one has an experience of a phosphene, the most natural description of what is going on is that you really are aware of an instance of yellowness. Phenomenologically speaking, yellowness is there for you in the very same way as it is there for you in an ordinary case of color perception. We cannot capture

²²Campbell & Cassam (2014), 10.

the phenomenology merely by appealing to an uninstantiated universal, *yellowness*; for this doesn't capture how the yellowness that you experience is right there in front of you, not in Platonic heaven.²³ For you may be simultaneously aware of numerically distinct instances of yellowness (imagine a case in which there are two phosphenes), so an appeal to a generic Platonic universal can do us no good. It seems like the only good characterization of our phenomenology has it that the perceiver is in fact aware of an actual instance of yellowness.

But, moving to the intuition expressed in (2), how can one make sense of the presence of an instance of yellow if there is nothing there that serves as the bearer of yellowness? To put it most paradoxically—how can yellowness be instantiated if there is nothing there that instantiates yellowness? Surely the mind is not itself yellow. Also, it does us no good to appeal to the phosphene itself as the “bearer” of yellowness. A phosphene is nothing over and above a collection of sensible instances and so it cannot serve as the bearer of these instances. The *only* entities, then, that seem suitable to serve as the bearers of sensible qualities are material substances. But the quandary is that there is no material substance around that can play this role for the yellowness that we are aware of in an experience of a phosphene. As Campbell writes, “we can search all of space and time” and fail to find any physical object that can serve this purpose. So, it seems, we must deny that there is anything yellow there in the case of a phosphene. But now, this leaves us unable to do justice to our phenomenology, thereby returning us to the opposing intuition in (1).

Our compulsion to reject the existence of an instance of yellowness in the case of the phosphene was driven by the natural thought that yellowness can only be instantiated if there is something there that is the bearer of yellowness. But now that we have worked through the notion of awareness-dependence in more detail, we have expanded our options—we now know that the absence of a bearer of yellowness does not straightforwardly entail the absence of an instance of yellow. For if Berkeley is right, the mind can secure the instantiation of yellowness without itself serving as the bearer of that instance. Instead, yellowness can be instantiated solely in virtue of a perceiver enjoying a certain kind of experience that has yellowness as its object.

²³This is the basic problem with Johnston's account of hallucination. See Johnston (2004).

The possibility that sensible qualities may be instantiated even in the absence of any material body in which they can inhere allows us to acknowledge that the two descriptions that Campbell puts forth are not really mutually exclusive. We can concede that there is no(thing) yellow there, insofar as there is no material body there that is itself yellow, while still insisting that there is an instance of yellow, whose existence depends on the perceiver's awareness of it.

Some might worry that allowing for the existence of yellow instances in the absence of material objects will result in the view that *all* instances of yellow are similarly mind-dependent. But this universalizing approach is not forced upon us. We can allow for the existence of two classes of sensible instances—those whose existence is secured by inhering in material bodies, and those whose existence is secured as the objects of a perceiver's awareness. To introduce this kind of view, we must move from the mere dependence claims we have been working with so far to a closely related set of sufficiency claims. Start with the case of sensory experience—if it is true that the perceiver being in a certain state of awareness *guarantees* the existence of a sensible instance even in the absence of a material body for the instance to inhere in, we must treat the perceiver's mind as *sufficient* for the instantiation of the sensible quality. In fact, it is in explaining how it can be that a sensory experience is sufficient for the existence of a sensible quality instance that we are led to think of the instance in question as dependent on the perceiver's awareness of it. To state this precisely, let us introduce the notion of instantiation-sufficiency:

Sufficiency_{AWA}: A mind is instantiation-sufficient_{AWA} for a sensible quality F iff \Box_F (if $\exists m$ (m is a mind and F is the object of m 's awareness) then F is instantiated).²⁴

But now consider the material world. To avoid a universalized mind-dependence, we must be able to hold on to the view that material objects have the colors and shapes that they do entirely independent of our

²⁴It is in the nature of a sensible quality that being the object of a perceiver's awareness is sufficient for its instantiation. But it is also the case that a perceiver's state of awareness is such that it requires, *for its existence*, a sensible quality instance as its object. The fact that such states can come about in the absence of material objects that possess those sensible qualities implies that sensible qualities have a nature that is compatible with being instantiated *solely* in virtue of being the object of such awareness.

awareness of them. Lemons were yellow long before any perceivers were around to experience them and they will continue to be yellow long after our demise. To capture this intuition, we once again need a sufficiency claim—it is not only the case that sensible qualities depend on material substances for their instantiation; it is also the case that *all* that is required for the instantiation of a sensible quality is that there exist a material substance that is its bearer:²⁵

Sufficiency_{INH}: A material substance is instantiation-sufficient_{INH} for a sensible quality F iff \Box_F (if $\exists s$ (s is a material substance and F inheres in s) then F is instantiated).²⁶

So far, we have stated two sufficient conditions on the instantiation of sensible qualities. Now, if we are to accommodate the possibility of both conditions, we must define the nature of sensible qualities in disjunctive terms:

Sensible Nature: For any sensible quality, F , \Box_F (if F is instantiated, ($\exists s$ (s is a material substance and F inheres in s)) or ($\exists m$ (m is a mind and F is the object of m 's awareness))).

Note that this statement does not imply that the nature of sensible qualities is itself disjunctive. Rather, it is sufficient that sensible qualities have a nature that *entails* disjunctive conditions on instantiation.²⁷ This will of course constrain our view of sensible qualities—if we were,

²⁵This assumes a non-relational account of sensible qualities. Note, though, that most relationalists about sensible qualities think that sensible qualities bear some relation to a *mind*, so they will deny the intuition that I am working with, namely that lemons will continue to be yellow in the absence of any perceiving minds.

²⁶Another caveat is necessary here: if we end up with a primitivist analysis of sensible qualities, inherence in a material substance will only provide a *partial* explanation of the instantiation of a sensible quality. So, inherence in a material substance will not be sufficient for the instantiation of the sensible quality. On such a view, we can still maintain that as far as substances go, the only *substance* that is required is a material substance. As will become clear, this kind of sufficiency claim will be adequate for our purposes—the important contrast is not whether anything else is necessary for instantiation of the property, but rather if a *mind* is necessary for the instantiation of the property. I will not formulate the more complicated sufficiency claim, however, for ease of exposition.

²⁷See Fine (1995) for the distinction between a constitutive and consequentialist notion of essence.

for example, to treat sensible qualities as essentially microphysical, then there would be no way we could allow for such qualities to be instantiated solely in virtue of a perceiver enjoying a certain kind of sensory experience. But there are accounts of sensible qualities that would permit for such ontological variety—if, for example, we treat sensible qualities as essentially qualitative properties—that is, as essentially tied to their appearances—then it is entirely compatible with their nature that they have both mind-dependent and mind-independent instances. To emphasize, a view of sensible qualities that does indeed permit such variety is to be preferred. For sensible features just don't seem to come with the ontological restrictions that either essentially mentalistic or essentially material properties have: we ascribe shape and size to material objects, regions of space and abstract entities; we find it incredibly natural to ascribe color to entities as diverse as tomatoes, rainbows, phosphenes, holograms and after-images. Indeed, the very fact that there has been such a protracted history of disagreement over the nature of the sensible qualities—whether they are mind-dependent, microphysical, structural or primitive—suggests that there is no *prima facie* reason to deny that sensible features can have ontologically diverse instances.²⁸

If sensible qualities have disjunctive conditions on instantiation, each of the disjuncts are sufficient for instantiation, but the quality is not dependent on either condition in particular obtaining. This means that the quality is, by its nature, neither essentially material nor essentially mental. But we can still categorize particular instances of the quality as material or mental. This categorization will be based on which condition of instantiation in fact obtains on a particular occasion. Those instances whose existence is secured by inhering in material substances will be material instances. On the other hand, those instances whose existence depends solely on a perceiver enjoying a sensory experience will be mind-dependent instances. Given that the *nature* of the sensible qualities is ontologically neutral, the *nature* of the resulting instances will be similarly neutral—there is nothing in the nature of any particular instance that makes it a material instance or a mind-dependent instance. Rather, our categorization of instances into the two categories is based on the

²⁸For the purposes of this chapter, I have only discussed two conditions on instantiation. But another advantage of not defining the nature of the quality as itself disjunctive is that it leaves open whether there are *only* two conditions on instantiation or more. I will not take a stand on this issue in this chapter.

contingent facts about their actual existence, not facts about their essential natures.

Once we conceive of sensible qualities as having a disjunctive nature, there is a third category of instance that we must consider—namely, an instance that results from both conditions on instantiation simultaneously obtaining. If such an instance is possible, its existence is simultaneously secured by two conditions, each of which is sufficient in isolation for the existence of that very instance. In other words, such an instance is over-determined.

If there were only one way in which substances could secure the instantiation of sensible qualities, such over-determination would likely be ruled out. Take the case of inherence - if an instance of a sensible quality inheres in one substance, this does indeed seem to prevent *that* instance from inhering in any other substance. The particular instance of redness that inheres in the tomato cannot, for example, also inhere in the strawberry in the refrigerator.²⁹ And so, if inherence were the only notion at our disposal, we could not conceive of one and the same instance being simultaneously determined by a material body and a mind. Similarly, if being the object of awareness were the *only* way to secure the instantiation of sensible qualities, then too the material world and the mind could not coincide in the explanation of a particular instance's existence—for surely, a material object (unless that material object belongs to the special category of minds) cannot perceive anything.

But, once we have two distinct modes of instantiation at our disposal, there seems to be no obstacle to their both contributing to the explanation of a single instance. No aspect of our notion of inherence rules out the possibility that an instance that inheres in a material body may also be the object of a perceiver's awareness, and vice-versa. So it seems like an over-determined instance of a sensible quality is in fact *possible*. But is this possibility of any significant philosophical interest? In the remainder of this section, I will briefly indicate that there is good reason to treat *all* cases of veridical perception as involving an awareness of over-determined

²⁹At this stage, someone might object by describing a case in which one and the same instance of the color sienna inheres in a statue and in the clay that comprises it. But even if we are to permit the statue and the clay as distinct substances, we must acknowledge that they stand in a relation of ontological dependence. It is natural to conclude of such a case that the instance inheres in the statue only in virtue of inhering in the clay, and so is not a genuine case of multiple inherence.

sensible instances. Furthermore, I will suggest that treating veridical perception in this way results in a uniquely compelling account of perception. The next chapter will explore the case of perception in much more detail.

Start with a hallucinatory experience of a banana, say.³⁰ Let us concede that the perceiver's state of awareness is sufficient_{AWA} for a sensible instance of yellow—this does justice to our intuition that a hallucinatory experience—just like an experience of an after-image or phosphene—makes us aware of sensible quality instances even in the absence of any material objects of awareness. But if a hallucination can be brought about just by replicating the neural state that the perceiver is in when she has an ordinary perception of a banana, then in the latter case too, the perceiver must be enjoying an experience that is sufficient_{AWA} for an instance of yellow. But notice that in the veridical case, we have a second sufficient condition for the instantiation of yellow that was missing in the hallucination—the presence of a material object in which yellowness can inhere. The banana, as we have seen, is also sufficient_{INH} for the instantiation of yellowness. So a veridical perception turns out to be the very kind of case described above, namely, a case in which there are two conditions present, each of which is sufficient for the instantiation of yellowness. Now, if we are to maintain that there is only *one* instance of yellowness present in such a case, we must treat that instance as over-determined. And there is good reason to insist that there is only one instance present in the veridical perception, rather than two distinct instances—the perceiver is only *aware* of a single instance, the instance she is aware of seems to be the very instance that inheres in the banana, and so on.

Treating the sensible instances present in ordinary perception as over-determined gives us a compelling account of both ordinary and delusive perceptions. Granting that in a hallucination, the perceiver enjoys an experience that is sufficient_{AWA} for a sensible instance gives us the most phenomenologically appropriate account of a hallucination, one on which hallucinations make us aware of actual instances of sensible qualities. Now given that there is no suitable material object present in the hallucination, the hallucinated sensible instance depends for *its* existence on the perceiver's awareness of it, rendering it mind-dependent. This implication has led most philosophers to avoid such an account of hal-

³⁰The move briefly sketched below will be spelled out in much greater detail in the following chapter.

lucination, because they have assumed that it forces upon us the same verdict of mind-dependence for the veridical perception. It would indeed be epistemically disastrous if we were forced to the conclusion that ordinary perception only ever made us aware of mind-dependent instances of sensible qualities. Assuming this implication, most philosophers have chosen to deny that delusive perceptions involve instantiated properties at all. But this renders it close to impossible to offer a satisfying account of the phenomenology of such experiences.

But once we have the possibility of over-determination on the table, we can avoid the ontological generalization across the two kinds of experience, thereby holding on to the treatment of hallucination as comprising an awareness of mind-dependent sensible instances. It is essential to recognize that the yellow instance in the hallucination is dependent on the perceiver *only because* there is no other sufficient condition present. In a case of over-determination, by contrast, the mind is only one of two sufficient conditions that secure the existence of the sensible instance in question. Insofar as inherence in the banana is itself sufficient for the instance to exist, that instance will continue to exist even in the absence of the experience. This makes the over-determined sensible instance present in the veridical perception *mind-independent*. Therefore, the mind-dependence of the instances in a hallucination turns out to be compatible with the mind-independence of the instances in a veridical perception.

So far, I have argued that a view on which sensible qualities have disjunctive conditions on instantiation does most justice to our pre-theoretical conception of such qualities. Furthermore, recognizing the disjunctive nature of these qualities allows us to provide a unified account of ordinary and delusive perception as both comprising an awareness of instantiated sensible qualities, without excluding the mind-independent world from the perceiver's ken. In the final section, I will shift focus to consider the case of sensuous qualities. I will argue that these qualities are best understood as having a conjunctive nature. The philosophical upshot of this observation is the ability to treat essentially mind-dependent qualities as nonetheless physically located, thereby respecting the important sense in which a significant set of sensations are *bodily* sensations.

2.5 JOINT DEPENDENCE AND BODILY SENSATIONS

The majority of this paper has focused on traditional sensible qualities like color, smell, size and shape. But now I want to consider a close relative of sensible qualities—*sensuous* qualities like pains, itches and tickles. Often referred to as bodily sensations, this class of sensuous qualities is typically assumed to be essentially mind-dependent. Pains are the kinds of qualities that depend, for their existence, on our awareness of them; Itches require for their instantiation, that they be felt; and similarly tickles require someone who feels tickled. We can capture this notion of mind-dependence with the help of our notion of dependence_{AWA}—it is true in virtue of the nature of these sensuous qualities that they depend, for their instantiation, on the existence of minds that perceive them.

Now, it has often been argued that the mind-dependence of bodily sensations is incompatible with these sensations being physically located. Traditionally, an acknowledgement of the mind-dependence of such sensations has led philosophers to insist that they are not in fact located in our bodies, but can only be said to be “in” the mind. But this is a problematic implication because it seems essential to our experience of a pain, say, that the pain felt is, say, *in* our ankle. Similarly, it seems essential to an itch that it is on my back, say. What could it even be for an itch to be in my mind? Gripped by the intimate connection that our phenomenology posits between such sensations and our bodies, some philosophers have recently concluded that sensations like pains are necessarily uninstanciatable.³¹ The basic reasoning proceeds as follows: if a pain were to be instantiated, it would have to reside in the body and yet be dependent on the mind, but many have concluded that this combination of features is untenable. If pains live in the body, it has been assumed, they cannot be mind-dependent.

But a view on which bodily sensations are necessarily uninstanciatable makes nonsense of our phenomenology. If there are no pains, itches or tickles in fact instantiated in pain, itch or tickle experiences, one might appeal to uninstanciated universals to explain the phenomenology of such experiences. But the unsatisfying nature of this approach has already been broached in our discussion of the phosphene—what good is an appeal to an uninstanciated universal in explaining why a pain is felt *in my leg*?

³¹See, for example, Chalmers (2006); Pautz (2009, 2012).

How can awareness of such a universal explain a case in which the very same kind of pain that was felt in my calf a moment ago is now felt in my toe? If both experiences merely involve an awareness of one and the same universal, what resources does such a view have to make sense of the clear differences between the two experiences?

Some might try to explain away the locatedness of pains as merely *seeming* locatedness. So, on such a view, it merely *seems* to me that a pain is instantiated in my toe, when in fact it is not. The difference between the two experiences described above, then, is captured in terms of where the pain *seems* to be located, but in fact is not. But then, this view has the bizarre implication that there is no objectively valid reason to request the perpetrator of the pain to stop stamping on my toe—for all that has been said, his actions merely result in a false belief about the presence of a pain in my toe. The perpetrator should be justified then to continue his behavior while politely explaining to me that there is in fact no pain in my toe, and I am merely deluded in thinking that there is. Or at best, we must re-describe our request as driven by a desire to avoid a false belief about pain, not to avoid the pain itself.

At this stage, the proponent of such a view will insist that I am not adequately acknowledging the distinctively *phenomenal* nature of the seemings in question—it is not merely the case that the perceiver has a false *belief* about the presence of pain in his leg, but rather, that he is in a sensorily rich state that represents to him the presence of a pain that is in fact not present. And this sensory state is what the perceiver is rightfully trying to avoid. But now, aren't we back at our original starting point? The natural way to explain the actual sensory character of the perceiver's state is to insist that he is aware of a pain quality that is in fact instantiated. If one is to deny the existence of any such instance of pain, and yet maintain the existence of a sensorily rich pain experience, one must offer an alternative account of the character of a pain experience without any appeal to pain itself. As evident from its very description, this task seems doomed to failure.

Fortunately, however, we can now see that the radical conclusions of uninstantiability are unwarranted, for they rest on a mistaken understanding of mind-dependence. Insisting that the pair of criteria—mind-dependence and bodily location—is jointly unsatisfiable stems from a failure to recognize that mind-dependence does not require that bodily sensations *inhere* in the mind. But the central goal of this chapter has

been to argue for a notion of mind-dependence on which a quality does not depend on a mind in virtue of inhering in it, but rather in virtue of being perceived by it. Relying on this notion to make sense of the mind-dependence of bodily sensations leaves entirely open the possibility that bodily sensations also inhere in a distinct, material substance. In the case of sensuous qualities like pains and itches, it is clear that this would be a case of *joint* dependence. For inhering in a body part is not sufficient in isolation for these qualities to be instantiated. On the other hand, merely being the object of perceptual awareness also seems insufficient for their instantiation, if we are to acknowledge the essential locatedness of these kinds of sensations. So we can define the nature of bodily sensations as follows:

Bodily Sensations: For any sensuous quality, F , \Box_F (if F is instantiated, $(\exists s$ (s is a material substance and F inheres in s) **and** $\exists m$ (m is a mind and F is the object of m 's awareness))).

If bodily sensations have *conjunctive*, rather than disjunctive, conditions of instantiation, then any particular instance of a sensuous quality will be such that it depends for its existence, *both* on the mind that is aware of it but also on the physical body that it inheres in. Once again, we have seen that making room for two distinct conditions on instantiation—inherence and awareness—allows us to make significant headway on a central problem in the philosophy of mind, namely, how to make sense of the bodily nature of mind-dependent sensations.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this chapter has been to present a new metaphysical framework on which the mind and the material world play *distinct* roles in securing the instantiation of sensible and sensuous qualities. Material bodies are implicated in sensible instantiation by serving as the bearers that these qualities may inhere in. But the mind cannot play the role of bearer for sensible or sensuous qualities. For it is never the case that the mind is literally the bearer of colors, shapes, sizes, pains, itches or tickles. Nevertheless, the mind does have a significant role to play in the instantiation of such qualities. We have seen that it can secure (or contribute to securing) the instantiation of these qualities by *perceiving*

them. The second half has been more exploratory—I have suggested that we should make room for both the mind and the material world to contribute to our explanations of sensible (or sensuous) instantiation, rather than being forced to choose one at the expense of the other. It turns out that an inclusive approach has some powerful ramifications for the philosophy of mind, two of which I have discussed in the latter half of the paper. If we treat veridical perception as involving an awareness of over-determined instances of sensible qualities, we can offer a unified account of perceptual consciousness that nonetheless allows a perceiver unmediated access to the mind-independent world. Furthermore, treating pains, itches, and tickles as *jointly* dependent on the mind and the physical body finally does justice to the essentially bodily nature of these mind-dependent phenomena.

Of course, much work still needs to be done to argue that pain is indeed the kind of entity that can be dependent both on the mind and on the body. At a minimum, one would have to address the possibility of phantom pains or itches that are not located in body parts. In this chapter, my central goal has been to lay the groundwork that is necessary prior to launching a defense of either of the views briefly suggested at the very end. Once we have clearly established inherence and awareness as two distinct kinds of determination, neither of which excludes the other, what remains to be defended is the claim that the determined entities—pains, itches and tickles—are not themselves incompatible with simultaneous determination by material and mental substances in the way that I have recommended.

The focus of this dissertation, however, is not on the sensuous. In this chapter, I have indicated the broad range of consequences that ensue from correctly understanding the role that the mind plays in the instantiation of qualities. But, for the remainder of the dissertation, we will return to the case of sense-perception. So far, I have only briefly described how making room for the mind and the material world to play distinct roles in the instantiation of sensible qualities can provide us a compelling, unified account of sensory experience. Elaborating upon and defending this claim will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Sensible Over-Determination

It is a distinctive fact about perception that sensible qualities, like colors, shapes, and smells, are actually *present* in a perceptual experience. This is what distinguishes perception from belief—I can entertain a belief about the color red in the absence of the color, but I cannot see the color red without redness actually being present before my mind. We can capture this intuitive thought as follows: perceptual experience, by its very nature, makes us aware of *instances* of sensible qualities. I introduce the notion of an instance here, because an appeal to uninstantiated universals cannot capture the distinctive way in which sensible qualities are present in perception. When I see a red hummingbird, I am not aware of some universal that resides in Platonic heaven; instead, I am aware of the particular redness of the bird that is in front of me.

Normally, the instances of color and shape that are present in our perceptions are just ordinary constituents of the mind-independent world. What makes it the case that there is an instance of redness present before me, when I look out the window at my honeysuckle bush, is just the fact that there is a bird in the bush that is red in color. The presence of an instance of redness, on this occasion, is guaranteed by the presence of an ordinary physical object that is the *bearer* of redness. Given that the bearer is mind-independent, so are the sensible instances that inhere in it.

But it is not only veridical perceptions that have this unique sensory character. We all know that experiences are possible in which it seems as if we are aware of a mind-independent object when no such object is present. Given that such *hallucinations* can have the very same phenomenology as veridical perceptions, they too must make us aware of actual instances of sensible qualities. And this seems right—hallucinating a red humming-

bird, just as much as seeing one, involves an actual instance of redness being present for me.

But how can there be an instance of redness in the hallucination for the perceiver to be aware of? There is no suitable material object present that is red. Nor is there anything else that can serve as the bearer of redness—we surely should not conclude that the mind (or the brain), when hallucinating, is itself literally red. Instead, the presence of redness in my hallucination seems intimately connected to my *awareness* of it—the particular instance exists only because it is the *object* of my awareness, and not because it inheres in a substantial entity of any sort.

In section 3.1 of this chapter, I will briefly reiterate the claim defended in the previous chapter; namely, that sensible qualities can be instantiated in two distinct ways: a sensible instance can exist either as a *feature* of a physical object or as an *object* of a perceiver's awareness. This simple thesis has some remarkable implications for cases of ordinary seeing. If in a hallucination, the perceiver is in a mental state that is sufficient for the existence of an instance of redness, then, given the similarities between the two experiences, the perceiver's mental state in the case of ordinary seeing must also be sufficient for an instance of redness. But, unlike the hallucination, there is also a physical object present in the veridical perception—the hummingbird—that is itself sufficient for an instance of redness. Given that there is only one instance perceived, we must treat this instance as *over-determined*. It is over-determined because there are two conditions sufficient for its existence, both of which obtain: the red hummingbird is sufficient for the instance because redness inheres in the bird; but the perceiver's state of awareness is also sufficient for the instance, because redness is the object of the perceiver's awareness.

This key finding—that the sensible objects of ordinary perception are over-determined—dissolves one of the deepest puzzles in the philosophy of perception: namely, how veridical perception can acquaint us with the mind-independent world if delusive experiences are possible. Dissolving this puzzle will be the primary task of the majority of this chapter. To get a sense of the puzzle, assume the commonsensical view described above—namely, that ordinary (veridical) perception, by its nature, makes us constitutively aware of mind-independent instances of sensible qualities. Call this view *naïve realism*. All participants in the contemporary debate on perception accept the truth of the following conditional: if hallucinations have the same phenomenology as veridical perceptions,

veridical perception cannot constitutively involve an awareness of the mind-independent world. In other words, if qualitatively matching hallucinations are possible, naïve realism must be false. The motivating argument for this conditional runs as follows: Consider a neurally-induced hallucination of a red hummingbird. If we admit that an instance of redness is present to the perceiver in this hallucination, it must be a mind-dependent instance of redness. But, if the sensible instances in a hallucination are mind-dependent, the instances in veridical perception must be as well. For both experiences, by stipulation, have the same neural state as their proximate cause, and this cause must produce the very same effect in each case—namely, an experience of a mind-dependent sensible instance. This means the mind-independent world cannot be a constituent of ordinary perception.

Accepting the conditional as true has transformed the philosophy of perception into a fundamentally revisionary research program: either, it seems, we must reject naïve realism—the pre-theoretical view of ordinary perception—or we must deny the equally commonsensical intuition that hallucinations and veridical perceptions can have the same conscious character. In this chapter, however, I will show that the conditional is straightforwardly *false*, and so there is no need to renounce one or another tenet of the commonsensical view.

I have already noted that we can accommodate phenomenally rich hallucinations if we treat the perceiver's state of awareness in a hallucination as itself *sufficient* for an instance of a sensible quality. What makes the instance in the hallucination *dependent* on the perceiver's awareness is that this instance exists *only because* the perceiver is in the state that she is in. But this is not the case in a veridical perception. Here too, the perceiver is in a state that is sufficient for an instance of a sensible quality. This is the common effect that the neural state has in both an artificially induced hallucination and its veridical counterpart. But, in the veridical perception, there is also a physical object present that is itself sufficient for an instance of the very same quality. The presence of two sufficient conditions makes the instance in question over-determined. But if it is over-determined, the instance does *not* depend for its existence on the perceiver's awareness of it. Even after the perception ends, the very same instance continues to exist, now unperceived, in the material object that is its bearer. So, the mind-dependence of the hallucinated instance is entirely compatible with the mind-independence of the veridically perceived instance. In brief,

attention to the underlying metaphysics of sensible qualities reveals both that ordinary perception is world-involving—it constitutively involves a relation between perceivers and the properties of mind-independent objects—but also that the mind itself has the power to generate phenomenally rich experiences.

3.1 ONTOLOGICAL OVER-DETERMINATION

In the previous chapter, I laid the groundwork for the notion of sensible over-determination. I will briefly re-describe that notion at the end of this section. But before I do so, I want to address the legitimate worry that the general notion of ontological over-determination is too arcane to be plausibly employed in the resolution of the problem of perception. Surely, such a worry proceeds, the resolution to such a central metaphysical problem cannot rest on such a gimmicky, philosopher’s notion. In response, I want to discuss a case of ontological over-determination that lies entirely outside the domain of philosophical inquiry and should strike us as eminently plausible and familiar. I hope that discussion of such a mundane case will reveal how ubiquitous cases of over-determination might in fact be. We will see that any entity that has disjunctive conditions on its existence is such that it may end up being over-determined (just in case both conditions obtain).

Consider the following two examples:

Death: A brawl is underway in a bar. Athos, Porthos and Aramis are all involved. Porthos is stabbed and succumbs to his wounds on the spot. Extensive post-mortem exploration reveals that the swords of Athos and Aramis simultaneously pierced Porthos’ heart with enough momentum for each sword to have caused a rapid death. In this case, Athos and Aramis are equally guilty of perpetrating Porthos’ murder.

Cricket: India and Australia are playing the final of the Cricket World Cup. India bats first. There are two distinct ways in which India can win the match: 1) India wins if they score more runs than Australia in the 50 overs allotted to each team. 2) India wins if they get all the members of the Australian team out before they can score more runs than the Indian team. But

this third scenario is possible as well: India makes 300 runs. Australia is batting second and has made 299 runs. There is one ball left in the game and the last two batsmen are playing. If either batsman gets out, India wins. If Australia does not make any runs on the last ball, India wins. The last ball is bowled. The batsman hits the ball in the air and is caught by a fielder before any runs can be completed. India enjoys a historic victory!

Death is a prototypical philosophical example of the phenomenon of *causal* over-determination. Either of Athos' or Aramis' jabs would have been individually sufficient to cause Porthos' death, but the way things played out, it just so happened that poor Porthos was simultaneously killed by both Athos and Aramis. There is only one death that occurs and neither Athos nor Aramis can be ascribed *sole* responsibility for the demise. In this instance, then, the two causes—each of which are individually sufficient for the death of Porthos—causally over-determine his demise.

In the second example, *Cricket*, India would have won if the tenth batsmen had been caught while Australia was still at 299. India would also have won if Australia did not score the requisite 300 runs in the allotted overs, even if the tenth batsman had not been caught. Australia's tenth batsman getting out and their exhausting the allotted overs before reaching 300 were each individually sufficient for an Indian victory. Furthermore, note that each condition is not merely *causally* sufficient for the victory to have occurred. Rather, each condition is *ontologically* sufficient for the victory. In Fine's terms, "What the one thing is" is explained by something else, by "what *it* is".¹ This is distinct from how a cause explains an effect—we do not explain what the effect *is* in terms of what the cause *is*. In *Death*, we explain how Porthos' death *came about* by appeal to the two jabs. But we do not explain what the death *is* in terms of the jabs. What a death *is*, is simply the end of a life.

In the case of *Cricket*, however, we do explain what the victory *is* in terms of the final outing (or in terms of the final ball being bowled). The final outing doesn't just cause a victory, it constitutes it. Similarly, the smaller run total doesn't just bring about a victory, it constitutes it. Given that we are building up to a case of over-determination, just as in *Death*,

¹Fine (1995), 269.

we begin with the notion of ontological sufficiency rather than ontological dependence. The outing of the last batsman while Australia is at a lower run total is *sufficient* to explain the victory that India enjoys—given that what it is, is a victory in cricket, the victory can be fully explained in terms of the outing of Australia’s final batsman while they are at a lower run total. Similarly, the last ball being bowled while Australia is at a lower run total is also *sufficient* to explain the victory that India enjoys—once again, given that what it is, is a victory in cricket, this victory can again be fully explained in terms of the final ball being bowled while Australia is still at a lower run total.

The particular victory that the Indians enjoyed on this occasion, however, is simultaneously determined by both conditions (the outing of the last batsman and the last ball having been bowled, each with the smaller run total). One can conclude, then, that even though the tenth batsman’s outing and the exhaustion of the allotted balls are individually sufficient to explain the existence of the victory, the way things played out, the victory is ontologically (or explanatorily) over-determined.

We can define the general notion of ontological over-determination as follows: For any three entities x , y , and z , z is ontologically over-determined iff 1) x is ontologically sufficient for z ; 2) y is ontologically sufficient for z ; 3) x and y both determine z . To see how this notion applies to our case, let z be the event of India’s victory, x , the event of Australia’s tenth batsman getting out (before reaching 300 runs) and y , the event of Australia using up its last ball (before reaching 300 runs). *Cricket* is a case of ontological over-determination because the particular event in question z (i.e. India’s actual victory) is simultaneously determined by two conditions x and y (Australia losing its last batsmen and using up its last ball, each before they reach the target score), either of which occurring in isolation would have been sufficient for z to occur.

We can also explicate the notion of ontological over-determination in terms of metaphysical grounding. The fact that Aleeya is touching the Blue Mosque is grounded in the fact that she is touching one of its many central pillars; San Francisco’s being in the temperate zone is grounded in it being located 37 degrees north of the equator; the fact that an object exists, according to Berkeley, is grounded in the fact that it is perceived. These are just some examples of one fact or property-instance being grounded in another fact or property-instance. The grounding relation is defined as a metaphysical relation that holds between properties or facts. It is typically

distinguished both from causal or modal relations (insofar as it implies an explanatory connection between the relata), and from the identity relation (insofar as the relata themselves are ontologically distinct). Some have argued that we should think of the grounding facts as *truth-makers* for the grounded fact, but to put it more neutrally, we can claim that the grounded fact holds *in virtue of* or *because of* the grounding facts, such that the obtaining of the grounding facts is taken to be constitutively sufficient for the obtaining of the grounded fact. Because the grounding relation is explanatory, it only holds uni-directionally and is therefore asymmetric.²

The grounding relation is, in most instances, a one-many relation where one fact is grounded in several facts.³ Each of the grounding facts serves as partial ground for the grounded fact, while all the grounding facts together serve as full grounds for the grounded fact.⁴ As can be seen below, ontological over-determination can be understood as a special case of full grounding, where one fact *F* can be fully grounded in two distinct sets of facts *G* and *H*, where *G* and *H* can also serve *individually* as full grounds for *F*:⁵

1. The fact that India won the cricket match is plurally grounded in the fact that Australia's tenth batsman got out before reaching the target score and the fact that Australia used up its last allotted ball before reaching the target score.⁶

2. The fact that India won the cricket match is fully grounded in the

²See Fine (2012); Rosen (2010); Schaffer (2009) for their seminal discussions of grounding. For an older discussion of the in-virtue-of relation, see Jackson (1977) and Foster (1982). For recent skepticism about grounding, see Daly (2012) and Wilson (2014).

³Though, see Dasgupta (2014) for the suggestion that ground is irreducibly a many-many relation.

⁴On Fine's system, a partial ground is a sometimes-*improper* part of the full ground for a fact. Here, I use partial ground only to signify a *proper* part of the full ground.

⁵I make explicit reference only to the two facts within the sets *G* and *H* that are not shared across both sets. There will be other relevant facts that are common to the two sets of grounding facts—for example, that India and Australia played a cricket match, that the match was played in accordance with the official rules etc. These facts will be constant across (1)–(3), so I have left them out for clarity of exposition.

⁶Note that the notion of plural grounding here is distinct from Dasgupta's notion. Here, the thought is that the distinct facts that serve as grounds for a grounded fact are individually *full* grounds for the grounded fact. Dasgupta, in contrast, is keen to point out that we can only provide grounds for *sets of facts*, not individual facts.

fact that Australia’s tenth batsman got out before reaching the target score.

3. The fact that India won the cricket match is fully grounded in the fact that Australia used up its allotted balls before reaching the target score.

The fact that India won the cricket match can be *fully* grounded in either of two distinct facts. Furthermore, as our case reveals, the two ways in which this fact can be grounded are not exclusive—that is, they can co-obtain. When they do co-obtain, the resultant fact is over-determined. Once we recognize the structure of this case, we see that ontological over-determination is quite a prevalent phenomenon. All entities that have non-exclusive disjunctive conditions on existence, essence or instantiation (based on which notion of dependence we employ) will be candidates for ontological over-determination.⁷

Remember that in the previous chapter, we argued that sensible qualities are indeed entities that have disjunctive, non-exclusive conditions on *instantiation*. We defined the nature of the sensible qualities as follows:

Sensible Natures: \Box_F (If F is instantiated, then $(\exists s$ (s is a material substance and s is the bearer of F) or $\exists m$ (m is a mind and F is the object of m ’s awareness))).⁸

Just as in the case of *Cricket*, then, given that sensible qualities have disjunctive conditions on instantiation, we must consider whether there are indeed cases in which *both* conditions obtain. In the remainder of

⁷For the non-cricket fans, here’s another possible case of ontological over-determination that has the same structure: in some legal codes, an individual may count as the official owner of a house either in virtue of the fact that they have a sale deed in their name *or* in virtue of the fact that they have resided in the home for a period that is greater than, say, ten years, without any challenge to their occupation of the premises. So the fact that X is a homeowner will be ontologically over-determined in every case in which it is *both* the case that X has a sale deed for the house in her name *and* the case that X has resided in the house without challenge for a period of ten years.

⁸Note how this doesn’t require us to treat the nature of the sensible quality as itself disjunctive—we can suggest that the disjunctive conditions on sensible instantiation are a consequence of the sensible quality’s nature. In the final section, I will return to the question of what the nature of a sensible quality might be such that it has this disjunctive consequence.

this chapter, I will show that such cases are ubiquitous. We will discover that all perceived instances of sensible qualities are ontologically over-determined. Once again, we can capture this in terms of the grounding of a fact about perceived instances of sensible qualities:

4. The fact that there is a perceived instance of redness in a veridical perception is plurally grounded in the fact that the instance of redness inheres in the tomato and the fact that the instance of redness is the object of the perceiver's awareness.
5. The fact that there is a perceived instance of redness in a veridical perception is fully grounded in the fact that the instance of redness inheres in the tomato.
6. The fact that there is a perceived instance of redness is fully grounded in the fact that the instance of redness is the object of the perceiver's awareness.

We have made the observation that each condition is individually *sufficient* for sensible instantiation. For there to be an instance of redness, *all* that is required is that there be a material bearer that is red. Equally, we have seen that the existence of a perceiver having an experience of redness is *sufficient* for the instantiation of an instance of redness: in the case of the after-image, for example, the perceiver's being in a certain type of perceptual state suffices for redness to be instantiated. If each kind of condition—the presence of a material bearer, and a mental state whose object is a sensible quality instance—is individually sufficient, it follows that cases in which both conditions obtain will be cases in which the sensible instance in question is *over-determined*.

In order to better explain how the notion of sensible over-determination salvages the naïve view, we must turn our attention to the threat that delusive experiences pose to our conception of ordinary perception. In other words, we must now turn to the argument from hallucination.

3.2 THE ARGUMENT FROM HALLUCINATION

In the previous chapter, I cited Berkeley as an advocate of the thesis that all sensible qualities must be mind-dependent. Exploring his reasons for this

view leads naturally to an investigation of the threat that hallucination poses for accounts of perceptual experience. In *A Treatise Concerning The Principles of Human Knowledge*, Berkeley infamously *begins* with the thesis that all sensible qualities are *ideas*. The natural first reaction to this approach is one of bafflement: we have been given no reason whatsoever to endorse what most are inclined to treat as an extremely counter-intuitive claim. In response, many have accused Berkeley of making an elementary error, conflating “the object of perception and the perceiving of it, or of sensible qualities and ‘sensations’.”⁹ ¹⁰ But, if we are to be more charitable interpreters, we can understand why Berkeley proceeds from such a contentious assumption by situating his work within that of his contemporaries. Consider, for example, the following passage, in which Malebranche presents an explicit argument for the mind-dependence of all sensible qualities:

Now, on the supposition that the world is destroyed and that God nonetheless produces the same traces in our brain, or rather that He presents to our mind the same ideas that are produced in the presence of objects, we would see the same beauties. Hence, the beauties we see are not material beauties, but intelligible beauties rendered sensible as a consequence of the laws of the union of the soul and body, since the assumed annihilation of matter does not carry with it the annihilation of those beauties we see in looking at the objects around us.¹¹

If we read Berkeley as implicitly endorsing this argument, we can take him to have principled reasons to conclude that sensible qualities, qua objects of awareness, must be mind-dependent. The soundness of these reasons, then, depends on the soundness of the argument he borrows from Malebranche.

Anyone familiar with contemporary work in the philosophy of mind should, in reading the passage by Malebranche above, immediately rec-

⁹Evidence of this assumption is pervasive in the *Principles*. See, for example, §5: “Light and colors, heat and cold, extension and figures, in a word the things we see and feel *what are they but so many sensations, notions, ideas or impressions on the sense...*” §7: “let it be considered, the sensible qualities are color, figure, motion, smell, taste and such like, that is *the ideas perceived by sense.*” (my emphasis)

¹⁰See Smith (1985).

¹¹Malebranche (1997), 11.

ognize traces of an argument that is extremely influential in the current literature. Commonly known as “the argument from hallucination,” the argument purports to show that the very possibility of hallucinations threatens our pre-theoretical account of perception. Hallucinations, by definition, are experiences that, from the perceiver’s perspective, seem just like ordinary perceptions, but which involve no ordinary mind-independent objects of awareness. In this chapter, we will focus, just as Malebranche does, on hallucinations that can theoretically be induced by neurally stimulating a perceiver’s brain to replicate the neural state she is in during an episode of ordinary seeing. These hallucinations are guaranteed to be indistinguishable from ordinary cases of seeing.¹² Now, we standardly conclude that hallucinations are subjectively indistinguishable from our ordinary experiences precisely because they are of the same fundamental, phenomenal kind; that is, they have the same underlying conscious nature as cases of genuine seeing. This is our first thesis:

- A) *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind*: A veridical perception and a subjectively indistinguishable hallucination are of the same fundamental phenomenal kind.¹³

Now the argument from hallucination takes the following form: if *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind* is true—that is, if hallucinations and ordinary perceptions have the same phenomenal nature, then it cannot be the case that ordinary perception, by its very nature, makes us aware of mind-independent objects and their sensible qualities. This view of ordinary perception—naïve realism—is best understood as a combination of the following two theses:

¹²This claim has received universal support ever since the early modern period, but it is also provided strong justification from the scientific principle of the locality of causal influence. The claim is rather weak—it does not state that replication of the proximate cause brings about a phenomenally identical experience, but only that it brings about a state that is indistinguishable with respect to its effects on the subject. The implication that the induced state has the same phenomenology as the veridical perception only comes with the introduction of the explanatory thesis *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind*.

¹³Historically, this principle was so universally accepted that it was rarely made explicit. Recently, it has received much critical attention in the literature on disjunctivism. Martin (2004) discusses a version of the principle he calls the *Common Kind Assumption*. Crane (2005) employs a principle he calls the *Identity of Subjective Indistinguishables*. The formulation I have chosen emphasizes the restriction to a phenomenal kind. Such a restriction will become important in our discussion of the argument.

- B) *Item Awareness*: What it is like for a perceiver to have a veridical experience is constituted by the sensible instances the perceiver is in fact aware of.¹⁴
- C) *Mind-Independence*: The sensible instances that a perceiver is aware of in veridical perception are mind-independent.

As its name suggests, naïve realism captures our pre-theoretical picture of perception: on this picture, what it is like to see is just a matter of which sensible objects one sees (*Item Awareness*), where these sensible objects are normally things like rectangular tables, black cats, colorful flowers, ripe peaches etc.—in other words, the ordinary constituents of the mind-independent world (*Mind-Independence*).

As I have already suggested, all participants in the debate on perception have endorsed the truth of the conditional: $A \rightarrow \neg(B \wedge C)$. This leaves them with three straightforward options: either one can deny the antecedent (A) *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind*, or one must deny either (B) *Item Awareness* or (C) *Mind-Independence*. Very briefly: disjunctivists have denied the antecedent in order to hold on to naïve realism, recommending that we give up the idea that cases of delusive perception can be phenomenally just like cases of seeing.¹⁵ Sense-datum theorists have accepted the antecedent but rejected the naïve realist commitment to (C) *Mind-Independence*, defending an account on which all experience, delusive or veridical, makes us directly aware only of mind-dependent sensible instances.¹⁶ Finally, representationalists and qualia theorists hold on to the antecedent, *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind*, just like the sense-datum theorists, but, unlike the sense-datum theorists, they reject (B) *Item Awareness*. Instead, they argue that the phenomenology of perception is not a matter of which items the perceiver is aware of.¹⁷

¹⁴Variations of this thesis include Robinson's Phenomenal Principle (1994) Crane's Object-Dependence (2005); and Pautz's homonymous Item-Awareness (2007).

¹⁵See Hinton (1967); Snowdon (1980); Campbell (2002); Martin 2004; Soteriou (2013).

¹⁶See Jackson (1977); O'Shaughnessy (1980); Foster (2000).

¹⁷For instances of representationalism, see Anscombe (1965); Dretske (1995); Harman (1990); Tye (1995). For those who have been trained in the contemporary representationalist tradition, it can be hard to recall the pre-theoretical power of *Item Awareness*. But once we interpret the representationalist as trying to do justice to the fact that it always seems as if objects and their sensible features are present in perception, we can rely on the *explanandum* to reconstruct the naïve view on which objects and their features

I will not discuss the independent plausibility of these strategies at any length. It is well known that sense-datum views suffer from the fact that they push the mind-independent world too far beyond our perceptual grasp. The representationalists and qualia theorists have a difficult time using their respective notions of representation and qualia to respect the relational character of our phenomenology. And finally, the disjunctivists have been summarily dismissed for having no good explanation for why hallucinations can be subjectively indistinguishable from ordinary cases of seeing. Given that the proponents of each of these strategies themselves concede that they must reject a thesis that is *prima facie* plausible, the advantage of maintaining all three theses—by showing the conditional to be false—should be agreed to by all.

The argument, while easy to grasp in outline, turns out to be notoriously difficult to construct. In what follows, I walk the reader through an explicit rendering of the often-implicit reasoning that proponents of the argument rely on. Every version of the argument assumes the truth of two of the three theses and concludes the falsity of the third. In the version I present here, I will assume the truth of *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind* and *Item Awareness* and conclude that *Mind-Independence* must be false. Let us start by considering a subject *S* who enjoys a veridical experience of a red tomato, *E*, and a subjectively indistinguishable hallucination, *E**. Given *Item Awareness*, we conclude that what it's like for *S* to enjoy the veridical experience, *E*, is constituted by the sensible instances she is aware of. For ease of exposition, I'll focus on an instance of color:

1. What it is like for *S* to have *E* consists in *S* being aware of an instance of redness. (*Item Awareness*)

Now, given the premise that veridical perceptions and hallucinations have the same phenomenal character, we must grant that the hallucination *E** is of the very same kind as *E*. In other words, we conclude that the hallucination, too, must make the perceiver aware of “the very same beauties”:

actually are constituents of ordinary perceptions. For qualia theorists, see Block (1997); Shoemaker (1990). Qualia theorists have also tried to convince us that it is not ordinary sensible features like red, but something like red' that must be genuine constituents of our experiences—but again, this is a revisionary move, given the ordinary inclination of the perceiver to appeal to redness to characterize their experiences, not red'.

2. What it is like for S to have E^* consists in S being aware of an instance of redness. (1, *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind*)

Now let us focus on the hallucination more closely. We have induced this experience in the perceiver by directly stimulating her brain; we can stipulate that no red material object is involved. And so we know:

3. In E^* , there is no suitable, mind-independent object of awareness that is red (by stipulation).

So we cannot explain the fact that there is a red instance present in the hallucination by appeal to the straightforward fact that there is a material object present that is itself red. Furthermore, we know that artificially stimulating a perceiver's brain is guaranteed to bring about a hallucination in which S is aware of a sensible instance. But how can this be? How can direct neural stimulation of the brain produce an experience that requires the existence of something like an instance of redness for the perceiver to be aware of? If the instance were itself independent of the perceiver's awareness of it, solely intervening on the brain could not guarantee an experience that is by its nature a relation between a perceiver and a sensible instance. In the face of these facts, it seems like the only way to explain the causal efficacy of direct neural stimulation to bring about hallucinations is to treat the state of awareness that the perceiver is in as itself sufficient for the existence of a sensible instance for the perceiver to be aware of. On such a proposal, the very existence of the perceiver's state *guarantees* the existence of a sensible object of awareness. Direct neural stimulation can bring about a hallucination, then, because it can bring about a mental state that itself suffices for its object.¹⁸

¹⁸A clarification must be made here: Given that no binary relation can obtain without both of its relata obtaining, a relation $R(a,b)$ is in all instances existentially dependent on both a and b . If either fails to exist, the relation must fail to obtain. This symmetrical logical dependence of a relation on its relata, however, is consistent with there being an asymmetric relation that holds between the two relata themselves. If a is sufficient for the existence of b , then a 's obtaining makes it the case that b obtains, thereby allowing for $R(a,b)$ to obtain. In this latter sense, the coming about of R asymmetrically depends on one of its relata. In the case at hand, it is of course the case that a hallucination, being a binary relation, can only come about if the perceiver and the sensible property both exist. However, we can also insist that the perceiver's state is sufficient for the existence of the sensible instance, and that the relation of awareness that the perceiver stands in to the instance that she has herself brought about is thereby asymmetrically dependent on the

4. In E^* , S 's state of awareness is sufficient for the instance of redness that S is aware of. (2,3)

Once we reflect on the nature of this case, it quickly becomes clear that the instance in question must be a mind-dependent sensible instance. For if the only thing ensuring the existence of this instance is the fact that the perceiver is in a certain mental state, it must be the case that the instance in question is dependent on that state of awareness. Just as we conclude, in the case of a pain, that it is mind-dependent because it cannot exist without an experience of it, so too, in the case of the sensible instances in a hallucination, we conclude:

5. In E^* , the instance of redness is dependent on the perceiver's awareness, i.e., mind-dependent. (4)

At this stage, proponents of the argument make a well-known "generalizing move" from the hallucinatory case to the veridical case: if the sensible instance in the hallucination is mind-dependent, the reasoning goes, the instance in the veridical perception must be as well:

6. In E , the sensible instance is mind-dependent. (Generalizing Move, 5)

This immediately leads to the conclusion:

7. The items that a perceiver is aware of in veridical perception are mind-dependent. (6)

What is left to unpack now is *why* it has been assumed that we can make the generalizing move from the hallucination to the ordinary case. If the generalizing move can be defended, it seems as if the argument does in fact go through and that naïve realism is in fact incompatible with hallucinations having the same phenomenology as veridical perceptions.

perceiver's mind. The asymmetry of the determination relation is further evidenced by the following: the kind of awareness S enjoys in E^* is, in all instances, sufficient for the existence an instance of redness; in contrast, an instance of redness is not sufficient for the kind of awareness enjoyed in E^* . The fact that sensible qualities belong to a kind, some of whose instances exist entirely independent of being perceived (if, for example, no one is around to perceive them) drives home the one-way asymmetrical determination relation already discussed.

The reasoning that is most often employed here runs as follows: *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind* states that veridical perceptions and hallucinations are of the same fundamental phenomenal kind. Given that a hallucination consists in a relation between the perceiver and a mind-dependent sensible instance, the only way for the two experiences to be of the same phenomenal kind is if the item of awareness in the veridical case is also mind-dependent. Crane, in his 2005 paper on the problem of perception, seems to rely on something like this reasoning:

“[Without the generalizing move], E and E^* have different essential natures: for the nature of E is partly determined by the nature of [a mind-independent] O , and the nature of E^* cannot be. But this is inconsistent with assumption (4) [Identity of Subjective Indistinguishables], which implies that E and E^* are experiences of the very same specific psychological kind, since they are subjectively indistinguishable.”¹⁹

But this defense of the generalizing move fails. All that satisfaction of *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind* (or Crane’s Identity of Subjective Indistinguishables) requires is that the two experiences are of the same fundamental *phenomenal* (or, in Crane’s vocabulary, “psychological”) kind. The two experiences need not be identical in every respect—after all, veridical perception is the kind of experience that is caused by ordinary mind-independent objects in the world, while hallucinations are caused by direct neural stimulation; a hallucination is the kind of experience that tends to produce false beliefs, a veridical perception is not; the list goes on. All that is necessary to ensure that a veridical perception and a hallucination fundamentally have the same phenomenal nature is that they both make the subject aware of the same qualitative features. Sensible qualities just are these qualitative features. Therefore, all that is required to ensure that the two experiences are of the same phenomenal kind is that they make the subject aware of the same sensible qualities. So it is compatible with *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind* that a perceiver is aware of a mind-dependent instance of redness in hallucination, while being aware of a mind-independent instance of redness in a veridical perception. The move, witnessed in Crane, from the claim that E and E^* cannot have

¹⁹Crane (2005), 240.

the same *essential* nature to the claim that they cannot have the same *psychological* (or *phenomenal*) nature is illegitimate.

There is, however, a better way to defend the Generalizing Move. It has already been suggested that the only plausible explanation of how neural stimulation can be causally sufficient to bring about a hallucination is if the resulting act of awareness is itself sufficient for the existence of its item of awareness (a sensible instance). But because the hallucination and the veridical experience both have the same neural stimulation as a common proximate cause, the effects of that cause in the hallucination must also obtain in the veridical perception as well.²⁰ This is the real threat that the possibility of hallucination poses. If, in the hallucination, the neural state gives rise to an experience that is sufficient for the existence of a sensible instance, then, in the veridical case too, that same neural state must give rise to an experience that is also sufficient for the existence of a sensible instance.²¹

There is one final step required to defend the transition from the hallucination to the veridical perception: we now need to show that the sufficiency of the veridical experience for the existence of a sensible instance implies that the sensible instance in question is mind-dependent. If this final move can be defended, we will be forced to conclude that constituents of the ordinary mind-independent world cannot serve as the objects of ordinary perception. In the following section, however, I will argue that the sufficiency of the veridical perception for the existence of an item does not imply the mind-dependence of the item itself. Now that we have the notion of sensible over-determination at our disposal, we can see that this kind of reasoning is flawed. While it is true that the sufficiency of the experience for an item of awareness licenses an inference to the mind-dependence of that item in the hallucination, the same inference cannot be made in the case of the veridical perception; for the items of awareness in veridical perception turn out to be over-determined.

²⁰Note that this does not imply that there cannot be any features that are unique to the veridical perception. It merely implies that whatever features are present in the hallucination must also be present in the veridical perception. It also presupposes that the hallucination has no causal or ontological conditions on its obtaining that are missing in the case of veridical perception.

²¹See Martin (2004) for an exposition of this kind of argument.

3.3 SENSIBLE OVER-DETERMINATION AND PERCEPTION

I have suggested that a certain generalizing move from hallucination to veridical perception is unavoidable: namely, if we admit that a hallucinatory state of awareness is sufficient for the existence of a sensible instance, we must grant that the corresponding veridical perception is sufficient for the existence of a sensible instance as well. For a veridical experience has the very same proximate cause as a hallucination, and that cause—a particular kind of neural stimulation—must have the very same proximate effects in each case.

Let's return to our two experiences of a red tomato. *In the case of the hallucination*, the fact that the perceiver is in the perceptual state that she is in is the *only* reason there exists an instance of redness for her to be aware of. If she were not hallucinating, there would be no such instance. And so the instance in the hallucination is mind-dependent—it depends for its existence on the perceiver's state of awareness. But, now, the crucial question is whether the same can be said of the veridical perception as well. In other words, is the *only* reason for the existence of an instance of redness in a veridical perception that the perceiver is in a state of awareness that is sufficient for the existence of such an instance? Notice that, unlike in the case of the hallucination, there is an ordinary red tomato present in a case of ordinary perception. Furthermore, reflection on how ordinary physical objects themselves have sensible features, independently of being perceived, suggests that the presence of a red tomato is itself sufficient for an instance of redness. That is, objects have the particular colors, shapes and sizes that they have independent of anyone perceiving them to be any way. These instances are material instances of redness. Note that the *conclusion* of the argument from hallucination is that all sensible instances are mind-dependent; until the argument has been shown to be sound, we cannot make use of the conclusion to rule out the eminently plausible idea that material objects instantiate the sensible qualities that they do independent of any minds perceiving them. Thus, the presence of a red tomato is itself sufficient for the instantiation of redness.

So in the case of veridical perception, we discover that there are indeed two sufficient conditions present:

- (A) An experience of a red tomato that is sufficient for the instantiation

of redness.

(B) A red tomato that is sufficient for the instantiation of redness.

There are now two possibilities. The first is that the two entities—the red tomato and the perceiver’s awareness—are each responsible for a *distinct* instance of redness. On this picture, one instance of redness would depend for its existence on the perceiver, while the other would depend on the tomato. But this option is hard to take seriously, for a number of reasons. It requires us to conceive of every veridical perception as involving *two* distinct sensible instances: the redness that is the object of the perceiver’s awareness, and the redness of the tomato. But this would raise a host of unanswerable questions: Are we aware of both instances? Why or why not? Phenomenologically, it surely does not *seem to us* as if we are aware of two sensible items in every case of ordinary seeing. Furthermore, if we try to respect our phenomenology by insisting that we are only *aware* of one of the two sensible instances present, it would be difficult to explain why our awareness was so circumscribed, and which instance was the particular one we perceived.

Fortunately, though, we do not need to consider this extremely un-compelling option. For, on a far more compelling picture of veridical perception, there is a *single* instance of redness, which is *both* the object of the perceiver’s awareness *and* the color of the tomato. The verdict that there is only one sensible instance present respects the phenomenology of perception and does not require arbitrary verdicts of the sort described above. Furthermore, this verdict is made possible by the analysis I gave in Section 3.1 of the two distinct kinds of sensible quality instantiation. We can insist that there is only one sensible instance present, if we treat the instance in question as *over-determined*.

Remember, sensible over-determination is made possible by the fact that there are two distinct ways in which sensible qualities can be instantiated. A sensible quality can be instantiated in virtue of a material object serving as the bearer of the quality. As I have already suggested, if the mind were also required to serve as the *bearer* of a sensible quality, cases of over-determination would be impossible. For the mind and the physical object would then be in *competition* with each other, as potential bearers of one and the same instance of redness; but we do not think that multiple entities can bear one and the same sensible instance. If, on the

other hand, the only possible way for a sensible quality to be instantiated was for it to serve as the object of a perceiver's awareness, material bodies—like tomatoes—that were not *perceiving* anything could not be implicated in sensible instantiation at all, thereby ruling out any cases of over-determination. So, it is only because the mind and the material world provide us two distinct ways for a sensible quality to be instantiated, that we can introduce a class of sensible instances—namely, the veridically perceived ones—members of which are simultaneously determined in both of these ways.

The disanalogy between the veridical perception and the hallucination should now be clear. In the hallucination, the perceiver's act of awareness is sufficient for the instance of redness that the perceiver is hallucinating; and, crucially, given that it is the *only* sufficient condition that obtains, the instance of redness in question is dependent for its existence on the perceiver's act of awareness. In the veridical case, however, even though the experience is still sufficient for the instance of redness that the perceiver is aware of, it is no longer the only sufficient condition present. The ordinary tomato is *also* sufficient for the instance of redness present in a veridical perception. Given that there are two conditions in place, each of which is sufficient for the instance of redness in question, the instance is not *dependent* on either. For when an instance is over-determined, it requires for its existence at least one of the two conditions to obtain, but it does not require either condition in particular. If, for example, the subject closed her eyes and stopped perceiving the tomato, the continued existence of the sensible instance that she was aware of a moment ago would be unthreatened—for as long as the red tomato still exists, the sensible instance will continue to exist by inhering in the tomato. Compare this to the hallucination: in that case, there would be no instance of redness if the subject were not suffering her hallucination. The moment the hallucination ends, the instance of redness ceases to exist. This is why the instance in the hallucination is mind-dependent, while the instance in the veridical perception is not.

Thus, the argument from hallucination is *invalid*: The mind-dependence of the hallucinated objects *does not* entail the mind-dependence of the objects of ordinary perception. We should reject the generalizing move that is essential to the argument's success. Given that the sensible instances in a veridical perception are over-determined, it is true that the perceiver is in a state that is sufficient for the existence of a sensible instance, but

it is false that the instance in question is mind-dependent. The presence of the material object as an additional sufficient condition in the veridical perception makes it the case that the sufficiency of the mind for the item does not entail the dependence of the item on the mind.

Treating the items of ordinary perception as over-determined also makes it possible for us to nicely distinguish between a case of veridical perception and a so-called veridical hallucination. In a veridical hallucination, a perceiver suffers an ordinary hallucination—she does not perceive the world—but it just so happens that her hallucination lines up with the way that the world actually is. In Grice’s well-known example, it may be the case that Jane hallucinates John even though John is in fact standing in front of Jane.²² Crucially, a veridical hallucination is defective insofar as the mind-independent object, though present, is *not perceived*. We ought to avoid a view on which all veridical perception turns out to be like veridical hallucination. The view briefly mentioned above, on which every perception involves two distinct sensible items, would struggle to distinguish cases of ordinary seeing from this strange sub-class of hallucinations.

If we treat ordinary sensible instances as over-determined, however, we have no difficulty distinguishing these two cases. A veridical hallucination, just like an ordinary hallucination, will consist in a perceived sensible instance that is dependent for its existence on the perceiver’s act of awareness. But, uniquely in a veridical hallucination, the world coincidentally lines up with the hallucinated scene, resulting in a second, *unperceived* sensible instance whose existence depends on the physical object in which it inheres. Importantly, only one of these two sets of instances is perceived—namely, the set of mind-dependent instances; the other set is present but *unperceived*, as it plays no role whatsoever in bringing about the hallucinatory experience. If Jane were veridically *perceiving* John, there would only be one set of sensible instances, and this would be the very set that resided in the ordinary physical objects in the external environment.

3.4 DEFENDING PARTICULARIST NAÏVE REALISM

So far, I have shown that the argument from hallucination is invalid. But I want to briefly discuss the resulting view of perception and defend it against some potential objections. We can call the view *particularist naïve*

²²See Grice (1988).

realism: it is naïve realist because it insists that veridical perception, in its very phenomenal nature, acquaints us with sensible features that reside in ordinary physical objects in the external world. It is particularist because it emphasizes that the *particular* sensible instances we are aware of in veridical perception are mind-independent, even though these instances belong to a broader sensible kind that can have ontologically diverse, sometimes mind-dependent, instantiations. In a hallucination, perceivers are aware of such qualitatively identical but mind-dependent instantiations.

Immune to the argument from hallucination, particularist naïve realism can respect all three of our pre-theoretical theses. First, particularist naïve realism allows for the phenomenal character of ordinary perception to be determined by the sensible instances that the perceiver is in fact aware of (thereby respecting *Item Awareness*). What it is like to perceive a tomato is constituted by the sensible nature of the tomato. Second, given that hallucinations and veridical perceptions make perceivers aware of ontologically distinct instances of the very same sensible qualities, the view allows for veridical perceptions and hallucinations to share a fundamental phenomenal kind (thereby respecting *Sameness of Phenomenal Kind*).

What about *Mind-Independence*? On particularist naïve realism, material objects are not the *only* reason for the existence of the sensible instances involved in veridical perception. The existence of over-determined sensible instances is guaranteed both by the material world and by the perceiver's act of awareness. However, the most straightforward definition of mind-independence is a negative one: a feature is mind-independent just so long as it is not dependent on the mind. On this definition, over-determined instances are indeed mind-independent—if the perceiver were to cease having an experience of the tomato, the tomato would still retain the very same red color that it had while being perceived. Furthermore, given that the only bearers these sensible instances ever have are ordinary material objects—remember that the mind does not serve as a *bearer* for sensible qualities—the view entails that we are genuinely acquainted with objects of the material world in virtue of perceiving those very objects' sensible qualities.

In challenging my claim that particularist naïve realism is compatible with *Mind-Independence*, someone might appeal to the symmetrical roles played by the object and the act of awareness. If the perceiver's awareness, like the tomato's redness, is itself sufficient for the red property-instance

in question, then, it might be argued, just so long as the perceiver's act of awareness is maintained (perhaps through direct neural stimulation that coincided with the removal of the tomato), she could continue to be aware of the very same instance of redness that she was veridically perceiving a moment ago. This, in turn, would mean that one and the same property-instance could go from being mind-independent to being mind-dependent. Thus, one might worry that while sensible over-determination preserves the letter of naïve realism by denying that the sensible instances we are veridically aware of are mind-dependent, it does not really respect the spirit of the view, insofar as it allows for the perceiver to be in touch with the very same sensible instances in the absence of the mind-independent object altogether.

This would indeed be an unfortunate implication if it were forced upon us. On more careful reflection, however, we can see that there is an important asymmetry between the roles played by material object and the perceiver's mind. We can grant that the physical object would retain numerically the very same instance of redness when unperceived, because the tomato in which the redness resides persists independent of the experience. However, in the reverse scenario, in which the mind-independent object is removed, we cannot presuppose that the very same act of awareness would continue. A particular experiential episode is rightfully individuated in terms of the causal process that gives rise to it. So if we were to remove the physical object that was implicated in bringing about the veridical experience and replace it with artificial neural stimulation, we would in effect be bringing about a numerically distinct, though qualitatively identical, experiential episode (a hallucinatory episode). Since the hallucinatory episode is numerically distinct from the veridical experience, the particular sensible quality instance for which it is sufficient will also be distinct from that instance associated with the veridical experience. Thus, a perceiver could not remain aware of the very same numerical instance in the absence of the mind-independent object. This asymmetry is compatible with the act of awareness and the tomato each being sufficient for the existence of the instance in question; it is merely a consequence of the fact that a particular act of awareness cannot persist in the absence of its distal cause, whereas a material object can clearly persist in the absence of any awareness of it. This shows that the property-instances we are aware of in veridical perception are robustly mind-independent, as *those* very instances could never be perceived in

the absence of the mind-independent world.

Another objection to particularist naïve realism might arise at an earlier stage. One might reject my proposal that sensible properties are ontologically flexible; that is, that they can have both mind-dependent and mind-independent instances. This ontological flexibility is what allows particularist naïve realism to secure the qualitative identity of veridical perceptions and hallucinations. But, one might think, it is implausible that one and the same sensible kind could have such ontologically diverse instances. Berkeley himself is famous for having denied that an idea could resemble anything other than an idea. If I am suggesting here that “ideas,” or mind-dependent items, can indeed resemble mind-independent objects, insofar as they can both be instances of the same sensible features, am I not ignoring Berkeley’s repeated warning? Consider, for example, the following passage of the *Principles*:

But say you, tho’ the ideas themselves do not exist without the mind, yet there may be things like them whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance. I answer an idea can be like nothing but an idea, a colour or figure, can be like nothing but another colour or figure. . . I appeal to any one whether it be sense, to assert a colour is like something which is invisible; hard or soft, like something with is intangible, and so of the rest.²³

Notice how in this passage, and in all others like it, Berkeley does not actually argue that a mind-independent object and a mind-dependent idea cannot both be colored, or shaped, or more generally, share one and the same sensible features. Rather, he has already *assumed* the truth of Malebranche’s claim that such sensible properties can *only* be properties of mind-dependent ideas. Having made this assumption, he rightly points out that no mind-independent object that is itself uncolored, or lacking in shape or texture, could ever resemble an item that has such rich sensible features. Given the assumption, a denial of the possibility of resemblance now seems quite plausible—if one item is essentially sensible and the other is essentially non-sensible, how could the two ever be said to be copies of each other?

²³Berkeley (1710/1948-1957), §8

The proposal that I have offered here, however, is strikingly different—my suggestion is that mind-dependent “ideas” and mind-independent objects can, in Berkeley’s terms, resemble each other, precisely because they *can* possess very same sensible features. Unless we can find independent reason to rule out the possibility that sensible qualities can have both mind-dependent and mind-independent instantiations, Berkeley’s arguments have no force. His skepticism about resemblance just assumes the falsity of the only proposal that would make genuine resemblance possible.²⁴

Furthermore, it seems obvious that a universal restriction of properties to a single ontological kind is indefensible. Material bodies and abstract objects share all sorts of properties—the carton of milk in your refrigerator is rectangular in shape but so are the figures you reason about in geometry. Both the Form of justice and Socrates’ nose share the feature of being contemplated by Plato, and so on. Nor can there be a worry about properties in general being shared by material bodies and minds—existing in the twentieth century, being over ten years old, being the bearer of many other properties, etc., are all properties that are shared by both my mind and the Taj Mahal.^{25 26}

It is true that some properties are ontologically restricted due to the nature of the properties themselves. One might think that pain—given that it is essentially a *felt* quality—must, in all instances, be mind-dependent. In the opposing direction, supposing that quarks and bosons are the fundamental constituents of material reality, one can rightfully conclude that being composed of quarks is a property that can only be instantiated by having mind-independent bearers. And so the strongest form of the objection would consist in a restricted claim about the nature of sensible

²⁴Of course, we might think that something that is uncolored *can* resemble something colored in *some ways*. But here, I’m just granting Berkeley the point in order to show that it still doesn’t rule out the view I am interested in developing.

²⁵Some early modern theorists who followed in the footsteps of Descartes distinguished substances by their attributes (or essential properties, in modern parlance). On this picture, distinct kinds of substances could not have overlapping attributes. Furthermore, all other properties that a substance possessed were just modes or ways of having the attribute that was particular to the kind of substance in question. On such a view, it may in fact follow that different kinds of substances cannot share their properties, but given that we no longer think of properties as modes, we have no reason to accept such an ontologically restrictive view.

²⁶The first example can be found in Stroud (2000), 107.

qualities in particular. Perhaps one could argue that there is something about the nature of these qualities that makes them ineligible for ontological plurality. But such a metaphysical assertion would require a careful defense. At first glance, sensible features just don't seem to come with the ontological restrictions that either essentially subjective or essentially material properties have—we ascribe shape and size, for example, to material objects, regions of space and abstract entities. We find it incredibly natural to ascribe color to entities as diverse as tomatoes, rainbows, phosphenes, holograms and after-images. Indeed, the very fact that there has been such a protracted history of disagreement over the nature of the sensible qualities—whether they are mind-dependent, microphysical, structural or primitive—suggests that there is no *prima facie* reason to deny that sensible features can have ontologically diverse instances. A proponent of the argument from hallucination, then, would need to present persuasive metaphysical argumentation to prove otherwise.²⁷

A final worry one might have is that on particularist naïve realism, we must give different accounts of the sensible qualities of a tomato, depending on whether they are perceived or not. In the former case, the sensible instances in question are over-determined, while in the latter, *only* the tomato is responsible for their existence. But doesn't this mean that the tomato changes in virtue of being perceived? How could the mere fact that someone walks into the room with their eyes open make a difference to the tomato itself? But particularist naïve realism does not imply that the tomato undergoes any *change* in virtue of being perceived. Tomatoes change when they go from green to red, from ripe to raw, from intact to sliced, and so on. An object undergoes a change from t_1 to t_2 if there is a difference in which properties are instantiated by the object at the two times. In our case, there is no change in which properties are instantiated. The tomato has all the same sensible features before and after a perceiver enters the room; what changes is merely the conditions on the existence of those sensible instances—once the perceiver leaves the room, the additional security that her experience provided for the

²⁷Most philosophers of mind have just assumed that qualitative features can only reside either in the mind or in the world. Much of the disagreement between the internalists about “phenomenal character” (the qualia theorists, sense-datum theorists and narrow representationalists) and the externalists (the wide representationalists and naïve realists) presupposes, without argument, that there could not be something right about both views.

tomato's redness lapses, leaving the tomato solely responsible for its own sensible nature.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Appealing to sensible over-determination may initially seem like a lot of fancy footwork, but it should now be clear that the rewards are ample. Employing the notion makes room for a view on which we are genuinely acquainted with the external world in veridical perception, even though direct neural stimulation can lead to qualitatively identical delusive experiences. Once we have ensured that naïve realism is in fact on secure ground and that we need not deny the possibility of qualitatively rich hallucinations, we have stripped the sense-datum theorist, representationalist and disjunctivist of the primary motivations for their respective revisionary views. Employing the notion of sensible over-determination, therefore, allows us to formulate a unified, non-revisionary account of perceptual phenomenology.²⁸

By resolving the tension between the naïve view of perception and the possibility of hallucination, we have also opened the door to the possibility of a satisfying response to skepticism. Traditional views of perception, having excluded the world from the fundamental constituents of ordinary perception, struggle to explain how we are not alienated from the world. Disjunctivists, who deny that hallucinations share their character with ordinary perceptions—in spite of the first-personal indiscriminability of the two—rescue our knowledge of the world only by accepting a more pernicious form of alienation from our own phenomenology. Granting that hallucinations and veridical perceptions belong to the same phenomenal kind, while insisting that the world is an essential constituent of our ordinary perceptions, gives the view developed here the resources to secure unproblematic knowledge both of the world and of our own minds.

²⁸One might worry that the resulting view is not really “naïve” at all: sensible over-determination is by no means an intuitive notion. In response, I concede that the metaphysical tools I have developed here are unlikely to be classified as intuitive. However, the way in which we must stay “naïve” is not to ensure that our philosophical toolbox remains that way, but rather to insist that we do not, through theoretical investigation, distort the naïve understanding of the phenomenon itself. To that extent, I have employed some admittedly non-naïve resources to preserve the naïve view of perceptual experience.

The central move I have made in resisting the argument from hallucination is to argue that the sensible items of ordinary awareness are over-determined. What this notion really relies on is the possibility that sensible qualities can be instantiated in two very different ways. First, they can be instantiated in virtue of having material objects that serve as the bearers of these sensible qualities. Second, they can be instantiated in virtue of being the objects of sensory awareness. This strategy has shifted our focus from the narrow context of the argument from hallucination to a much broader investigation of sensible qualities and their relations to the mind and the material world. One avenue for further research, which I only briefly explored in Chapter 2, would be to investigate what the underlying metaphysical nature of sensible qualities must be if it is to allow for the distinct kinds of instances we are so intimately acquainted with in both veridical and delusive sensory experiences. This question must be left for another day, however, for the goal of this dissertation is to develop an account that does justice to the world-involving nature of ordinary perception. We will continue along this path in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

A Critique of Representationalism

In the previous two chapters, I have provided a positive defense for a view on which ordinary perception constitutively involves the perceiver being aware of mind-independent objects and their sensible qualities. In so doing, I argued that the items of ordinary awareness are ontologically over-determined. Central to my argument was the assumption that the phenomenal character of perception is determined by which sensible items the perceiver is aware of—I called this assumption *Item Awareness*. But many in the contemporary literature in the philosophy of mind have rejected this assumption. The most prevalent view that results—representationalism—insists that the phenomenal character of perception is a matter of which objects and qualities the perceiver *seems* to be aware of, where this notion of *seeming* is to be given a representationalist analysis that is compatible with the objects and qualities not in fact being present. The key idea behind this move is to deny that perception comprises a relation of awareness that a perceiver stands in to some actual item. The representational features of the experience are meant to explain why it *seems as if* experience puts us in a relation of awareness to objects, when in fact it does not (at least not constitutively) do so.

In this chapter, I will criticize theories of perceptual experience that are committed to the following thesis:

Representational Thesis (RT): Phenomenal properties that are instantiated by a conscious, perceptual experience just are representational properties.¹

¹Many representationalists write as if they are positing an identity relation between representational properties and phenomenal properties. But we can be neutral on

A property is a *phenomenal* property if there is *something it is like* for a subject to be in a state that instantiates the property. In other words, phenomenal properties are those properties in virtue of which a state or a system is conscious. What it is like to see the sunset, to experience a pain and to hear a piano concerto, for example, is fixed by what phenomenal properties are instantiated at the time of the experience. Representational properties, on the other hand, are those properties in virtue of which a state represents the world as being some way. Take a painting for example—the painting may have certain material properties such as being made of oil paints, having patches of red and purple paint. But the painting may also be a still life that depicts a bowl of heirloom tomatoes. This latter property is a representational property of the painting. *RT* suggests that what it is like to have a conscious perceptual experience just is a matter of what is represented as being the case.²

Representationalism is the view that results from a commitment to *RT*. It is a view about the nature of *conscious, perceptual* experience. In this chapter, I am not concerned with views that make use of a notion of representation to describe the operations of unconscious or sub-personal mental processes. Also, representationalism, for our purposes, specifically concerns itself with *perceptual* consciousness, not consciousness in general. One final clarification: standard representationalism is committed to a conception of the phenomenology or the conscious character of experience on which experience represents *worldly* states of affairs. Therefore, *RT*, as stated above, is stronger than the mere claim that conscious experience is fundamentally a kind of representation, insofar as it constrains what sorts of things perceptual experiences represent.³

whether the “is” in the thesis is the “is” of identity or the “is” of constitution. For some instances of representationalism, see: Harman (1990); Dretske (1995); Lycan (1998); Tye (2002).

²In this chapter, I am only concerned with those versions of representationalism that are committed to an exhaustive thesis, on which phenomenology is *fully* constituted by representational content. This view, referred to as *strong* representationalism is often contrasted with *weak* representationalism: the latter view argues that while some features of phenomenology are fixed by the representational content of experience, representational content does not *fully* fix the character of experience. I will not address such views here, but for a sampling of weak representationalist views, see Peacocke (1983); Block (1990).

³Some contemporary forms of representationalism accept that the conscious character of an experiential state is constituted by its representational content but deny that experiences must represent *worldly* states of affairs. For example, in his 2001 paper, Alex

Representationalism, as a view about perception, originally emerges out of the insight that the phenomenology of perceptual experience is always world-directed. Many of the first contemporary representationalists—Anscombe, Searle and Strawson among others—argued for this world-directed conception of experience in opposition to a view of perception, prevalent in the first half of the twentieth century, on which experience only revealed mind-dependent sense-data. Consider Strawson’s suggestion that our ordinary description of experience only makes reference to ordinary worldly objects:

To [a non-philosophical observer] we address the request, ‘Give us a description of your current visual experience’, or ‘How is it with you, visually, at the moment?’ Uncautioned as to exactly what we want, he might reply in some such terms as these: ‘I see the red light of the setting sun filtering through the black and thickly clustered branches of the elms; I see the dappled deer on the vivid grass...’ and so on.⁴

Or Searle’s insistence that experience is always directed at worldly states of affairs:

The visual experience is as much *directed at* or *of* objects and states of affairs in the world as... belief, fear, or desire... I can no more separate this visual experience from the fact that it is an experience *of* a yellow station wagon than I can separate this belief from the fact that it is a belief that it is raining.⁵

Byrne suggests that representationalism can leave open the question of whether the represented objects of experience are mind-dependent sense-data or ordinary mind-independent objects. This is an unusual version of the view and it does not capture the standard commitments that most representationalists adhere to. I will only consider more substantial representationalist proposals in this chapter. Some members of the recent “Phenomenal Intentionality Research Program” also argue that experience is representational while remaining neutral on whether the states of affairs represented in experience are ones that can be instantiated by the world or not. This version of representationalism also rejects the representational thesis as it is formulated here. I will briefly discuss the phenomenal intentionality program in the last section of this chapter, but will not focus on this particular feature of the view. For adherents to the PIRP program, see for example, Horgan & Tiensen (2002); Loar (2002); Chalmers (2006); Kriegel (2012).

⁴Strawson (1988).

⁵Searle (1983), 39.

In such passages, Searle and Strawson point out that describing *what it is like* to have a perception just consists in describing what objects and states of affairs in the ordinary world we seem to be aware of.

Now, many philosophers of perception today—representationalists or not—accept the claim about the world-directed nature of our phenomenology. What distinguishes representationalists from this much more inclusive group is the appeal to *representation*. One might have a relational view that endorses the world-directed nature of our phenomenology but explains this in terms of perceivers in fact being related to constituents of the external world. On such a view, phenomenal properties would either be identical to the qualitative properties of worldly objects or states of affairs or be analyzed as relations of some sort to such qualitative properties (This is the approach taken by the naïve realists).

The representationalists, in contrast, suggest that what it is like to have a perception is not a matter of how the world actually is, but rather a matter of how the world is *represented* as being.⁶ Essential to representational theories of conscious perception, then, is the notion of *intentional presence*. Having an experience that represents a lemon tree can make it seem to a perceiver *as if* a lemon tree is present, even in the material absence of any such tree. It is in virtue of the fact that my experience represents a lemon tree—a lemon tree that unbeknownst to me does not actually exist—that it has the rich phenomenology that it in fact does. The promise, then, is that an appeal to representational content has the ability to explain how we can have phenomenally rich experiences even when the seeming objects of awareness do not exist. It is no coincidence, then, that most representationalists are committed to the claim that experience can present the world as seeming some way without the world in fact being that way. The possibility of perceptual misrepresentation is built into the very essence of the representationalist view.

⁶Representationalists disagree about whether the representational content of experience is propositionally or non-propositionally articulated. Some representationalists endorse the claim that experiences have representational content but deny that this requires the content to be propositionally articulated. For example, Searle (1992) relies on the notion of aspectual seeing to bring out the representational character of experience without appeal to propositions. McDowell (1998) who denies that he is a full-blown representationalist but believes that experiences have content, also argues that experiences are conceptually articulated but non-propositional. When I refer to experiences representing the world *as being some way*, I mean to make room for such non-propositional yet representational notions of content.

The thesis of this chapter as a whole is that representationalism fails as an account of perceptual experience because it does not have the resources to offer an adequate account of the phenomenal character of experience. In the first section of the chapter, I will present two pre-theoretical criteria of adequacy on any account of the phenomenology of experience: I will argue that phenomenal properties must be both occurrent and categorical. For the remainder of the chapter, I will defend the claim that representationalists—once they offer a substantive account of representation—fail to meet one or both of the criteria described in the first section. There are two central approaches to representation that need consideration. First, I will discuss representationalists who are committed to causal and teleological theories of content. In section 4.2 of the chapter, I will argue that views of this sort fail to meet one or both of the criteria of occurrence and categoricity. In the following section, I will discuss a version of representationalism that endorses an inferentialist account of content and argue that this sort of view also fails to meet our criteria. It will emerge that the underlying problem for representationalism is that it grants that objects and their properties *seem* present in perceptual experience, but that it aims to explain this *seeming* presence without appeal to any features that are in fact present (present both according to a temporal dimension and a dimension of actuality) for the subject. But, I will argue, the uniquely phenomenal way in which things seem present in perception (unlike in belief, say, where the seeming is merely epistemic) cannot be sufficiently explained by non-occurrent, non-categorical features of perceptual states.

Finally, in section 4.4, I will suggest that the worries that arise for “reductive” theories of content cannot be avoided merely by resorting to a primitivism about content. Firstly, a primitivist conception of content fails to offer us the substantive account of phenomenal character that the representationalist promised. But more worryingly, primitivists invariably treat content as a non-analyzable intrinsic property of a state. This approach, I will suggest, fails to appreciate the insight—that the reductionists are keen to impress—that a state cannot *intrinsically* represent anything. If something like a causal-teleological or inferentialist approach to representation is necessary to capture how a state can represent anything at all, the failure of *reductive* representationalism as an account of phenomenology is a failure of representationalism in general.

4.1 TWO CRITERIA OF ADEQUACY

When a perceiver has an experience of a red hummingbird, she is in a mental state that instantiates some phenomenal property (or set of properties) *P*. Now, any account of the phenomenology of experience must be an account that tells us what (kind of) property *P* is. Is it a representational property, a relational property, a microphysical property, or perhaps just a primitive irreducible property of the mental state? Different accounts of phenomenology will offer different analyses of *P*. In this section, I am interested in whether we can set certain pre-theoretical constraints on possible analyses of *P*. Relying on an intuitive understanding of what our phenomenology is like as justification, I will conclude that phenomenal properties like *P* must be a) occurrent and b) categorical. I will speak of the *present* (as opposed to past or future) and *actual* (as opposed to hypothetical) nature of phenomenal character in order to capture the pre-theoretical intuitions that lead us to the more technical notions of occurrence and categoricity.

How do these pre-theoretical constraints impact accounts of phenomenology? Take representationalism: according to *RT*, phenomenal properties just are representational properties. But if phenomenal properties are occurrent (and categorical), then the representational properties that we identify phenomenal properties with must themselves be occurrent (and categorical).⁷ If it turns out that representational properties are not occurrent (or categorical)—as I will argue it indeed does—then representationalism violates our established constraints.

At this stage in the dialectic, if the representationalist insists upon the truth of her view, she must concede, at a minimum, that her account of phenomenology is revisionary. For she insists that despite the fact that our phenomenology seems one way to us (namely, occurrent and categorical), it is in fact some other way. Revision of this sort, however, comes with high costs. It disallows us from relying on introspective access to our own phenomenology as an anchor that tells us what a theoretical account is an account *of*. If it seems to us as if our phenomenology is occurrent

⁷The objection can also be pressed against forms of representationalism that are committed to a relation of grounding or constitution. One would need the additional premise that occurrent properties can only be constituted by or grounded in occurrent properties. I will assume that this premise is plausible enough, but see Maudlin (1989) for an example of what a defense of such a thesis might look like for the case of supervenience.

and categorical, but a theoretical view denies that it is in fact this way, why should we treat the view as describing the right phenomenon in the first place? Furthermore, if representationalists are revisionary in this way, they too are disallowed from appealing to the pre-theoretical conception of experience to motivate their view. As should be evident from the quotes provided above, this is in strict tension with the methodology of the representationalists themselves. Proponents of *RT* take themselves to be offering an account that respects our ordinary understanding of what it is like to be a perceiver. Being an error theorist, therefore, is not a position that the representationalist can or ought to embrace.⁸

4.1.1 *Presence/Occurrence*

The first pre-theoretical constraint I want to discuss employs the notion of temporal presence. My currently having my left arm extended 10 cm in front of me is a feature of me that is constituted by the *present* configuration of my body. Where my arm was earlier in the day or where it will be two hours from now is irrelevant to making it the case (constitutively) that my arm is currently in the position that it is in. Contrast this with having eaten Ethiopian food for dinner yesterday. Clearly this is a feature I possess now only in virtue of how I was at a past time, namely yesterday evening. Even if it is true of me *right now* that I ate Ethiopian food yesterday, what makes it true of me in the present moment is a fact about my past history. In this section, I will suggest that introspection reveals to us that the phenomenology of perceptual experience is like the former kind of property, and not like the latter.

Before I defend the claim that our phenomenology is occurrent, I want to make a few clarifications. So far, we have defined the phenomenal character of experience in terms of what it is like to have that experience. The notion ‘what it is like’ is extremely broad and may include features like mood, predispositions, background beliefs, sensations etc., all as relevant to the phenomenology of a particular perceptual episode. In contrast, the notion of phenomenal character that I am interested in here—and I take it the notion that the representationalists are interested in—is narrower than this. The representationalist need not be committed to the view that *all* aspects of what it is like to be me when I have a perceptual experience

⁸I will discuss other non-revisionary responses that the representationalist might offer in the final section of the chapter.

are constituted by what is represented as being the case. If perceptions of hummingbirds are always accompanied by a sense of elation in me, *RT* ought not entail that the feeling of elation must itself be understood in terms of some state of affairs being represented as being the case. Rather, we are interested in that aspect of our perceptual phenomenology that is exhausted by *how things look* to the subject (in the case of visual experience). For the purposes of our discussion, a change in phenomenal properties constitutes a change in how things look and vice-versa.

Defining perceptual phenomenology in terms of things looking some way constrains our subject matter significantly. However, we must clarify the notion of things looking some way. We often use such “looks” locutions in such a way that it cannot look to a perceiver as if a hummingbird is present unless she has the concept of a hummingbird.⁹ On this sort of epistemic understanding of “looks” locutions, how things look depends on what concepts a perceiver has (or deploys) at the time of the experience. On this picture, someone who has the concept of a hummingbird will have an experience in which things look quite different from someone who merely has the concept of a small bird.

Now, it seems very plausible that the particular concepts we deploy in experience can, in one sense, affect how things look to the subject.¹⁰ However, the notion of things looking some way that I am interested in is one on which things can look the same to two subjects regardless of which concepts they might apply. We can make this point across and within

⁹There is a long and harrowing discussion of the semantics of ‘looks’ statements that I hope to be able to sidestep here. The only claim I’m committed to here is that it is metaphysically possible for things to look the same to two subjects who deploy different sets of concepts, and that therefore, there must be a way that things look that is prior to, or independent of the concepts that we apply. This claim is neutral on whether a *semantic* analysis of such statements ought to employ a notion of looks that must be understood in epistemic, comparative or phenomenal terms. For a discussion of the different kinds of looks statements, see Chisholm (1959); Jackson (1977).

¹⁰Susanna Siegel, in *The Content of Visual Experience* (2012), argues that properties like “being a pine tree” can contribute to the phenomenology of experience. Barry Stroud, in his 2011 paper suggests that when we experience a ball rolling across a table, we can see *that the ball will fall*. Such views are committed to an expansionist notion of perceptual phenomenology. Siegel argues that such features can make a difference to perceptual phenomenology. Again, nothing I say in this chapter denies this point. I am making the far weaker point that there are some aspects of perceptual phenomenology that do not require the application of concepts. The aspects of phenomenology that Siegel and Stroud are interested in are real; they are just not the focus of this chapter.

perceivers. Imagine that two perceivers are presented with a red tomato. In having such an experience, things look a particular way to each perceiver. While one perceiver may apply the concept of a red round sphere, the other may apply the concept of an indigenous fruit of the Americas. Within a single individual, imagine a perceiver having her first experience of an American opossum—upon this unfortunate encounter, she may acquire a concept for the animal and then employ this concept on future sightings. While it would be appropriate to describe the phenomenology across the multiple sightings as different in one sense, it would be equally legitimate to insist that in another sense, the phenomenology remains the same. The aspect of phenomenology that I am interested in here is that aspect which remains the same, across and within perceivers, and when I employ the notion of phenomenal properties, then too, I only intend to be discussing these common features.¹¹

Another way to draw the relevant distinction is by distinguishing between experiencing x or experiencing F and having an experience *as of* x or having an experience *as of* F .¹² Having an experience *as of* x or F requires that the perceiver deploy the relevant concepts. If this is the case, then, having an experience *as of* a red hummingbird or *as of* a bird or even *as of* a red object is not separable from applying the relevant concepts. Nonetheless, this is not the case for experiencing o or experiencing F . A perceiver can be said to experience o or F even if she does not count as having an experience *as of* anything. She can indeed experience red without having an experience *as of* red: in both cases, redness is instantiated, but it is only in the latter case that she must also apply the concept RED. If we are to grant that non-conceptual beings have perceptual experiences with rich phenomenal character that is in some ways similar to our experiences, we must grant that there is at least an aspect of our phenomenology that

¹¹One might worry that such a construal of phenomenology is subject to the worries posed by Sellars and McDowell in their criticism of the *given*. See for example, Sellars (1956) and McDowell (1998). A full discussion of this concern lies outside the scope of this chapter, but I can make the following brief remark here: I am committed to the claim that there are features of our conscious phenomenology that are independent of or prior to conceptual application. However, this does not imply that an awareness of these features can lead to knowledge or give rise to contentful beliefs in the absence of conceptual articulation. As a result, I do not believe that the conception of phenomenology that I am making use of here validates the *myth* of the given though I am committed to a notion of the given that McDowell would be skeptical of.

¹²See for example, Dretske (1969).

consists in the instantiation of phenomenal properties independent of the perceiver deploying suitable concepts.

Keeping in the mind the restricted aspect of phenomenology that I have specified, let us return to our experience of a red hummingbird. The claim that I now want to make is that introspection on the nature of our phenomenology reveals that it seems to be entirely constituted by facts pertaining to how it is for the individual *at the time* that the experience is being had. Imagine being asked what the hummingbird's feathers look like to you. This is a question about the phenomenal character of your perception. To answer this question, all you need to do is focus on the currently available features of your experience—you can describe how the feathers look a resplendent shade of red (perhaps you didn't have a concept of this shade prior to your experience), how they shimmer as the light falls on them, and so on. In giving a complete description of what your phenomenology is like, you need only report on the here and now. No past or future facts about you and your mental states seem constitutively relevant to how things look when you are having the experience.

Contrast the case of describing one's visual phenomenology with a case in which one is asked to describe a memory. Imagine that you are now enjoying a memory of the red hummingbird that you saw a few moments ago. In describing your memory, you will of course describe the same visual features (the redness of the feathers and so on), but what you will now be describing are features that the bird seemed to you to have when you saw it in the past. So even though both the perception and the memory are being enjoyed at the time of description, you cannot fully describe the memory just by appeal to the features that are present at the time of remembering. In order for an individual to *remember* a particular red hummingbird, she must have, at some point in the past, have seen the very hummingbird that she is now remembering.¹³ Memory, then, is a mental state that is partially constituted by past states—if an individual did not have the relevant experience in the past, her current state is not a genuine memory of a red hummingbird.¹⁴ The properties of

¹³This is in line with Shoemaker's Previous Awareness Criterion for episodic memory on which a subject can count as remembering an event only if she were, at some point in the past, witness to the event. This implies that the past experiencing is at least partially constitutive of the current act of remembering. See Shoemaker (1970).

¹⁴Philosophers often appeal to the notion of quasi-memory to distinguish between those aspects of memory that may be said to be in common across cases of genuine

a mental state that make it a perception with conscious phenomenology, on the other hand, are properties that are fully in the here-and-now. This is the basic pre-theoretical commitment that I am working with: the visual phenomenology of perceptual experience is exhausted by how things are at the moment in time at which the experience is had.¹⁵

One can state the point in very simple terms if we focus on the knowledge we have of our own phenomenology—I can know what the phenomenal character of my experience is without knowing my past causal history. If phenomenal properties were constitutively dependent on my past causal history, I could not know the former without knowing the latter. Therefore, phenomenal properties are not constitutively dependent on past causal history.¹⁶

The claim that the phenomenology of perception is a matter of how things are at the time at which the experience is enjoyed is compatible with the acknowledgment that past facts about a subject are often *causally* relevant to determining the character of our perceptions. The fact that Deepa just had her eyes dilated this morning might impact what her current experience of the red hummingbird is like. But this does not make it the case that her having had the eye exam makes a *constitutive* difference to her experience in any way. She could have had the very same experience

remembering and cases of false memory. But this just brings out the fact that those common features—often construed in phenomenological terms—are occurrent, whereas the features that make them a genuine memory, i.e. that they are causally linked to a past experience, are non-occurrent in nature. Therefore, memory can be analyzed as a mental state that has an occurrent, phenomenological component and a non-occurrent, causal component, both of which are essential to its nature.

¹⁵The occurrence of phenomenology likely extends beyond perceptual phenomenology. The most common examples of philosophers admitting this are early discussions of pain. Lewis, for example, in his 1980 discussion of the feeling of pain explicitly clarifies that he is interested in occurrent pain. Maudlin, in his discussion of functionalism, writes of pain “A pain has its existence and being in the event of its being perceived and its *perception is a single unified occurrence. . . the phenomenal state is entirely realized at the time of experience. . .*” (1989, 409, my emphasis)

¹⁶One might argue that in knowing what the phenomenology of my experience is like, what I know is some facts about my past causal history, even though I do not know that the facts I currently know are facts about my past. This would amount to the claim that I know a past fact but not under that description. But this remains just as difficult to defend. I could be in a situation in which I have suffered total amnesia about all my past experiences and causal encounters with the world. So long as I have the relevant concepts in place (without perhaps any episodic memory of how I acquired them), my ability to describe the phenomenology of my current experience could remain unaffected.

under very different circumstances: a hummingbird of a slightly different shade, dull lighting conditions, or lack of sleep, could all have resulted in Deepa having exactly the same experience that she is currently enjoying with dilated pupils.

Similarly, features of Deepa's past history may also be relevant as *enabling* conditions on perceptual experience: her visual system may have needed to detect a variety of shades of red over a period of time in order for her to be able to currently enjoy this red experience. In such cases, we can say that Deepa couldn't have had this kind of experience if she did not have the right training and the right perceptual apparatus. That being said, it remains the case that her past history does not *constitute* what her current visual phenomenology is like.¹⁷ It may happen to be a requirement of our biology and our psychology that we need a certain background in order to have the perceptual experiences that we do, but again, what our experience is like at the end of that process seems logically independent of those enabling facts. For surely it is conceivable that there could be beings more evolved than us whose perceptual systems are capable of perfectly perceiving the colors and sounds around them without a history of training. It is strictly possible that such beings could have exactly the same phenomenal character as we do.

I now want to define our first criterion more precisely. The intuition that the phenomenal character of experience is exhausted by facts pertaining to the moment at which the experience is had can be made more precise by appeal to the notion of occurrent properties. We can initially define an occurrent property in the following way:¹⁸

Occurrence: O is an occurrent property of x iff for any time t , the fact that x has O at t is constitutively independent of any fact pertaining to a time t_1 , where $t_1 \neq t$.¹⁹

¹⁷I will return to this in more detail when I consider causal-historical representationalism in section 4.3.

¹⁸In defining the property in this way (and in my upcoming discussion of categorical properties), I have been influenced by Yablo's work on intrinsic and categorical properties (in his 1987 and 1999 papers) and his very brief discussion of occurrence in his 1992 paper.

¹⁹This definition and the immediately ensuing discussion needs further refinement. One might think that whether an object has O at time t is not logically independent of the following non-occurrent property it has at $(t+1)$: "having the property O at time t ." What

Occurrent properties, then, are those properties, the instantiation of which at a time is logically independent of past or future configurations of the world. Let us assume that an individual x has the property O at time t in the actual world $@$. O is an occurrent property of x if there is a possible world w which satisfies the following two conditions: 1) x has O in w ; 2) w has no overlap with $@$ with respect to how things are at any time t_1 , where $t_1 \neq t$.²⁰ What our explication brings out is that occurrent properties are those properties, the instantiation of which is logically independent of how things are in the world at any time other than the time at which they are instantiated.

Many properties will turn out to be non-occurrent on this definition. Having eaten Ethiopian food for dinner yesterday, being born in India, being twenty-five years old, being a member of the 2018 soccer world cup team, are all non-occurrent properties—whether an individual instantiates these properties at a time t depends on past and future states of the world. On the other hand, my arm being extended ten inches in front of me, having a headache and being square are all good candidates for occurrent properties. What the world was like a moment ago or what it will be like a moment later does not affect whether an object has any of these properties at a particular point in time.

My proposal then is that any analysis of the phenomenology of experience must be able to treat phenomenal properties as occurrent properties in this way. I believe that this gets at the intuition that I began this section with, namely that the phenomenology of a perceptual experience or a phenomenal state in general, is constituted by properties that are in the here-and-now. The criterion of occurrence is naturally only a necessary condition. There will of course be lots of other criteria on whether some

we really need to rule out these sorts of cases is a definition that says that a property is occurrent only if it is constitutively insensitive to how things *occurrently* are at times other than the present time. But this is obviously circular. I will not work through the formal details of how to adapt the definition to overcome this circularity because that will take us too far afield. For the time being, I will just note that this worry exists but also suggest that we can just keep our current formulation as a working definition, with the caveat suggested here. This is not a chapter in which I try to provide a rigorous definition of occurrence—rather, I merely want to use a definition that is precise enough for our purposes to pick out the intuitive set of properties that we already have in mind.

²⁰See fn. 17. A qualification needs to be made: if there are relevant enabling conditions for the existence of individual x in the actual world $@$, these enabling conditions must also obtain in w .

property O can be a phenomenal property or not. Properties of rocks may be occurrent but will naturally be excluded from being phenomenal properties.

It may be helpful to point out how our earlier restriction on phenomenology is relevant here. There is good reason to conclude that the application of a concept cannot be described entirely in terms of occurrent facts. One might believe that I do not count as applying a concept at a time t unless I have a set of capacities that I have exercised in the past and will exercise in the future. If this is the case, then those aspects of our phenomenology that are constituted by the application of concepts will fail the criterion of occurrence that I have been appealing to here. Given our restriction, however, we can hold on to the criterion of occurrence as a legitimate constraint on any account of phenomenal properties as long as we make sure to restrict the criterion to those phenomenal properties that an experience has independent of the concepts that the perceiver deploys.

4.1.2 *Actuality/Categoricity*

Before I discuss whether representationalism can respect the criterion of occurrence, I want to present the second criterion on an adequate account of the core phenomenology of experience. In this section, I will suggest that phenomenal properties must not only be occurrent properties, they must also be categorical properties of experience. I will start to develop the criterion by appealing to the intuitive notion of actuality.

Consider the difference between being cylindrical and being fragile. Whether a glass pitcher is cylindrical or not seems to be a fact about what the pitcher is like in the actual world, a fact that is constitutively independent of how the pitcher might behave in other possible worlds. Contrast this with the pitcher's fragility. Whether the pitcher is fragile in our world cannot be settled just by examining how the actual world is. The pitcher may be fragile in the actual world even if it never breaks in that world. In other words, the object may not display its fragility in this world. However, we are inclined to conclude that the pitcher is fragile, even in the absence of any actual breakages, because it still has the *potential* to break. We have here an intuitive distinction between the way an object is in actuality and the way an object is hypothetically. Now of course, this isn't precise enough because we just said that the pitcher is not just hypothetically fragile, it is actually fragile. Therefore, the distinction

we're after is one that distinguishes between properties of objects that are *constitutively* independent of worlds other than the actual world and properties that are not so independent of such possible worlds—the actual fragility of the pitcher in this world depends on its behavior in other possible worlds, while the actual cylindricality is independent of other such behavior.

This now brings us to the distinction between categorical properties and hypothetical properties. Just like we defined an occurrent property above in terms of the property being constitutively independent of how the world is at *other times*, we can now define a categorical property as follows:

Categoricity: C is a categorical property of x iff the fact that C is instantiated by x in the actual world $@$ is constitutively independent of any facts obtaining in a possible world w , where $w \neq @$.^{21 22}

²¹The same qualification needs to be made here that was made above with respect to definition of occurrence. The definition provided here works only if we implicitly read it as saying the following: A property C is categorical iff the obtaining of C is constitutively independent of how things *categorically* are in worlds other than the actual world. It is not the case that the property of cylindricality is independent of how things *hypothetically* are in other worlds - it *must* be the case in other worlds that x can hypothetically be cylindrical in order for x to be cylindrical in the actual world. Therefore the definition as it is stated here is circular. Again, for our purposes, I want to just accept the charge or circularity because the important task I am undertaking here is not to give an adequate non-circular definition of categoricity, but to rely on the notion of categoricity (the basic nature of which can be gleaned through this admittedly circular definition) to place a constraint on accounts of phenomenology. To see how the definition of categoricity can be formulated in a non-circular way, see Yablo (1987, 1992).

²²Shoemaker has argued that if being a categorical property requires having a causal profile only contingently, then there are no categorical properties (for a recent example, See Shoemaker (2011)) This offers a challenge to the definition of categorical properties that I'm relying on here because causal roles the way Shoemaker (and I) understand them are hypothetical properties. Shoemaker's central argument (one that does not rely on a specific theory of realization) proceeds by arguing that if categorical properties have their causal profiles only contingently, then the notion of sameness of property at two points in time would be empty. The broad moves that Shoemaker makes in his 2011 paper are as follows: We normally assume that categorical properties don't change their causal profiles in the actual world because properties have the causal profiles they do in virtue of the physical laws. Shoemaker points out that these laws are just formulated on the basis of observed regularities between properties. However, if categorical properties have

Given our definition, being cylindrical, being 5'4" and being made of wood are all categorical properties while being fragile, being a potential winner of the 2016 US Presidential election and being fluent in French are all hypothetical properties. How tall an individual is does not depend on what the individual might be like in possible worlds—her height and all her other contingent properties may vary drastically in other worlds but this leaves her actual height unaffected. Whether someone is fluent in French, on the other hand, does depend on what capacities the individual has, how they are disposed to respond to a French conversation and so on. If the individual has merely learnt a very long list of French statements such that his lack of competence is never detected in the actual world, we can still insist that he is not fluent, because *if* he were to be queried in ways that he was not in fact queried, he *would* not have been able to respond fluently. These hypothetical facts about his linguistic abilities affect what capacities we ascribe to him in the real world.

Imagine that we restricted the set of possible worlds to one, namely to the actual world (in other words, imagine living in a strictly necessitarian universe). Now under this restriction, objects would no longer possess many of the properties that we normally take them to have. It would no longer be appropriate to think of objects as having potentialities or tendencies that were not *in fact* realized at some point in the object's actual

their causal roles only contingently, one could never know whether one was observing a regularity in the relation between the very same properties on repeated occasions or whether there were different properties in play each time that just happened to have the same causal profile, thereby demonstrating an absence of regularity. If we cannot distinguish between these two hypotheses, we cannot formulate any laws, the content of which presupposes sameness of properties. The conclusion then is that the laws cannot help us know whether we are ever confronted with an instance of sameness of property, because the ability to formulate laws in terms of properties (rather than causal profiles), presupposes that a distinction can be made between sameness of profile and sameness of property. A full treatment of such an argument would need further discussion, but in brief, there seem to be several contestable points in the argument. Firstly, Shoemaker is assuming a regularity-governed conception of the laws that can be challenged. Secondly, it is important to distinguish between whether we can *tell* if we have a case of sameness of property or sameness of causal profile, and whether there is *in fact* a difference between sameness of property and sameness of causal profile. Shoemaker seems to think that this worry is more than an idle skeptical worry, but I fail to see a genuine threat if one rejects the verificationist move that Shoemaker relies on. Finally, some have argued that perception provides us direct access to the categorical features of objects that explain their causal profiles (see Campbell & Qassam, 2014).

history. It would be nonsensical to say of objects that in fact stayed intact during their existence that they were fragile. It would be equally illegitimate to say of an individual that she could have become president if in fact she did not. The kinds of properties an individual could possess would drastically shrink in such a necessitarian universe, but some properties would remain untouched. These would be the categorical properties.

In such a world, individuals could still have the very same kinds of experiences that we do and the phenomenal properties that such experiences instantiated would remain unaffected. We can know what the phenomenal character of an experience is like without knowing anything about the dispositions of the perceiver or the perceived items. Knowing how one is disposed to behave, or what one is disposed to believe is unnecessary for knowing what the phenomenology of one's experience is like.

Consider pain. When someone says: "That headache was terrible, it lasted for two full hours", she does not only mean that she had the tendency to display certain pain behavior for those two hours, but importantly that there was a way that she actually felt during that entire period of time. Furthermore, the fact that she felt that way is what explains or grounds any of the dispositions that she may have to display such pain behavior. This point has been repeatedly emphasized by critics of a simple functionalist account of pain on which pain is fully analyzed in terms of causal roles.²³ Causal roles, being hypothetical properties, cannot fully capture the categorical nature of pain sensations. As is the case with pain, I want to suggest that visual phenomenology is categorical as well. When I introspect on what it is like to perceive a hummingbird, it seems like the features that are relevant to the visual phenomenology of this experience are fully actualized during the having of the experience and are robustly non-dispositional in nature. Just as the pure phenomenology of a pain experience can explain why the patient is disposed to take an Advil without itself being constituted by those dispositions, the categorical phenomenology of perception can explain why I am inclined to believe that there is a red hummingbird in front of me, and why I am disposed to act the way I do towards it, even though these dispositions or inclinations

²³David Lewis advocates for (an admittedly peculiar) version of identity theory on the grounds that what he calls "mad pain" is a coherent possibility—there may be an individual who feels the very same pain that we do but lacks any of the dispositions associated with normal pain in human beings.

are not themselves constitutive of the phenomenology of the experience itself.

Again, just as in the case of occurrence, aspects of my phenomenology that require the application of concepts will not pass the test of categoricity. It is implausible to suppose that I could have an experience in which I employed the concept of a hummingbird without having any disposition to judge that there was a hummingbird present. Any plausible account of concept application will posit a tight connection between the application of concepts and the dispositions to judge in certain ways. If this is the case, one cannot posit that an experience that essentially involves such concept deployment is constitutively independent of what one would be disposed to believe in a variety of scenarios. For this reason, our restriction to those aspects of phenomenology that are independent of concept deployment is important to keep in mind.

The criterion of categoricity is only necessary and not sufficient. Not all categorical properties are phenomenal properties, but all phenomenal properties—on our restrictive construal of phenomenal properties—must be categorical properties.

In this section, I have motivated the claim that a pre-theoretical understanding of phenomenology commits us to analyzing phenomenal properties as both occurrent and categorical. These constraints are meant to capture the intuition that our phenomenology exists fully in the here and now, where ‘here’ refers to the actual world and ‘now’ refers to the temporal present. This characterization is supported by the fact that we assume a special kind of acquaintance with our current phenomenology. If there were past or hypothetical facts that we needed to be acquainted with in order to truly be acquainted with our phenomenology, it would be hard to justify the presupposition that we have this sort of special, if not infallible access, to how things are for us right now. In the remainder of this chapter, I will argue that standard forms of representationalism violate one or both of these criteria. If this is true, both views must be seen as revisionary accounts of phenomenology.

4.2 REPRESENTATIONALISM A: CAUSAL ACCOUNTS OF CONTENT

In the introduction to this chapter, I defined representationalism as the view that emerges from a commitment to the following thesis:

Representational Thesis: Phenomenal properties that are instantiated during a conscious, perceptual experience just are representational properties.

Now as I have already suggested, many theorists of perception are committed to a claim that the phenomenology of experience is world-directed. As Strawson describes, if we were to describe what it is like to enjoy a visual experience of a lemon tree, all we would mention were the features of the tree that we were aware of. The thesis that perceptual experience seems to present us with worldly items and their sensible features has come to be known as *Transparency*.²⁴ One can understand the thesis as centrally committing us to the idea that all conscious perception involves the seeming presence of worldly objects and their sensible features.

While *Transparency* is a descriptive thesis about the phenomenology of experience, *RT* is put forth as an explanatory thesis—representationalists appeal to *RT* in order to *explain* how perceptual experiences are transparent in this way. On their view, all experiences seem to present mind-independent objects and properties *because* all experiences have representational properties (or have representational content). So they disagree with the naïve realists, for example, who think that the transparency of experience can only be explained by admitting that experience does in fact consist in a relation between perceivers and constituents of the world. The representationalists in contrast insist that our perceptual experiences can have just the phenomenology that they normally do even if the states of affairs presented do not in fact obtain. This is where representation does its essential work—all that is required for it to *seem* as if a lemon tree is present is for the perceiver to be in a state that represents a lemon tree, and we can be in this sort of representational state even in the absence of a real lemon tree. Similarly, representationalists disagree with

²⁴Transparency normally has a positive and negative component. The positive component states that we seem to be aware of mind-independent objects and their properties, while the negative component states that we are not aware of anything else. For statements of transparency, see Harman (1990); Tye (1995, 2000); Thau (2002).

qualia theorists and sense-datum theorists who explain why it seems to us as if a lemon tree is present by appealing to certain qualitative features (*color and shape* for the sense-datum theorists, something like *color'* and *shape'* for the qualia theorist) that the subject is in fact aware of.²⁵ Representationalists insist that we can make sense of why it seems as if yellow is instantiated—even when there is no instance of yellow or yellow' instantiated—by appeal to representation.

Unique to the representationalists then is the claim that an appeal to representation is *sufficient* to explain the phenomenology of our experience: more specifically, an appeal to representation is sufficient to explain how it can seem to us as if yellowness is *present* (when in fact there is nothing yellow in the world that we are aware of). The task before the representationalist then is to explain how this explanation is meant to work. How can it seem to us as if yellowness is present even when there is no instance of yellowness of which we are aware? How can it seem to us as if there is a lemon tree present when in fact we're merely hallucinating?

Just a brute appeal to the fact that we are, on such occasions, representing a yellow tree does not seem adequate.²⁶ The representationalist needs to offer us an account of *what it amounts to* for an experience to represent the world as being a certain way. Only once we have an answer to this question can we evaluate whether the proposed account of representation can serve as an adequate account of phenomenology. Without an account of what it means for a state to have a particular representational content, all that the representationalist has offered is a placeholder for an *explanans*. We cannot, therefore, evaluate the success of the view without a substantive account of content.²⁷

While representationalists are famously hesitant to commit to a determinate account of content, the most common theory of representational

²⁵Or in qualia speak, that characterize the state of awareness that the subject is in, without themselves being the items of awareness.

²⁶One might think that this is too strong of a demand to place on representationalists. We don't expect representationalists to have an account of representation in order to conclude that belief is representational. But there is a special demand in the case of perception—in the case of perception, the representationalists insist that they have the resources to explain the notion of *seeming presence* that is essential to the phenomenology of experience. Beliefs do not have this feature. The representationalist must, to make good on this promise, have some story to offer for how intentional presence works.

²⁷In the last section of this chapter, I will discuss possible views that take content to be a primitive notion that cannot be analyzed in more basic terms.

content is a causal-historical theory.²⁸ Given that the account aims to give a naturalistic explanation of content, it has primarily been developed and endorsed by representationalists who are interested in a reductionist approach to the mind. Dennis Stampe, one of the early proponents of the view, describes it as follows:

Thus it cannot be by luck that our beliefs and desires correspond as they do with the facts and the characters of things; it must be determined that they should often so correspond, and be determined *by* those facts or things. The idea that this determination is *causal* determination is, if not inevitable, only natural. . . It is not the fact that there looks to me to be something red and round before me that determines what it is that looks that way to me, or what object I am seeing. The thing I am seeing is the thing (whether it be red and round or not) that causes it to look to me as if there is something red and round before me, and not some tomato off in Irkuts.²⁹

He goes on to say:

It will stand to reason that the “appropriate causal connection” that a causal theory must specify, will be a causal connection of particular pertinence to the fulfillment of [the organism’s] functions.³⁰

Dretske, who perhaps develops this kind of view in most detail, illustrates its basic features using the case of a primitive state of the visual system:

If that cluster of photoreceptors we call the retina is to perform its function (whatever, exactly, we take this function to be), the various states of these receptors must mean_n something about the character and distribution of ones optical surroundings. Just what the various states of these receptors mean_f will (in

²⁸Here, I will present the bare bones of a causal account that also has a functional or teleological component to it. This version of a causal theory has been developed most prominently by Dretske, but other variations of causal theories of representational content have also been offered. Some examples are: Dretske (1986, 1995); Fodor (1990); Stampe (1977); Tye (1982).

²⁹Stampe (1977), 43.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 45.

accordance with M_f) be determined by two things: 1) what it is the function of this receptor system to indicate, and 2) the $meaning_n$ of the various states that enable the system to perform this function.³¹

Natural meaning ($meaning_n$) and functional meaning ($meaning_f$) are defined by Dretske as follows:

Meaning_n: A natural sign means_n that P only if P , given some *causal* or lawful relation between the sign and the state of affairs P .

Meaning_f: d 's being G means_f that w is F iff d 's function is to indicate the condition of w and d 's being G means_n that w is F .³²

On Dretske's picture, what a state represents is determined by what it has the function of meaning_n. A state or a sign means_n that P iff it stands in a causal or law-like relation with P . As long as the circumstances are normal, if the sign is tokened or the state is instantiated, P must obtain. Now, the existence of such a causal or law-like relationship between the representational item and the state of affairs represented is not sufficient for the state to truly count as representational. Essential to Dretske's conception of representation is the possibility of *misrepresentation*. Law-like dependence, or to use another term from Dretske's repertoire, *indication*, does not leave any room for error. If a clock is broken and has its hands stuck at 1 and 8, the clock merely fails to indicate the time. Given the breakage, there is no longer a law-like relation that exists between the time of day and the clock. In order for a state to not merely indicate the presence of a state of affairs but rather, to represent it—or in other words, in order to go from natural meaning ($meaning_n$) to functional meaning (or $meaning_f$)—Dretske introduces the notion of a function. If the function of a state is to indicate that P , then there may be occasions on which the state can be said to misrepresent that P —these will be occasions on which

³¹Dretske (1986), 25-26. Note that in this chapter, Dretske is developing a general account of content, where essential to the notion of content is the possibility of misrepresentation. In his later series of lectures *Naturalizing the Mind* (2005), Dretske applies this notion of content to qualitative states of the mind.

³²*Ibid.* 19-22.

it does not *indicate* that *P* but still has the function of indicating that *P*. The broken clock, though broken, still has the function of telling the time and can therefore be said to misrepresent the time.

A brief reconstruction of Dretske's story for how a natural system can come to have functions is as follows: An individual may have a certain physical state that is tokened every time a bird is present. Now, what makes it the case that the state has the function of indicating such birds—and thereby representing such birds—is that it was recruited in the system's cognitive architecture (or evolutionarily selected to persist through future members of the species) *because* it indicated the presence of those very birds. When this state fails to indicate such birds (perhaps because it is tokened as a consequence of direct neural stimulation), the state misrepresents the presence of a bird because that is what its function is within the system's cognitive economy.³³

Let's apply Dretske's account of content, then, to the representationalist thesis about phenomenology.³⁴ Take our experience of a red hummingbird. *RT* states that what it is like to have an experience of a red hummingbird is just a matter of representing a red hummingbird in one's environment. But now we know that what it takes for a state to represent in this way is for the state to have the function of indicating the relevant bird. So having an experience that has the kind of phenomenology that our hummingbird experiences do is constituted by being in a physical state that has the function of indicating these birds. The state has this function just in case it has stood in a law-like relationship with hummingbirds either in the individual's or the species' past history and if it was in virtue of this relationship that the state was recruited by the system as a whole.

³³One might worry that proponents of the causal-historical account of content are not offering an explanation of what feature makes it the case that *x* is a representation, but instead they are explaining how an item—that we already treat as representational—comes to represent *P* rather than *Q*. But this would be to misunderstand Dretske's goals—he believes that all that is required for *x* to be a representational item at all is that it 1) stands in a law-like relation to some state of affairs *P*; 2) that *x* has the function of indicating *P*. Any item that satisfies these two features is a representational item. Therefore, Dretske is not just concerned with the question of how we determine the particular content of a representational state, but what makes something a representation in the first place.

³⁴Dretske himself endorses such an application—his book *Naturalizing the Mind* is a defense of the claim that his account of content can be used to give an account of the phenomenology of conscious mental states.

What we need to do now is evaluate whether Dretske's account of content satisfies the criteria of occurrence and categoricity. Let us begin with the criterion of occurrence. Remember that in order for a property O to be an occurrent property, the fact that x has O at a time t must be constitutively independent of how things are at times other than t . But it is clear that Dretske's account of content fails this criterion. Imagine Rosa looking at a hummingbird in the actual world. We can describe the phenomenal character of her experience—the bird look a bright red color, its wings look waxy and delicate, the beak looks narrow and sharp. Now, the criterion of occurrence suggests that facts about what it is like for Rosa for have such an experience must be facts pertaining to the time at which Rosa is enjoying her experience. But on Dretske's view, what makes it the case that Rosa's experience has the phenomenology that it does are facts that stretch back in time to Rosa's past and potentially beyond, to the time of her evolutionary ancestors. If what it is like for her to have an experience as of a hummingbird is for her to represent it as red and elongated and soft, say, then according to Dretske, her current physical state can represent these features only if in the learning environment for Rosa or for her species, that very kind of physical state was recruited because it detected objects that were red, elongated, and soft. So, the fact that her experience—right now—presents to her a bright red bird is constituted by the fact that in the past, her physical state was caused by (and thereby selected to detect) the relevant red objects.

But this is where the strangeness of Dretske's account reveals itself. How can it be the case that the seeming presence of redness at the time of the experience is *constituted* by Rosa's past history? It would be perfectly plausible to suggest that Rosa's past history is relevant as an enabling condition for her to have the experience that she currently has. But how can it be that her having an experience that consists in there being a red, soft object seemingly present to her *at the time of* the experience, is fully constituted by features of her past causal or evolutionary history. There must be something in the present moment that constitutes the rich phenomenology that obtains in the present moment. With respect to their explanatory potential, facts about Rosa's past causal history are facts that seem to pertain to the wrong period of time.

A representationalist sympathetic to Dretske's approach cannot appeal to the occurrent features of the *physical* state that Rosa is in, for these features *do not* contribute to fixing what it is like for Rosa at the time of

the experience. According to the representationalist, Rosa might have a counterpart—call her Mariposa—who is physically identical to Rosa at the time of the experience, and yet does not have an experience as of a red, elongated object. If Mariposa’s past causal history is different, the occurrent facts about her brain state or the occurrent facts about her external environment are irrelevant to determining what her phenomenology is like. She may be in exactly the same brain state as Rosa, and that brain state may have been caused by an identical red hummingbird on this particular occasion and yet she may not count as having an experience that has the kind of phenomenology that Rosa’s experience has.

The problem with Dretske’s proposal can be made most vivid if we examine a non-veridical experience. Imagine for a moment that Rosa is not perceiving, but rather hallucinating the hummingbird. A representationalist like Dretske aims to explain how the hallucination can have the same phenomenal character as a veridical experience by appeal to the fact that the hallucinatory state, just like the veridical experience, is realized by a physical state that has the same causal history as the veridical experience. But the structure of the explanation is entirely mysterious—how can possessing a particular kind of causal history—a causal history that the current hallucinatory episode deviates from—be constitutively sufficient to fix the phenomenal character that the hallucination actually has at the time of experience? The occurrent nature of our phenomenology cannot be respected by appeal to the merely non-occurrent properties of the state that the perceiver is in. It is important to note that the point isn’t specific to the non-veridical cases. While the inappropriateness of the explanation is most vivid in that kind of case, the point is a general one: the details of a past causal history seem entirely inadequate to determining what core phenomenal character a particular experience has.

I already made the following point in the first section, but it is worth re-emphasizing here. In arguing that phenomenal properties must be occurrent, I am not suggesting that causal-historical facts about the individual are irrelevant to whether such ascriptions can be made or not. The past causal history of an experience may indeed be *causally* relevant to whether a subject can have a particular conscious experience or not. It may very well be the case that someone cannot have an experience that presents to her a red hummingbird unless that individual has a past history of experiences with a hummingbirds, small flying objects, red things, and so on. It may indeed be the case that a certain history of causal connec-

tions with the world is necessary for the individual to have any perceptual experiences whatsoever. However, this is entirely compatible with the claim that phenomenal character must be an occurrent property of the state. Causal relevance is not to be confused with constitutive relevance. What makes a property occurrent is that it is *constitutively* insensitive to how things are at times other than the time of ascription. It is compatible, therefore, with phenomenal character being occurrent, that it may be the case, given contingent facts about our psychology, that human beings can have experiences with a certain phenomenology only if certain past conditions obtain.

So Dretske's account of representational properties fails to respect the criterion of occurrence. But what about the criterion of categoricity? The criterion of categoricity requires that phenomenal properties be properties that are constitutively independent of how things (categorically) are in worlds other than the actual world. Here too, the verdict for Dretske is grim. At first glance, one might think that Dretske's account of content respects our second criterion. A state s , within a system S , has a certain representational content P just in case s has the function of indicating P , where having such a function is just a matter of s having in fact been recruited in the past by S because s indicated P . Now, the essential mention to the past was what ruled out representational properties from being occurrent. But, one might suggest, all the features that fix the content of s are categorical features of s . It is only facts about s 's *actual* causal history that determine the representational content that s has. So perhaps Dretske's account at least respect the criterion of categoricity.

But the claim that Dretske's account can respect categoricity needs to be qualified. When Dretske defines the notion of natural meaning or indication, he defines it in terms of a causal or law-like relation between representational item and the state of affairs represented. Now, if Dretske offers a counterfactual account of such a law-like relation, then he will also run into trouble with the criterion of categoricity. A counterfactual account of indication must make appeal to non-actual scenarios. The state s represents that P *iff* there is an indication relation between s and P , where this requires that s and P co-vary across a variety of counterfactual scenarios. Therefore, if Dretske relies on a counterfactual account of the relation between the indicator and what is indicated, then his account fails the test of categoricity as well.

Views of content such as Dretske's get into trouble because of their appeal to facts about the past and facts about counterfactual scenarios. Notice how these will be essential components of most teleological theories of content. I want to briefly consider another candidate account that is broadly committed to a similar theory of content. In so doing, I hope to show that the problems that Dretske's account runs into when applied to the phenomenal character of experience are not a consequence of the particularities of the account, but rather a consequence of its fundamental commitments.

Also, notice how the criticism being developed here is not the standard criticism developed against reductive theories of content. Most standard criticisms are criticisms of adequacy: a causal-functional theory of content is often taken to not be sufficient to explain the features that we take content to have. In contrast, I am suggesting that the very fundamental tools that such a theory makes use of rules it out as a theory of content that could ever be applied to give an account of phenomenology.

As another example of a teleological theory of content, consider Millikan's consumer-based account.³⁵ The central difference between the two accounts is that Millikan foregoes the emphasis on there being an actual law-like relation between the representational item and its representational content. For Millikan, whether a state *s* of a system *S* represents a certain state of affairs *P* or not depends on whether it is a condition on *S*'s functioning "properly" that *s* corresponds to the state of affairs in question. So even if there is no systematic or law-like relation between the tokening of the *s* and *P*, every tokening of *s* may still be said to represent *P* just so far as the system that uses or needs *s* to go off in the presence of *P* to function properly. What counts as proper functioning is an evolutionary matter: a system that is functioning properly is a system that is functioning as it was "designed". Millikan's criticism of Dretske is that Dretske's indication-based account makes heavy weather of how a particular state of a system functions with respect to its external environment rather than focusing on how the state is *used* by the system of which it is a part. Whether the state does in fact systematically indicate *P* does not matter, according to Millikan, as long as the system makes use of the state to detect *P*. So if there is a state in a frog that is triggered every time there is any kind of black blotchy object in its environment, this state can still be

³⁵See for example, Millikan (2009).

said to represent flies, and only flies, because the frog, when functioning properly, relies on the state to figure out where the flies are, not where the black blotchy objects are.

Now Millikan's account, despite its differences from Dretske, will run into very similar trouble when adopted by the representationalists as an account of the phenomenal character of perceptual experiences. As should be fairly evident, what counts as an organism functioning properly will depend on the evolutionary history of the species to which the organism belongs. It may be the case that a frog that has never successfully detected a fly may still have a state that represents flies because its evolutionary history reveals that the state is normally used by frogs to detect flies. What physical properties the state currently has and what its current environment is like are not relevant factors for the determination of the state's representational content. All teleological theories, then, in their appeal to past evolutionary history, straightforwardly violate the criterion of occurrence. Whether they end up abandoning the categorical nature of our phenomenology or not depends on whether their account also makes use of counterfactual resources to flesh out notions like indication.

Both Dretske and Millikan rely on teleological or functional explanations for two main reasons: 1) to account for misrepresentation: a state can retain its function (evolutionary or otherwise) even when its not performing that function, thereby creating room for error; 2) to eliminate indeterminacy: a state may indicate (or in Millikan's terminology, correspond to) many states of affairs but it represents only that state which it has the function of indicating. Now one might conclude that the problems that they run into are a consequence of the emphasis on teleology or function. Delving back into the evolutionary or learning environment of an organism seems like it will result in a theory of representation that is unsuited to serve as an account of phenomenology. But if one can solve the problem of misrepresentation and indeterminacy without an appeal to teleology or function, one may avoid the problems that the causal-teleological accounts run into. To see if this is true, I want to briefly consider the account of content offered by Fodor to see if eliminating the teleological component helps.³⁶

The basic structure of Fodor's account is as follows: a state *s* represents some state of affairs *P* iff 1) *s* is normally caused by *P*; and 2) if *s* is also

³⁶See Fodor (1990).

caused by Q , s being caused by Q *asymmetrically depends* on s being caused by P , but not vice-versa. The important move that Fodor makes is to replace the teleological appeal to function with an appeal to the notion of asymmetric dependence. Imagine that a mental item COW is normally tokened by cows. Now it is likely that such an item will also always be tokened by horses on a dark night. Dretske and Millikan appeal to the function of the state to categorize the latter tokening as an instance of misrepresentation. But Fodor argues that COW misrepresents horses in virtue of the fact that it being tokened by horses on a dark night is asymmetrically dependent on it being tokened by cows. If the state were not tokened by cows, it would not be tokened by horses either. However, even if the state were no longer tokened by horses, it would continue to be tokened by cows. That is why when the representational item is tokened in response to a horse on a dark night, the item counts as misrepresenting cows rather than accurately representing horses on a dark night.

If a representationalist about perceptual phenomenology were to adopt Fodor's account of content,³⁷ we would have a view on which being in a state that has the phenomenology that a red hummingbird experience has would just be a matter of being in a physical state that is normally tokened by red elongated objects of a certain sort. Furthermore, even though a baby sparrow in strange lighting may cause the subject to be in this very state, such an experience would not be one that represented a baby sparrow because baby sparrows causing such an experience asymmetrically depend on hummingbirds causing the experience.

On examining Fodor's view, we are again led to the conclusion that standard causal theories of content violate our criteria of adequacy. It is central to the reductive representationalist's project that the content of a state be fixed, *not* by the actual cause of the state, but rather by the *normal* cause. The reason for this is now familiar—firstly, as we have already suggested, the representationalist needs to allow for misrepresentation. If the content of a state is always fixed by its actual cause, the state can never misrepresent its environment. But notice how appealing to the normal cause to fix the phenomenology of an experience violates the criterion of occurrence—whether something is the normal cause of an experience or not depends, at a minimum, on whether it has caused the

³⁷Note that Fodor himself is doubtful of the view that a reductive theory of content could offer a satisfying theory of phenomenology.

very same state on a variety of occasions. But as I suggested in section 4.1, the phenomenology of an experience seems constitutively independent of facts pertaining to the individual's past or future.

Furthermore, Fodor also explicitly violates the criterion of categoricity—the notion of asymmetric dependence is explicitly counterfactual. x asymmetrically depends on y iff were y to stop tokening the state s , then x would cease to token s as well, but not vice-versa. Therefore, what a state in fact represents depends on what the relation between the representational item and the represented state *would* be in a counterfactual scenario. Again, the criterion of categoricity says that the phenomenal properties are categorical properties. P being such that other actual causes asymmetrically depend on P clearly makes P non-categorical. Fodor's view, then, also fails to satisfy either of our two criteria of adequacy.

Let us step back from a moment. We have considered a set of reductive views about content that all agree that content of a representational state is individuated in terms of the causal relations that the state bears with respect to its environment. Even Millikan, who thinks that we should focus on how the representational state is consumed by the system will admit that the reason why the frog's state say, is used as an indicator of flies, is because it is at least sometimes causally responsive to flies. If this weren't the case, a system that relied on such a state would never function properly. Dretske, Millikan and Fodor are all offering theories of content that are primarily motivated by concerns that lie outside the realm of phenomenology.³⁸ In this section, we've considered whether a representationalist about experience—someone committed to the thesis that phenomenal properties just are representational properties—could make use of any of these reductive accounts to give us a satisfying explanation of phenomenology. I have shown that on any causal theory of content, phenomenal properties would turn out to be either non-occurrent, or non-categorical, or neither.

This leads to one of two conclusions: either we can hold on to representationalism and reject causal theories of content, or we can hold on to a causal theory of content and instead, reject representationalism about perceptual experience. Proponents of the former strategy will suggest that representationalism is still a compelling thesis, and insist that causal theo-

³⁸Dretske explicitly argues that his theory of content ought to be extended to experience in *Naturalizing the Mind*.

rists get the analysis of content wrong. But, as the latter strategy suggests, if the causal theorists are in fact right about how to understand content, then we must acknowledge that the notion of content is inherently ill suited to serve as an account of phenomenology. I will discuss the latter strategy in the last section of the chapter. Before that step, though, in the next short section, I will consider an alternative approach to content—one that gives an inferentialist, rather than causal account of content—to see if this branch of reductive views fare any better than the variety we have already discussed.

4.3 REPRESENTATIONALISM B: INFERENCEALIST ACCOUNTS OF CONTENT

One might think that the reductive representationalists discussed in the previous section get into trouble only because they define representational content in broadly causal terms that require us to factor in not only actual causes but a prior causal history. Perhaps an alternative account of content will fare better at respecting the criteria of occurrence and categoricity. Causal theories of content are wide theories—they individuate contents in terms of their external causes. An alternative reductive project—one that is usually narrow in scope—analyses content in terms of inferential or functional roles. On such a view, the content of a particular state is fully determined by how that state fits into a network of contentful states. According to an inferentialist, believing that it is sunny outside just amounts to being in a state that licenses certain inferences or disposes the subject to form other beliefs, desires, intentions and so on. Notice how such a view does not individuate content in terms of its normal *worldly* causes. Rather, the intuition driving the inferentialists is that having a desire to eat ravioli, say, just amounts to being disposed to eat ravioli if one believes that ravioli is available on the menu, experiencing a feeling of satisfaction if in fact you realize the desire, and so on. If there is some state that plays this role in the organism's cognitive architecture, that state just is the desire to eat ravioli.

It should be evident that the property of having a certain inferential or functional role is straightforwardly a non-occurrent property. When we ascribe a role property, what we are ascribing is a *typical* set of causes and effects to the state. The property of typically having effects x_i and

typically being caused by y_i is a property that fails the tests of occurrence as described in section 4.1. Consider a state s that is tokened at time t and has a role r in the actual world. There will in fact be possible worlds in which s exists but does *not* have the same functional role at t , solely in virtue of differences in the way things are at times other than t . In such worlds, being in s at t might have exactly the same (occurrent) causes and effects at t as s does at t in the actual world, even though the causes and effects of s on occasions other than t are very different than those in the actual world. In such possible scenarios, the role properties that s has at t would not be identical to r . Therefore, role properties are not occurrent in nature.

Similarly, role properties are also non-categorical in nature. Role properties are counterfactually defined. What it means for an individual to be in state that is defined in terms of its functional or inferential role r is for the state to have certain effects or produce certain behaviors *were* certain other circumstances to obtain. For example, assume an inferentialist account of belief. If Norah believes that alleviating global hunger is more important than finding a cure for cancer, Norah must, *if* she believes that either of the goals are possible, desire the alleviation of hunger over a cure to cancer; if she were given the option to work on one of the two projects, she must pick the former over the latter, and so on. But one can perfectly well imagine her never being in any of these situations—she does not think either of these goals are realistic, so she doesn't actually desire either; she is never asked to work on either of the two projects etc. But nonetheless, we can make sense of Norah having the belief in question because we define it in largely counterfactual terms. Therefore, if content is to be understood in terms of inferential roles, it turns out, yet again, to be non-categorical in nature.

Again, we seem to have arrived at the conclusion that if a representationalist appeals to inferentialist accounts of content, she too will be forced to think of phenomenal properties as non-occurrent and non-categorical. Before we leave such an account behind, however, I want to consider one possible response that an inferentialist might attempt. In order to do so, I will consider the kind of inferentialist or functionalist view that is offered by Sydney Shoemaker in his work on perceptual experience.³⁹ Sydney

³⁹Dennett has also defended functionalism about qualia: his suggestion is that if there is no introspectible difference between two perceptual states (where this would amount

Shoemaker offers an account of the phenomenal character of experience—or qualia—in terms of subjective indistinguishability. On such a view, if two perceptual states of an individual, *s1* and *s2*, are subjectively indistinguishable, then they must be qualitatively identical as well. What it means for two states to be subjectively indistinguishable to a subject is for the two states to play identical inferential roles within the subject's cognitive economy. If *s1* and *s2* are indistinguishable, being in *s1* and *s2* must dispose the subject to form all the same beliefs, the same memories, to produce the same behaviors etc. It may be helpful to point out here that I am identifying the view as committed to an inferentialist account of *content* despite the fact that Shoemaker does not explicitly mention content. Shoemaker directly offers an account of phenomenology or qualia in terms of subjective indistinguishability but this is not so different from a representationalist view that first equates phenomenology with representation and then defines representation in terms of subjective indistinguishability.

If phenomenal properties were to be straightforwardly identified with inferential role properties, they would naturally be non-occurrent and non-categorical as already discussed. But Shoemaker's view on the nature of phenomenal properties is more complex. The phenomenal properties of a *particular* state are to be identified, *not* in terms of the inferential role that the state plays, but rather with the physical properties of the state itself.⁴⁰ The role properties become relevant only in order to fix an intra-subjective criterion of identity for phenomenal states. Two states may have distinct physical properties and yet may be instances of the same kind of phenomenal state in virtue of the two distinct states having the same inferential properties. Shoemaker might insist then, in response to the style of objection developed in this chapter that he *can* treat phenomenal properties as occurrent and categorical. A particular state has the phenomenal character that it does in virtue of the ordinary physical properties that the state has, where these properties may indeed be occurrent and categorical. He might go on to insist that this is compatible with a broadly inferentialist account of what makes it the case that two physically distinct states *s1* and *s2* have the same phenomenal properties, namely that they are subjectively

to no introspectible differences in beliefs, memories etc.), there can be no difference in phenomenal character. See, Dennett (1991).

⁴⁰We can ignore the fact that Shoemaker is broadly functionalist about the physical as well.

indistinguishable from each other.⁴¹

In effect, Shoemaker offers a hybrid of identity theory and functionalism. A particular phenomenal state is identical to a physical state, but what makes distinct physical states instances of the same phenomenal kind is their functional properties. One might think that such a hybrid approach is the key to escaping the objections developed in this chapter. If a representationalist can appeal both to the occurrent physical properties of a state *and* to its functional properties, then one does not have to concede that there are no occurrent or categorical aspects to content that could be poised to explain the occurrent and categorical nature of our phenomenology.

Unfortunately, I think this sort of hybrid view is ultimately untenable. On a simplified interpretation, Shoemaker claims that the intrapersonal functional criterion of identity picks out a class of neurophysiological states that are themselves instances of a phenomenal state in a particular subject. But what makes this disparate class of physical states instances of that phenomenal kind is that they are indistinguishable to the subject. At first glance, it seems like Shoemaker must then concede that the *phenomenal* properties of *s1* and *s2* just are its functional role properties. This concession would return us to our original criticism of views that are committed to a functionalist or inferentialist conception.

Shoemaker does have an alternative response at his disposal—he can instead suggest that we ought to identify the shared functional role property with a disjunctive property of the sort “having neurophysiological property P1 or P2 or P3. . .” Treating functional properties as disjunctive in this way allows Shoemaker to deny that the distinct physical states share a functional property that is not reducible to any more basic neurophysiological property that the states themselves instantiate. But now, identifying functional properties with potentially infinite disjunctive properties leaves him open to several objections. Firstly, one may worry that such disjunctive properties of this sort are metaphysically queer. More importantly, however, disjunctive properties do not do the work that they are posited to do. An appeal to functional roles was meant to *explain* how

⁴¹For our purposes, it is sufficient to focus on the intra-personal case. In his work, Shoemaker also extrapolates an inter-subjective criterion of identity. If two distinct individuals have overlapping sets of physical states that do (or would) realize subjectively indiscriminable experiences in each of them, the subjects are in qualitatively identical states.

physically distinct states can be phenomenally identical (Note how the motivation for this kind of view is always expressed in terms that are meant to be pre-theoretical in nature). But suggesting that the states share a disjunctive property where the disjuncts can be said to have nothing else in common does not fulfill the explanatory task. For these reasons, I conclude that a proponent of this kind of view must either choose to give up a functionalist criterion of identity or she must treat functional properties as properties in their own right. Choosing the former amounts to relinquishing the claim that phenomenal properties are to be understood in inferentialist or functionalist terms. This version of the view would no longer be of interest to us within this chapter. If she chooses the latter option and defines phenomenal properties in functional terms, then she is still subject to the criticism that functional role properties are non-occurrent and non-categorical.

This may be a good point at which to diagnose why representationalism seems bound to fail as an account of phenomenology. The problem does not stem from the particularities of any of the accounts of representational content we have considered so far. Rather, the inadequacy stems from the very kind of thing that content itself is. To see this, consider which accounts of experience are able to respect our pre-theoretical intuitions about the occurrence and categoricity of our phenomenology. It turns out that *most* accounts other than representationalism are in fact able to do so. Sense-datum accounts have the ability to appeal to the occurrent and categorical features of sense-data to explain the occurrent and categorical nature of our phenomenology. Naïve realists can appeal to the occurrent and categorical features of the mind-independent objects that are perceived. And finally, qualia theorists can appeal to such properties of the quale that is instantiated. What should become clear is that the representationalists uniquely find themselves in this quandary because they try to make sense of how a feature or an object can *seem* to be present, without appealing to any facts about the features that are in fact present. Similarly, they appeal to how a feature or an object can *seem* to be actual, without appealing to any facts that are themselves about the actual world.

This would be a plausible strategy if we could just understand the way in which objects *seem* present in purely epistemic terms. Take belief: the notion of content is perfectly suited to explain belief because belief is a mental state in which the world seems some way that it may or may not be. The notion of seeming here is entirely epistemic. In perceptual experience,

however, the way in which it seems as if a red hummingbird is present is *not* merely epistemic.⁴² I do not just believe that there is red hummingbird there when there may not be one. Rather there is a rich phenomenology that is in fact real and present at the time of experience, regardless of the presence or absence of the hummingbird, that itself needs explaining. It is this actual phenomenal richness that representationalists try to explain by appeal to features that lie outside the actual world or beyond the time of the experience. And this is where their attempts flounder. At the end of the day, we need some features that are in fact present in the actual world, at the time of the experience at our disposal. Merely appealing to the fact that the state actually has the content at the time of experience is inadequate once we recognize that having a particular content is fully grounded in nothing more than the obtaining of certain past and/or hypothetical facts.

Up to this point, I have argued that the central accounts of content treat content as non-occurrent and non-categorical. If a representationalist about phenomenology embraces either of these accounts, she will be forced to analyze phenomenal properties as non-occurrent and non-categorical. In section 4.1, I suggested that this violates our pre-theoretical conception of phenomenology.⁴³ In the final section of this chapter, I want to achieve two things: first, I hope to distinguish the kind of objection

⁴²An interesting consequence of a representationalist view that construes the notion of phenomenal seeming in solely epistemic terms is that it becomes indistinguishable from the kind of view that Martin (2004) proposes that disjunctivists must adopt in the case of hallucination. One interpretation of Martin's claim is that a disjunctivist can only give an epistemic characterization of hallucinatory phenomenology in terms of it seeming (epistemically) to the subject as if she is veridically perceiving. But most representationalists take great pains to distinguish themselves from the disjunctivists on precisely this point. Furthermore, if the representationalist were to be saddled with a merely epistemic notion of seeming, it would have to apply in both veridical and hallucinatory cases, thereby making their view even less phenomenologically appealing than the disjunctivists.

⁴³Similar arguments have been offered by Maudlin (1989) and more recently, by Papineau (2014). The common strategy employed by all three of us is to insist that representational properties (or for Maudlin, functional properties) are just the wrong kinds of properties to identify phenomenology with. Papineau argues that representational properties are abstract while phenomenal properties are concrete. Maudlin argues that a functional specification of a system includes a specification of causally inert structures within the system. But phenomenal character is not the kind of thing that can depend on causally inert structures. Therefore, phenomenal properties cannot be functional properties.

I have developed so far from a closely related objection concerning the supposed intrinsicness of phenomenology. Second, I will consider how a representationalist might defend herself against this charge and suggest that none of her responses are satisfactory.

4.4 RESPONSES

I want to consider three primary ways in which a representationalist can respond to the criticism developed in this chapter. For the sake of clarity, I will explicitly focus on the representationalist who is committed to a causal-functional account of content, but similar responses could be attributed to the inferentialist as well. First, the representationalist can endorse the causal-historical account of content, but undermine the pre-theoretical intuitions that I began this chapter with. Second, the representationalist can deny that she must accept a reductive account of content. Third, she can agree that her view forces us to give up genuine intuitions about the nature of phenomenology but argue that this is our only alternative. I will consider each response in turn.

A representationalist who wants to hold on to a reductive theory of content might try to convince us that we ought to give up our pre-theoretical intuitions that phenomenology is occurrent and categorical. In a revealing discussion of his view, Dretske considers the very objection I have developed in this chapter to his view: “The Representational Thesis cannot be true if it makes what one is experiencing *here and now* depend—not just causally (no one denies this), but as a matter of logic—on what happened yesterday or in the remote past.”⁴⁴ This is precisely the objection that it cannot be right to say that phenomenal character is constitutively fixed by non-occurrent facts.

Interestingly enough, Dretske interprets this objection as an objection to externalism: he interprets the objection as one that argues that it can only be *intrinsic* features of the individual having the experience that determine what the character of the individual’s experience is like.⁴⁵ Dretske

⁴⁴Dretske (1995), 126, my emphasis.

⁴⁵Chalmers (2010) also presents a similar criticism to *wide* theories of representational content (of which causal-historical versions are an instance, but inferentialist versions are normally not): “The wide representationalist strategy is even more counterintuitive, entailing that what it is like to be a subject depends constitutively on factors that may be

responds to this objection by defending the thesis that facts that are extrinsic to the subject can be relevant to fixing the phenomenal character of the experience. He does this by appeal to the kinds of considerations that externalists have appealed to since the cases developed by Putnam and Burge, and suggests that we should take the lessons from externalism to apply to all mental states. But notice how this response fails to address the worry developed here: arguing that phenomenal properties must be occurrent and categorical is *not* to be confused with arguing that phenomenal properties must be intrinsic. It is entirely compatible with the phenomenological intuitions that I am relying on here that facts about the subject's external environment be relevant to fixing the phenomenal character of the subject's experiences. Given that the pre-theoretical intuitions I relied on in section 4.1 *do not* assume the truth of internalism, arguments that serve to undermine internalist intuitions do not in and of themselves constitute arguments that undermine the intuition that phenomenal character is a matter of the *here-and-now*. "Here" can be extrinsic to the subject, but not extrinsic to the actual world; and "now" must be confined to the (specious) present moment.

I want to emphasize the distinction between the well-known objection to representationalism that it makes phenomenal character extrinsic to the subject from the objections I have developed that make use of the notions of occurrence and categoricity. In fact, I think our intuitions about intrinsicness are quite weak with respect to phenomenology. Consider the recent prevalence of naïve realism—the view that experience consists in a relation of awareness to ordinary constituents of the mind-independent world. On such a view, the phenomenology of experience is just constituted by objects and their properties in the external world. If we find credible that this kind of view is "naïve", then it is by no means clear that we have pre-theoretical, internalist intuitions about our phenomenology. Our intuitions about whether phenomenology is intrinsic or not are complex—we both think of experience as just directly revealing the world to us (thereby supporting externalism about phenomenology), and yet we think of qualitatively identical hallucinations as possible (which some have taken to provide support for internalism, though Chapters 1 and 2 undermine this).⁴⁶ So I agree with Dretske that we ought not criticize the

far away from the subject and in the distant past."

⁴⁶Recent defenses of internalism support the point by relying on more and more

representationalists who are committed to externalist theories of content for violating any pre-theoretical intuitions having to do with the internalist or externalist account of character. The objections from occurrence and categoricity, on the other hand, are equally applicable to both internalist and externalist conceptions of phenomenology.

At this stage, one might ask the obvious question: why not just give up on reductive theories of content while holding on to the claim that the phenomenology of experience is just a matter of its representational content? The criticisms that I have developed so far pertain only to the reductive accounts of content offered by causal-historical representationalists and inferential role representationalists. If we can instead insist that content is a primitive notion, we might be able to salvage the central theses of representationalism.

There are in fact many representationalists who do not commit themselves to reductive theories of content. An appeal to the essentially intentional nature of experience has recently enjoyed a reincarnation in the form of a view known as phenomenal intentionalism. See, for example, the following quote by Kriegel, a recent proponent of the phenomenal intentionality program (PIRP):

The basic, guiding idea of PIRP... [is that] intentionality is injected into the world with the appearance of a certain kind of phenomenal character. It is when the relevant phenomenal character shows up that intentionality makes its first appearance on the scene. Here too, once this phenomenal character appears, and brings in its train "original intentionality," intentionality can be "passed around" to things lacking this (or any) phenomenal character. But the *source of all intentionality* is the relevant phenomenal character.⁴⁷

All proponents of this approach strongly oppose reductive, attempts to explain intentionality in non-phenomenological terms. I want to highlight two problems with the kind of non-reductive approach that is adopted by the phenomenal intentionality research program. Firstly, it leaves the

complex argumentative forms. A recent argument, presented by Pautz suggests that we ought to be internalists because the structure of our experience more closely maps internal neural structures rather than external physical structures. See Pautz (2013).

⁴⁷Kriegel (2013), 3.

notion of intentionality or representation under-described. When Kriegel refers to the *relation* between phenomenology and intentionality, he writes as if we have a prior conceptual grip on each of the two notions such that we can posit a theoretically substantive relation between them (even if it is a relation of identity). But the primary way in which Kriegel and his peers speak of intentionality is just in terms of the world seeming some way to the subject. Now, I have already argued that this characterization of experience does not commit us to thinking of experience in intentional terms at all. Non-intentionalists can accept such a description of the character of perceptual experience. So if we are to be convinced of the statement that we much think of intentionality in phenomenological terms and vice-versa, the phenomenal intentionalists must say more about what the notion of content is that they are working with.

More importantly, even if we grant the phenomenal intentionality theorists (or any kind of non-reductive theorist) a coherent concept of content, the real problem with a primitivist account of content is that it ends up being committed to a magical theory of representation. Proponents of the phenomenal intentionality research program are invariably internalists about phenomenal character—the phenomenal properties of a state are intrinsic properties, independent of any relations the state bears to the external world. What this means is that a state can come to represent a worldly state of affairs without having any necessary connection to the state of affairs that it represents, or with any worldly state of affairs at all. But how can this be—how can a state, just in virtue of the properties it has intrinsically, come to represent anything external to it?⁴⁸

A denial of this sort of magical theory is Dretske's guiding principle in his work on representation. It is central to his view that what makes it the case that a physical system represents an external feature or state of affairs must be facts that supply an intelligible link between the representational state and the represented item. Merely intrinsic characteristics of the system by itself cannot fix any representational content that the states of the system can have. Consider the following statement:

What gives something intentional content, what makes it rep-

⁴⁸Perhaps the phenomenal intentionality theorists can appeal to resemblance, but resemblance theories have had little success and open themselves up to a broad range of skeptical concerns about how we can know whether the content of our experiences resembles anything in the world at all.

resent, mean, or say something about other affairs are not its intrinsic properties, but, rather, something about its purpose or function in an informational system. That is why alcohol in a glass tube—an ordinary household thermometer—is able to *mean* or *say*, truly or falsely as the case may be, that the temperature is 70° F... Remove this informational purpose, this indicator function, by (say) bottling the alcohol for medicinal purposes, and the glass encased liquid becomes representationally lifeless... Except for the source of the functions (natural vs. conventional), the same is true of the events in our brains. They become representations, they acquire intentional content, by developing via some appropriate history an informational function."⁴⁹

Putnam, in his work on reference makes the same point in his discussion of magical theories of reference:

If lines in the sand, noises, etc. cannot 'in themselves' represent anything, then how is it that thought forms can 'in themselves' represent anything...How can thought reach out and 'grasp' what is external?⁵⁰

Putnam's point, like Dretske's, is that a line in a sand drawn by ants that just happens to trace out the features of Winston Churchill in no way represents Churchill unless there is some kind of causal contact between the ants tracing the lines and Churchill. Dretske's conclusions are identical—states of our brain, just like states of a thermometer acquire the ability represent only in virtue of the informational connections that exist between the thermometer and the mercury. Remove such connections and you have states that are representationally lifeless.

The compelling point that Putnam and Dretske are pressing is that to think that a state or an object can represent a state of affairs without some kind of extrinsic connection between the representation and what is represented is to be under the spell of a magical theory of reference. How could a visual experience represent a lemon tree or a red hummingbird if the system of which that state was a constituent had never had any kind

⁴⁹Dretske (2004).

⁵⁰Putnam (1981).

of contact with lemon trees or hummingbirds? The intrinsic properties of the state don't connect it up with anything; they cannot make the state *about* anything.

One can see such a concern with magic driving both causal and inferentialist theorists of content. On the former view, it is only because the tokening of my state is causally connected to lemons that the state represents lemons. On the latter, it is only because a perceptual state disposes me to reach out for the lemon in the presence of lemons and form the beliefs and intentions I do with respect to lemons that it can be said to represent lemons. Both kinds of view respect the insight that no state, just in virtue of its intrinsic properties, can be said to represent anything.

Now once we grant that for x to represent y , there must be some kind of non-intrinsic systematic connection between x and y , we will very quickly have to give up the claim that content can be occurrent and categorical. Causal contact with the represented state of affairs or cannot just occur during a particular act of representing. In order for there to be a representational relation between x and y , there must be some sort of history of contact between the item representing and that which is represented. This is why we see, over and over again, that proponents of content who free themselves of such magical theories, appeal to facts about the past causal history or the evolutionary function of the organism that has the representational capacities in question. Similarly, for a state to occupy a place within a broader inferential network, it must stand in a temporally extended range of counterfactual relations with other states. Therefore, inferentialists end up straightforwardly denying our criteria of occurrence and categoricity as well.

So let's assume that the reductive accounts of content rest on strong grounds when it comes to their treatment of content. What is relevant for our purposes is whether *content*, interpreted in this way, can offer us a plausible account of *phenomenal character*. In arguing that one can give a sufficient account of phenomenal experiences in terms of their representational content, Dretske commits himself to the view that phenomenal character is the kind of property that is fixed by the past causal history or the function of the system at hand. But all his arguments are intended to merely make plausible the claim that *content* ought to be interpreted in this functional sense. One can formulate the criticism in the following way: Dretske (and theorists like Putnam and Burge) have presented several compelling considerations for why our notion of content must be spelled

out in causal or inferential terms. These considerations may indeed be right. But this does no work to show that phenomenal character ought to be understood as so dependent on these evolutionary and functional facts. One might suggest that Dretske- and Putnam-style considerations show precisely why one should *not* try to give an account of phenomenal character in terms of the representational content of experiences. Merely showing that content is a feature that is not in the here-and-now is not adequate. Instead, having convinced us of this fact with respect to content but not with respect to character, bodes even worse for the prospect of representationalism—if it is in fact true that content must be understood in non-occurrent and hypothetical terms, then the most natural conclusion ought to be that the phenomenal character of experience *cannot* be spelled out in terms of representational content at all.

The final response available to the representationalist (causal or inferentialist) is to accept the revisionary nature of their account of the phenomenology of experience. They can point out that while it is indeed the case that it *seems* to us that phenomenal properties are occurrent and categorical, I have provided no argument for the conclusion that they must in fact be occurrent and categorical. They might suggest that we need to give up our intuitions and realize that we are wrong about the nature of our own phenomenology in this respect. But the response to this strategy is clear: whether we are required to give up these intuitions largely depends on whether we can develop an alternative account of perceptual experience that respects these intuitions. If we can do so, all other things being equal, the alternative account is clearly to be preferred over a revisionary form of representationalism.

Where have we reached? First, I argued that representationalists who are committed to a reductive theory of content are unable to treat phenomenal properties as occurrent or categorical. I went on to briefly consider what a non-reductive theory of content looked like. I suggested that the problem with a non-reductive approach is two fold: primitivists about content cash out the notion of representation in terms of things seeming some way, but this is too weak a formulation to distinguish themselves from non-representationalist views. Furthermore, primitivists about content are committed to a magical theory of reference whereby states can be about states of affairs in the external world without bearing any specifiable relation to those states of affairs. In conclusion then, if adhering to a reductive theory of content is the only plausible approach for a representa-

tionalist to take, representationalism itself is in trouble. The only coherent version of the view is inherently ill suited to offer a satisfying account of the phenomenology of experience.

In the previous chapters, I have developed the basic contours of such a non-representational account of experience that does justice to the worldly nature of our phenomenology. The representationalists normally defend their approach by pointing out that naïve realism is unable to account for the phenomenology of delusive experiences. But I have argued that this is not the case, thereby putting representationalism and naïve realism on equal footing. In this chapter, I have argued that representationalism is *not* a viable approach to perception—once the representationalist commits to a substantive theory of content, her view becomes unsuited as an account of phenomenology. This leaves naïve realism as the only standing contender. For all other views of experience start out with a *denial* of the basic observation that perceptual phenomenology is world-directed. Given this denial, we will not consider such views here.

There is one last challenge to naïve realism that we must address: this challenge stems from an older, less reputed argument: the argument from conflicting appearances. In the final chapter, I will argue for two claims: first, that this argument is more threatening to naïve realism than it is usually taken to be; but second, the naïve realist has an effective response so long as she broadens the class of sensible qualities that we encounter in the world.

Chapter 5

Objective Appearances and Berkeley's Relativity Arguments

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the early sections of *A Treatise Concerning The Principles of Human Knowledge*, Berkeley claims that the very notion of material substance is a contradiction.¹ He writes:

It is indeed an opinion strangely prevailing amongst men, that houses, mountains, rivers and in a word all sensible objects have an existence natural or real, distinct from being perceived by the understanding. . . yet whoever shall find in his heart to call it in question may, if I mistake not, perceive it to involve a manifest contradiction. For what are the forementioned objects but the things we perceive by sense, and what, I pray you, do we perceive besides our own ideas or sensations, and is it not plainly repugnant that any one of these or any combination of them should exist unperceived?²

His infamous argument for idealism can be reconstructed as follows:

1. Material substances have an existence distinct from being perceived.
2. Material substances are the objects of our senses.
3. The objects of our senses are ideas.

¹Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), vol.2, 42.

²Berkeley, (1710/1948-1957), §4

4. Ideas do not have an existence distinct from being perceived.
5. The objects of our senses do not have an existence distinct from being perceived. (3,4).
6. Material substances do not have an existence distinct from being perceived. (2,5)
7. \perp (1, 6)

I will assume that the first two premises are uncontroversial and focus on the contentious third premise of the above argument. The natural first reaction to this premise is one of bafflement: Why would Berkeley make the glaringly obvious mistake of treating sensible qualities as ideas? Isn't he guilty of "a confused conflation of the object of perception and the perceiving of it, or of sensible qualities and 'sensations'"?³ Even if ideas or sensations are involved in the act of perception, they are by no means the objects of those perceptions. Keeping the distinction between the object and the act in mind allows us to maintain that the only rightful *objects* of perception are ones whose existence is robustly independent of being perceived. Having found this rebuttal convincing, most philosophers have concluded that we can easily dismiss Berkeley's arguments against the coherence of materialism.

In more recent work, some have come to Berkeley's defense and suggested that we can find in Berkeley's work a reliance on something like the argument from hallucination.⁴ On this line of interpretation, Berkeley is committed to the claim that the objects of perception are ideas because this is the most compelling way to accommodate the fact that our experiences can be replicated in the absence of any mind-independent objects being presented to consciousness at all. This line of reasoning is most explicit in Malebranche's *Dialogues on Metaphysics and Religion* and it seems plausible that in the *Principles*, Berkeley is engaging directly with some of Malebranche's conclusions. If we take this approach, the

³Thomas Reid is one of the earliest commentators to accuse Berkeley of such an error. See Reid (1785/2002), 192-193. Many have followed in Reid's footsteps in offering such an interpretation of Berkeley. See, for example, Cummins (1975).

⁴See, for example, Smith, 1985; Robinson (1985); Pitcher (1977). This is also the strategy that I adopted in Chapter 3.

strength of Berkeley's argument for the claim that the very notion of material substance is incoherent hinges on the strength of the argument from hallucination. If we can resist the claim that the possibility of hallucination forces us to conclude that the objects of perception must, in all instances, be mind-dependent, then we can resist Berkeley's arguments for idealism.

Given that I have already argued against the argument from hallucination in Chapter 3, I will not pursue this interpretive approach here. Rather, I am interested in a distinct series of arguments that Berkeley himself puts forth in favor of the thesis that the objects of our senses must be mind-dependent ideas. The relativity arguments—presented most explicitly in *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*—have the aim of proving, from considerations stemming from cases of perceptual relativity, the radical conclusion that *all* sensible qualities must be mind-dependent. These arguments, however, have been largely dismissed, even by Berkeley's most charitable readers.⁵ But it is through these very arguments that Berkeley aims to prove that all sensible qualities must be mind-dependent ideas. In most of his other work, the thesis that the objects of our senses are ideas is simply taken for granted.⁶ Berkeley begins the *Dialogues* with the perfectly

⁵Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), v. II. A sample of Berkeley interpreters who have explicitly rejected the relativity arguments as unconvincing: Dicker (1982); Rickless (2013); and Winkler (1994) (though Winkler does take the time to work through the arguments). Also revealing of this kind of distrust of the seriousness of the relativity arguments: Smith, in his 1985 paper, spends much of his time defending Berkeley's claim that sensible qualities are ideas but makes no mention of the relativity arguments. Robinson, yet another charitable reader of Berkeley, relies on arguments in the *Third Dialogue* that loosely mirror the argument from hallucination that I mention above. In so doing, he follows the lead of George Pitcher (1977) Neither Smith nor Robinson—both of whom are interested in the contemporary implications of Berkeley's work—pay much attention to the relativity arguments that occupy much of the first half of Berkeley's *Dialogues* (though it is important to point out that Smith, in his 2002 book *The Problem of Perception*, does spend a lot of time defending the strength of the argument from illusion, a close relative of Berkeley's relativity arguments).

⁶Smith offers an interesting interpretation of Berkeley's argument for the mind-dependence of sensible properties that does not rely on the relativity arguments. In brief, his reasoning is as follows: Berkeley is interested in the material features of a representational state that give the representations their rich sensory phenomenology (analogous to the physical paints used to create a visual representation of the Bishop, say). Berkeley believes that Descartes' overly-intellectualized understanding of representation purely in terms of their content renders them phenomenologically empty. Sensations, then, for Berkeley, are these features of the representation itself and are therefore, "mental items *par excellence*... without [which] we should not even be conscious." Furthermore,

natural working assumption that the immediate objects of perception are sensible qualities like colors, sounds, tastes etc. He then goes on to argue, on the basis of the relativity arguments, that these qualities must be ideas. He does *not* proceed in the reverse direction from the assumption that the immediate objects of perception are ideas to the conclusion that sensible qualities must be ideas. This latter approach would indeed be subject to harsh criticism and could warrant the kind of objection developed by many commentators from Reid onwards, that Berkeley is wrong to treat ideas or sensations as *objects* of perception. If he were in fact starting with that presupposition, we could hold on to the mind-independence of the sensible qualities by distinguishing the act of perceiving, which may be characterized by appeal to the notion of ideas or sensations, from the object of perception, reserving sensible qualities only for the latter category. However, this form of resistance to Berkeley's arguments will not work because he too begins with the assumption that the objects of perception just are the ordinary sensible qualities of objects, and then proceeds to show that this forces us to concede their ideality.⁷

according to Smith, Berkeley's verdict on what these sensations are reveals them to be phenomenal colors, sounds, tastes etc. However, once we have defined sensations as properties of the representations themselves, rather than what is represented, Berkeley must ask what are the *representata* of our cognitions. Here, Smith rightly suggests, "it will take some weighty argument to show that what we are thus aware of in perception is anything other than, for example, the manifest colors of objects, sounds *with their phenomenal characteristics*" (55, my italics), etc. But these are precisely the properties that Berkeley has identified as sensations, and therefore, he is forced to treat sensations *not only* as the properties of representations, but as the properties (re)presented as well. Through this reconstruction, Smith hopes to explain why Berkeley *appears to* conflate the objects of perception and the act of perceiving. My strategy overlaps in interesting ways with Smith's: given that Smith thinks of the phenomenology of experience in terms of mental sensations, he attributes to Berkeley a view on which phenomenal colors are mental sensations and yet are represented as located in the world. However, as will become clear with respect to my reconstruction of Berkeley's argument, I suggest that Berkeley is straightforwardly committed to a view on which experiences are fundamentally relational, that is, they are constituted by an immediate awareness of some items (this is opposed to a typical view of sensations on which sensations are properties of the experience, rather than properties *of which* the subject is aware).

⁷"What mean you by sensible things? Those things which are perceived by the sense. . . This point then is agreed between us, that sensible things are those only which are immediately perceived by sense. . . You will farther inform me, whether we immediately perceive by sight any thing beside light, and colors and figures; or by hearing, any thing but sounds; by the palate, anything besides tastes; by the smell, beside odors; or by

In section 5.2, I will undertake the task of reconstructing the strongest version of the relativity arguments. In so doing, I will suggest that they are much more philosophically compelling than has traditionally been granted. If the relativity arguments go through, Berkeley can be taken to have successfully demonstrated that we must think of sensible qualities as mind-dependent. If sensible qualities are mind-dependent, they cannot be qualities of entities whose existence is independent of being perceived. I will assume that if Berkeley effectively demonstrates the mind-dependence of the sensible qualities, he has sufficient resources to conclude that the objects of our senses are mind-dependent, thereby providing him the crucial premise of the argument above.⁸ Remember that in the second premise of his argument for idealism, he takes for granted that mind-independent objects are objects of senses. But the only way this could be is if they had features that are genuinely sensible. Denying that any of the sensible qualities we are aware of in perception are qualities that the mind-independent world instantiates leaves us with the claim that if material objects exist at all, they are not perceptible to us. But what comfort can the metaphysical realist derive from the insistence that there are material substances that cannot be perceived—this position would deny the realist the fundamental motivation for her view. And so, defending the third premise of the argument above really does constitute a robust defense of its conclusion.⁹

the touch, more than tangible qualities." Nowhere in these passages is Berkeley presupposing that the immediate objects of perception are ideas. (Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), 174-5)

⁸In the *Principles*, Berkeley considers whether one can form a conception of material substance as detached from our conception of sensible qualities, thereby conceiving of mind-independent objects as entities that lie outside our perceptual grasp. He criticizes this move as stemming from a commitment to abstractionism, a view that he spends much of his time refuting. In the *Dialogues*, Berkeley adopts the strategy of dismantling, one at a time, his opponent's proposals for any such account of material substance as non-perceptible substratum or cause of our perceptions.

⁹In his 1985 chapter, Robinson suggests that once we deny that mind-independent substance is perceivable, a defense of metaphysical realism is driven primarily by stubborn intuition. He has the following, compelling response to the validity of such intuitive reasoning: "the seemingly overwhelming intuitive priority of realism entirely draws its force from our feeling that the immediate objects of our awareness are mind-independent physical objects. This is the sole origin of the psychological power of realism. Once one is persuaded that these immediate objects are not mind-independent, then the intuitive priority we give to realism has entirely lost its rationale. It is bad faith to pretend that

Once I have presented the most compelling version of these arguments, I will go on to offer a way for us to nonetheless resist their conclusion. The key to resistance, however, is a less familiar one—it does not, for instance, accuse Berkeley of something like the sense-datum fallacy or of unjustly moving from an epistemological conclusion concerning our knowledge of the sensible nature of material objects to a metaphysical conclusion about their having such sensible natures. Rather, I will suggest that Berkeley's arguments reveal to us the falsity of a certain view of *which* sensible qualities we are aware of in perception. If we remain committed to the thesis that, in the first instance, we are aware of colors, shapes, sounds, tastes etc., then Berkeley's appeal to cases of perceptual relativity does threaten our ability to maintain the mind-independence of these qualities. If, on the other hand, we reconceive the properties we are aware of in perception, not as the ordinary, *absolute* properties we just mentioned, but as sensible appearances that objects have *relative* to a set of environmental conditions, we can maintain both that objects' sensible qualities are mind-independent, but *also* that their sensible *appearances* are genuine features of the mind-independent world. A development of this positive proposal will be the content of section 5.3.

5.2 THE RELATIVITY ARGUMENTS

5.2.1 *What is the goal of the relativity arguments*

Before we look at the structure of the relativity arguments, I briefly want to consider a recent interpretation offered by Sam Rickless on which Berkeley does not even intend for the relativity arguments to show that the sensible qualities must be mind-dependent.¹⁰ On Rickless's interpretation, the arguments are meant to serve as a *reductio* of a principle that vulgar materialists are committed to—namely, if S perceives by sense at time *t* that *o* has some sensible quality *F*, then *o* has *F* at *t*. Rickless calls this the *Principle of Attribution* and insists that Berkeley merely employs the relativity arguments as a *reductio* of the principle. Importantly, Rickless

representative realism answers to the intuitions which make realism psychologically compelling, because to get to the representative level we have already discounted as false the substance of that intuition, which was that the immediate objects of awareness are mind-independent." (169)

¹⁰This interpretation is also defended by Muehlmann (1992).

suggests that the *reductio* goes through only given a certain principle that the materialists are committed to (which Berkeley rejects); namely, that one and the same material object is the bearer of several sensible qualities. So, on Rickless's reading, Berkeley does not take the relativity arguments to constitute a positive defense of the mind-dependence of sensible qualities; rather, Berkeley relies on the relativity arguments to show that the *Principle of Attribution*, in addition to a certain assumption of materialism, forces us to the conclusion that sensible qualities are mind-dependent. The arguments, then, serve as an *ad hominem* attack against any version of materialism that holds both that (a) the sensible qualities perceived in the relativity scenarios must inhere in one and the same entity, and (b) the *Principle of Attribution*. According to this interpretation, Berkeley's real argument for the mind-dependence of *all* sensible qualities is not to be found in the relativity arguments at all. Instead, it is located in the early equation of the secondary qualities with sensations of pain and pleasure, which, combined with Berkeley's insistence that one cannot conceive of the primary qualities apart from the secondary qualities, taints the ontological status of the primary qualities as well.

In response, I believe that there is ample textual evidence to show that this cannot be the right interpretation of the passages in the *Dialogues*. The *Principle of Attribution* is not the target of the relativity arguments; as the context makes clear, those arguments are indeed intended to demonstrate the mind-dependence of the sensible qualities.

According to Rickless, Hylas (Berkeley's materialist opponent in the *Dialogues*) expresses his original commitment to the *Principle of Attribution* in the following passage:

[P1]

Phil: Tell me, Hylas, is this real existence equally compatible to all degrees of heat, which we perceive: or is there any reason why we should attribute it to some, and deny it to others? And if there be, pray let me know that reason.

Hyl: Whatever degree of heat we perceive by sense, we may be sure the same exists in the object that occasions it.¹¹

Now, Rickless relies on this passage to offer the following generalized version of the principle:

¹¹Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), 175.

Principle of Attribution: if S perceives by sense at time t that o has some sensible quality F , then o has F at t .

Importantly, just antecedent to [P1], Philonous has asked Hylas about his view of sensible things. Hylas has suggested 1) that sensible things are the immediate objects of perception; and 2) that sensible things have an existence distinct from being perceived. [P2] and [P3], both passages that are immediately antecedent to [P1] provide the passages in which Hylas commits to these two claims:

[P2]

Phil: What mean you by sensible things?

Hyl: Those things which are perceived by the sense. Can you imagine that I mean anything else?

Phil: ... Are those things only perceived by the senses which are perceived immediately? Or may those things properly said to be sensible which are perceived mediately?

Hyl: ... I tell you once for all, that by sensible things I mean those only which are perceived by sense, and that in truth the senses perceive nothing which they do not perceive immediately.

Phil: ... This point then is agreed between us, that *sensible things are those only which are immediately perceived by sense*.¹²

[P3]

Phil: Doth the reality of sensible things consist in being perceived? Or, is it something distinct from their being perceived, and that bears no relation to the mind?

Hyl: To exist is one thing, and to be perceived is another.

Phil: I speak with regard to sensible things only: and of these I ask, whether by their real existence you mean a subsistence exterior to the mind, and distinct from their being perceived?

Hyl: I mean *a real absolute being, distinct from and without any relation to their being perceived*.¹³

¹²*Ibid*, p. 174.

¹³*Ibid*, p.175, my emphasis.

It is only once Philonous has established this definition of sensible things as entities of immediate awareness, whose existence is distinct from being perceived, that he applies the definition of sensible qualities to the case of heat. It is now that Philonous asks whether the reality of sensible qualities applies only to some degrees of heat or to all. This is where we encounter our original passage [P1]. But notice how the discussion of the reality of degrees of heat in [P1] takes place only within the context of the claim that sensible qualities have a real and distinct existence. In [P1] then, Hylas is merely acknowledging that his general definition of sensible qualities applies to heat, and furthermore, that it applies to *all* degrees of heat. The focus of the dialogue at this stage is *not* whether all properties that an object is perceived as having must in fact be properties of the object; rather, the focus is on whether *every* quality that is sensible has an existence in the object (as opposed to in the mind). The former question is never discussed in the *Dialogues*, precisely because both Hylas and Philonous take it to be uncontroversial and unnecessary to contest.

Rickless's suggestion that [P1] serves as an explicit formulation of the *Principle of Attribution* and as the setup for the target for the relativity arguments is hard to defend given the context in which it occurs. As I have already demonstrated, the passages preceding [P1] have to do with the real existence of sensible qualities and in [P1], Hylas is endorsing a particular instance of this claim in the case of heat. But furthermore, if we look at the passages that come after [P1], there too we do not find evidence for Rickless's reading. It is *not* the case that Philonous immediately moves to target the *Principle of Attribution* with the help of the relativity arguments. Rather, immediately following [P1], once Hylas has conceded that all degrees of perceived heat inhere in the object, Philonous proceeds to argue that an *intense* heat is identical to a pain and therefore must be mind-dependent. After convincing Hylas of this claim, Philonous then makes use of Hylas's concession that *all* perceived degrees of heat must be features of the object, thereby concluding that *all* perceived instances of heat must be properties of the mind.

At this stage, Hylas resists this generalizing move and suggests that while it may be true that an intense heat is nothing but a pain and therefore mind-dependent, a *moderate* degree of heat cannot be identified with either pain or pleasure. Rather, a moderate degree of heat can be thought of as an indolence, or a privation of any positive or negative sensations. Once Hylas refuses to concede that a moderate degree of heat is mind-dependent,

Philonous shifts strategies and moves to the relativity arguments. The reason to shift to the relativity arguments, then, is to show that Hylas cannot maintain that moderate degrees of heat exist in mind-independent objects, while intense degrees of heat do not. It is at this stage that we encounter the following passage:

[P4]

Phil: Can any doctrine be true that necessarily leads a man into an absurdity?

Hyl: Without a doubt it cannot.

Phil: Is it not an absurdity to think that the same thing should be at the same time both cold and warm?¹⁴

Now, just as Rickless suggests, it is clear that the relativity argument is meant to reveal that there is *some* doctrine that must be rejected on the grounds that it leads a man into absurdity. But the question is which doctrine this is. Rickless suggests that the relevant doctrine in question is the *Principle of Attribution*, which is asserted in [P1]. However, given what we have seen so far about the context within which [P1] is situated, it is far more plausible to conclude that the central doctrine under consideration is the doctrine according to which sensible qualities have an existence distinct from being perceived. As I have suggested, the thesis that all perceived degrees of heat exist in the object is *not* taken by Philonous to be a distinct thesis concerning an inference that one can make from the immediate objects of perception to the sensible qualities of objects. Rather, it is intended by Hylas and interpreted by Philonous as nothing more than an instance of the more general doctrine that all sensible qualities exist in the objects perceived. The conclusion, then, that is much better supported by the text, is that the relativity arguments are meant to target the doctrine expressed in [P3], namely that sensible qualities have an existence independent of being perceived.

Now that I have motivated the claim that the relativity arguments are taken by Berkeley himself to reveal the mind-dependence of sensible qualities, we can finally turn our attention to the arguments themselves.

¹⁴*Ibid*, 178.

5.2.2 *The Steps of the Argument*

While there is indeed variation in the form that the relativity arguments take for secondary and primary qualities, I will provide two passages in which Philonous develops very similar versions of the argument in the case of taste and in the case of extension:

[P5]

Phil: That which at other times seems sweet, shall to a distempered palate appear bitter. And nothing can be plainer, than that divers persons perceive different tastes in the same food, since that which one man delights in, another abhors. And how could this be, if the taste was something really inherent in the food?

Hyl: I acknowledge I know not how.¹⁵

[P6]

Phil: Is it not the very same reasoning to conclude, there is no extension or figure in an object, because to one eye it shall seem little, smooth, and round, when at the same time it appears to the other, great, uneven, and angular?

Hyl: The very same. But doth this latter fact ever happen?

Phil: You may at any time make the experiment, by looking with one eye bare, and with the other through a microscope.¹⁶

On the basis of such passages, we can begin to formulate the most basic structure of the relativity argument for the case of shape:

1. *o* can look round to the naked eye and look angular under a microscope.
2. When *o* looks round to the naked eye, the perceiver is aware of an instance of roundness.
3. When *o* looks angular under a microscope, the perceiver is aware of an instance of angularity.

¹⁵Ibid, 180.

¹⁶Ibid, 189.

4. *o*, being a material object, cannot both be round and angular (roundness and angularity are contraries).
5. Roundness and angularity cannot both exist in *o*.

Berkeley runs through exactly the same kind of argument for each of the primary and secondary qualities. The basic move consists in pointing out that one and the same object can appear to have contrary sensible qualities at the very same time. Given that material objects cannot simultaneously instantiate contrary properties, the sensible qualities that are perceived cannot be properties of material objects.

Let us start by focusing on the move from (1) to (2) and (3). Remember that in the passage already quoted earlier in [P2], Philonous and Hylas agree that sensible qualities just are the immediate objects of perception. So if there is some quality that we are immediately aware of, then that quality just is a sensible quality. Philonous then goes on to ask Hylas whether “we immediately perceive by sight any thing beside light, and colors and figures; or by hearing, any thing but sounds; by the palate, anything besides tastes; by the smell, beside odors; or by the touch, more than tangible qualities.”¹⁷ In this passage, Berkeley is stating which things he thinks the immediate objects of perception are; on his view, they are just collections of the ordinary primary and secondary qualities. So *if* we were to assume that in each case of perception, there must be an immediate object that is perceived, we now know that Berkeley thinks these immediate objects would be the sensible qualities (or collections thereof). In other words, *if* it is the case that when an object looks round to one eye and angular to the other, there must be an immediate object of each perception, Berkeley will conclude that what the subject is aware of in each case must be roundness and angularity. It is the generalized version of this claim that Rickless refers to as the *Principle of Attribution*. I will call this principle *Sensible Awareness*, for reasons that will become clear below. It is important to note that nowhere does Berkeley provide an explicit defense of this principle—if we are to defend its use in the argument, we must defend the principle on Berkeley's behalf.

For a moment, though, let us assume that perception must always have an object and that these objects just are collections of sensible qualities, in order to discover whether this assumption is sufficient to arrive

¹⁷*Ibid*, 175.

at the conclusion that all sensible qualities must be mind-dependent. If *Sensible Awareness* is in fact a defensible principle, then it would follow that the perceiver must be aware of instances of *F* and *G* in virtue of having experiences in which an object looks *F* as well as looks *G*. Now given the nature of material substances, *F* and *G* cannot both inhere in *o* given that material substances cannot instantiate contrary properties without undergoing any change themselves. But that would still not get us to the conclusion that sensible qualities are mind-dependent. Even if we grant that in each case of an object looking *F* (or *G*), there must be something that is *F* (or *G*), why does Berkeley think that the materialist must concede that one and the same material object must be both *F* and *G*? Why can't it be the case that *F* is a property of a material object, while *G* is a property of something else? In other words, why can't the materialist concede that *some* sensible property-instances that we are aware of are genuine features of material objects, while others aren't? Finally, even if we defend the claim that *no* sensible property-instances can be said to inhere in material objects, what leads us to the conclusion that they all must then be mind-dependent?

There are three goals I must achieve in this section in order to provide a robust defense of the relativity arguments:

1. Defend the claim that all perceptions must have an object.
2. Defend the generalizing move: if in some cases of *o* looking *F*, *F* does not inhere in a material body, then it must be the case that in all cases of *o* looking *F*, *F* does not inhere in a material body.
3. Defend the restriction to material bodies and minds: if *F* does not inhere in a material body, it must be an idea in a mind.

The Act-Object Structure of Perception

In what ensues, I will first offer what I take to be evidence that Berkeley is in fact committed to a conception on which perception must in all cases have an object. Furthermore, I will go on to motivate this conception of experience on independent grounds. Given that my goal in this chapter is not merely interpretive—I intend to show that the relativity arguments are *philosophically* better off than they are usually taken to be—I must provide

evidence not only for the claim that Berkeley was committed to such a thesis, but also that he had good philosophical reasons to be.¹⁸

There is ample evidence suggesting that Berkeley just takes this view of experience for granted. Here, I will provide only a few, select passages as evidence:

Thus in the case of the oar, what he immediately perceives by sight is certainly crooked; and so far he is in the right.¹⁹

Things immediately perceived are ideas, and ideas cannot exist without the mind; their existence therefore consists in being perceived when therefore they are actually perceived, there can be no doubt of their existence.²⁰

I own the word *idea*, not being commonly used for *thing*, sounds something out of the way. My reason for using it was, because a necessary relation to the mind is understood to be implied by that term; and it is now commonly used by philosophers, to denote the *immediate objects of the understanding*. . . there are only things perceiving and things perceived.²¹

In the first passage, Berkeley explicitly states that when we perceive a straight oar in water, what is immediately perceived is something that is in fact crooked—this seems like an explicit commitment to the view that there must always be something that is perceived and furthermore, that what is immediately perceived is a collection of sensible qualities like crookedness. In the third passage too, Berkeley makes clear that he is using the term “idea” to refer to the *objects* of the understanding or to the *things* perceived. Passages such as these are only a few instances of a

¹⁸Many have found this principle ludicrous on the face of it. As J.L. Austin so eloquently put it: “Does anyone suppose that if something is straight, then it jolly well has to look straight at all times and in all circumstances?” See Austin (1964), 29. If Austin’s criticism is to apply to Berkeley, we need to slightly modify the form of his indignation. Austin needs to ask Berkeley whether anyone could rightly suppose that if something *looks* straight, then it jolly well has to *be* straight at all times and in all circumstances. But one might assume that this is as unwarranted a supposition as Austin’s original version.

¹⁹Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), 238

²⁰*Ibid*, 230.

²¹*Ibid*, 235.

pervasive commitment to an act-object conception of perception. As I have already suggested, once we see that Berkeley is committed to an act-object account of perception, we can rely on his explicit definition of sensible qualities as the immediate objects of perception to see why he concludes that in all cases of perception, there must be some sensible quality that the perceiver is immediately aware of. Rather than present the principle in unanalyzed form as Rickless does when stating the *Principle of Attribution*, I think it is more illuminating to see Berkeley's commitment as comprising two distinct components:

1. *Act-Object (AO)*: Any perceptual experience *E* must have an immediate object of awareness.
2. *Sensible Objects (SQ)*: Sensible qualities are the immediate objects of awareness.

Combining the two theses we get:

3. *Sensible Awareness (SA)*: Any perceptual experience *E* must make the subject immediately aware of some sensible quality(ies).²²

So in any instance in which an object *o* looks some way to a perceiver, there must be some item that the perceiver is in fact immediately aware of; given that the only immediate items of awareness are sensible qualities, this object must be a sensible quality. One might still ask why the sensible quality that the perceiver is aware of must always be the sensible quality that the object looks to have. Even if we grant that a straight stick's looking crooked to a perceiver or a round coin looking angular involve an awareness of some sensible quality, one might worry that this still falls short of the claim that the sensible qualities in question ought to be crookedness and roundness. I will return to this worry in section 5.3 of the chapter, given that this is precisely the point at which I will resist Berkeley's argument. I will insist that we ought not think of *absolute* sensible qualities as the immediate items of awareness, but rather that appeal to the sensible appearances that objects have *relative* to environmental conditions. But for the time being, we can grant Berkeley the pre-theoretically plausible

²²Note that this thesis is closely related to the thesis *Item Awareness* in Chapter 3. The difference is that *SA* is a thesis about *all* experiences, while *Item Awareness*, in our formulation, was limited to the class of veridical perceptions.

claim that *once* we have conceded that there must be some sensible quality instantiated when an object looks crooked, the most natural candidate for which sensible quality this might be is crookedness.²³

The central claim that needs motivating is *AO*—if we grant *AO*, *SA* becomes eminently plausible, for surely if perception must have an object, the natural candidates for these objects are the sensible qualities. We can start by noting that *AO* has strong phenomenological support—when we introspect on our perceptual experiences, our attention always seems to fall on perceived objects and never on any mental features of the experience itself. Furthermore, the character of our experience *seems* to be primarily fixed by the character of the items themselves. Remember, for example, Moore's observations about perception:

When we refer to introspection and try to discover what the sensation of blue is, it is very easy to suppose that we have before us only a single term. The term 'blue' is easy enough to distinguish, but the other element which I have called 'consciousness'—that which the sensation of blue has in common with the sensation of green—is extremely difficult to fix. . . . And, in general, that which makes the sensation of blue a mental fact seems to escape us: it seems, if I may use a metaphor, to be transparent—we look through it and see nothing but the blue.²⁴

In this passage, Moore suggests that the conscious character seems to be exhausted by what is given or presented to a perceiver. In the case that he describes, a perceiver "sees" the color blue. The blueness is not experienced as a mental item or property of the mental state itself; rather it is experienced as the object of the mental state, or as what the mental state is directed at. Any features of the experience that are not features of the items presented are hard to detect—in Moore's words, they "escape us". Moore's suggestion seems to be that introspection on the phenomenology of experience supports the claim that the conscious character of perception

²³There are different ways in which you can challenge this assumption of Berkeley's. Martin (2010) argues that when a straight stick looks crooked, the only sensible quality we are aware of is the stick's straightness, but we are in a position, given the nature of subjective impact the stick's straightness has on us, in which we cannot assert its straightness.

²⁴Moore (1903), 446.

derives from the conscious character of the relatum to which the perceiver stands in a diaphanous 'consciousness' relation. More recent theorists of perception have made similar observations about the phenomenologically transparent nature of experience:

When Eloise sees a tree before her, the colors she experiences are all experienced as features of the tree and its surroundings. None of them are experienced as intrinsic features of her experience. Nor does she experience any features of anything as intrinsic features of her experiences. And that is true of you too. . . Look at a tree and try to turn your attention to intrinsic features of your visual experience. I predict that you will find that the only features there to turn your attention to will be features of the tree.²⁵

The observations described above are pre-phenomenological observations. They concern how experience seems to be on introspection. The central observation is that conscious perception seems relational: the conscious character of perception seems to derive from the sensible character of the objects that we perceive. *AO*, on the other hand, is an ontological thesis about the nature of perception—it is a thesis that takes our pre-theoretical observations at face value and provides the most straightforward explanation of these observations. According to *AO*, it seems to us as if experience is relational because experience is in fact relational.²⁶ A

²⁵Harman (1990), 667.

²⁶Harman does not ultimately accept *AO*. He accepts transparency—the thesis that on introspection, we seem to only be aware of the mind-independent objects presented to us in experience. However, being a representationalist, Harman believes that we can account for this observation without needing to think of experience as fundamentally relational. Moore, as a sense-datum theorist, is more sympathetic to a thesis like *AO*. He does, in a later passage of the same text, suggest that he is ambivalent as to whether the common element of consciousness is itself blue: "Whether or not, when I have the sensation of blue, my consciousness or awareness is thus blue, my introspection does not enable me to decide with certainty: I only see no reason for thinking that it is. . . It is possible, I admit, that my awareness is blue *as well* as being *of* blue: but what I am quite sure of is that it is *of* blue." Therefore, even though Moore is ambivalent as to whether we must ascribe "blueness" to the element of consciousness, we can glean from his discussion that he does not think that it could make any difference to the phenomenology of experience (insofar as we assume that the phenomenology of experience is introspectible). *AO* is merely a thesis about the fundamentally *conscious* nature of perceptual experience, and so, we can tentatively assume that Moore would endorse the thesis.

theorist of perception who denies *AO* can take one of two paths: either she can grant the pre-theoretical claim that experience *seems* relational but insist that we can explain why experience seems this way solely by appeal to non-relational resources, or she can deny the intuitive claim concerning the relational character of our phenomenology. Given that the latter strategy denies what most take to be phenomenologically given, we ought to avoid this approach if possible.

The former strategy is adopted by contemporary representationalists and at least some projectivists. Both views grant the phenomenological claim that experience seems to comprise a relation of awareness between us and some items—sensible features—but they deny that there must be in fact be such items present in order for experience to have the relational phenomenology that it does. The representationalist explains the relational phenomenology of perception by appeal to the representational content of the experience—a non-relational property of the experience. According to the representationalist, the conscious character of our perceptions derives from the character of the objects and states of affairs *represented*. Those objects or states of affairs do not in fact need to be present or instantiated in order for the conscious character to obtain. On this view, representational or intentional presence is sufficient to account for the relational phenomenology of perception. A projectivist, on the other hand, might insist that it is in fact the experience that is phenomenally rich, but that these qualities are projected outwards by the mind, thereby making it seem as if the qualities are external to the experience itself.

I have already argued against representationalism in the previous chapter. In general, both these views have the historically difficult task of explaining how such non-relational states can give rise to relational phenomenology. How mere intentional presence can be sufficient for actual, rich phenomenology remains a mystery.²⁷ Projection on behalf of the mind is equally hard to comprehend. Accepting *AO* allows us to avoid that explanatory task altogether. Therefore, if we can maintain *AO* without

²⁷In work in progress, I argue against the plausibility of employing a reductive account of content to account for the phenomenology of perception. My central criticism of reductive approaches is that they fail to respect two pre-theoretically evident features of phenomenal properties—namely, their occurrence and categoricity. All reductive accounts of content treat representational properties as non-occurrent, hypothetical or both. I argue that this makes it the case that phenomenal properties cannot be grounded in representation.

dramatically negative consequences, we ought to do so.²⁸ While it may be true that Berkeley does not consider any non-relational options, we can agree that there is strong reason to hold on to a relational conception of experience is possible.²⁹

Now that we have provided some motivation for *AO*, and therefore, *SA*, we can ask what role the thesis plays in Berkeley's relativity arguments. Consider a veridical experience of the shape of a round coin. This experience has rich conscious phenomenology that we describe by saying that the coin looks round. Now *SA* predicts that the conscious character of the experience is constituted by the sensible features the perceiver is aware of. In the case at hand, then, the natural explanation in line with *SA*, for why the coin looks round (where the coin looking round serves as a description of the conscious character of the perception) is just that the subject is aware of the roundness of the coin. In the original version of the argument, Berkeley moves from the observation that a coin looks round to the conclusion that the subject must be aware of an instance of roundness. An appeal to *SA* now substantiates this transition.

So far, we have suggested that given *SA*, when a coin looks round to *S* while viewed head-on, she is aware of an instance of roundness. But what should we say about the case in which a coin looks angular when viewed under a microscope? Clearly, this experience has phenomenal character just as much as ordinary veridical experiences do. Furthermore, the Moorean claim about transparency seems to hold in the very same way for an experience of this sort. We do not seem to be aware of any features of our experience and the features we are aware of seem to be features of the item presented. If we take our introspective verdicts about the phenomenology of this experience at face-value, then it follows that we experience the coin as looking angular in just the same way as we experience the coin as looking round. In other words, the phenomenological symmetry of the two cases gives us reason to either accept *SA* in both cases or in neither.

²⁸The most serious threat to a relational account of perception comes from the argument from hallucination. I address this threat in Chapter 2.

²⁹A caveat: it does seem true that *if* a relational conception of experience forces upon us the kind of pervasive mind-dependence that Berkeley takes it to, this would constitute a strong reason to resist *AO*, even in the absence of a well-worked out alternative. However, as I will argue by the end of the chapter, we can hold on to *AO* (or a modified version thereof) without succumbing to the relativity arguments, thereby making the denial of *AO* theoretically unnecessary.

So in the case in which we look at a coin under a microscope, it seems like we must grant that we are aware of an instance of angularity.

Where have we reached in our defense of Berkeley's relativity arguments? We are now at the stage at which we've granted that in any case in which a subject has an experience in which o looks F , the subject must be aware of an instance of F . But, is this enough to get us to the mind-dependence of all instances of F ? Here's the current formulation of the argument:

1. o can look round to S when viewed head-on but look angular to S when viewed under a microscope.
2. Any perceptual experience E must make the perceiver immediately aware of some sensible quality(ies). (*Sensible Awareness*)
3. When o looks round to S , S is aware of an instance of roundness. (1,2)
4. When o looks angular to S under a microscope, the subject is aware of an instance of angularity. (1,2)
5. o undergoes no change when it is moved closer to S .
6. o cannot be both round and angular because roundness and angularity are contraries.
7. Roundness and angularity only exist in S 's mind.

The Generalizing Move

Even though we have appealed to *SA* to motivate the move from (1) to both (3) and (4), there is still more work that needs to be done. While it is true that roundness and angularity cannot both be instantiated by a material object, why can't we conclude that at least one of the sensible features that we are aware of is in fact a feature of the mind-independent object? On a differential analysis of the two experiences under consideration, we could hold on to the claim that *sometimes* we are aware of the ordinary sensible features of the mind-independent coin, namely when the round coin looks round, while other times, such as when a round coin looks angular, we are aware of a sensible feature that is *not* a feature of

the coin itself. This way, we are not required to conclude that *all* sensible instances are mind-dependent, thereby resisting the dramatic conclusion of the relativity argument.

Why doesn't Berkeley grant that some sensible instances that we immediately perceive are mind-independent and some are mind-dependent? Here, there have been two pervasive responses in the literature on the relativity arguments. I will describe each response and suggest that neither response is philosophically compelling, nor does it accurately capture Berkeley's reasoning.

Perhaps the most common response that has been attributed to Berkeley is an appeal to what has come to be known as the Resemblance Principle or the Likeness Principle, in other words, the principle that only an idea can be like an idea. On this reading, Berkeley relies on the relativity arguments to show that sometimes, the sensible features that we are aware of in experience must be mind-dependent, and therefore nothing but ideas. Consider a case in which a coin looks angular when viewed under a microscope—we can concede that the sensible feature we are aware of on this occasion is mind-dependent. But, this does not force us to conclude that all instances of angularity that we perceive must be mind-dependent—for instance, when we perceive a polygon head-on, why not think that on such an occasion, the sensible item that we are aware of is genuinely a feature of the mind-independent object? It is at this stage that Berkeley is supposed to make appeal to the Resemblance Principle, according to which an idea can resemble nothing but an idea. If there were some sensible instances that genuinely inhered in material objects—such as the instance of angularity we perceive when we look at a polygon—and some that were mind-dependent—such as the instance of angularity we perceive when we look at a coin under a microscope, one would have to concede that ideas and material bodies could resemble each other in virtue of their sharing sensible features. If the Resemblance Principle is true, this cannot be the case; therefore, conceding that some instances of angularity are mind-dependent forces us to the conclusion that *all* instances must be similarly mind-dependent.

How might we defend the Resemblance Thesis? Cummins has the following suggestion for a possible defense:

- A. All qualities which are determinates of the same determinable have the same ontological status;

- B. A necessary condition of resemblance between two entities is that they are or possess qualities which are determinates of the same determinable;
- C. None of the qualities we immediately perceive (hereafter termed 'sensible qualities') can occur unperceived.³⁰

On this reconstruction, Berkeley is led to the Resemblance Principle because he assumes that resemblance requires the sharing of properties (or at least the possession of determinates of the same determinable) but this violates what Cummins calls the "relatively non-controversial" principle that qualities that are determinates of the same determinable must have the same ontological status. But this principle is far from uncontroversial. Assuming the truth of the principle seems to license the following questionable inferences:

- A. My mind has the property of coming into existence in 1985.
- B. My fingernail has the property of coming into existence in 1985.
- C. Qualities which are determinates of the same determinable must have the same ontological status.
- D. So, my fingernail must be a mental item (Or my mind must be a physical item).

Or, if we want to restrict the claim to qualities:

- A. The Pyramids of Giza have the property of being triangular.
- B. The figure that Euclid relies on to prove the angle sum property has the property of being triangular.
- C. Qualities which are determinates of the same determinable must have the same ontological status.
- D. So, the Pyramids of Giza must be abstract items (or the figure that Euclid relies on must be a physical item).

³⁰Cummins (1968)

None of these arguments are *prima facie* compelling. Of course, it may be true that there are some properties (pain, perhaps) that may be such as to rule out the possibility of being instantiated by substances of different ontological status, but this would be a claim that would be particular to those properties, not generalizable to all properties. So if Berkeley relies on this kind of defense of the Resemblance Thesis and if the Resemblance Thesis is essential to the validity of the relativity arguments, the arguments seem to be on thin ice indeed.³¹

I want to suggest that Berkeley does *not* rely on this kind of defense for the thesis. In fact, Berkeley defends the Resemblance Thesis *only after* he has proved the generalizability of the relativity arguments; that is, it is only once he has concluded that *all* sensible features are mind-dependent that he suggests that ideas and material bodies cannot resemble each other. This is a fairly controversial interpretative claim to make—it is pervasively assumed that Berkeley makes use of the Resemblance Thesis in order to defend the controversial claims he makes about the mind-dependence of all sensible qualities. For example, it is often thought that Berkeley's response to Locke on the primary qualities is to insist that Locke's view that our ideas of primary qualities resemble the qualities that mind-independent objects themselves possess is absurd *because* it commits Locke to the claim that material objects and ideas can resemble each other. But if my interpretation is correct, this cannot be the right way to understand Berkeley's criticism of Locke—on this reading, it is only after Berkeley has already argued that all instances of primary qualities are mind-dependent that he concludes that ideas and material objects cannot resemble each other. So far from being an argument against Locke's claim that primary qualities can be genuinely instantiated by material objects, all appeals to the Resemblance Thesis presuppose that we have already ruled out the possibility that the primary qualities ever be instantiated by mind-independent objects.

³¹Winkler, for example, also thinks the Resemblance Thesis does the generalizing work for Berkeley. On his view, the relativity arguments are *only* sufficient to show that the instances we immediately perceive must exist unperceived. Winkler thinks that Berkeley recognizes this fact and relies on the Resemblance Principle to make the generalizing move. Winkler, however, offers an epistemological defense of the principle, as opposed to Cummins's metaphysical defense, according to which resemblance is an essentially subjective notion that requires us to have some kind of access to the two things to be compared.

The interpretation I am offering, despite being an unusual one, seems to have overwhelming textual support. Let us look at some of the most salient passages in which Berkeley discusses this thesis:

But say you, though the ideas themselves do not exist without the mind, yet there may be things like them whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance. I answer, an idea can be like nothing but an idea; a colour or figure can be like nothing but another colour or figure. If we look but ever so little into our own thoughts, we shall find it impossible for us to conceive a likeness except only between our ideas. Again, I ask whether those supposed originals or external things, of which our ideas are the pictures or representations, be themselves perceivable or no? If they are, then they are ideas, and we have gained our point; but if you say they are not, *I appeal to anyone whether it be sense, to assert a colour is like something which is invisible; hard or soft, like something which is intangible; and so of the rest.*³²

Phil: Ideas then are sensible, and their archetypes or originals insensible.

Hyl: Right.

Phil: *But how can that which is sensible be like that which is insensible? Can a real thing in itself invisible be like a colour, or a real thing which is not audible, be like a sound? In a word, can any thing be like a sensation or idea, but another sensation or idea?*³³

Notice the structure of the Berkeley's appeal to the resemblance thesis in both the passages above. The argumentative move that is made in the first passage is to ask how something that is colored can be like something that is uncolored, how something that is soft can be like something intangible, etc. In the second passage too, the question is how something that is sensible can be like something that is insensible, whether a thing that is itself invisible can resemble something that is visible, etc. In both passages then, and in all other passages like these, Berkeley is already assuming that material objects are uncolored, inaudible, intangible and so on. Naturally,

³²Berkeley (1710/1948-1957), §8 my emphasis.

³³Berkeley (1713/1948-1957), 206, my emphasis.

if we have already assumed this, the possibility of an idea resembling a material object is rightly difficult to make sense of—if resemblance requires sensible similarity but material things lack any of the sensible qualities that ideas have, then how could they be said to resemble our ideas? But, crucially, this defense of the Resemblance Thesis—on which we are asked to consider the implausibility of such resemblance—*presupposes* that material objects cannot themselves have sensible features.

This realization also makes us rethink our understanding of Berkeley's response to Locke—he does not ask how it could be that an object and an idea *both* be colored or *both* be audible or *both* have figure. Rather, he first argues that material objects do *not* have any of these qualities and *then* asks how they could nonetheless be said to resemble our ideas. If Berkeley were really intending these passages to be targeted at Locke, Locke could rightfully accuse Berkeley of just denying the very claim that Locke was arguing for. To be charitable to Berkeley then—in fact, just to be honest interpreters of Berkeley's words—we must recognize that Berkeley takes himself to have *already* established the mind-dependence of *all* instances of sensible features *before* he asserts the Resemblance Principle. In fact, it is precisely the arguments that have already been presented that give the Resemblance Principle any appeal. It is only if we grant that the material world cannot be the bearer of any sensible properties that it seems implausible to assert that the material world can resemble the world of the mind and thereby be depicted by it.

So, the resemblance thesis cannot give Berkeley the ammunition to make the generalizing move in the relativity arguments; in fact, it presupposes this move. So, we still have the question left open—why does Berkeley think establishing that *some* sensible features are mind-dependent is sufficient for the conclusion that *all* sensible features are mind-dependent? Another strand of defense that has been provided on Berkeley's behalf is epistemological. Many who have appealed to this line of defense, do so in order to show how it falls short of a convincing argument.³⁴ Winkler, in contrast, offers the following argument as a *defense* of the generalizing move:

1. We do not know by sense which are the true qualities of an object.

³⁴Both Dicker (1982) and Rickless (2013) are dismissive of what the relativity arguments can show. Berkeley himself in the Principles has this reading of his own arguments.

2. Yet we sometimes know this.
3. If a true quality is (a) inherent in an outward object and (b) immediately perceived in some privileged situation, then we cannot help but be arbitrary when we identify that situation.
4. If we cannot help but be arbitrary when we identify that situation, then we cannot know which quality is the true one.
5. Because we do know which quality is the true one, a true quality cannot satisfy both (a) and (b).³⁵

On this line of defense, we work with the assumption that we *do* sometimes know which sensible qualities an object truly has. Winkler suggests that Berkeley thinks that we can predict how objects will appear in a variety of circumstances in virtue of having this kind of knowledge. We do this by relying on “normal” circumstances as revealing the *real* sensible features of objects. But as Berkeley nicely shows, picking a set of circumstances, even if they are in fact normal viewing conditions *for us*, as the circumstances in which the real features of the objects are revealed is nothing more than arbitrary.

To understand this point, it becomes important to recognize the genuine relativity of the cases that Berkeley is interested in. If a coin looks round when we view it head-on, but angular when we view it obliquely, how can we justify the claim that the first set of viewing conditions is privileged in getting us onto the real shape of the object while the others merely present us with shapes that are not instantiated by the object at all? Of course, we can privilege *some* viewing conditions over others: there is a certain distance beyond which the real shape of the object starts to be concealed from view. But viewing an object from different angles, each of which allows just as much information about the shape of the object to be encoded by the perceiver, results in viewing conditions that allow for equal discrimination. How do we evaluate which viewing conditions, within this more restricted set, make us aware of the real shape of the object?

Furthermore, once we consider how creatures with different perceptual mechanisms may view the object, we realize that there is always a

³⁵Winkler (1994), 173.

multiplicity of viewing conditions—none of which are more privileged than the other—that reveal different sensible properties to the perceivers. An object that looks one size to a human being will look an entirely different size to a mite, an object that looms over us will look insignificantly sized to a much larger creature. Within the class of viewing conditions that allow for equal discrimination, there seems to be no non-arbitrary means by which we can privilege one set of conditions over the rest with respect to their ability to reveal the object's features.³⁶ As Winkler puts it, "what reason do we have for thinking that the circumstances we deem normal somehow enable the object to present itself as it really is, when in every other situation a potentially misleading appearance intervenes?"³⁷ Normal viewing conditions for us may indeed be extremely abnormal viewing conditions for other creatures and there is no reason to think that only human beings have privileged access to the nature of sensible objects.

It is my opinion that Winkler is on the right track, but that he conceives of this argument in too epistemological a manner. For, it is entirely open to the materialist to just deny that we do in fact know, through sense, which sensible properties genuinely inhere in the object and which are mind-dependent ideas, thereby rejecting premise (2) of Winkler's argument above. But this is not, a materialist might argue, a fatal problem for the view—there are non-sensory ways by which to determine which sensible qualities genuinely belong to the object and which don't.³⁸ And this is precisely the move that unsympathetic readers of the relativity arguments do make—they conclude that all that Berkeley has shown us is that we cannot know which qualities inhere in material objects, but this is nowhere close to having motivated the kind of idealism that Berkeley takes himself to have established.

To start developing a non-epistemological defense of the generalizing move, consider the following passage:

³⁶Some might think that there's an easier way to defend Berkeley. If it is true that each sensible property can be illusorily presented to a perceiver, it will follow that all sensible properties have some mind-dependent instances. One might believe that this is sufficient to conclude that all their instances must be mind-dependent. But I don't find this line of reasoning very compelling—it requires us to presuppose that sensible properties must have exclusively mind-dependent or mind-independent instances. I find this reasoning unmotivated and have argued against it in the first two chapters of my dissertation.

³⁷Winkler (1994), 173.

³⁸Though note Barry Stroud's 2009 paper for a sense of how difficult this proposal might be to develop.

How then is it possible, that things perpetually fleeting and variable as our ideas, should be copies or image of anything fixed and constant? Or in other words, since all sensible qualities, as size, figure, color, etc. that is, our ideas, are continually changing upon every alteration in the distance, medium, or instruments of sensation; how can any determinate material objects be properly represented or painted forth by several distinct things, each of which is so different from and unlike the rest? Or if you say it resembles only some of our ideas, how shall we be able to distinguish the true copy from all the false ones?³⁹

In the passage above, Berkeley points out that the sensible qualities that show up in perception are “continually changing upon every alteration in the distance, medium or instruments of sensation.” This amounts to the observation that there is rampant variation in our experiences of the sensible world. With the slightest change in our perceptual viewing conditions, there will be a distinct sensible quality of which we are aware. As we move the object around or change our perspective on it, there will be subtle variations in how the object looks. Importantly, once we have granted *Sensible Awareness* (SA) for *all* such perceptual experiences, we must conclude that with each of these subtle variations, there is a new sensible property that the perceiver is aware of. If the perceiver were aware of roundness when the object looked round a moment ago, she is instead aware of angularity a moment later, as well as a range of other shape qualities in between. It is, therefore, the commitment to *Sensible Awareness*, along with the observation that how objects look varies based on our perspective on them, that leads Berkeley to conclude that which sensible qualities we are aware of in perception is continually changing. So as long we grant the very plausible claim that objects look different as we change our viewpoint upon them, we must conclude that the continually variable stream of sensible properties that show up to us in perception is a feature of all perceptual experience.⁴⁰

³⁹Berkeley (1713/1948-1957) 41.

⁴⁰Whether this is compatible with the overwhelming evidence for perceptual constancy is a question we'll return to shortly. We can simultaneously maintain that the object looks round or angular even though the object *looks to be round* in all instances. It's unclear that Berkeley can hold on to this distinction given that on his view, an object

Berkeley now asks: "How shall we be able to distinguish the true copy from all the false ones"? Note that the question does not just concern how we can know whether a particular experience is veridical or not. The mere fact that we do not possess stringent criteria internal to the experience itself that distinguish veridical experiences from non-veridical experiences, constitutes weak ground by which to defend Berkeley. This is precisely the problem with Winkler's reconstruction above—the materialist can easily just insist that knowing which sensible features are veridical and which are illusory is not a matter to be determined by the senses themselves. Rather, the worry is about the plausibility of an account of perception that is led to this resting place by its initial materialist commitments. The materialist is now in the following position—we are always, in accordance with *SA*, aware of some sensible feature or another. With the slightest change in viewing conditions, which sensible feature we are aware of changes.

Let us assume that there is some extremely limited viewing conditions under which, unknown to us merely on the basis of our senses, we are aware of the genuine sensible features that inhere in mind-independent objects. We end up with a view on which for the vast majority of our perceiving lives, the material world is in fact invisible to us. If it is true that material objects can only ever instantiate a single sensible quality without undergoing any change, yet also true that the particular sensible qualities we are aware of are constantly fleeting, we can, at best, be said to have only fleeting access to the material world. But this is where the severe implausibility of the materialist proposal becomes a substantive problem for the materialist herself. The materialist finds herself so committed to the existence of a stable material world *precisely because* she thinks she has access to this stable world through the senses. If the materialist, just in order to maintain her view that sensible qualities inhere in material objects, is forced into the position in which she must concede that we *only* have fleeting access to this supposedly stable mind-independent world in which material objects have their sensible features in a secure and steady way, then she has lost precisely the evidence upon which she built her commitment to this stable world.⁴¹

looking round is just to be explained in terms of the subject being aware of an instance of roundness. We will return to this at the start of the next section.

⁴¹Smith (2002) develops a similar reading of the argument from illusion.

The Restriction to Minds and Bodies

The last stage of the argument is fairly quick. On the proposal we are currently considering, perceiving subjects are aware of sensible features that are not features *of* a mind-independent object. Does this entail that these instances are then mind-dependent? Berkeley seems to think so. One can see why Berkeley would conclude that sensible instances that do not inhere in material objects must be mind-dependent, if we recognize that SA commits us to a view on which there exists a sensible item of awareness every time the perceiver has an experience. The availability of such a sensible feature is easy to explain in cases in which the sensible feature inheres in an ordinary mind-independent object. This object causes the perceiver's experience and is also the bearer of the feature that the perceiver is aware of, so it is expected that there will be such a coincidence between the having of an experience and the availability of a suitable sensible object of awareness. However, in cases in which the perceiver's experience is not itself caused by the presence of an object that has the relevant sensible features, one might wonder *how* it can still be the case that there is always a relevant sensible item present for the perceiver to be aware of. The only plausible explanation for the existence of a sensible feature, in cases in which we cannot appeal to the mind-independent object as both the cause of the experience and the bearer of the sensible quality, is for the existence of the sensible instance to itself depend on the perceiver's awareness of it. The mind-dependence of the sensible feature, then, provides the only plausible explanation for how a sensible feature exists for the perceiver to be aware of.⁴²

We are finally at the stage where we can present the most compelling version of the relativity arguments. If we grant that every time an object looks *F*, the perceiver must be aware of an instance of *F*, then the undeniable phenomenon of perceptual relativity forces us to the conclusion that we are in most viewing conditions only aware of mind-dependent sensible features. Now, this concession gets us to the conclusion that all sensible features are mind-dependent only by undermining the very motivation the materialist had to insist that sensible features are mind-independent.

⁴²Parallel reasoning is employed in the argument from hallucination. Once you have a guaranteed that all perception must have a sensible item of awareness, we must either appeal to the object that causes the experience to be the bearer of the item, or we must appeal to the mind—if we appeal to the latter, this renders those items mind-dependent.

For the materialist was motivated to insist that there is a material world only because she thought we had perceptual evidence for a world of persistent entities that bear their qualities in a stable manner. But now, the materialist has been forced to concede that we get no such perceptual evidence at all—in perception, we only ever get ever changing sensible qualities, so insisting that one of them is perhaps a quality that resides in a supposedly permanent, material body that we have no perceptual evidence of, can be little more than stubborn insistence. The end result of the relativity arguments then, in the absence of perceptual evidence for the existence of a stable material realm, is such that the materialist can only demonstrate stubborn insistence if she wants to uphold her view. This strategy can be seen employed repeatedly in the *Dialogues* as a whole—when Hylas tries to provide non-sensory justification for the existence of material substance, then too, Philonous does not *prove* conclusively that there is no coherent non-sensory notion of matter; rather, he considers it sufficient to demonstrate that the materialist has little reason to be committed to the existence of matter. Having brought the materialist to this position, Philonous then introduces idealism as the commonsensical alternative that can conceive of the world in just the way as perception presents it as being.

5.3 APPEARANCES TO THE RESCUE

Despite the pervasively dismissive response that commentators have had to Berkeley's relativity arguments, little has been said that adequately responds to the dialectical situation we have reached. One might try to maintain *Sensible Awareness* and still deny that the perceiver is aware of different shapes from different viewing conditions. One might suggest that when a round coin looks angular to a subject, she is only aware of its genuine shape—roundness—but, for one reason or another, she forms a false belief about the shape she is perceptually presented with.⁴³ But this account is phenomenologically and epistemically unsatisfying. There are clearly cases of illusion in which the illusory property is *phenomenally* present to the subject in exactly the same way as a genuine property is presented in a veridical experience. When perceiving the two lines in Müller-Lyer illusion, say, the lengths of the two equal lines are phenome-

⁴³This is the kind of account suggested by Martin (2010).

nally presented as being unequal in exactly the same way as the lengths of two genuinely unequal lines would be presented as unequal. Furthermore, the lines are presented as unequal even once one is fully aware of the nature of the illusion and knows that the lines are in fact of the same length. If one insists that the lines in the case of the Müller-Lyer illusion are phenomenally presented to the subject as *equal*, then what is phenomenally presented to a subject has been divorced from our ordinary notion of phenomenology as what is available from the first-person perspective. Separating what we are presented with from what is accessible from the first-person perspective makes it the case that we are alienated from our own phenomenology.

Instead, one might insist that the subject is only ever aware of the coin's roundness, but that roundness is presented to the perceiver *in different ways* from different viewpoints. This is a promising approach and will, on a particular interpretation of it, lead us to the view I want to defend in this section. First, however, I want to point out that the most natural interpretation of this suggestion will not do. We have two experiences: in one, the object looks round; in the other, the object looks angular. *Sensible Awareness* requires that the sensible features of which the perceiver is aware account for the phenomenal character of the two experiences. Given that one experience presents the object as looking round and the other presents the coin as looking angular, we must be able to find different sensible features in the two cases to explain this difference in phenomenology. If the sensible features that the perceiver is aware of do not vary across these two cases—if the perceiver is aware of roundness in both cases—then the motivation for *Sensible Awareness* is not respected. If we are only aware of roundness in both cases, then what really determines the phenomenology of the experience is the *way* in which we are aware of a sensible item, not the item itself. But on the most natural parsing, the *way* in which a perceiver is aware of an item is not itself part of what the perceiver is aware of, and therefore, *Sensible Awareness* is violated.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Also, the most common way (though this is not the way that someone like John Campbell intends the third place of his relation to be interpreted, see Campbell (2002)) in which such a proposal has been developed is to offer a mind-dependent analysis of the *ways* in which a mind-independent property can be presented. On this approach, the conscious character of our phenomenology is rendered fully mind-dependent. For those of us who are interested in defending the claim that the conscious character of experience is determined by the mind-independent world, this proposal will not do. In

So far, I've been arguing that Berkeley's relativity arguments are in fact quite threatening. At this stage, one might conclude that Berkeley's arguments and the conclusions we have drawn out are themselves ample reason for rejecting *Sensible Awareness*. Instead, in the following section, I want to suggest that *Sensible Awareness* is not itself the culprit. Rather, the problem lies with the particular sensible items that Berkeley chooses when he describes the items of perceptual awareness.

In my reconstruction of the relativity arguments, I suggested that appealing to a thesis like *Sensible Awareness* seems to give Berkeley the resources he needs to conclude that in genuine cases of relativity, the perceiver is aware of distinct shape properties, all of which cannot be instantiated by the mind-independent object. I then suggested that there is no good way for the materialist to insist that one of these shapes genuinely inheres in the mind-independent object while conceding the mind-dependence of the others, given that this concession undermines the very motivations for materialism.

Of course we have an extremely strong belief that objects have unique shapes that persist through time. The materialist is right about this. Yet, Berkeley is right that the primary ground for this belief, if it is to be justified, must indeed come from perception. Unlike Berkeley, I do not think that the conclusion we came to at the end of the last section, namely the conclusion that we are only ever aware of fleeting ideas, is commonsensical—but we seem to have ended up in a position where we are forced to accept this counterintuitive conclusion. Where along the way did we go wrong? I want to suggest that the mistake in the reasoning that I have presented so far comes quite early. We started out with the perfectly natural thought that objects look different to us from different vantage points. This point is hard to deny.⁴⁵ I then suggested that we should also try to hold on to *Sensible Awareness* in order to offer the most straightforward explanation

other words, even if it manages to strictly avoid the conclusion of Berkeley's relativity argument, it still fares poorly at defending the claim that the mind-independent world shows up to us in perception.

⁴⁵Some recent defenders of a relational view have tried to offer a minimalist account of the change in perceptual experience as you change your viewpoint. Schwenkler, in a paper titled "Against Perspectivalism" (draft) argues for a view on which we can explain the changes in visual experience (of shape) merely by appeal to which spatial relations we are aware of. However, the problem with this sort of approach is that it does not explain why the *object* looks different to us as we move around it.

of the phenomenological fact that experience seems to relate us to objects and their sensible features. But, when combining these two perfectly legitimate starting points, we concluded that when x looks F to a subject, she must be aware of an instance of F -ness. In this section, I want to argue that F -ness is the wrong candidate for which sensible feature a perceiver is aware of when an object looks F to her. Rather, I want to suggest that perceivers are directly aware of looks, or more broadly, *appearances*. This will be the key move to escape the conclusion of Berkeley's arguments.

To outline the path of resistance: I will argue that when o looks F from one viewpoint and looks G from a distinct viewpoint, the subject is aware of two sensible appearances, both of which are mind-independent properties of o . On our earlier reconstruction, we ruled out the option that both sensible instances could be mind-independent because we assumed that the only sensible candidates that could serve as items of awareness were absolute shape properties like roundness and angularity. It is true that a mind-independent object cannot be both absolutely round and absolutely angular. But once we broaden the candidate properties that we may be aware of in perception to include not only shapes, but also shape appearances, we will realize that one and the same object can instantiate different shape appearances. This is because shape appearances, unlike shapes, are not instantiated by an object absolutely, but rather they are instantiated by objects *relative* to a set of viewing conditions.

To develop this response, there are three steps I will take in the remainder of this section. First, I will demonstrate that treating such perceptions as making the perceiver aware of sensible appearances is in fact the most phenomenologically compelling analysis to provide of the cases under consideration. Second, I intend to offer support for the claim that appearances can be mind-independent properties of objects. And finally, I aim to show that an object can instantiate *multiple* mind-independent appearances in virtue of the fact that appearances are properties that objects instantiate only relatively. If these three goals are achieved, we will have found a way out of Berkeley's relativity arguments that does not require us to give up *Sensible Awareness*.

5.3.1 *Sensible Appearances and Phenomenology*

Remember that the phenomenological motivation for *Sensible Awareness* rests on how experience seems to present us with objects and their qual-

itatively rich properties. In our original reconstruction of Berkeley's arguments, we did justice to *Sensible Awareness* by arguing that the shape property the perceiver is aware of changes as the perceiver changes her vantage point on the object. But, on further reflection, we should view this claim with some suspicion. It does not seem phenomenologically accurate to describe an experience in which a round coin looks angular as an experience in which we are presented with an instance of angularity. Rather, and this point is clearly emphasized by the literature on perceptual constancy, as we change our viewpoint upon the object, it normally does *not* seem as if the object changes in shape. If we were aware of the coin's roundness from a distance, we take ourselves to still be aware of the coin's roundness as we move it closer to the eye or as we rotate it in space. The most natural explanation for why the shape of the coin does not seem to change is that we are normally also aware of the change in spatial relations that we bear to the coin as we move the coin while remaining stationary ourselves. Our perceptual experience of the coin head-on, or our experience of the coin when tilted or when viewed under a microscope all reveal to us the coin's genuine roundness and no other shape property. In line with this observation, most theorists of perception insist that the claim that was commonly attributed to earlier sense-datum theorists like Hume and Berkeley and Russell, that objects appear to change their shapes as we change our perspective on them, is just phenomenologically implausible.⁴⁶

But denying that the shape of the object seems to change is compatible with the acknowledgment that how object's shape looks is different from different viewpoints. A similar point can be made in the case of color experience. As the lighting conditions change in a room, it is both true that the color of the object does not seem to change, *and* that how the object's color looks changes. How can we accommodate both of these phenomenological observations?

As I have already briefly suggested when discussing a potential re-

⁴⁶Whether the sense-datum theorists themselves held this view or not is an interpretive question that I will not answer here. As a typical example of statements that are often attributed as evidence of such phenomenologically undesirable commitments, here's Russell (2001): "But the 'real' shape is not what we see; it is something inferred from what we see. And what we see is constantly *changing in shape* as we, move about the room; so that here again the senses seem not to give us the truth about the table itself. . ." (my emphases)

sponse to the relativity arguments, the most standard response in the face of these dual phenomenological observations, has been to argue for a hybrid view on which perceptual experiences have two kinds of features—the first kind of feature is sensational and is meant to capture how an object looks different as we move around it or as the lighting conditions change; the latter is representational and this kind of feature captures how the shape or color of the object itself does not seem to change across the changes in viewpoint.⁴⁷ The latter component of experience presents the shapes and colors and sizes of the objects around us, while the former captures the *ways* in which these sensible features can be presented. This response, however, is deeply puzzling. Why think that the changes in how the object look cannot themselves be part of what is represented by the experience? It is true that we often focus on the unchanging shapes and colors but there is no reason to assume that the representational content of our experiences must necessarily be restricted to such unchanging features. If we attend to how things look different as we change our viewpoint upon the object, there must be something in the content of the experience that reflects these changes.

A related way to express this puzzlement is by appeal to the fact that the objectual character of our phenomenology seems to extend not just to the unchanging shapes and colors that experience makes us aware of but also to the changing appearances that these objects have. One may appeal to features of the subject or of the relation of experiencing in order to explain cases like blurry vision, but those resources seem manifestly inadequate in the cases under discussion. This is because it is the *object* itself or the scene presented that looks different, not our experience or our relation to the object or presented scene. Unlike blurriness, which seems on the face of it to be a feature of the experiencing relation, rather than the object experienced, the relevant features in this case are perceived, just as much as the shape, size, color etc., as features of the scene experienced. A hybrid approach tries to explain the change in how objects look with the same resources it employs for cases of blurriness or haziness etc. but the moment the analogy is made explicit, it reveals the shortcomings of the approach.

What we really need is some features of the scene presented that *do* change even though the shapes and colors presented do not change. For

⁴⁷See for example, Peacocke (1983).

this, we must broaden our conception of which features are presented to us in experience. This is where the appeal to sensible appearances becomes necessary. If we can argue that what changes with a change in viewing conditions is not the real color and shape that the object has but the color and shape appearances that it possesses, this would give us the most accurate account of the phenomenology of the experiences.

I will go on to spell this out in much more detail, but the general idea is this: a round coin has a number of distinct shape appearances, such that an awareness of any of these appearances can be a way for us to be aware of the real shape of the coin. For example, when we look at a coin that is tilted, we recognize that the way the coin looks is the way that round coins look when viewed from the angle that we are currently viewing it from. Being aware of this appearance, then, is a perfectly good way for us to become aware of its genuine shape, just so long as we are cognizant of the particular viewpoint from which we are viewing the coin. Similarly, when we look at the coin head on, the way the coin looks to us is *also* just the way round coins look given the particular viewpoint we occupy when we look at it head on. Importantly, non-round objects can look the very same way when viewed from an unusual viewpoint. To broaden the set of cases, we can illustrate this in the case of color. Consider the way a ripe tomato looks in normal daylight. Being aware of this appearance makes us aware of the red color of the tomato. However, if we look at the tomato under fluorescent lighting, it will have a distinct appearance, an awareness of which can also grant us awareness of the red color of the tomato just so long as we know that we are viewing the object in special lighting. Now, the appearance that a ripe tomato has in normal lighting is not unique to red objects. That very appearance can be possessed, say, by an orange traffic cone in strange lighting conditions. As long as we are aware of how lighting conditions affect the color of objects, being aware of the appearance that an orange object has in such lighting—an appearance that it shares, say, with red objects in ordinary daylight—can be a perfectly good way to become aware of the real orange color of the traffic cone. Note the superficial similarity between this approach and that described above. Both suggest that one and the same shape or color property can be presented in different ways. On my view, however, the ways in which a color or shape property can be presented are themselves properties of the objects themselves.

The erroneous move that Berkeley makes, then, is to conclude from

the fact that we describe the coin as looking angular to the conclusion that there is an instance of *angularity* that the perceiver is aware of. We could not do justice to the fact that we can rely on either experience to come to know the shape of the coin *if* the sensible properties we are aware of in each experience are actual roundness and actual angularity. Being aware of an instance of angularity cannot be a way to get onto the real shape of the coin, because roundness and angularity are contraries. Being presented with an instance of roundness and an instance of angularity is being presented with two candidate shapes, *only one of which* can be instantiated by the coin. In other words, treating shape properties as the items of awareness makes it the case that only one kind of experience can hook us up with the real shape of the coin. What I have been suggesting so far is that this is misguided. Looking at a coin from a variety of viewpoints can both serve as perfectly good ways for us to get onto the real shape.

Therefore, we must conclude that the more phenomenologically accurate conclusion is that there are several appearances that the perceiver can be aware of in virtue of which she can, under the right circumstances, become aware of the circularity of the coin. Even when the perceiver has an experience of the coin, which we describe as the coin *looking angular* to her, it is phenomenologically and epistemically appropriate to conclude that the perceiver is aware of an appearance that the coin has, in virtue of which, under the right circumstances, she is aware of the circularity of the coin.

A question arises at this stage: why do we describe the coin as looking *angular* if there is no instance of angularity for the perceiver to be aware of? I will return to this question shortly, but first, we must get more clarity on what it even means for a coin to have sensible appearances. It is to this question that I will now turn my attention.

5.3.2 *Mind-Independent Appearances*

Consider the following statements:

1. Many Braques have the look of a Picasso painting.
2. The couch in the furniture store looks blue.
3. Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas has the appearance of antiquity.

The above statements are statements about the appearances of things. We often talk about how something looks or how something appears in order to describe what we have evidence to believe. I might say that the couch looks blue in order to indicate that I believe that the couch is blue. But I can also use appearance locutions in non-evidential ways. I can state that the couch looks blue even though I know that it is beige. There is an extensive literature about how to understand the semantics of non-evidential looks statements. Some have argued that statements such as “the tomato looks red,” at least sometimes, require us to interpret “looks red” as picking out a distinctive phenomenal property, either of the tomato or someone experiencing the tomato. Others have argued that we can adequately explain all non-evidential uses without any special appeal to phenomenal looks statements. The most compelling alternative is to interpret such statements in comparative ways, as stating nothing more than the fact that the tomato looks the way red things do. Here, I am not interested in defending the need for one semantic analysis over another. Given that I introduce the notion of objective appearances in order to propose a solution to Berkeley’s relativity arguments, my motivations are not semantically motivated. It could perfectly well be the case that sensible appearances are phenomenally rich properties even though all our ordinary uses of looks statements can be understood in comparative terms.⁴⁸

So can we think about appearances in objective terms? Many have thought that the only plausible way in which we can treat *objects* as the bearers of appearances is to think of them as dispositions to cause certain experiences in us.⁴⁹ In contrast to this, I want to argue that we ought to think of appearances as categorical properties that objects have, properties that are distinct from, but serve as the grounds for any dispositions an

⁴⁸For a discussion of the semantics and metaphysics of looks, see Chisholm (1959); Jackson (1977); Byrne, (2009); Martin (2010).

⁴⁹See, for example, Shoemaker (1994). Shoemaker works through different ways to understand appearances—he considers dispositional options and the occurrent options. With respect to the latter option, he considers thinking of a red appearance as being the property of currently causing some kind of experience in a perceiver. Even though this option is non-dispositional, it still exhibits the feature I describe below of treating the experience rather than the object itself as the bearer of qualitative richness. Egan (2006) and Brogaard (2010) also develop views of appearances properties as centered properties. As far as I can tell, centered properties of the sort that Egan and Brogaard are interested in will still be properties that make essential reference to perceivers.

object may have to produce experiences in us. On the view of appearances I am interested in developing, having a certain appearance—call it a *B*-appearance for the time being—is what explains why the couch looks blue to a perceiver. The looks that objects have will be prior to how objects look to any subject.

Most have assumed that appearances can only be understood in dispositional terms because of a fundamental starting assumption about the source of qualitative character. In particular, most philosophers of mind have assumed that all qualitative character ultimately resides in the mind. It is our experiences that have bright and vivid qualitative properties while the world itself is “schematic and bloodless”. On such a view, colors themselves are microphysical or dispositional properties that objects have and the brightness and vivacity that we associate with colors are features not of the colors themselves, but rather, of our *experiences* of colors. Now, many of the very same philosophers grant that when we talk about how things look, we are making reference to qualitatively rich properties. But if the world is devoid of any such properties, the only way to make sense of such talk is to analyze it in dispositional terms. To describe an object as looking blue, given such a background assumption, could only be to ascribe it a disposition to produce a qualitatively rich experience in us.

But there has been sparse argument provided to defend the assumption that only the mind can be the source of qualitative character. Furthermore, our ordinary talk about how things look does not seem as dependent on perceptual experience as it is taken to be by the straightforward dispositionalists. Austin famously points this out in his observation that a claim about how petrol looks is a claim not about me, but about petrol.^{50 51} The first half of this dissertation has argued that we *can* indeed think of *both* the mind and the world as sources of qualitative character. So, why not treat these appearances, not as dispositions to produce qualitatively rich states in perceivers, but rather as themselves qualitatively rich properties of objects?

If we think of appearances as themselves qualitative, then we can treat appearances as categorical properties that objects have independent of being perceived. Objects just look a certain way, and their looking this

⁵⁰ Austin (1964).

⁵¹ See Byrne (2006); Shoemaker (2006) for a clear formulation of the two ways in which one can conceive of qualitative character.

way has nothing to do with their being perceived by us. The categorical appearances that objects have can still serve as the grounds of certain dispositions, but they are no longer analyzed as *mere* dispositions. When one perceives such appearances, one may indeed have an experience that is itself qualitatively rich, but the fact that the object is disposed to cause these sorts of qualitative experiences in us is grounded in the fact that it has a categorically qualitative nature itself.

Furthermore, if we want to make use of sensible appearances in order to provide an account of perception that is compatible with *Sensible Awareness*, we *cannot* give a dispositional analysis of the appearances themselves. If we did, we would find ourselves in the following dialectical position: Given the relational view of perception implied by *Sensible Awareness*, it follows that the qualitative character of experience is determined by the properties of the items perceived; but given a dispositional view of appearances, the properties perceived are dispositions to produce qualitatively rich experiences. But now we have a scenario in which the experience has no qualitative character independent of the qualitative character of its objects, and in which the object has no character independent of our experience of it. To avoid such a circular account, we must conclude that the properties the perceivers are aware of are a) categorical, and b) qualitative.

5.3.3 *Relational Appearances*

So far, I have suggested that we should think about appearances as qualitative, categorical properties that are instantiated by mind-independent objects.⁵² However, there is an additional feature that objective appearances have. When appearances are instantiated by ordinary objects in the external world, they are instantiated *relative to* a set of viewing conditions. Given that a green table can both look green in one kind of lighting and look blue in a different lighting, appearance properties are distinct from

⁵²One might worry that treating objective appearances as the items of perceptual awareness leaves the colors and shapes of objects beyond our perceptual ken. I do not think this is an implication of the view. Whether it follows or not depends on what one thinks the relation is between the objective appearances and the traditional sensible qualities like color and shape. Discussing this in depth lies outside the scope of this chapter, but very briefly: If the colors and shapes of objects are made manifest through objective appearances, then in perceiving objective appearances, we are thereby perceiving the colors and shapes of objects as well. On such an approach, there is no other way to perceive the sensible qualities, if not by perceiving how they appear.

the ordinary sensible properties that the table has. The table cannot both *be* blue and green, regardless of lighting, even though it can both look blue and look green in different lighting. An object cannot both *be* round and circular (unless of course the object actually undergoes a physical change) but it can both look round and look circular. It is only relative to normal lighting condition that a green object instantiates, say, a *G*-appearance. Relative to blue lighting, however, the object may instantiate a different appearance, say a *B*-appearance. The object instantiates both appearances, but it instantiates each only relatively. Similarly with shape: a many-sided object can look polygonal from two feet away but circular from a thousand feet away. The object has only one real shape in all circumstances, but it can instantiate a variety of appearances relative to different viewing locations.⁵³ Furthermore, objects can share appearances without sharing a color or shape. A white table and a red table may share the property of instantiating an *R*-appearance just so long as they instantiate this property relative to distinct conditions. Similarly, a circular coin and an elliptical disc may share the property of looking oval but, again, they instantiate this property in distinct conditions.⁵⁴

I have introduced locutions like “instantiates a *B*-appearance” or “instantiates an *R*-appearance” to indicate that there is an appearance property that is in fact instantiated by the object when we describe it as looking blue or looking round. But how should we connect this up with our looks talk? For example, what is the content of the assertion that the coin *looks angular*? This is where a comparative understanding of looks statements seems appropriate. When we describe a coin as looking round, what we intend to convey is that the coin instantiates an appearance (which we can call an *R*-appearance) that round objects instantiate relative to standard or paradigmatic viewing locations (which are say, locations that are at a safe head-on distance from the object in question). Similarly, when we say that the coin looks angular, we mean that the coin instantiates an appearance

⁵³If we think of higher-level appearances, it may not be evident that “looking antique” or “having the appearance of a Picasso” are relative properties in the way that “looking square” or “looking blue” are. But, higher-level properties of the former kind are ultimately understood in terms of lower-level properties of the latter kind, and therefore inherit their perspectival nature as well.

⁵⁴Note that appearances being relative or relational is compatible with their categoricity. Categoricity is opposed to hypotheticality, while relationality is opposed to intrinsicity. See Yablo (1992, 1999).

(which we can call an *A*-appearance), which angular objects instantiate relative to paradigmatic or standard viewing locations. Now, assuming the coin in question is *not* angular, but round, that coin will instantiate an *A*-appearance relative to non-paradigmatic viewing locations. But we still describe the object's appearances by appeal to the non-relative property that objects have when they instantiate the relevant appearance in normal viewing conditions. Our looks statements are comparative in nature—we do not have a rich, autonomous vocabulary of terms that modify appearances themselves, but we rely on the non-relative sensible qualities to obliquely pick out the appearances that we are interested in making an assertion about.

Treating appearances as the items of perceptual awareness also explains the dual phenomenological observations that we pointed out earlier. A coin can look angular without looking to be angular because the coin can instantiate the appearance that angular objects instantiate, but in non-paradigmatic viewing conditions. As long as the subject is aware of the abnormality of the viewing conditions, she will recognize that the object she is viewing is *not* angular even though it currently instantiates the very same appearance that angular objects instantiate in paradigmatic viewing conditions. If for some reason, the perceiver fails to recognize that the viewing conditions are abnormal, then her experience will be genuinely misleading. For on such an occasion, she will perceive the appearance that angular objects instantiate in paradigmatic viewing conditions and assume that the object she is viewing must thereby *be* angular. Therefore, in normal scenarios in which perceivers are aware of the conditions in which they are viewing objects, objects can look *F* without looking to be *F*. It is only when they are misled about the nature of the viewing conditions that they will take the fact that the object looks *F* as evidence for the object's being *F*.⁵⁵

5.4 CONCLUSION

Let me recap. I have suggested that mind-independent appearances are qualitative, categorical properties that objects instantiate relative to a set of conditions. In the case of color, a specification of the conditions includes, at

⁵⁵The literature on perceptual constancy demonstrates that the viewing conditions are rarely something the perceiver needs to *explicitly* attend to in conscious experience.

a minimum, a specification of lighting conditions. In the case of shape, the relativizing conditions will be different—they will include a specification of viewing locations and angles. Of course, much work needs to be done to specify what the complete set of relevant conditions may be. For our purposes, however, it is sufficient to have clarified that appearances, when instantiated by material objects, are instantiated relative to a set of viewing conditions, whatever those conditions turn out to be.

In our discussion of Berkeley's relativity arguments, I have shown that an appeal to sensible appearances allows us to resist Berkeley's conclusion about the mind-dependence of the items of awareness. It should be clear now how such a response works. When the subject has an experience in which the coin looks circular to her, she is aware of an *appearance* that the coin instantiates relative to a particular location L1. When the subject perceives the coin from up close, she is aware of a distinct appearance that the coin instantiates relative to a distinct viewing location L2. Both appearances can be instantiated by the coin just so long as they are instantiated by the coin relative to distinct viewing locations. Therefore, there is no obstacle to treating both appearances as robustly objective. In this way, we can resist the conclusion that the items we are aware of in experience must be mind-dependent.

We have seen that Berkeley is not guilty of any simple errors of reasoning and that the "relativity" arguments are worthier opponents to the naïve view of perception than has been traditionally assumed. Despite this fact, I have shown that we can resist Berkeley's conclusion by arguing that objective appearances are the genuine items of perceptual awareness. Just as in the case of the argument from hallucination, resisting the argument allows us to hold on to the thesis that perception fundamentally involves an awareness of objects; and furthermore, that the objects of *ordinary* perception are always constituents of the ordinary mind-independent world.

As I have already mentioned, the contemporary literature in the philosophy of perception has been transformed into a fundamentally revisionary enterprise. Two arguments have resulted in this transformation: the argument from hallucination and the argument from illusion (of which Berkeley's relativity arguments are but an instance). The key move that both arguments make is to rely on considerations from delusive cases of perception to exert pressure on our account of ordinary, veridical perception. The basic insight behind this strategy is that delusive perceptions—illusions

and hallucinations—are phenomenologically just like ordinary cases of sensing and so must be given the same analysis.

At each step in my argument against this line of reasoning, I have shown that the underlying metaphysics that the revisionists rely on is faulty. In the first half of the dissertation, I argued that sensible qualities are in fact ontologically flexible qualities insofar as they have disjunctive conditions on instantiation. Such qualities can either inhere in material bodies or serve as the objects of a perceiver's awareness. This led us to the conclusion that the instances of sensible qualities we are aware of in ordinary perception are over-determined; for their existence is secured *both* by the material bodies they inhere in *and* by the perceptual acts for which they are the proper objects. And so we can explain the phenomenological identity of veridical perceptions and hallucinations in terms of which sensible qualities they make us aware of, while insisting that the instances in the veridical case are mind-independent (given that they are over-determined) even though the hallucinated instances are not.

In this chapter, we have gained a clearer sense of *which* sensible qualities we are aware of in veridical and delusive perceptions. On the basis of considerations from illusion and conflicting appearances, I have shown that we are, in the first instance, aware of sensible appearances. Once again, I have argued that the standard understanding of the metaphysical nature of these qualities is faulty. Appearances are not mental entities, nor are they dispositions to produce experiences; rather, they are qualitatively imbued properties that objects instantiate relative to certain viewing conditions. To unify the two halves of the dissertation, we must now interpret the claims made in Chapters 2 and 3 as applicable to sensible appearances, in the very same way as they were applicable to the colors and shapes that were the focus of our investigation in those chapters. Appearances—as a sub-class of sensible qualities—will also have ontologically flexible natures that allow them to have both material and mind-dependent instances.

Having defended the view that ordinary perception puts us in contact with the mind-independent appearances of ordinary material objects, we can finally shift our focus to the epistemological role that perception plays in our cognitive lives. In the introduction, I already suggested that a defense of naïve realism would naturally put the threat of skepticism to rest, once and for all. There are, however, other questions that arise concerning our epistemic and conceptual access to the world. One question we must ask is how much we can know about the material world if

perception reveals to us, not how objects are absolutely, but how they are in relation to an environment of which we ourselves are a part. Another natural question concerns our concepts of the material and the mental: if both the mind and the material world can secure the instantiation of qualitatively rich sensible qualities, we can no longer distinguish the two realms on grounds of which is the natural home for the qualitative. Rather, we must explore other aspects of the material world—in particular, its stable existence across space and time—to explain what is distinctive about our conception of a mind-independent, physical universe. This approach would give veridical perception a unique, though non-phenomenological, role to play in explaining how we form a concept of a stable world that endures beyond our experience of it; for it is only this class of experiences that puts us in touch with instances of sensible qualities that continue to exist beyond our perceptions of them. But further investigation of such matters must be left for another day. The task of this project was to create the metaphysical room that is a necessary precondition for the consideration of such concerns, and this task is now completed.

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