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Transparency in Perceptual Experience

By

Austin Carter Andrews

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in

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in the

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University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

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Abstract

Transparency in Perceptual Experience

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Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

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Perceptual experience, and visual experience in particular, is often held to be 'transparent' in that when you try to focus on your experience you find that you can only focus on the subject matter of your experience. For example, when you look at your hand and try to focus on your visual experience of it, it is natural to admit that the only thing you find yourself able to focus on is your hand. But, of course, hands and visual experiences are two quite different things. In this way your experience, but not your hand, is transparent to you. In the dissertation I discuss the so-called transparency of experience at length.

The first half of the book aims to make the idea of transparency of philosophically precise. The results of this section of the book generate an understanding of transparency which differs in important ways from how transparency is typically understood in the literature. The second half of the book utilizes this understanding of transparency to query the philosophical significance of transparency. In this portion of the book I argue that transparency is not very illuminating when it comes to questions concerning the nature of perceptual experience. Most philosophers who write about transparency disagree with this and the reason for this is that most philosophers have a mistaken understanding of transparency. When one understands transparency properly, it is clear that the truth of transparency would have no direct impact on what we should say about the metaphysics of perceptual experience. I then argue that transparency is significant from an epistemological point of view. The basic thought I elaborate on is that if our perceptual experiences are transparent then they are first-personally elusive in the sense that when we, the subjects of experience, go to look for our perceptual experiences they are nowhere to be found. Thus transparency raises a number of puzzles concerning our ability to think and know about our own perceptual experiences given their elusiveness. After raising these puzzles I propose a solution to them which treats our understanding of visual experience as theoretical rather than as something which is given to us introspectively.

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I would also like to take this opportunity to give certain individuals the dubious distinction of being thanked by name. I acknowledge both those who have contributed directly to the present work as well as those who have had a more indirect impact by way of their general intellectual influence.

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All the mistakes contained in this book are, of course, my own.

Austin Andrews

Berkeley, California

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Introduction.

Extend your right hand and look at it. Consider its shape. Look to see whether there are any hairs on the knuckle of your ring finger. Admire each wrinkle. Given that you are able to do these things it is true of you that you are seeing your hand. Or, if you are suspicious of this, it is at least true of you that you are having a visual experience 'as of' your hand. Given that it is true of you that you are undergoing a visual experience of some manual kind, I want you now to focus on your visual experience. That is, move your consideration away from your hand and to your experience of it. Focus on your experience and its experiential features, rather than on your hand and its wrinkles.

It is tempting to suppose that it is impossible to follow these latter instructions. This is because when one does try to follow these instructions one ends up focusing on one's hand. But it is obvious that a hand is not the same thing as a visual experience of a hand. Thus, instead of finding what one is looking for, *viz.,* a visual experience, one finds something else, *viz.,* a hand.

I have introduced this idea using the example of a hand but the point is meant to be more general than that. That is, our efforts to fix on our visual experiences, be they of a hand or anything else, are in general frustrated. When we attempt to consider our experiences first-personally what we find is the world around us rather than some experiential indication of it in consciousness.

In the literature this idea is described by saying that visual experience is 'transparent'. The term traces back to Moore and many contemporary commentators are happy to point this out.[1] But it is often that discussions of transparency fail to appreciate that Moore used the term metaphorically in his description of perceptual experience. In ignoring this, discussions which describe perceptual experience as transparent and simply cite Moore fail to give a direct characterization of the relevant phenomenon. What is more, the metaphorical description which they do give has connotations which are, in my view, to be avoided. The term suggests that visual experience is something which you see through and so something which, presumably, is before the eyes. On this view, visual experience is a perfectly transparent pane of experiential glass through which the world is seen. This, suffice it to say, is difficult to make sense of. As such, I do not like the terminology of transparency very much. However, because it is a common label for the phenomenon with which I am concerned in this book I shall use the term despite my reservations.

The first aim of the book, dealt with over the course of the first two chapters, is to dispense with metaphor and state the thesis that experience is transparent with philosophical precision. The second aim of the book, taken up in the subsequent chapters, is to address the question of what, if anything, of philosophical significance would follow were it true that experience is transparent in the sense described in the opening chapters.

Treating the matter in this order is sensible from the point of view of systematic inquiry as one can only inquire fruitfully into the implications of something if it is reasonably well understood. However, taking things in this order does not make it obvious why it is worth making transparency precise and making a claim philosophically precise is worthwhile only if that claim shapes the way we think of our subject matter. So whether or not transparency is worth the work will depend on whether it has implications for our philosophical theories, a

1 Moore, (1903).

matter which I do not address directly until the third chapter. In light of this, it will be useful to précis the material of the second half of the book in order to motivate the first half.

The third chapter addresses whether transparency has any significance for theories of the nature of perceptual experience. While there is no consensus about what, exactly, transparency tells us about the nature of perceptual experience, there is wide agreement that transparency does tell us something about the metaphysics of experience. Thus there are the debates between qualia theorists and representationalists, the former contending that transparency is false and that its failure shows that there are qualia, the latter contending that transparency is true and that this shows that experience is fundamentally a matter of representing the world as being some way. The sense-datum and adverbial theories are sometimes dragged in and made to consider their falsity anew in light of their incompatibility with transparency. Then there are the naïve realists, insisting at the fringes that they are the true heirs of transparency. Against this I argue that transparency does not have any direct implications for this kind of theorizing about perceptual experience. I do this by showing that transparency is compatible with any possible view of the nature of perceptual experience. However, it is shown that there are certain explanatory constraints which all metaphysical theories of perceptual experience face that, when paired with transparency, arguably provide some reason to prefer certain views to others. The effect of this chapter is to deflate the significance of transparency for debates of this kind.

The fourth chapter addresses the loosely epistemological significance of transparency. Here I address the much less discussed question of how transparency impacts our conception of the way we are epistemically connected to visual experience. In particular, I focus on one's ability to think and know about one's own visual experiences in light of transparency. In contrast with the metaphysics of experience, I argue that transparency has serious and direct implications for the epistemology of perceptual experience. In particular, I argue that transparency calls into question certain aspects of our commonsense conception of how we are able to think and know about our visual experiences. I then argue that the revisions to our commonsense which transparency requires makes it difficult to see how we are able to think about our own visual experiences at all. Given that it is obvious that we are able to think in terms of visual experience, transparency raises a puzzle about one of the most basic categories with which we understand ourselves and others. In response to this puzzle I develop a way of thinking about the nature of our epistemic connection to our own visual experiences which is compatible with transparency and which explains our ability to think in terms of visual experience. The picture I suggest treats our understanding of ourselves as subjects of visual experience as a kind of theory that we apply to ourselves.

That transparency fails to make a direct impact on what we are to say about perceptual experience metaphysically and that transparency requires rethinking our epistemic connection to visual experience is why I think transparency is of philosophical interest and so why I think it is worth the trouble of philosophical precisification. Whether or not I am right in this contention will depend on the quality of the arguments which I give in this book and the reader is left to make their own assessment of this. But however the arguments are evaluated, I hope that the reader is able to see past them to the broader considerations which they confront.

I said that this book is concerned with the transparency of experience. The focus on transparency is, in a way, superficial. This is because, as I think of it, transparency is one entry point into the broader issue of the extent to which philosophical inquiry into perceptual

experience is first-personal or otherwise 'introspective'. This is because transparency is supposed to be a phenomenon which is available to one on the basis of first-personal reflection and which is a driver of philosophical theorizing about perception. From this point of view transparency confirms a picture of perceptual experience according to which first-personal reflection on experience constitutes an important mode of access to philosophical truths about perceptual experience.

The arguments of this book attempt to call this picture into question. They do this by arguing that transparency reveals that our first-personal access to visual experience is either too meager to do any interesting philosophical work or, more radically, that it shows that we simply do not have any interesting first-personal access to our own visual experiences. If our experiences elude us when we search for them first-personally, if all we find are the environmental objects of those experiences, then how could we have any interesting first-personal access to experience on which we could base our philosophical theories? From this point of view, theorizing about perceptual experience begins to look continuous with our theorizing in other domains where we do not suppose that we have any special first-personal access to our subject matter.

I do not pretend that the arguments of this book succeed in establishing these conclusions. But I do think that they are suggestive in that that they provide a jumping off point for reflection about the extent to which philosophical theorizing about perceptual experience should be understood as seeking form of self-understanding which is achievable 'from the inside'.

Chapter 1: Making Transparency Precise.

The question I will be pursuing in this chapter is what it would be for perceptual experience, and visual experience in particular, to be transparent. This question can be sensibly addressed without having to face the issue of whether or not experience is transparent and that is what I shall do in this chapter and in the chapters which follow.[1]

In arguing about perception philosophers have placed quite a lot of weight on the idea that perceptual experience is transparent. The most familiar example of this is the debate over whether there are qualia in perception.[2] But transparency has also been evoked in arguments for naïve realism, in discussions of perceptual epistemology and in discussions of perceptual content.[3] So transparency is a thesis of some importance to philosophers of perception. However, when one looks closely at the sort of discussions I have been mentioning, one sees that the phenomenon of transparency itself receives relatively little attention. Very often transparency is expressed in metaphorical terms, e.g. that one 'looks through' one's experience to what it is an experience of. Or, equally common, transparency is simply expressed by quoting G.E. Moore.[4] Given that a lot is supposed to hang on transparency, we should not be satisfied with metaphor or with quotations of enigmatic passages from a paper intending to refute idealism.

So what would an adequate expression of transparency look like? First, we need an understanding of the content of transparency which is spelled out non-metaphorically and in terms which are reasonably well defined. To understand the content of transparency is to understand what transparency claims about perceptual experience. Towards this I will argue that we should understand transparency as claiming that perceptual experience is such that in perception we are aware only of mind-independent elements, a claim which I clarify in detail below. Secondly, we need a better understanding of the way in which, or the level at which, the claim of transparency is meant to apply to perceptual experience. Talk of levels of analysis is common in psychology and philosophers sometimes characterize their theories in terms of the traditional three levels of psychological analysis.[5] However, philosophers of perception also discuss perception in ways which indicate a different scheme of levels of analysis. In particular, philosophers suppose that we can distinguish between the level of phenomenology, where this describes what experience is like, and the level of what grounds that phenomenology. So, for example, two theorists may agree that color is an aspect of visual phenomenology, i.e. that color partially characterizes what it is like to have a visual experience. However, these theorists may disagree about what accounts for this. For example, one theorist may think that color phenomenology is a matter of representing the colors in a distinctive perceptual way while the other theorist may account for color phenomenology by appeal to qualia or to a special kind of awareness which one bears to external colors. So while there is a level at which these theorists agree, there is clearly a level at which they disagree. One way of making sense of this situation is

1 For debate about whether perceptual experience is transparent see, e.g., Block (1996), Block (2010), Pace (2007) and Smith (2008).

2 See, e.g., Block (1996) and Tye (2014).

3 For transparency and naïve realism see Kennedy (2009) and Martin (2002). For transparency and perceptual epistemology see Evans (1982). For transparency and perceptual content see Speaks (2009).

4 See, e.g., Speaks (2009) p. 539.

5 For discussion of levels of analysis in psychology see, e.g., Marr (1982) and Pylyshyn (1984). For a philosophical discussion of this see Peacocke (1986).

to make a distinction between perception's *phenomenological* level and its *ontological* level. When we describe perception at the phenomenological level we aim to characterize what perception is like for its subject from the point of view of that subject. When we describe perception ontologically we aim to characterize perception's basic metaphysical structure, attempting to explain what perception consists in at the most fundamental level in a way which explains or otherwise illuminates our phenomenological characterization of perception. So the two theorists I have been discussing are in agreement about visual experience at the phenomenological level but are in disagreement about visual experience at the ontological level. In this chapter I will argue that the content of transparency concerns the mind-independence of perceived objects and that this should be understood as applying to perception at the phenomenological level rather than at the ontological level. In the course of arguing for this I give more detailed discussion to the distinction between perceptual experiences' phenomenological and ontological levels. Thus, by the end of the chapter we will have a precise account of the content of transparency and of the level at which it applies to perception.

Having set out my argumentative goals here is the plan for the chapter. In the first section of the chapter I will argue for the claim that we should understand transparency in terms of the mind-independence of perceived elements. In the second section of the chapter I draw the distinction between the phenomenological and ontological levels with more precision and argue that transparency should apply at the phenomenological rather than ontological level. In the third section of the chapter I consider a number of objections to my proposals and I defend against them. In fourth and final section of the chapter I set out a puzzle that my view of transparency generates. The burden of the second chapter is to respond to this puzzle.

I. Transparency and Mind-independence.

I have said that transparency is not very well understood by contemporary philosophers of perception. At the very least it is true that philosophical discussion has not been as precise about transparency as one would like. While philosophers have succeeded in drawing our attention to an interesting *phenomenon* they have not given us an adequate philosophical *description* of this phenomenon. The phenomenon of transparency is the one that I introduced in the preceding chapter. To recapitulate, it is the idea that when we try to consider our experiences themselves we inevitably consider the objects or subject matter of those experiences. Perhaps this is true, or perhaps it is not. To make a legitimate assessment of this matter, and to make a legitimate assessment of what the truth of transparency would or would not entail, we must first better understand the claim which transparency itself makes. To do this we need a description of transparency, a transparency thesis, which is philosophically precise and which accurately captures the spirit of the transparency phenomenon.

In this part of the chapter I am going to argue that the transparency phenomenon is best described by the following claim.

> [Transparency]: For any perceptual experience e, in having e all the subject of e is aware of are mind-independent elements.

Because [Transparency] includes a number of notions whose meaning are not perfectly obvious I will need to clarify the claim that [Transparency] makes before I can argue that it is the right

construal of the transparency phenomenon. In clarifying [Transparency] my focus will be on 'perceptual experience', 'mind-independence', 'awareness' and 'elements'.

I.I Perceptual experience.

Experiences are states of mind for which there is something it is like to be in that state of mind.[6] For example, there is something it is like to be in pain and there is something it is like to feel hungry. These cases of pain and hunger are thus experiences. Experiences are not limited to cases of bodily sensation. For example, there is, perhaps, something it is like to think that today will be particularly difficult.[7] While there may be debate about particular cases it would be strange to deny that there are any experiences.

Because it will be useful to be able to speak directly about the experiential aspect of experiences I will use the term 'phenomenology' and cognate terms like 'phenomenal character' to refer to that aspect of experiences which makes them such that there is something it is like to be in them. So, for example, because there is something it is like to be in pain, pain has phenomenology or has phenomenal character. To talk of the phenomenology or phenomenal character of pain is to talk of what it is like to be in pain.

Perceptual states of mind such as seeing, touching, hearing and so on, can be such that there is something it is like to undergo them. In such cases these states of mind have phenomenology and so are experiences. Perceptual experiences are thus perceptual states of mind which are also experiences. For example, there is something it is like for me to see the screen of my laptop as I write this chapter. In this case I am in a visual state of mind which is such that there it is something it is like for me to be in this state of mind. However, perceptual states of mind are not always experiences, or at least this is not obviously so. For example, information about the environment can be processed by the visual system and used to guide behavior even when this information is presented too briefly to generate a visual experience, so-called masked priming. In such cases it is natural to describe this situation as one where the subject is in a visual state of mind but where there is nothing it is like for the subject to be in that visual state of mind. That being said, it seems obvious that many perceptual states are perceptual experiences. [Transparency] applies only to those perceptual states of mind which are perceptual experiences. While my focus will often be on visual experience, [Transparency] is advanced as a quite general statement which is meant to apply to all perceptual experiences.[8]

I.II Mind-independence.

[Transparency] involves the notion of mind-independence. What does 'mind-independent' mean as it figures into the formulation of [Transparency]? Often the mind-independence of an item is understood in terms of the constitutive independence of that item from any mind. On such an understanding an item i is mind-independent if and only if i's existence and nature is constitutively independent of the experiences and other psychological responses of any subject.[9] In place of this, I will use a notion of mind-independence which is indexed to a particular mind as follows.

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6 For the 'what it is like' locution see Nagel (1974).

7 Tye (1995) denies that cognitive states have phenomenology. Horgan & Tienson (2002) hold that some cognitive states have phenomenology. For general discussion of this issue see Bayne & Montague (2011).

8 For discussion of this point see Kind (2003).

9 See, e.g., Allen (2016), chapter 1.

> [Mind-independence-for-S]: For all perceivers S and items i, i is mind-independent-for-S iff i's existence and nature is independent of the experiences and more general psychological responses of S.[10]

The reasoning behind utilizing a notion of mind-independence indexed to a particular perceiver is that this notion captures one way in which perception unfolds from the point of view of the perceiver. What is salient from the point of view of describing perceptual experience is that what I perceive, say a cup, is independent from me, not that it is independent from minds generally. Indeed, other people's thoughts, feelings and experiences are, in the relevant sense, aspects of my environment despite these things failing to be mind-independent simpliciter.

Although it has a complicated name and is expressed using some philosophical jargon, the core idea of [Mind-independence-for-S] is very straightforward. The thought is simply that the things I encounter in perception are such that they exist and are as they are in a way which is independent from my perception of them. When I see a mango it is natural to suppose that it exists in itself and that its nature is independent of my awareness of it. That is what mind-independence-for-S is meant to capture.

I.III Awareness.

The next term in [Transparency] in need of clarification is 'awareness'. I use 'awareness' to indicate the particular way in which things are presented to us in perception. In perceptual experience we are presented with the subject matter of our experience, what our experience concerns or is about, in a way which differs from how that subject matter would be presented were it to be, say, thought about it. For example, when I merely think about my dog laying at my feet my dog is in some sense present to my mind. She is, after all, what I am thinking about. However, if I glance down and see my dog laying at my feet she is thereby present to me in a way which differs from the way in which she is present to me in thought. While it is obvious that there is a profound difference in the way the subject matter of a psychological state is present in perceptual experience as compared to thought, it is very difficult to characterize this difference. One could try to describe the difference in terms of the idea that perceptual presence is more direct and visceral than cognitive presence. But such a description begs the question of what directness and viscerality are and it is not obvious how these questions are to be answered. However the difference is to be described, we can mark that there is such a difference by describing perceptual experience in terms of awareness and withholding the use of 'awareness' from our description of psychological states which are not marked by this variety of presence to mind. Two final comments about the notion of awareness I have been discussing.

First, it is tempting to think that the kind of awareness at issue requires the existence of what one is aware of and so that any psychological state which involves awareness is necessarily a relational state of mind. But it is not obvious that this is so. For example, it is natural to regard hallucinatory experiences as involving the kind of awareness I have been discussing even though such experiences might be rightfully described in terms of our being aware of nothing.[11] In having a hallucinatory experience of a red patch, the patch seems present to me in the way which is distinctive of perceptual presence. It is equally tempting to suppose that in such a case there is

10 Note that an item may be mind-independent-for-S but fail to be mind-independent simpliciter.

11 See, e.g., Harman (1990). Here I understand 'being aware of nothing' as the rejection of the relevant state's relational status, not as reifying nothing in such a way that one can be aware of it.

no actual red patch of which I am aware. Whether or not these two reactions to this case are compatible is a delicate matter and I do not propose to settle the issue here.

Secondly, and lastly, in speaking of awareness I remain neutral about how this awareness is to be analyzed philosophically, e.g. whether it must be treated as primitive or if it can be analyzed in more fundamental terms, e.g. representationally.[12] My contention is that it is still meaningful to speak of awareness even if one does not have its philosophical analysis ready to hand.

I.IV Elements.

I use 'elements' to refer to the things that one perceives, or, in the case of perceptual error, seems to perceive. Plausibly, the elements we encounter perceptually include, but are not exhausted by, objects (e.g. chairs), property instances (e.g. the pitch of a tone), relations (e.g. one object being to the left of another) and events (e.g. an object disappearing and then emerging from an occluder).

Having clarified the content of [Transparency] in this way it is not unreasonable to regard [Transparency] as being sufficiently sufficiently clear for purposes of assessment. I now turn to the question of whether [Transparency] provides an adequate construal of the phenomenon of transparency.

I.V [Transparency] as a correct construal of the phenomenon of transparency.

The strategy I will pursue in this sub-section is twofold. I will argue that [Transparency] is an adequate construal of the transparency phenomenon by (i) showing that [Transparency] captures the transparency phenomenon as I have introduced it and by (ii) showing that [Transparency] captures the way the transparency phenomenon is discussed by other philosophers in the literature. I begin with (i).

I.V.I [Transparency] captures the transparency phenomenon.

As I have mentioned, it is natural for us to make a distinction between our states of mind and what, if anything, those states of mind pertain to in the world. So, for example, it is natural to distinguish between my belief that Austin is the capital of Texas and the subject matter of my belief. The belief is a psychological state while its subject matter is a certain city in relation to a certain state. Things are much the same with perceptual states of mind. We find it natural to distinguish between one's seeing of the table and the table. The former is a psychological occurrence in the mind of a perceiver while the latter is a piece of furniture.

As I introduced the transparency phenomenon in the preceding chapter, transparency was explained in terms of our inability to access our perceptual experiences themselves. Instead of this, we appear only to have access to the object or subject matter of our perceptual experiences. When we attempt to consider our perceptual experiences in a first-personal way, we find that our consideration inevitably lands on the subject matter of our experiences, e.g. to a table. Our perceptual experiences are then transparency in the sense that our concern passes through them to their subject matter. How does [Transparency] capture this thought?

In the first instance, [Transparency] captures the idea that our first-personal consideration of perceptual experience is confined to consideration of perception's subject matter by insisting that in perception we are only aware of mind-independent elements. Though it is a delicate issue,

12 How one should analyze awareness philosophically will depend on, among other things, how one thinks of the considerations discussed in the previous paragraph. For discussion of the idea that awareness is primitive see, e.g., Campbell (2012). For discussion of the idea that awareness can be analyzed in representational terms see, e.g., Searle (1983).

there is plausibility to the thought that the intuitive distinction we draw between our perceptual states and what they pertain to in the world can be illuminated by the suggestion that an aspect of what distinguishes our perceptual states from what they pertain to is the mind-independence of the subject matter of perception.[13] What distinguishes our seeing of the table from the table is, at least in part, that the table is an aspect of the environment external to the mind. One way of characterizing this externality is in terms of the mind-independence of the environment. Thus, in insisting that perceptual experience only involves the awareness of mind-independent elements, [Transparency] conveys the idea that our first-personal access to perception is confined to perception's subject matter.

It seems to me that this is the core of the transparency phenomenon. What is striking about transparency is that it claims that in perceptual experience we are given an environment and that that is all we are given. Because [Transparency] provides us with a reasonably precise philosophical gloss on this thought, it seems to me to capture the target phenomenon very well. As we will see, [Transparency] also comports with how philosophers describe the transparency phenomenon.

I.V.II. [Transparency] captures the way the transparency phenomenon is described in the literature.

While [Transparency] adequately expresses the transparency phenomenon as I have described it, this may only be because my description of it is idiosyncratic. To guard against this it will be useful to consider how other philosophers have described the transparency phenomenon and to see whether [Transparency] fits with their descriptions. To do this I will consider how a number of philosophers have described the transparency phenomenon. While the following quotes do not exhaust the descriptions of transparency that can be found in the philosophical literature on perception, they are numerous enough to be comprehensive. After each quote I explain how [Transparency] captures the content of the quote. The result of this survey and the discussion of section I.V.I. is that [Transparency] provides a very attractive construal of the transparency phenomenon.

Jeff Speaks: "Transparency: Nothing is available to introspection other than the objects represented as in one's environment, and the properties they are represented as having."[14]

In describing transparency in terms of what perceptual experience represents, Speaks diverges from [Transparency]. However, this difference is somewhat superficial. This is because Speaks' use of representation, while theoretically loaded, is most fundamentally meant to draw our attention to *what* we find in perceptual experience. On Speaks' view elements make it into perceptual experience by being represented in a certain way, but this is inessential. So, what, according to Speaks, do we find when we turn our introspective attention to our perceptual experiences? The answer is that we find objects in our environment and the properties they

13 For discussion of this issue see Austin (1962), chapter 2. In particular, Austin is critical of the distinction, found in the sense-datum literature, between sense-data and material or physical objects. Because Austin finds the distinction to be without content and because the distinction is central to the articulation of sense-datum theories of perception, Austin contends that the debate surrounding sense-datum theories of perception is ill-posed. While this issue warrants much more discussion, one possibility for answering Austin's challenge lies in characterizing material objects in terms of their mind-independence.

14 Speaks, (2009), p. 3.

appear to have. Here the intended contrast is between environmental objects and properties, like trees and brownness, and mental objects and experiences and their properties.[15] So Speaks' construal of transparency comes to the claim that in examining our perceptual experiences introspectively we find only environmental objects and their properties. Given that it is plausible to draw the distinction between environment and one's mind in terms of the mind-independence of the former, [Transparency] seems to capture the quote from Speaks. One worry about this, however, might concern Speaks' inclusion of introspection in his description of transparency. Given that [Transparency] does not involve any mention of introspection does this not mark an important point of difference?

As I mentioned in the preceding chapter, I think that [Transparency] is a thesis which is available on the basis of first-personal reflection on experience, though I did not use the word 'introspection' to refer to this mode of reflection. This is because 'introspection' is liable to have a number of connotations which I do not wish to impute to what I described as first-personal reflection. By first-personal reflection on experience I mean that kind of reflection which an individual can engage in just in virtue of the fact that they are themselves a subject of experience and are cognitively competent. Is this introspection? Perhaps. Exactly how this first-personal reflection is to be understood theoretically is an interesting question. But it is a further question for my purposes. The basic point is simply that [Transparency] is a thesis which is available to individuals on the basis of this sort of first-personal reflection. So provided we understand Speaks' use of 'introspection' fairly thinly, I do not think it provides any deep contrast with [Transparency].

Related to this, it is important to note that the transparency phenomenon is in the first instance a phenomenon of perceptual experience, rather than introspection. That is to say, the transparency phenomenon concerns how perceptual experience is, rather than how introspection is. As such, [Transparency] is a thesis about perceptual experience, rather than a thesis about introspection. Of course, it may be that one can only access the transparency phenomenon via introspection, but this does not make the transparency phenomenon an introspective phenomenon. When I note that a distant mountain range is snow covered I may do this using binoculars. But that the mountain range is snow covered is a claim about the mountains, not the binoculars with which I note this fact. Much the same, in my view, regarding the transparency phenomenon and introspection.[16]

Gilbert Harman: "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. There is nothing special about Eloise's visual experience. When you see a tree, you do not experience any features as intrinsic features of your experience. Look at a tree and try to turn your attention to intrinsic features of your

15 Speaks does not make this distinction explicitly in the paper from which I am quoting. But his quotation of Harman, which I discuss below, makes it clear enough that this is the distinction he has in mind.

16 The same applies to the role of attention in expressing the transparency phenomenon. While many authors describe the transparency phenomenon in terms of attention, the transparency phenomenon is not itself an attentional phenomenon.

visual experience. I predict you will find that the only features there to turn your attention to will be features of the presented tree..."[17]

The focus of this oft-quoted passage from Harman is to make a distinction between what one does and does not find in perceptual experience. Again we find a contrast between the environmental objects and their properties which one does find in perceptual experience and the experiential materials which one fails to find. Harman's point is that when one reflects on one's perceptual experiences in a first-personal way nothing one finds is experienced as an experience or as a feature of experience. Instead, one finds environmental objects, like trees, and their features. As before, assuming that we can characterize the distinction between environment and experience in terms of the mind-independence of the former, Harman's point seems to be captured nicely by [Transparency].

One worry one might have about the passage from Harman vis-a-vis [Transparency] is Harman's emphasis on failing to find any *intrinsic* features of experience. The worry is that because the passage from Harman only denies that we are aware of intrinsic features of experience, [Transparency] makes a stronger claim in that it denies that we are aware of any features of experience.

To respond to this it is useful to place Harman's focus on intrinsic features in the larger context of the paper from which I have quoted. Harman uses the phrase 'intrinsic features of experience' to provide a contrast with the intentional features of experience, those features of experience which concern the fact that the experience represents things as being a certain way. In the case of perceptual experience Harman holds that perceptual experience represents a perceiver as in a particular environment. So the intentional features of experience of perceptual experience will concern the way in which the experience represents the environment as being. As came out in discussion of the quote from Speaks, there is an innocent way of understanding perceptual representation according to which it is just a way of speaking about what one is aware of in perceptual experience. On this construal, the fact that Eloise is aware of the intentional features of her experience is simply to say that she is aware of the way the experience represents her environment as being, namely tree laden. But this is just to say that she is aware of a tree in her environment. In this sense, being aware of the intentional features of experience is simply to be aware of the environment. This being so, there is little reason to worry that Harman's focus on the intrinsic features of experience constitutes an important contrast with [Transparency].

Michael Tye: "Intuitively, you are directly aware of blueness and squareness as ... features of an external surface. Now shift your gaze inward and try to become aware of your experience itself, inside you, apart from its objects. Try to focus your attention on some intrinsic feature of the experience that distinguishes it from other experiences, something other than what it is an experience *of*. The task seems impossible: one's awareness seems always to slip through the experience to blueness and squareness, as instantiated together in an external object. In turning one's mind inward to attend to the experience, one seems to end up concentrating on what is outside again, on external features or properties."[18]

17 Harman (1990), p. 39.
18 Tye (1995), p. 30.

As with the passages from Speaks and Harman, the quoted passage from Tye focuses on what one is aware of when one considers one's perceptual experiences. Tye's suggestion is that what one finds is what one's experience is of, rather than one's experience itself. But what, on Tye's view, are our perceptual experiences of? Tye's answer is that our perceptual experiences are of an external environment, rather than of anything experiential. Given that we can draw this contrast in terms of the mind-independence of the environment, [Transparency] seems to capture Tye's core message in the quoted passage.

William Alston*: "*I look out my study window and observe a variegated scene. There are maple, birch, and spruce trees in my front yard. Squirrels scurry across the lawn and up and down the trees. Birds fly in and out of the scene ... The most intuitively attractive way of characterizing my state of consciousness as I observe all this is to say that it consists of the *presentation* of physical objects to consciousness. Upon opening one's eyes one is *presented* with a variegated scene, consisting of objects spread out in space, displaying various characteristics. . . To deliberately flaunt a controversial term, it seems that these objects are *given* to one's awareness. It seems for all the world as if I enjoy *direct, unmediated* awareness of those objects. There is, apparently, nothing at all ''between'' my mind and the objects I am perceiving. They are simply *displayed* to my awareness."[19]

Alston's remarks seem to fit my mold as well, though this is somewhat harder to see this initially. In the case of Harman and Tye, we get a description of the way we actually experience things as well as a description of the way we do not experience things. For both Harman and Tye, the way in which we perceptually experience things is described in terms of externality and in terms of one's surroundings. In addition to this description we are given a description of how we do not perceptually experience things. This description is put in terms which are contrary to the description of how we in fact experience things perceptually. The negative description uses terms like 'internal' and 'intrinsic qualities of experience'. This gives us a nice contrast and one which is able to be captured in terms of mind-independence and mind-dependence. But Alston seems only to give us a characterization of how we perceptually experience things. Alston says that we perceptually experience things as 'physical objects' and as 'spread out in space'. But Alston does come close to giving an analog to the negative characterization given by Harman and Tye when he denies that there is anything between his mind and the scene which he is seeing. This suggests that the negative characterization Alston would give of perceptual experience is one where we experience something as getting in between us and the physical objects we are perceiving. It is implicit in Alston's remarks that the items that would get between one and the physical objects one is perceiving are not themselves physical objects. Rather, these items would be distinct in kind from ordinary physical objects and would play the role of mediating one's awareness of physical objects. Alston's negative characterization is that perceptual experience of a kind that one has when one looks out from one's study is not intuitively describable in terms of the presentation of such intermediary items. All of this being so, it seems natural to understand Alston as utilizing a distinction between mind-independent and mind-dependent items and claiming that perceptual experience is most naturally described in terms of the presentation of mind-independent items, rather than in terms of an immediate

19 Alston (1999) p. 182.

awareness of mind-dependent elements which then facilitate our indirect awareness of the mind-independent world.

Michael Martin: "At heart, the concern is that introspection of one's perceptual experience reveals only the *mind-independent* objects, qualities and relations that one learns out through perception. The claim is that one's experience is, so to speak, diaphanous or transparent to the objects of perception, at least as revealed to introspection."[20]

Michael Martin casts transparency explicitly in terms of mind-independence so no work is needed to show that his gloss on transparency is able to be understood in terms of mind-independence. Furthermore, Martin is explicit that the availability of such mind-independent elements is the only thing which is revealed in perception.

Having set all of this out, it is clear that [Transparency] captures and illuminates the transparency phenomenon. I have argued for this by showing that [Transparency] captures my own discussion of the transparency phenomenon and that it captures how the transparency phenomenon is discussed by a number of other philosophers. Having clarified the content of the transparency phenomenon by establishing [Transparency] as its construal, I now turn to the question of the level at which [Transparency] is to be applied to perceptual experience.

II. [Transparency] as phenomenological.

In the introduction to this chapter I distinguished between ontological and phenomenological claims about perceptual experience. In this section I argue that [Transparency] should be construed as a phenomenological claim about perceptual experience. In order to do this it will be necessary to give further discussion to the distinction between the ontological and phenomenological levels of perceptual experience. I begin this section by discussing this issue.

II.I. The phenomenological/ontological distinction.

Myles Burnyeat quotes Sextus Empiricus as saying "From the fact that honey appears bitter to some and sweet to others Democritus concluded that it is neither sweet nor bitter, Heraclitus that it is both."[21] Whatever else it may do, this quote expresses a distinction we make in ordinary thought between how things appear or otherwise seem to us and how those things actually are in themselves. So while honey may appear sweet to some and bitter to others, the honey may be such that it is sweet, bitter, both, or neither.

The distinction between the phenomenological level and ontological level of perceptual experience is meant to mirror the ordinary distinction we make between appearance and reality. That is, my contention is that we can apply the ordinary distinction between appearance and reality to perceptual experiences themselves in that we can distinguish between how our perceptual experiences seem to us and how those experiences actually are in themselves.

One initial worry about this distinction concerns the idea of perceptual experience seeming to be some way. Often the contrast we draw in daily life is between how something appears to us perceptually and how it is independently of our perceptual awareness. But it is difficult to understand our perceptual experiences seeming some way to us in terms of those experiences looking, tasting or smelling a certain way. So what, exactly, is it for perceptual experience to seem some way to one?

20 Martin (2002), p. 378.
21 Burnyeat (1979), p. 69.

One place to look for an answer to this question is the literature on the nature of intuitions. This is because the way experience seems to us is relevantly similar to our intuitive reactions to other matters. An initial possibility that one finds in this literature is that we can analyze seeming epistemically, in terms of the beliefs one holds about perceptual experience.[22] On this suggestion we would analyze perceptual experience seeming to involve, e.g. awareness of shape, as coming to the claim that we believe that perceptual experience involves awareness of shape. Unfortunately, this will not do. This is because one's experience can seem to involve an awareness of shape even where one does not believe that it does. Known perceptual hallucinations and illusions provide an example of this.[23] In such cases one's experience will seem to involve the awareness of shape even though one knows, and so believes, that it does not. On the supposition that one cannot have such 'close' contradictory beliefs, it follows that we cannot analyze the relevant sense of 'seems' in terms of belief.

Another possible analysis is loosely epistemic but does not involve the holding of beliefs. In a case where I knowingly look at a white object in red light I am in some sense tempted to form the belief that the object is pink even though I know that the object is not pink and so do not form the belief that it is pink. The object seems pink to me just in the sense that my experience inclines me towards, or would incline me towards, a belief that the object is pink.[24] Even so, I do not form the belief because knowledge of the circumstances of the situation keep the inclination in check.

This proposal avoids the objection from cases of known illusion and hallucination. This is because having an inclination to believe that P and believing that not-P does not involve having close contradictory beliefs. Even so, it does not seem to me a wholly satisfactory analysis. This is because we would like a characterization of the way experience seems to us which explains why an experience has the power of doxastic inclination which it does. That is, we form beliefs, or feel inclined to form them, *because* of how things seem to us. With respect to the specific issue under consideration, it is the fact that my experience seems to be a certain way which explains why I am inclined to believe that my experience is that way. Understanding the way experience seems to us in terms of doxastic inclination obscures this. What is wanted is a non-doxastic characterization of experience seeming some way which explains the doxastic force of the experience, whether this force issues in the formation of beliefs or falls short and issues only in an inclination to believe.

Bealer advances a view which tends in this direction according to which seemings are *sui generis* propositional attitudes.[25] On Bealer's view, seemings are distinct from beliefs, judgements, guesses and hunches. Bealer contends that seemings fail to be beliefs because, among other things, seemings fail to be plastic in the way that beliefs are. While one's beliefs can be altered by any number of considerations, e.g. '...(false) appeals to authority, cajoling, intimidation, brainwashing, and so forth...' the way things seem to one is typically resistant to all of this.[26] Bealer contends that seemings are not forms of judgement, guessing or any species of hunch on the grounds that one can make a judgement, take a guess or form a hunch about pretty much anything while one's intuitive responses only occur with respect to some propositions.

22 Lewis (1983).
23 See Martin (2002), pp. 400-1.
24 Views of this kind are held by van Inwagen (1997) and Sosa (1998).
25 Bealer (1996).
26 Bealer (1996) pp. 123-4.

I am sympathetic to Bealer's suggestion. In particular, Bealer's view is appealing because it leaves room for the possibility that seemings explain our doxastic responses. But if one is wary of the notion of seeming at issue, I do not think it is very illuminating to be told that it is a *sui generis* propositional attitude which is only able to be characterized in terms of what it is not.

Unfortunately, I do not have much to add to Bealer's view regarding the positive characterization of seemings. Instead, I want to simply acknowledge that experience seeming some way to us is a matter of a *sui generis* propositional attitude but try to gain some traction by emphasizing the process which is generative of such sui generis propsitional attitudes in the case of perceptual experience. I hold that these seemings are the product of first-personal reflection on experience which brackets any knowledge or belief which pertains to matters other than one's current experience as it is being enjoyed.

To set aside any beliefs one may have about the matter and turn an innocent eye to one's experience is to engage in the sort of first-personal reflection I have been discussing. When one engages in reflection of this kind one brackets any theoretical beliefs one has about one's experience as well as any beliefs about the way things are in the environment that one is experiencing.[27] In carrying this out one is able to consider what one's experience is like. It is this activity which results in one's experience seeming some way to one.

In a famous passage from his paper 'Perception and its Objects' Peter Strawson describes the kind of first-personal reflection I have been discussing. Strawson asks us to consider a

> "...a non-philosophical observer gazing idly through a window. To him 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 grazing in groups on the vivid green grass…'; and so on. ... We explain that we want him to amend his account so that, without any sacrifice of fidelity to the experience as actually enjoyed, it nevertheless sheds all that heavy load of commitment to propositions about the world which was carried by the description he gave. We want an account which confines itself strictly within the limits of the subjective episode, an account which would remain true even if he had seen nothing of what he claimed to see, even if he had been subject to total illusion."[28]

Strawson's observer is presumably non-philosophical in the sense that he does not have any theoretical beliefs about the nature of their experience. Thus, the observer does not bring to bear any philosophical beliefs about his experience to his assessment of it. Neither does he bring to bear any beliefs about the nature of the external environment. In this way the observer utilizes "...the best possible way of characterizing the experience." What is important is that this is the best possible mode of characterization of the experience 'as actually enjoyed', that is, from the point of view of the observer. The result of this procedure is that the observer's experience seems some way to him as a result of this first-personal mode of reflection.[29]

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27 This procedure does not require one to bracket all beliefs. For example, one can rely on certain general beliefs like squares typically look like this, I am now having a visual experience, and so on.

28 Strawson (1979) pp. 127-8.

29 Note that the procedure just described explains why seemings may not issue in belief. This is because the procedure involves bracketing beliefs which may conflict with how the experience seems.

Even if we can make good sense of experience seeming to be some way in terms of this being a *sui generis* propositional attitude which results from first-personal reflection on experience, there is a further worry about the distinction which is nicely summarized by John Searle. Searle writes that "Where appearance is concerned we cannot make the appearance-reality distinction because the appearance is the reality."[30] One way of interpreting Searle's assertion is as rejecting the distinction I have been trying to draw between how experience is and how it seems to us.

Searle makes his assertion within a broader discussion of reductionism and so it is useful to consider this context in trying to understand Searle's objection to the distinction under discussion. Simplifying somewhat, Searle's view of reduction is that it proceeds by first defining things in terms of their perceptual impact on us. So redness, for example, is initially defined as whatever it is in the world which causes a particular perceptual response in us. We then go out into the world and try to identify what this physical feature is. When we have succeeded in this we have 'causally reduced' redness to that physical feature in that we have identified what causes the perceptual response which redness was initially defined in terms of. We then can obtain what Searle calls an 'ontological reduction' by simply redefining redness in terms of the physical feature which we identified in the causal reduction. In this way we end up with a characterization of redness which abstracts away from how redness appears to us and which captures how redness is in itself. This is as it should be given that the scientific impulse is to understand the world as it is, rather than as it appears to us.[31] But, on Searle's view, this scientific impulse can't be extended to a reductive explanation of experience. This is because where consciousness is concerned it is precisely the appearances that we are interested in. Thus it is that there can be no distinction between appearance and reality when it comes to conscious experience.

In reply I make two points. The first is that we can still be interested in consciousness even when we give it some reductive analysis. For example, when we reduce water to h20 we are not getting rid of water in a way that would frustrate someone who is interested in water. Rather, what we are doing is giving an analysis of the nature of water. So rather than abandoning the phenomenon we began with we are putting forward a theory of the phenomenon that is of interest to those who are interested in water. Much the same with consciousness. To give a reductive analysis of consciousness, to say what consciousness 'really is', is precisely not to eliminate consciousness. To insist on this is to confuse reduction with elimination.

The next point is that we must make a distinction along the lines I have been drawing if we are to make intelligible the varieties of disagreement about consciousness which one finds in the theoretical literature on consciousness and on perceptual consciousness in particular. If all there was to experience was its appearance this disagreement would be inexplicable.

The basic idea here is that while there is tremendous disagreement among perceptual theorists, there is nevertheless significant common ground. Part of this common ground is an initial description of perceptual experience which serves as an entry point for further theoretical treatment. Theorists agree that there is something it is like to undergo perceptual experience. Theorists also agree on a number of details about what it is like to undergo perceptual experience. For example, it is uncontroversial that color characterizes what ordinary visual

30 Searle (1992) p. 122.

31 See also Nagel (1974) and Nagel (1989).

experience is like.[32,33] Even so, there is widespread disagreement about, e.g., whether there are color qualia or whether the color we find in visual experience characterizes external objects.[34] So while there are certain claims about the relation between color and visual experience which philosophers are in agreement about, there are other claims about this relation which are highly controversial. Drawing a distinction between the ontological and phenomenological levels of perceptual experience makes this situation intelligible and gives us a clearer view of the shape that philosophical theorizing about perception takes.

The distinction does this by distinguishing between phenomenological claims about how perceptual experience seems to us as a result of first-personal reflection and ontological claims about how perceptual experience is actually structured. We can distinguish, for example, between the phenomenological claim that color is part of what it is like to experience the world visually, a claim about which there is wide agreement, and ontological claims about what it is about perceptual experience that makes this so. Examples of claims of this second variety include that color enters visual phenomenology because it is visually represented, that color enters visual phenomenology because visual experiences have color qualia, that color enters visual phenomenology because it characterizes the external objects which we are acquainted with in visual experience, that color enters visual phenomenology because we are in a certain brain state when we have a visual experience, among others.[35] Thus there can be agreement about the phenomenological claim while there is disagreement about what ontological structure perceptual experience has.

When one examines the philosophical literature on perceptual experience with this distinction in mind, it becomes clear that philosophers are theorizing with something like this distinction in mind. For example, Michael Martin writes that "...the disjunctivist advocates naïve realism because they think that this position best articulates how sensory experience seems to us to be just through reflection. If the disjunctivist is correct in this contention, then anyone who accepts the conclusion of the argument from hallucination must also accept that the nature of sensory experience is other than it seems to us to be."[36]

On a natural reading of this passage, Martin's diagnosis of the motivation for naïve realism as well as his understanding of the force of the argument from hallucination involves a distinction between the phenomenological and ontological levels of perceptual experience. This is because Martin suggests that naïve realism receives its motivation from the fact that it best accounts for how our perceptual experiences seem to us on reflection. But if naïve realism receives support from a claim about how our perceptual experiences seem to us, then naïve realism cannot itself be a claim of this kind. Instead, it is natural to construe naïve realism as a claim about the metaphysical nature of perceptual experience rather than a claim about how our experiences seem to us. Turning to the point about hallucination, Martin's thought is that

32 This is so even for theorists like Chalmers (2006) who hold that color properties are not instantiated in the actual world.

33 There is, of course, some disagreement at this level. For example, Berkeley famously denied that depth characterizes our visual experiences. More recently, Siegel (2010) discusses whether kind properties characterize the phenomenology of visual experience.

34 For discussion of this issue see, e.g., Pautz (2007).

35 For the representational view see, e.g. Searle (1983) and Tye (1995). For the qualia view see Block (2010). For the acquaintance view see Campbell (2002). For the brain state view see McLaughlin (2007).

36 Martin (2006), pp. 354-5.

accepting the argument from hallucination requires abandoning naïve realism. But because naïve realism is the view which captures how our experiences seem to us, acceptance of the argument from hallucination requires accepting that our experiences have a nature which diverges from how our experiences seem to us. If that is right then we must accept a distinction between how experience seems to us and how experience is. But that is just the distinction I have made between the phenomenological and ontological levels of perceptual experience.

Having explained the content of the phenomenological/ontological distinction and its motivation I now turn to the question of whether we should understand [Transparency] as a phenomenological or ontological claim about perceptual experience.

II.II. Showing that [Transparency] is a phenomenological claim.

Before arguing that [Transparency] should be understood phenomenologically it will be useful to state [Transparency] in its ontological and phenomenological forms. Here I will deal with ontological and phenomenological formulations of [Transparency] as they would apply specifically to visual experience.

> [Phenomenological Transparency]: For any visual experience e, in having e one seems only to be aware of mind-independent elements.
>
> [Ontological Transparency]: For any visual experience e, in having e one is only aware of mind-independent elements.

While [Phenomenological Transparency], henceforth [PT] makes a claim about how perceptual experience seems to us, [Ontological Transparency], henceforth [OT], makes a claim about how perceptual experience is structured ontologically. In particular, [OT] makes the controversial claim that perceptual experience involves awareness and that the elements we are aware of in perception are mind-independent. However, [PT] does not make these controversial claims. This is because [PT] only claims that perceptual experience seems to involve the awareness of mind-independent elements. So given that there is an important difference between [PT] and [OT], should we understand [Transparency] in terms of [OT] or [PT]?

My view is that we should understand [Transparency] in terms of [PT]. To argue for this I will focus on the way in which philosophers defend the truth of the transparency phenomenon. I will argue that while [PT] could be argued for in the way that philosophers argue for the truth of the transparency phenomenon, [OT] could not. Thus we should characterize the transparency phenomenon in terms of [PT] rather than [OT].

I.II.I Supporting transparency.

How do philosophers typically defend transparency? In general, philosophers contend that transparency is true because it is introspectively evident. As I shall put it, philosophers assume that the truth of transparency can be *settled* just on the basis of introspection, or what I have called first-personal reflection on experience. Once one is introduced to the idea of transparency and once one reflects on one's experience, it becomes obvious that transparency is true. Thus it is somewhat odd to speak of the way that philosophers *argue* for transparency.

My suggestion will be that only a claim about how our perceptual experiences seem to us could be settled just on the basis of introspective reflection. This is not to deny that claims about the metaphysical nature of experience cannot enjoy introspective report, for that is surely true. It

is only to claim that introspection alone is not enough to *settle* questions about the nature of perceptual experience. Thus, in light of the fact that introspection could only settle the question of a thesis about how perceptual experience seems to us and given that whatever the claim of transparency is philosophers hold that it is a claim which can be settled purely introspectively, it follows that transparency should be understood as a claim about how our perceptual experiences seem to us. Given that I have already argued for the adequacy of [Transparency] in capturing the transparency phenomenon, this argument establishes [PT] as the right precisification of [Transparency].

To make good on my argument I will first have to substantiate my claim that philosophers base their endorsement of transparency entirely on introspection. After this I will defend the other premises of the argument.

I.II.I Introspective endorsement of transparency.

In a recent paper, Murat Aydede agrees with my contention about how transparency is established when he says that,

> '...[Transparency] is supposed to be the kind of phenomenon that is evident on the basis of careful, reflective introspection, not a controversial philosophical thesis. In other words, it is supposed to be a claim that can be established, relatively uncontroversially, on the basis of careful empirical observation about one's own experiences.'[37]

This is borne out when one looks at the literature on transparency. Here is Michael Tye, a prominent proponent of transparency, setting out transparency:

> 'Standing on the beach in Santa Barbara a couple of summers ago on a bright, sunny day, I found myself transfixed by the intense blue of the Pacific Ocean. Was I not here delighting in the phenomenal aspects of my visual experience? And if I was, doesn't this show that there are visual qualia? I am not convinced… I experienced blue as a property of the ocean not as a property of my experience.'[38]

We can construe Tye's passage as inviting the reader to join him on the beach in Santa Barbara, to consider the question of whether blue appears to one as an aspect of one's experience or as an aspect of the ocean and to reflect on one's experience to answer this question. Tye's contention is that if one does this, one will find it obvious that blueness is experienced as an aspect of the ocean, rather than as an aspect of one's experience. Implicit in this is the suggestion that what holds true of blueness will hold true of all the aspects one finds in one's experience. [39]

It seems to me plausible to describe the procedure by which Tye establishes transparency as introspective. That is to say, Tye stakes the truth of transparency on what one can glean just by considering one's experience as one enjoys it. On Tye's view, nothing beyond this kind of first-personal consideration of one's experience is required to establish the truth of transparency.

This way of thinking about the truth of transparency is also taken up by Gilbert Harman when he writes:

> '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 experience. And that is true of you too. There is nothing special about

37 Aydede (2017) p. 7.

38 Tye (1992), p. 160.

39 For an explicit statement of this see Tye (2002).

> Eloise's visual experience. When you see a tree, you do not experience any features as intrinsic features of your experience. Look at a tree and try to turn your attention to intrinsic features of your visual experience. I predict you will find that the only features there to turn your attention to will be features of the presented tree, including relational features of the tree "from here."'[40]

Here Harman instructs his reader to look at a tree and to consider the experience one has in light of the question of whether or not that experience involves the awareness of any intrinsic features of experience. Harman's contention is that when one carries this procedure out it will be obvious to one that one's experience does not involve the awareness of any intrinsic qualities of experience. Instead, one's experience will only seem to involve the awareness of things like trees.

As with Tye, the procedure outlined by Harman seems to base the truth of transparency just on the kind of first-personal reflection which Harman is inviting his reader to engage in. Harman's view seems to be that if one simply considers the relevant question about experience and then turns one's attention to one's experience, one will see that the answer to the relevant question is no. In this way both Harman and Tye simply prod you to reflect on your experience and, in so doing, to come to see what is true of it, *viz.,* that it is transparent.

Opponents of transparency also adopt this introspective procedure when they write in opposition to transparency. For example, Ned Block argues against the points from Harman above by appealing to what he calls phospene-experience. Block uses the term 'diaphanousness' to refer to the transparency phenomenon. Block writes:

> "...the diaphanousness of perception is much less pronounced in a number of visual phenomena, notably phosphene-experiences. ... phosphene-experiences are visual sensations “of” color and light stimulated by pressure on the eye or by electrical or magnetic fields. ... Close your eyes and place the heels of your hands over your eyes. Push your eyeballs lightly for about a minute. You will have color sensations. Can you attend to those sensations? I believe I can."[41]

Here Block contends that a certain kind of visual experience, a phosphene-experience, is such that it can involve attention to, and so awareness of, sensations which do not appear to one as an aspect of the environment. This, Block contends, is inconsistent with transparency, or what Block calls 'the diaphanousness of perception'.[42] As the passage makes clear, Block thinks that this disconfirmation of transparency is available just on the basis of consideration of one's own experience. All one has to do to see that transparency is false is push lightly on one's eyeballs and consider whether, in having that experience, one can attend to something other than one's environment.

I.II.II The truth or falsity of [OT] cannot be settled just on the basis of introspection.

The discussion in section I.II.I.I shows that the truth or falsity of transparency is taken to be able to be established just on the basis of introspection. In this subsection I will argue that the truth or falsity of [OT] cannot be established just on the basis of introspection and so that we should not construe [Transparency] in terms of [OT]. In the next subsection I will argue that the truth or falsity of [PT] could be settled just on the basis of introspection and so that, given that our choices are [PT] and [OT], we should construe [Transparency] in terms of [PT].

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40 Harman (1990) p. 39.

41 Block (2003), p. 13.

42 Use of the term 'diaphanous' in this context traces to Moore (1903).

To make the arguments I will give a bit more precise it will be useful to better understand the idea of a proposition's being able to be settled just on the basis of introspection. To do this it will be useful to introduce the idea of a conclusive reason. Here I will follow Dretske in understanding a conclusive reason as a reason which precludes the possibility of the falsity of the proposition for which it is a conclusive reason.[43] That is, if R is a conclusive reason for P, then R would not be the case unless P was the case. Thus, to show that a reason R* is not a conclusive reason for a proposition Q, one would need to show that R* could be the case while Q fails to be the case. So, for example, to show that an object is colored is not a conclusive reason for the object being red one would have to show that it can be true that the object is colored while it could be false that the object is red.

Using this framework we can characterize the claim argued for in section I.II.I.I in terms of conclusive reason. The idea is that philosophers assume that the result of first-personal or introspective reflection on experience is conclusive reason for the truth, or in Block's case falsity, of transparency. What I will now argue is that the result of first-personal reflection on experience cannot be conclusive reason for or against [OT]. I'll argue for this by showing that the truth of [OT] is independent of what first-personal reflection on experience reveals. To do this I will describe cases which seem to me to show that [OT] could be false even though first-personal reflection suggests its truth. In this way it is shown that the result of first-personal reflection on experience can't be a conclusive reason for [OT].

[OT] could be false for a variety of reasons. I will focus on cases where [OT] is false because some of the elements of which we are aware in perceptual experience fail to be mind-independent. The first case I will discuss is Hume's discussion of perception in section 12, part 1 of his Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding.[44] I then turn to a more contemporary discussion which illustrates the same moral which I draw from Hume's discussion.

In these passages Hume is concerned to distinguish between two conceptions of perceptual experience, conceptions which focus on the nature of what we encounter in perceptual experience. The first conception Hume describes holds that perception is a relation to '...an external universe, which depends not on our perception, but would exist, though we and every sensible creature were absent or annihilated.'[45] The view which Hume describes is very close to [OT]. In particular, proponents of this view 'always suppose' that perception involves the presentation of 'external objects', objects which have an existence which is 'independent of the situation of intelligent beings.'[46] Hume describes this as a view which is the result of "a natural instinct or prepossession".[47] One possible interpretation of this is that Hume regards this view of perception as something innate. This interpretation is perhaps bolstered by the fact that Hume calls this view the "universal and primary opinion of all men".[48] However, another possibility is that Hume regards this view as a consequence of a kind of naïve reflection on experience, rather than as being something innate. This is the view which, without argument, I will attribute to Hume.

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43 Dretske (1971), p. 1.
44 Hume, (1758; 1975).
45 Hume, (1758; 1975), p. 152.
46 *Ibid.*
47 *Ibid.*. Hume also uses the phrase 'the primary instincts of nature' to describe the origins of this view.
48 *Ibid.*

Hume contrasts this universal and primary opinion with the view that "...that nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception, and that the senses are only the inlets, through which these images are conveyed..."[49] However else this view may contrast with the view described above, it is clear that one contrast concerns the nature of what is presented to us in perception. On this latter view, which we may call the sophisticated view for reasons that will be made clear below, it is an 'image' or 'perception' which is presented to us in perception. Whatever images and perceptions may be, it is clear that Hume wishes to distinguish them from the ordinary external objects which the universal and primary opinion holds are the objects of perception. On the assumption that this contrast with external objects requires that images and perceptions fail to be mind-independent, the sophisticated view is incompatible with [OT].

I have called this view the sophisticated view because of how Hume characterizes its motivation. Notoriously, Hume claims that the sophisticated view is established by the 'slightest philosophy'.[50] This slightest philosophy takes the form of an argument which does live up to Hume's description of it. The argument which Hume sketches is this:

> "The table, which we see, seems to diminish, as we remove farther from it: But the real table, which exists independent of us, suffers no alteration: It was, therefore, nothing but its image, which was present to the mind."[51]

In discussing this argument my concern will not be with its merit, or with its content. Instead, I am simply interested in the fact that it is an *argument* which is meant to show that the universal and primary opinion is mistaken. What we have is a kind of clash between what naïve reflection on experience reveals and what is revealed to by the 'obvious dictates of reason'.[52] That is to say, Hume seems to accept that while naïve reflection on experience compels us to accept the universal and primary opinion, philosophical argument compels us to accept the sophisticated view.

Hume is unapologetic in siding with the dictates of reason on this occasion and one might reasonably complain about this. Indeed, are not matters of consciousness exactly those cases where first-personal reflection trumps philosophical argument? However that issue is to be resolved, Hume's discussion is still illustrative. This is because the reasonable complaint against Hume is only that his decision is arbitrary without further argument, not that his decision is incoherent. This involves a concession on behalf of the proponent of the universal and primary opinion, *viz.,* that naïve reflection may show our experiences to be a way that they are not. Unless we are prepared to charge Hume with incoherence we must accept that even when naïve reflection on experience suggests the universal and primary opinion, it does not provide us with a conclusive reason for that view. In this way Hume's discussion seems to show the coherence of the idea that while [OT] seems true on first-personal reflection, it fails to be true. Thus, Hume's discussion seems to show that the result of first-personal reflection cannot constitute a conclusive reason for [OT].

The standoff between first-personal reflection and philosophical argument which I have claimed to find in Hume is littered throughout the philosophical literature on perception. The prevalence of this stance suggests a prevailing attitude according to which first-personal

49 Hume, (1758; 1975), p. 153.
50 *Ibid.*
51 *Ibid.*
52 *Ibid.*

reflection, whatever it discovers, does not provide conclusive reason to endorse a philosophical theory of perception. I discuss a further example in the remainder of this subsection.

Early analytic discussions of the so-called 'argument from illusion' are another illustrative case. To take just one example, A.J. Ayer begins his book *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* with a contrast between a view of perception which is held by 'most people' and a distinct view of perception which is held by 'those philosophers who have recently concerned themselves with the subject of perception'.[53] Ayer characterizes the popular view as one which holds that we perceive '...familiar objects, the chairs and table, the pictures and books and flowers with which my room is furnished...' and furthermore that we are '...therefore satisfied that they exist.'[54] In contrast, the philosophical view is that '...that such objects as pens or cigarettes are never directly perceived.' and that '[what] we directly perceive is always an object of a different kind from these; one to which it is now customary to give the name of "sense-datum ".[55]

How, exactly, are we to understand the contrast between the philosophical view and its everyday competition? As with Hume, Ayer focuses on contrast between what these views claim we find in perceptual experience. In particular, the philosophical view replaces the everyday view's ordinary objects of perception with 'sense-data'. How are we to understand this contrast?

Whatever, exactly, sense-data are supposed to be, it is clear that they are distinct from 'material objects'.[56] Furthermore, Ayer says that it is '...held to be characteristic of material things that their existence and their essential properties are independent of any particular observer.'[57] In itself this does not require that sense-data fail to be mind-independent. This is because their contrast with ordinary objects may be explained in their failing to meet some other condition which ordinary objects must meet. Even so, Ayer later remarks that the argument from illusion is taken to show that sense-data fail to be mind-independent. Thus the objects of perception described by the philosophical view contrast with the objects of perception as they are described by the everyday view.

These aspects of Ayer's discussion help us situate [OT] within it. While the everyday view perhaps falls short of [OT], it is clear enough that the philosopher's view would be incompatible with [OT]. For Ayer's discussion to be of further interest to the main point at issue, *viz.*, the conclusivity of introspective reason for [OT], we need to ask about how Ayer conceives of the motivations for the everyday and philosophical views. Only then can we see whether Ayer accepts that it is coherent for first-personal reflection to recommend something in the vicinity of [OT] even though [OT] fails to be true.

Ayer is not explicit about the motivations which 'most people' have for the popular view. But it is not unreasonable to suppose that it is something like taking one's experience at face value and, so, not engaging in the kind of investigation of experience which some philosophers are inclined to undertake. Ayer writes that it '...does not normally occur to us that there is any need for us to justify our belief in the existence of material things.' and that we have 'no doubt' that we are 'really perceiving the familiar objects' which we take to populate our world. As Austin points out in his famous commentary on Ayer's discussion, the suggestion from Ayer seems to be that most people *should* consider their justification and that most people *should* have

53 Ayer (1940). See Austin (1962) for discussion of Ayer.
54 Ayer (1940) p. 1.
55 Ayer (1940) p. 2.
56 See, e.g., Ayer (1940), p. 19.
57 Ayer (1940), p. 10.

their doubts, if only they were reflective enough to see this.[58] What Ayer is suggesting is that there is, on the part of most people, a certain lack of scrutiny regarding their experiences. What I am suggesting is that this lack of scrutiny is to be understood in terms of a failure to move beyond taking experience at face value.

What of the motivation for the philosopher's view? Luckily Ayer is much more explicit on this head, citing the argument from illusion as the motivation for this position. As with my discussion of Hume, I will not trouble very much with the details of the argument as Ayer presents it. What is important for my purposes is just that the argument, however exactly it is to be understood, is something other than the taking at face value of experience which is the practice of most people. It is only this minimal point that is required to show that Ayer's discussion is committed to the possibility of argumentative and theoretical considerations contravening what first-personal inspection of perceptual experience discovers. This is just to say that the results of such first-personal inspection are considered as one reason among many for endorsing a theory of perception, rather than being regarded as a conclusive reason.[59] Whatever other problems it may have, it does seem to me that Ayer's discussion is coherent. So Ayer's discussion is a further example of the attitude that the results of first-personal reflection on experience are not conclusive reasons relative to theses like [OT].

The discussions I have considered from Hume and Ayer implicitly rely on a distinction between how our experiences seem to us and how our experiences are. Furthermore, both Hume and Ayer endorse theories of perceptual experience according to which perceptual experience is not how it seems to us to be. Thus their discussions show that first-personal reflection on experience could not constitute a conclusive reason for the truth of [OT].

More generally, any sustained philosophical debate about perceptual experience would seem to require acceptance of these points. Otherwise, disagreement about these matters would be unintelligible. If we assume that philosophers are being introspectively forthright, then if first-personal reflection was capable of giving us conclusive reason to adopt a particular view there would seem to be no room for the disagreement about perceptual experience that is manifest in the philosophy of perception. One way of making this disagreement intelligible is to draw a distinction between phenomenological and ontological claims about perceptual experience and hold that ontological claims about perceptual experience are not directly available just on the basis of first-personal reflection on experience. I found the legitimacy of making such a distinction on the work that such a distinction would do in making sense of philosophical dispute about perceptual experience. Once one makes such a distinction it is then evident that reflection on experience cannot constitute a conclusive reason for any ontological claim about perceptual experience. Given that transparency is supposed to be able to be established or rejected just on the basis of such reflection, [OT] cannot offer an adequate characterization of transparency. In the next section I consider whether it is right to think that phenomenological claims, claims about how perceptual experience seems to us, are available just on the basis of first-personal reflection on experience. I will suggest that they are and so that [PT] offers us the best description of the transparency phenomenon.

58 See Austin (1962), p. 9.

59 As with Hume, it isn't clear whether Ayer does regard the result of taking experience at face value as any reason for endorsing the everyday view.

I.II.III The truth or falsity of [PT] can be settled just on the basis of first-personal reflection.

What I will do now is explain why [PT] can be established or rejected just on the basis of first-personal reflection. Given that [Transparency] is an adequate gloss on the transparency phenomenon and given that [Transparency] must be able to be established or rejected just on the basis of first-personal reflection, that [PT] can be established or rejected just on the basis of first-personal reflection gives us reason to endorse [PT] as the proper philosophical description of the transparency phenomenon. In this section I begin by arguing for the general claim that first-personal reflection on perceptual experience is capable of establishing or rejecting claims about how perceptual experience seems to us. I then argue that there is nothing specific about [PT] which would exclude it from the general set of claims about how perceptual experience seems which my first argument establishes as capable of being established or rejected just on the basis of first-personal reflection.

I begin with my argument for the general claim that first-personal reflection on perceptual experience is capable of establishing or rejecting claims about how perceptual experience seems to us. The argument is as follows.

> P1) If first-personal reflection on perceptual experience alone cannot establish or reject claims about how perceptual experience seems to one, then such reflection is epistemically worthless.
> P2) Such reflection is not epistemically worthless.
> ---
> C) First-personal reflection on perceptual experience alone can establish or reject claims about how perceptual experience seems to one.

The idea behind P1 is that if it can tell us anything, first-personal reflection on perceptual experience can tell us about how perceptual experience seems to us. That is, if such reflection is incapable of establishing or rejecting claims about how perceptual experience seems to us, it is difficult to see what would be left for such reflection to do. So unless one is prepared to regard such reflection as utterly worthless, i.e. as not being able to establish *anything* about experience, then one should accept that such reflection can establish facts about how our perceptual experiences seem to us.

The idea behind P2 is that it would be wrong to treat first-personal reflection as utterly worthless. Surely such reflection can tell us something about what is true or false about our experiences. Otherwise it would be difficult to see why we are even able to engage in it. Because P1 and P2 are both plausible and jointly entail C, C seems true.

Moreover, it is difficult to see how one could run the kind of argument that I did against [OT] with respect to claims about how perceptual experience seems. That is, it is difficult to wrap one's mind around the idea that while our perceptual experiences seem to seem some way to us, they fail to seem that way to us. So it does seem true that first-personal reflection on perceptual experience can constitute conclusive reason to accept or reject a claim about how perceptual experience seems.

One could accept my argument for C but hold that while it is generally true that first-personal reflection can establish such claims, [PT] has particular features which preclude it from

being established or rejected in this way. Thus [PT] would constitute a kind of special case. I now turn to reasons one might cite for thinking that [PT] is special in this way. In defending against them I complete the second step of the argument which I described above.

One could raise the objection that [PT] is too theoretical to be able to be supported by introspection alone. I am not sure that [PT] is theoretical in any way that would preclude it from being able to be established on the basis of first-personal reflection alone. What, exactly, is too theoretical about [PT]? One might point to the notion of mind-independence-for-S as being the theoretical aspect of [PT] which precludes it from being established in this way. In response to this it seems to me that if someone has the concept of mind-independence-for-s they will be capable of evaluating [PT] by reflecting on their perceptual experiences in a first-personal way. Whether or not such a concept is in some sense theoretical is beside the point. I would make similar replies regarding the other aspects of [PT] that might be deemed theoretical, e.g. elements, awareness, etc.

Another objection is that first-personal reflection cannot establish universal generalizations and because [PT] is a universal generalization, first-personal reflection cannot establish it. As against this, I do not see why introspection cannot establish universal generalizations, at least in certain cases. For example one could reflect first-personally on the connection between a particular instance of one's being rejected and subsequently feeling ashamed and, even though this is a particular case, establish a general, i.e. universal, connection between rejection and shame. There is an intelligible connection which holds between rejection and shame generally and this connection is able to be identified by first-personal reflection on a single instance of rejection and subsequent shame. This being so it seems unreasonable to hold that such cannot establish universal generalizations.

Given all of these considerations it seems reasonable to suppose that there is nothing idiosyncratic to [PT] which would preclude it from being able to be established or rejected just on the basis of first-personal reflection given that it is the kind of claim which can be established or rejected just on the basis of first-personal reflection. I close the chapter by summarizing my discussion and raising a worry about [PT] which I address in the next chapter.

II. Conclusion.

In this chapter I argued for two main claims. First, I argued that we should understand transparency in terms of the mind-independence of experienced elements. I then noted that one could construe this claim in at least two ways. One could understand it as a claim about the mind-independent nature of experienced elements and so understand transparency ontologically or one could think of it as specifying the way in which experienced elements seem to us in perceptual experience. This is to construe transparency phenomenologically. After making this distinction I argued that we should understand transparency in phenomenological terms on the grounds that only a phenomenological construal of transparency could be established on purely reflective grounds. In particular, I argued that [PT] offers the best philosophical description of the transparency phenomenon.

Supposing all of that is right, [PT] is not without its own problems. In particular, [PT] makes the claim we seem to be aware of elements as mind-independent in perceptual experience. But it is not obvious what it would be for experienced elements to seem mind-independent in perceptual experience. Without an account of this aspect of [PT] it cannot be said that [PT] has

been made sufficiently philosophically precise. In the next chapter I address in the question of what it would be for experienced elements to seem mind-independent in some detail.

Chapter 2: Seeming Mind-independence and Perceived Spatiality.

In the last chapter I described transparency as coming to the claim that for any perceptual experience e, in having e one seems only to be aware of mind-independent elements.

One of the key components to this understanding of transparency is the idea that all of what we encounter in perceptual experience seems mind-independent to us. In the previous chapter I discussed the general idea that our perceptual experiences seem some way to us and characterized this in terms of a *sui generis* propositional attitude that we bear to the proposition that our experience is some way.

The issue I consider in this chapter concerns the more specific question of what it would mean for perceptually experienced elements to seem mind-independent to us. The analysis of the previous chapter suggests that this is to be understood in terms of our bearing the attitude of seeming to the proposition that perceived elements are mind-independent. The question I want to ask is what compels us to bear that attitude to that proposition. In particular, what is it about perceived elements as we experience them which makes it the case that they seem mind-independent to us?

A number of authors write as though this idea is relatively well understood. For example, in a number of papers Michael Martin considers the thought that '…it seems to us as if we have a non-representational relation to the mind-independent objects of awareness.", that "…it is evident that a mind-independent world is present to us." and that '…introspection of one's perceptual experience reveals only the mind-independent objects, qualities and relations that one learns about through perception."[60] That Martin does not comment in any detail about what exactly these ideas come to suggests that the considerations he is discussing are reasonably clear. But this is not obviously so.

To begin to see the problem, it is useful to contrast the seeming mind-independence of perceived elements with the way in which visually experienced elements seem colored. It is plausible that visually experienced elements seemed colored, i.e. that we bear the attitude of intellectual seeming to the proposition that visual experienced elements are colored, because those elements look colored to us in experience. But it is not obvious that visually experienced elements look mind-independent to us. One reason for skepticism here is that mind-independence is a robustly counter-factual notion and so something which could not be taken in by perceptual experiences which traffic in the here and now. Another reason for skepticism is that it simply seems to make no sense to say that something looks mind-independent. Nor does it make anymore sense to say that something smells or sounds mind-independent. So I want to put to one side the possibility that experienced elements seem mind-independent to us because they perceptually appear that way to us. Instead, I want to pursue the thought that there is nevertheless a way experienced elements appear to us perceptually which does ground their seeming mind-independence. My proposal will be that it is the fact that experienced elements perceptually appear to us as spatial in a certain respect which makes it the case that those elements seem mind-independent to us.

Here is the plan for the chapter. In the first section I backtrack a bit and consider some additional motivation for treating seeming as a *sui generis* propositional attitude in the special case of seeming mind-independence. In the second section I develop my proposal that the

60 Martin (2006) p. 365, Martin (2002) p. 377, Martin (2002) p. 378.

seeming mind-independence of experienced elements is connected to those elements being perceived to be spatial in a certain way. In the third section of the chapter I consider a number of objections to my proposal and reply to them.

I. Ways of engaging with mind-independence.

In the last chapter I argued for construing the relevant sense of seeming in terms of a *sui generis* propositional attitude on the grounds that this account could explain various doxastic phenomena which would be left unexplained if seeming were identified with belief or with an inclination to believe. The basic idea was that we can explain why we believe, or are inclined to believe, that things are so in terms of their seeming to be so to us. But, as I pointed out, this would require an analysis of things seeming to be so which did not bottom out in one's believing, or being inclined to believe, that they are so. Treating seeming as a *sui generis* propositional attitude is one such analysis.

Here I want to further explore the explanatory power of this approach by considering the specific case of things seeming mind-independent. What I want to try to bring out is how treating seeming mind-independence as a *sui generis* propositional attitude helps to explain the various ways in which we engage with mind-independence.

I.I. Engaging with mind-independence behaviorally.

There are distinctive ways we engage behaviorally with things that seem mind-independent to us. Some of this behavior concerns the publicity of mind-independent elements, that such elements are publicly available for perception, behavioral coordination and thought. We hold things up for others to see. We find it natural to look in the direction of the gaze of others to determine what they are looking at. We shield things from the view of others and in so doing indicate that what we are holding up is available for public perceptual consumption. With respect to the publicity of elements for behavioral coordination, we enlist the help of a passerby to push a broken down car and throw a football across the yard to a friend. In acting as we do we indicate that there is a shared behavioral space in which such things as cars and footballs exist. In the case of the public availability for thought, we demonstrate an object for another so that they may think of it and in so doing indicate that a single object is poised to be thought about by distinct individuals. These behaviors reflect an engagement with objects which we take to be publicly available in that one and the same object is available to others to perceive, think about and act on.

Other behavior concerns the existential persistence of mind-independent elements, that mind-independent elements are capable of existing when they are not being considered by any mind. For example, we leave traps for people, or we leave them gifts. We write notes before we leave in the morning and leave them on the kitchen table to be read by a roommate when they come home. Here our behavior reflects an engagement with objects which we take to persist in the absence of being perceived or thought about, objects which, in Bernard Williams' famous phrase, are there anyway.[61]

One possible analysis is to hold that what it is for something to seem mind-independent is just for it to be engaged with behaviorally in these and other relevant ways. So rather than having to hold that elements seeming mind-independent to us is a matter of some difficult to characterize propositional attitude, we could instead hold that it is simply a matter of the way we engage with things behaviorally.

61 Williams (1978), p. 64.

The difficulty with this approach is that we should want some explanation of why we engage behaviorally in this way with certain elements but not others. Whatever exactly this would involve, we do not engage with our headaches behaviorally in a way which suggests their publicity and existential persistence. But we do act this way with respect to many other things and so we should want an explanation of this difference. The natural answer is that in some more fundamental sense, external objects, but not headaches, seem mind-independent to us and that it is because they seem this way to us that we engage them behaviorally in the ways that we do. In light of this it is inadvisable to characterize this more fundamental way in which elements seem mind-independent to us just in terms of our behavioral patterns. But it does seem advisable, from my point of view, to characterize this more fundamental sense in terms of our bearing a *sui generis* propositional attitude toward the proposition that such and such is mind-independent. This is because that we bear that attitude toward that proposition would explain why we engage behaviorally with the elements referred to in the relevant proposition in a way which suggests our appreciation of them as mind-independent.

I.II. Engaging with mind-independence rationally.

Another way we engage with mind-independence concerns the way we reason. John Campbell helpfully isolates three dimensions to the patterns of inference which we apply to mind-independent things.[62] Some of our thinking reflects our appreciation that "...it is the same object that we encounter over time.'[63] This is what was called existential persistence above. For example, upon reentering a room and seeing a vase that is qualitatively identical to a vase which was seen in the same room moments ago we are prepared to infer that the vase is numerically identical with the vase seen previously. We also reason about mind-independent objects in a way which reflects our acknowledgement that, e.g., a seen object can be '... the same object we encounter in different sensory modalities.' For example, while walking to the bathroom in the middle of the night you hear a person snoring on the living room couch and lament the fact that your roommate has houseguests so frequently. In the morning a stranger is at your breakfast table and you conclude that this stranger which you see before you is the same person you heard the night before. A further pattern of inference that Campbell identifies concerns what I have called the publicity of mind-independent elements. For example, when we see that two people are looking at a single object we infer that they are having experiences of one and the same object.

Campbell suggests that grasp of these patterns of inference, together with "...grasp of the justification for use of those patterns of inference..." are the "...two dimensions to grasp of a term referring to an ordinary physical object.' and that these two dimensions "...reflect the mind-independence we usually take physical things to have."[64] It is not clear to me that Campbell intends these remarks to indicate that we can give a comprehensive account of our conception of mind-independence by appealing to our grasp of these patterns of inference and their justification. But whether or not Campbell intends this, it seems to me that this would fail to be true.

This is because, as before, we should want some explanation of why we utilize these patterns of inference with respect to the objects that we do. Given that we do not apply these patterns of inference to headaches, why do we apply them to tables and chairs? This is not to ask

62 Campbell (2012).
63 Campbell (2012), p. 33.
64 *Ibid.*

so much for a justification of these patterns of inference as it is to ask for a descriptive psychological explanation of why we reason as we do. Supposing as I am that it is reasonable to ask for such an explanation, our appreciation of the mind-independence of things runs deeper than our use of certain patterns of inference. My view is, again, that there is some more fundamental sense in which things seem mind-independent to us which would explain why, with respect to such things, we utilize the patterns of inference that Campbell discusses. This is just what the treatment of seeming as a *sui generis* propositional attitude offers.

That the treatment of seeming as a *sui generis* propositional attitude has the potential to explain the way in which we engage with mind-independence rationally and behaviorally is, in my view, strong motivation for pursuing this option. But as I mentioned above, this treatment of the seeming mind-independence of experienced elements does raise an explanatory question of its own, *viz.,* why it is that experienced elements seem mind-independent to us. Put in terms of the theory I have been working with the question is: when we consider our perceptual experiences first-personally why do we come to bear the attitude of seeming to the proposition that the elements which we experience are mind-independent? I address this issue in the next section.

II. Seeming mind-independence and seeming spatiality.

I will take as my starting point the thought that the elements we find in perceptual experience seem mind-independent to us because of how they are presented to us in perceptual experience. This is, of course, not the only possible starting point. It could be that there is no interesting explanation of why things which we perceive seem mind-independent to us. It is also possible their seeming mind-independent to us is itself a condition on our being able to perceive them. Instead of these, I take the starting point that I do because it opens up the possibility of what I take to be an interesting explanation. In this way the starting point is vindicated by its results.

How, exactly, then, do things appear to us perceptually such that their appearing this way makes it the case that they seem mind-independent to us? The possibility which I would like to explore is that it is the apparent spatiality of perceived elements which explains their seeming mind-independence. More specifically, I will argue for:

> [Spatiality]: If an item i perceptually appears to a subject S as at a spatial distance relative S, then, if S has the concept of mind-independence, i will seem mind-independent to S.

Before arguing for [Spatiality] I will first clarify what it does and does not claim. Strawson was famously concerned with the connection between space and objectivity.[65] In the second chapter of Individuals, Strawson raises the following question: "Could there be a scheme, providing for a system of objective particulars, which was wholly non-spatial?"[66] For Strawson it is important that the question queries the possibility of a *conceptual* scheme which includes objectivity but not space. The question as Strawson conceives of it does not concern the relation between objectivity and spatiality themselves but rather the relation between these two concepts in our thinking. Here is Strawson on the matter:

65 See, e.g., Strawson (1959), especially chapter 2. See also Evans (1980).
66 Strawson (1959) p. 62.

> "...material bodies are, in a certain sense, basic in relation to other categories of particulars. But I should like to emphasize the point that there are certain ways in which category-preference may be exhibited, in which I am not exhibiting it. Suppose As exist in this sense, other things only in a secondary sense; sometimes by the declaration that only As are real; and sometimes by the declaration that other things are reducible to As, that to talk about other things is an abbreviated way of talking about As. I want to emphasize that in saying that material bodies are basic among particulars, at least in our conceptual scheme as it is, I am not saying any of these things."[67]

Instead of making a claim about the relation between objectivity and space as they are outside the mind, Strawson's claim is that, as a matter of psychological fact, our conceptual grasp of objectivity depends on our conceptual grasp of material bodies. For Strawson this translates to a claim about the conceptual connection between objectivity and space in light of the fact "...that material bodies are the basic particulars in our scheme can be deduced from the fact that our scheme is of a certain kind, viz. the scheme of a unified spatio-temporal system of one temporal and three spatial dimensions."[68] Strawson's concern, then, is with "whether, and if so how, it could be otherwise."[69]

That Strawson's interest is in whether the conceptual connection between space and objectivity that we find in our thinking is something that could have been otherwise provides an initial point of similarity with [Spatiality]. This is because [Spatiality] is a thesis about the way in which spatiality and mind-independence are related in our psychologies. In this way [Spatiality] does not make a claim about the relation between space and mind-independence themselves but instead makes a claim about how these notions are connected in what we might call, following Strawson, our conceptual scheme. That being said, it is not mandatory that we think of the connection that [Spatiality] asserts as a conceptual connection, strictly speaking. Instead we might think of it more loosely as a general psychological connection between spatial distance and mind-independence. The motivation for this looser construal of the connection is that it is not obvious that the way in which spatial distance manifests itself in perceptual experience is a conceptual matter. For example, A.D. Smith holds that "...phenomenal spatiality is not plausibly seen as a matter of conceptualization, but seems, rather, to be a matter of the intrinsic character of certain sense- fields..."[70] Whether or not Smith is right about this, we can finesse the issue by construing the connection as a general psychological one in such a way that it is left open whether the connection holds between two concepts or between non-conceptualized perceptual encounters with spatial distance and a concept of mind-independence.

A further clarification concerns the way in which spatial distance and mind-independence are connected psychologically according to [Spatiality]. [Spatiality] claims that the connection between space and mind-independence in our psychology is such that if we perceptually experience something as at a spatial distance from us, this suffices for our taking that thing to be mind-independent. That [Spatiality] focuses on sufficiency is then a contrast with Strawson's question. This is because Stawson's question is whether thinking in spatial terms is necessary for thinking about an objective world. As Strawson puts it: "...is the status of material bodies as

67 Strawson (1959), p. 59.
68 Strawson (1959), p. 62.
69 Strawson (1959), pp. 59-60.
70 Smith (2002), p. 133.

basic particulars a necessary condition of knowledge of objective particulars?"[71] In endorsing [Spatiality] I take no stand on Strawson's question.

Another clarification concerns what [Spatiality] is not trying to explain. As should be clear from the language of the principle, [Spatiality] does not try to explain our initial grasp of mind-independence by appealing to our experience of space. So [Spatiality] should not be understood as trying to solve the genetic puzzle of how we are able to think of a mind-independent world. Instead, [Spatiality] is a thesis which seeks to chart a particular connection between concepts or perceptual sensitivities which thinkers already possess. It is not clear to me whether Strawson was concerned to account for our initial grasp of objectivity. If this was one of Strawson's concerns, this provides a further contrast with [Spatiality].

To further clarify [Spatiality] it will be useful to consider the views of A.D. Smith, as he develops a view which is in many ways similar to [Spatiality].[72] Smith holds that perception, as opposed to what he calls sensation, "...concerns the "external world."'[73] Smith's question is what it is about perceptual experiences, or 'perceptual consciousness' as he calls it, which makes it the case that perceptual consciousness, but not sensation, concerns an external world. Whether or not Smith makes the assumptions that would be required to assimilate his question to my question of why perceptually experienced elements seem mind-independent to us, there is nevertheless a useful similarity between the question Smith asks and the one which I am concerned with here.

Smith's answer to his question is that perceptual consciousness concerns an external world "...because perceptual experience presents such "external" objects as *literally* external—to our bodies."[74] Smith is keen to point out that it is spatial distance in particular, and not simply the experience of things as spatial in some respect, which is relevant to the perceptual disclosure of an external world. For Smith, this is because many phenomena which we fail to treat as external are nevertheless experienced as having various spatial features. For example, bodily sensations like pain are experienced as having locations on or in the body yet such sensations are not treated as a condition of the external world. Smith also discusses the 'inner light-show', something which is not taken to be external but which is experienced as being arrayed in two spatial dimensions.

Smith motivates his view further by noting that the experience of something as at a spatial distance is related to other ways of experiencing things which are relevant to externality. In particular, Smith links the experience of spatial distance to our appreciation of the fact that '...that there is more to such an object than is directly registered in sensation..'[75] For example, Smith holds that it is the experience of something as at a spatial distance which 'underlies' the possibility of taking '...differing perspectives on a single, intrinsically unchanging object.'[76] In arguing for [Spatiality] I will mirror Smith's argumentative strategy.

II.I [Spatiality] and the argument from occlusion.

To argue for [Spatiality] I will focus on the role that perceptual occlusion plays, both vis-a-vis our conception of mind-independence and our experience of things as at a spatial distance.[77]

71 Strawson (1959), p. 62.
72 See Smith (2005), especially chapter 5.
73 Smith (2002), p. 133.
74 Smith (2002), p. 134.
75 Smith (2002), p. 135.
76 Smith (2002), pp. 134-5.
77 Smith (2002) discusses occlusion briefly at p. 137.

In particular, I will use perceptual occlusion as a bridge between the experience of spatial distance and seeming mind-independence.

Perceptual occlusion pertains to situations in which one perceived object impedes the perception of another object.[78] Perceptual occlusion may be partial, as when a dog is seen behind a fire hydrant, or complete, as when the curtain is drawn across a stage. Perceptual occlusion is most salient in vision, but it is not obvious that occlusion fails to occur in other sense modalities. For example, Smith discusses a case where '...a nearby sound can impede your perception of a more distant sound even though it is no louder than the latter.'[79] Occlusion seems possible in tactile experience where an object is interposed between your hand and a previously touched object. Gustatory experience may involve occlusion when a long-lasting aftertaste is temporarily masked by another taste of equal intensity.

Perceptual occlusion is related to the perceptual phenomenon of amodal completion. Amodal completion pertains to situations in which an entire object is perceived despite the fact that the entire object is not registered at the sensory organ. Amodal completion sometimes occurs because a portion of a perceived object is occluded, or is perceived to be occluded. For example, when you see a dog behind a fire hydrant you perceive an intact dog, rather than a series of detached dog parts. Having explained what is meant by perceptual occlusion I can now turn to my argument for [Spatiality]. The argument is as follows:

> P1) If an item i perceptually appears to a subject S as at a spatial distance relative to S, then, if S has the concept of occludability, i will seem occludable to S.
> P2) If an item i seems occludable to S then, if S has the concept of mind-independence, I will seem mind-independent to S.
> ---
> C) If an item i perceptually appears to a subject S as at a spatial distance relative S, then, if S has the concept of mind-independence, i will seem mind-independent to S.

To motivate the argument I consider the justification for each premise as I conceive of it and respond to objections to each premise. After this I consider objections to [Spatiality] itself.

The motivation for P1 is that if one perceptually experiences something as at a spatial distance then that item will seem to one to be such that there is unoccupied space between one and that item. In the case of vision, this is simply because if the space were completely occupied then one would not have perceptual contact with the initial item. But if it seems to one that there is unoccupied space between one and some perceptually experienced item, then it will seem to one that some other item could occupy that space in such a way that the initially experienced item would cease to be experienced. Thus, perceptually experiencing an item as at a spatial distance relative to one is sufficient for that item to seem occludable, given that one has a concept of occludability and one reflects on the situation in a minimal way.

One potential objection to P1 is that, even though it is a conditional claim, it suggests something false, namely that items are sometimes perceptually experienced as at a spatial distance relative to one. One finds this thought in Berkeley when he writes in his Essay Towards

78 This definition is not meant to rule out that an object's facing surface may occlude its other parts. Here we need only treat the facing surface as one 'perceived object', whatever exactly this description comes to.

79 Smith (2002), p. 137. This example seems to depend on the operation of another perceptual capacity relevant to mind-independence, *viz.,* loudness constancy.

a New Theory of Vision that it is "...agreed by all that distance, of itself and immediately, cannot be seen."[80] More recently, John Searle has said that "Depth is not a basic perceptual feature. The basic visual experiences are of color, lines, angles, shapes, etc., but depth is perceived as a non-basic feature of the objective visual field because of the Background mastery of the principles of perspective."[81] In reply to this it is worth pointing out that both Berkeley and Searle qualify their claims about the extent to which depth is not perceived. Searle holds that depth isn't a "basic" perceptual feature. But as Searle makes clear, this is compatible with depth being perceived as a non-basic feature. In much the same way, Berkeley holds that depth is not seen "immediately", but this is consistent with depth being perceived mediately. Because I make no claim about whether or not depth is perceptually experienced immediately or as a basic feature, these sorts of considerations are unproblematic from the point of view of the argument in question. What is more, it does seem implausible to deny, as Searle and Berkeley do not, that depth is ever perceptually experienced in anyway. But if it is agreed that depth is found in perception in some sense, P1 holds.

Another potential objection to P1 is that one could perceptually experience an item as at a spatial distance but for that item to fail to seem occludable simply because one is unreflective. In response to this, I point out that the perceptual experience as of something at a spatial distance would, if one considered the matter briefly, make the item seem occludable. Or, alternatively, one could hold, as is plausible, that seeming occludability needn't be something which manifests itself in an occurent conscious thought. So in this sense, things can seem occludable even where one is unreflective. This would mimic the way that one believes, of a red tomato that one is seeing, that the tomato is red where this does not require a conscious thought to the effect that the tomato is red.

Another potential objection is that there are specific counter-examples to P1. For example, in a known hallucination items may perceptually appear as at a spatial distance but fail to seem occludable in light of the fact that one knows that one is undergoing a hallucination. Similarly, one might object that after-images appear as at a spatial distance to one but fail to seem occludable in light of the fact that one knows that one is having an after-image.

In response to such cases I hold that known hallucinatory items and after-images do seem occludable even though it is known that they are not. The temptation to say that such items do not seem occludable arises from our knowledge that after-images and hallucinated items are not environmental items. However, if we bracket such knowledge it does not seem implausible to me to suppose that these items do seem occludable. That is, when one considers the relevant experiences on their own it is not unreasonable to hold that after-images and hallucinated items seem occludable.

Evidence for this is that the transition from, e.g., naïve hallucination to known hallucination need involve no change in spatial phenomenology. Suppose one is hallucinating a vase on a table across the room and one is naïve about this. In such a situation, the vase will appear as at a spatial distance relative to one and will, I contend, seem occludable. Now suppose that one is made knowledgeable of the fact that the vase is a hallucinatory item. Will the vase cease to perceptually appear spatially distant from one? I will admit I have never had such a hallucination, but it strikes me as bizarre to suppose that the vase would cease to perceptually

80 Berkeley (1709), section 2. See Hara (2004) for an alternative interpretation of Berkeley.
81 Searle (2015), p. 140.

appear spatially distant. It is not as though, when one comes into the relevant knowledge, the vase become experientially thrust against one's eyeballs or becomes otherwise absorbed into the mind. Instead it simply becomes the case that one knows that the vase is not at a spatial distance relative to one even though this is how things appear perceptually. Given that this is so, the fact that the spatial character of the experience remains static, together with the fact that the spatial character of the naïve hallucination sufficed for the seeming occludability of the vase, shows that the known hallucinatory experience suffices for the seeming occludability of the vase. This seeming occludability is compatible with having knowledge that the vase is not in fact occludable. I take the same considerations to apply with equal force to the cases involving after-images.

Moving to P2, part of the motivation for P2 concerns the difference between occludability and annihilation. That is, in regarding an item i as occludable we do not regard i as being such that were a distinct item, i*, interposed between us and i in such a way that we lost perceptual contact with i, i would cease to exist. Rather, we assume that we simply loose perceptual contact with i in virtue of our perceptual contact with i*. In this way the notion of occludability builds in the idea that occluded items continue to exist when unperceived. In light of this, when something seems occludable to us it will seem to be such that it would continue to exist were it occluded. That is, such an item would, in virtue of its seeming occludable, seem mind-independent in at least this minimal sense.

One way of objecting to P2 mirrors the third objection discussed in connection with P1. These sorts of objections hold that even though an experienced item seems occludable it can fail to seem mind-independent because one knows that the item is illusory or hallucinatory. In response to this objection I point out that it would be odd, from the point of view of the objection, to grant that known illusory or hallucinatory items seem occludable yet fail to seem mind-independent. This is because the motivation for denying that such an object would seem mind-independent, *viz.,* that one knows that it is not, would seem equal motivation for denying that the same object seems occludable. How could one hold that an item is occludable, that something could get between one and it, but deny that the item has an existence distinct from one? So either one denies both that the item seems occludable and mind-independent or one denies neither. In either case, P2 is untouched.

Having set out my argument for [Spatiality] and having defended its premises, I now turn to objections to [Spatiality] itself.

III. [Spatiality], objections and replies.

Objection 1: After-images are a counter-example to [Spatiality]. This is because after-images appear as at a spatial distance relative to one but fail to seem mind-independent.

Reply: In a recent paper Ian Phillips considers an objection due to Boghossian and Velleman according to which,

> "On the one hand, the after-image is seen as located before one's eyes, rather than in one's mind, where visual memories are seen.… But on the other hand, one does not perceive these items as actually existing in the locations to which they are subjectively referred.… the afterimage is seen as overlaying the thin air before one's eyes, where there

> is visibly nothing to see.… the image [is thus perceived] as a figment or projection of one's eyes: as existing only in so far as one is perceiving [it]."[82]

It is somewhat difficult to make sense of what Boghossian and Velleman have in mind here. This is because while they accept that after-images are 'seen' as located before the eyes, and so, presumably, seen as at a spatial distance relative to one, they nevertheless deny that we 'perceive' after-images to exist in the locations to which they are 'subjectively referred' and instead hold that after-images are 'perceived' as a 'figment or projection of one's eyes'. One possible reading of the passage from Boghossian and Velleman is as raising an objection to [Spatiality] on the grounds that after-images are perceptually experienced ('seen') as at a spatial distance relative to a perceiver but fail to seem ('be perceived') mind-independent to that perceiver.

In the paper from which I have quoted, Phillips is not concerned with defending [Spatiality]. However, Phillips is concerned to reject the idea that after-images appear to us as subjective. In response to the quoted passage and to other writers who allege that after-images are perceptually experienced as subjective, Phillips develops what he calls the 'light illusion account' of after-images. According to the light illusion account '...afterimages are illusory presentations of pure visibilia...'.[83] Phillips defines pure visibilia as objects which are percieved to have a nature which does not go beyond the purely visual.[84] Phillips provides the following as examples of pure visibilia: '...rainbows, shadows, highlights, filtows, ... holograms, beams of light, glories, mirror images, and the vault of the sky...'.[85] On Phillips' view, after-images experiences are experiences which involve the illusory presentation of pure visibilia. Given that pure visibilia needn't appear to us as subjective, after-images needn't appear to us as subjective if the light illusion account is true.

Whether or not the details of Phillips' proposal are acceptable, it does seem to me plausible to describe experiences involving after-images as experiences as of some phenomenon in the environment. For example, if one has an after-image and looks at a white wall, the after-image will look as though it is on the wall. But if the after-images looks to be on the wall, then it looks to be in one's environment. How exactly to characterize the way one's environment looks when one has an after-image is a delicate question and Phillips' view is one way of answering it. But however one answers that question, it does seem right to suppose that having an after-image is a matter of one's environment looking some way. In light of this, after-images do not pose any problem for [Spatiality].

Objection 2: Items which are experienced as kinetically dependent, i.e. items whose location and movement appear to depend on the perceiver, can be experienced as at a spatial distance relative to one. But such items are experienced as failing to be mind-independent in virtue of their kinetic dependence. So [Spatiality] is false.

Reply: Susanna Siegel describes a case of this kind and it is worth considering it at some length so that I may respond to it.

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82 Quoted from Phillips (2013), p. 427. The original text is Boghossian & Velleman (1989), p. 87.
83 Phillips (2013), p. 427.
84 Phillips (2013), p. 425.
85 Phillips (2013), p. 426.

Siegel considers the case of seeing a doll sitting on a shelf, playing with it a bit, returning it to its shelf and moving on to other things.[86] Nothing out of the ordinary so far. However, soon "...something odd happens. You look back at the doll on the shelf and find that it seems to have lost its [kinetic] independence: it moves with movements of your head as if you were wearing a helmet with a imperceptible arm extending from the front, keeping the doll in your field of view." At this point, it is plausible that the doll would still seem mind-independent to you. That is, it would seem that the doll is an aspect of the external environment but that its movement has become coordinated with yours in a way which does not apply to most external objects. As Siegel points out, one hypothesis you might have is that there is an invisible arm connecting the doll to your head. This hypothesis clearly treats the doll as an item in the mind-independent environment. So far, no problem for [Spatiality]. But now things get even more bizarre.

You now try moving your eyes without moving your head and "...you find that the doll seems to move with your eyes as well. It seems to be sensitive to the slightest eye movement"' At this point is still seems like we can hold on to the idea that the doll seems mind-independent. Perhaps there is now an invisible mechanical connection between your eyes and the doll, rather than between your head and the doll. Or perhaps what is going on is that you have acquired the power to move the doll with your eyes. So as yet the situation Siegel discusses doesn't seem to be a problem for [Spatiality] in that we can still make sense of the case in terms of the doll seeming mind-independent to you.

However, things get even stranger still. Siegel writes of this next stage, "When you close your eyes, you continue having a visual experience as of a doll. And when you try, with your eyes open, to put an opaque object right in front of the doll to block it from your view, your visual experience persists in being a visual experience as of a doll."

I think that this stage of Siegel's story does raise a problem for [Spatiality]. This is because it seems to me that the failure of occlusion will bring it about that the doll fails to seem mind-independent. If something behaved as the doll does in this stage of Siegel's story, surely one would fail to treat it as an aspect of the environment. More specifically, the doll would not seem mind-independent. However, as Siegel describes the case, you experience the doll in such a way that it appears to you that you could place an opaque object between you and the doll in order to block your view of the doll. Otherwise your attempt to occlude the doll by interposing an opaque object would make little sense. So, presumably, you experience the doll as at a spatial distance relative to you. In this way, the case poses a challenge to [Spatiality].[87]

My response to this kind of case is that it is difficult to see how it would be coherent if it is to provide a counter-example to [Spatiality]. As I think of the case, it is not until the doll fails to be occluded that one comes to treat it as not among the items in one's environment. Until this point one is still able to treat the doll as an item in the environment whose dynamics, while admittedly quite strange, are not incompatible with the doll being environmental. However when one fails to occlude the doll by taking steps which would occlude an environmental item, e.g. interposing an opaque object between one and the doll, it is then that the doll ceases to seem mind-independent. The question is, then, whether or not the doll is perceived to be at a spatial distance *at that point.* That is, the question is whether or not the doll continues to be experienced

86 This quotation and the ones which follow are found in Siegel (2006) pp. 369-373.

87 This case would also seem to constitute an objection to the second premise of the argument I gave for [Spatiality]. The way I respond to the case as an objection to [Spatiality] would also extend to a defense of the second premise of the argument.

as spatially distance when occlusion has actually failed and the doll fails to seem mind-independent. It is here that I find it difficult to see how this could be. If something is experienced as unable to be occluded, then how could that same item be experienced as at a spatial distance from one?

One possibility is that the item is experienced as unable to be occluded because it is experienced as constantly moving in such a way as to avoid occlusion. In such a case the item fails to be occluded because it is experienced as 'jumping' in front of whatever item you attempt to occlude it with. This would make experienced unoccludability phenomenologically compatible with the experience of spatial distance. But in such a case it is not obvious that the moving item would fail to seem mind-independent. Indeed, as I have described the case the item is experienced as moving around the environment in such a way as to avoid occlusion by other items in the environment. So to that extent it is difficult to see how it could be that the item fails to seem mind-independent given that one perceptually experiences the item as mobile in the environment and interacting with other items one experiences in that space. However, if one does not describe the case in terms of the doll moving in order to avoid occlusion, it is hard to square the doll's unoccludability with its being perceived to be at a spatial distance.

Objection 3: As was indicated in objection 2, there are many ways an item can appear perceptually that are relevant to its status as mind-independent. Constancies like shape and color constancy, the affordance of multiple perspectives and kinetic independence are just some of the perceptual features which are relevant to attributions of mind-independence. Given that this is so, spatial distance is simply one such feature among many. This raises at least two questions. First, why should spatial distance be privileged as [Spatiality] alleges? Second, it seems clear that perceptible features which are relevant to seeming mind-independence can conflict. For example, Siegel's case involves a putative conflict between spatial distance and kinetic independence. In such cases why suppose that spatial distance wins out?

Reply: Taking these points in turn, it is not clear to me that [Spatiality] privileges spatial distance over other features which might be taken to be perceptual marks of mind-independence. This is because [Spatiality] only claims that the perceptual experience of something as at a spatial distance relative to one is sufficient for seeming mind-independence. This is compatible with other perceptible features being sufficient for seeming mind-independence. Furthermore, [Spatiality] doesn't assert that perceived spatial distance is a necessary condition on seeming mind-independence. So it is not clear that [Spatiality] privileges spatial distance over other relevant features. What [Spatiality] does do is isolate one way elements appear perceptually that is related to our sense of perceived items as mind-independent.

As to the second issue, it is true that there may be conflicts between perceptible features that are relevant to seeming mind-independence. Moreover, there may be cases where one perceives an item to be some way which suggests its mind-independence but where the seeming mind-independence of the item conflicts with other knowledge one has about the situation. In such a case we needn't suppose that the seeming mind-independence is completely done away with. Instead, it is plausible that the seeming mind-independence persists in something like the

way that the Muller-Lyer lines persist in looking unequal despite one's knowledge to the contrary.[88] This being so, such cases needn't threaten [Spatiality].

To see this consider, for example, a situation in which one perceptually experiences a pile of leaves as having features which suggest its mind-independence but where one knows that one is in a situation where it is likely that one is only hallucinating the pile. In the following passage H.H. Price describes himself as being in such a situation:

> "It happened late in the day, in twilight. I was sitting on a chair looking at a divan bed. The bedspread covering it had a very well-marked pattern, with strong contrasts between the lighter and the darker parts. Quite suddenly the bedspread appeared to turn into a pile of very large dead leaves. …The whole pile, and each leaf in it, was markedly three-dimensional, if anything more solid looking than a real pile of dead leaves would have been. …this hallucination continued for quite a long time, two or three minutes perhaps… I had ample leisure to study it and enjoy it. Contrary to what some philosophers have suggested my judgement was not in the least confused. I did not suppose for a moment that the leaves were really there, though they *looked* as real as could be."[89]

Here Price is plausibly interpreted as drawing a distinction between how the leaves are experienced as being, *viz.,* 'real', and how Price knows them to be given his knowledge of the situation. Strictly speaking the situation Price describes is different than a situation in which an item is perceptually experienced as being a way which suggests its mind-independence despite one's knowledge that the item is not mind-independent. This is because while Price writes that the leaves *looked* real, I instead construe the sense in which an item seems mind-independent, or 'real', as being cognitive. Even so, the passage from Price does suggest a sense in which an item can seem mind-independent as a result of one's perceptual encounter with that item even though one knows that the item fails to be mind-independent. What is crucial here is that the item persists in seeming mind-independent to Price even though he knows that it is not that way. As Price says, he did not suppose while he was hallucinating that the leaves were real even though that is how, while he was hallucinating, things looked to him. What Price's case demonstrates is that seeming mind-independence can persist in the face of countervailing knowledge. So, [Spatiality] is not open to counter-examples which depend on countervailing knowledge 'defeating' the seeming mind-independence which is generated by the perceptual experience of an item as at a spatial distance relative to the perceiver.

IV. Conclusion.

In the previous chapter I argued for a construal of transparency which involved, among other things, the claim that experienced elements seem mind-independent. At the start of this chapter I pointed out that it is not at all obvious what it would be for experienced elements to seem mind-independent. In response to this I developed an account of seeming mind-independence according to which the perceptual appearance of an item as at a spatial distance relative to one suffices for that item to seem mind-independent to one. The purpose of developing this account was to achieve greater clarity about what it would be for perceptual experience to be transparent. I hope that the result of the discussion of this chapter and the one that preceded is that transparency has been shown in a clearer philosophical light. In the next two chapters I turn to

88 For discussion of this point see Bealer (1996), p. 123.

89 Price (1964), p. 15.This passage is also discussed by Stroud (1984), p. 25.

the significance of transparency as I understand it. If [PT] is true, what, if anything, of philosophical significance follows?

Chapter 3: The Metaphysical Significance of Transparency.

If perceptual experience is transparent what, if anything, does this tell us about the nature of perceptual experience? That is the question I will take up in this chapter. Many philosophers think that the transparency of perceptual experience provides a strong and direct argument in favor of certain views of perception and against others. In this way transparency is supposed to play a leading role in metaphysical theorizing about perception. However, there is significant disagreement about what, exactly, transparency shows us about the metaphysical nature of perceptual experience. As Jeff Speaks puts it, "Though there is widespread agreement that the transparency of experience shows something important about perception, there is little agreement about what it shows."[90] Using the understanding of transparency which was developed in the last two chapters I want to raise some skepticism about the idea that transparency itself tells us anything important metaphysics of perception. In particular I will argue that if transparency does tell us anything about what perceptual experience is fundamentally, it does so only in conjunction with other considerations. Thus the role of transparency in theorizing about the nature of perceptual experience is more indirect than many philosophers have supposed.

The argument I develop centers on the phenomenological construal of transparency set out in the preceding chapters according to which in perceptual experience we seem only to be aware of mind-independent elements. The central claim of this chapter is that while transparency concerns how perceptual experience seems to us in having it, theories of the metaphysical nature of experience concern how perceptual experience is. Given that it is possible that perceptual experience is not how it seems to us, a claim which I defended in the first chapter and which I motivate further below, in itself transparency need tell us nothing about how perceptual experience is. Thus it may be that perceptual experience is transparent in the relevant sense but that we are simply mistaken about the nature of our own perceptual experiences. It is in this way that transparency need tell us nothing about the nature of perceptual experience.

In the first section of the chapter I outline the way I think about giving a metaphysical theory of perceptual experience. In the second section of the chapter I discuss the main theories of the metaphysical nature of perceptual experience that are found in the philosophical literature on perception. In the third section of the chapter I discuss how philosophers have thought transparency to be relevant to these theories. In the fourth section of the chapter I set out my alternative conception of how transparency interacts with theories of the nature of perceptual experience. In the fifth section I make some concluding remarks about my discussion.

I. The nature of perceptual experience.

In the first half of the twentieth century philosophical discussion of perception was primarily concerned with the nature of the objects of perception, and, in particular, with the issue of whether the objects of perception are distinct from the ordinary objects in the environment which we assume perception to make us knowledgeable about. Sustained discussion of this issue can be found in all of the important writers of the period, like Moore, Russell, Broad and Price, who engaged with questions about perception.[91] In such discussions considerations of illusion and

90 Speaks (2009) p. 539. 'Transparency, Intentionalism, and the Nature of Perceptual Content'

91 See Moore (1957), Russell (1912), Price (1932), Broad (1923).

hallucination took center stage and most theorizing was conducted in the service of or in direct relation to the theory of knowledge.[92]

At a glance, contemporary philosophy of perception would seem to have little concern for the objects of perception. Instead, contemporary theorists concern themselves with the phenomenal character of perceptual experience, that feature of perceptual experiences which makes it the case that there is something it is like to have that experience.[93]In chapter 1 I defined perceptual experiences as perceptual states of mind which are such that there is something it is like to be in them and I used the term phenomenal character to refer to the experiential aspect of perceptual experiences. Using this terminology we can say that contemporary philosophers of perception are concerned to give an account of the phenomenal character of perceptual experiences.

To clarify this philosophers often say that they are giving a theory of phenomenal properties*,* the properties perceptual experiences have in virtue of which those perceptual experiences have the phenomenal character that they do.[94],[95] A common assumption, which is embedded in how I just explained the notion of a phenomenal property, is that there are certain features which perceptual experiences possess in virtue of which those experiences feel the way they do for their subject.[96] As common as this understanding is, we will see later in the chapter that construing phenomenal properties as properties of experiences stacks the deck in favor of certain theories of perceptual experience and against others. So at this point we can proceed more neutrally and say that philosophers of perception are trying to give an analysis of phenomenal properties where phenomenal properties are understood simply as the properties which determine the phenomenal character of perceptual experiences, whether or not such properties are instantiated by perceptual experiences.[97]

Many seek a clearer understanding of phenomenal properties by identifying phenomenal properties with properties that are better understood.[98] For example, phenomenal properties might be identified with representational properties, with functional properties, with neural properties or with properties of some other kind. The various views in the philosophy of perception can all be cast in terms of phenomenal property identities. Thus the role of [PT] in this debate will concern whether [PT] gives us any reason to adopt or reject a given phenomenal property identity. To assess this it will be necessary to consider the particular phenomenal

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92 For example, A.J. Ayer sets out his theory of perception in his 1940 book entitled 'The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge'.

93 See Nagel (1974) for the 'what it's like' locution. For an illuminating discussion of these issues to which I am indebted, see Martin (2000). See Orlandi (2014) for an uncharacteristic but interesting philosophical discussion that focuses on unconscious perceptual processing.

94 I have defined phenomenal properties in such a way that only perceptual experiences have phenomenal properties. Given that many philosophers hold that non-perceptual mental states have phenomenal characters, my usage of 'phenomenal properties' is non-standard. This non-standard usage is justified by my exclusive focus on perceptual experience.

95 Construing philosophical accounts of perception as giving an analysis of phenomenal properties is central to the work of Adam Pautz. See, e.g., Pautz (2007).

96 For an example of the common assumption see Chalmers (2006).

97 As I use the term 'determine', that property A determins property B is compatible with property A being identical with property B.

98 In the case of some theories of perception it is dubious whether we have a firmer grip on the reducing properties than we have on the reduced properties. But I'll ignore this for now.

property identities which philosophers have proposed and it is to this issue which I turn in the next section of the chapter.

II. Theories of the nature of perceptual experience.

What is the logical space of possible views one could take as to the nature of phenomenal properties? To answer this question we can begin by asking whether the instantiation of phenomenal properties requires that there is something which one is perceptually aware of or perceiving. We can call views which answer this question affirmatively relational views. According to such views if it is the case that one is undergoing a perceptual experience with phenomenal character K, and so that phenomenal properties <P1..PN> are being instantiated, then it must be the case that one is perceptually aware of some item or set of items i. Relational views may build in further constraints as to the nature of the items of which one must be aware in order that one have a perceptual experience but the basic commitment of relational views is that they understand perceptual experience as essentially a relation of perceptual awareness to an item or set of items of some as yet unspecified kind. We can state the relational view as follows:

> [REL] Necessarily, properties of the form having a perceptual experience with phenomenal character K are identical with properties of the form being aware of some item or set of items i.

Because [REL] is neutral with respect to the nature of i, we can distinguish between different versions of relationalism by distinguishing between views one could take as to the nature of the items of which one is necessarily aware in perception.

In particular, we can distinguish between relational views according to which the instantiation of phenomenal properties consists in an awareness of *mind-independent* items and views which hold that the instantiation of phenomenal properties consists in an awareness of *mind-dependent* items.

> [REL-MI] Necessarily, properties of the form having a perceptual experience with phenomenal character K are identical with properties of the form being aware of some mind-independent item or set of items i.

> [REL-MD] Necessarily, properties of the form having a perceptual experience with phenomenal character K are identical with properties of the form being aware of some mind-dependent item or set of items i.

Certain formulations of the sense-datum view are examples of [REL-MD]. For example, Frank Jackson holds that perceptual experience consists in the awareness of mind-dependent entities which he calls sense-data.[99] Howard Robinson has a similar view.[100] However, not all 'sense-datum' views endorse [REL-MD]. For example, proponents of sense-datum views in the early analytic period sometimes regarded sense-data as mind-independent, though non-physical.[101] For present purposes I will ignore that complication and construe sense-data theories of perception as

99 See Jackson (1977).
100 Robinson (1994).
101 See Martin (2003).

those theories which accept [REL-MD]. In what follows I will use the name [SD] to refer to such views.

Moving on from [SD], there is a cluster of views in the current philosophical literature on perception which are variously referred to as naïve realism or the relational view.[102] Such views are examples of views which accept [REL-MI]. According to these views the instantiation of phenomenal properties requires the awareness of mind-independent items. For example, Campbell's variety of naïve realism holds that "...the phenomenal character of your experience, as you look around the room, is constituted by the actual layout of the room itself...".[103] Thus, on Campbell's view, having a perceptual experience with a given phenomenal character constitutively requires the awareness of mind-independent items such as furniture in a room. I will call views that endorse [REL-MI] *naïve realism* and I will use the name [NR] to refer to views of this kind.

We can now consider non-relational approaches to perception. Non-relational approaches are those which reject [REL] in characterizing phenomenal properties. So described, non-relational views say something purely negative. But such views still identify phenomenal properties with something. So what do these analyses look like?

We can begin towards this by distinguishing between non-relational views which characterize perceptual experience in externally-directed terms and non-relational views which characterize perceptual experience in non-externally-directed terms, a distinction which I clarify below.

One grouping of non-relational views, variously referred to as intentionalism or representationalism, holds that phenomenal properties are identical with representational properties of a certain kind.[104] Intentional or representational approaches to perception are non-relational in that they reject [REL].[105] However, as I understand them, intentional views still characterize perceptual experience in a way which makes essential reference to the external environment. It is in this sense that such views are 'externally-directed'.[106] To see this it will be useful to characterize intentional views further.

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102 For the use of 'naïve realism' see Martin (2006), Fish (2009) and Smith (2002). For the use of the 'relational view' see Campbell (2002). A related view is Brewer's 'object view'. See Brewer (2007).

103 Campbell (2002) p. 116.

104 In some cases these terms are used to describe views which do not identify phenomenal properties with representational properties. For example, some writers, e.g. Byrne (2001) use the term intentionalism to refer to the view that phenomenal properties supervene on representational properties. 'Representationalism' is sometimes used for that view as well, as in Pace (2007) and Tye (2002). 'Representationalism' is also sometimes used for the view that perceptual experiences have contents, as in Kennedy (2009). Siegel (2010) uses the phrase 'the content view' to describe such a view, though the same phrase is used by Brewer (2007) to describe a different view according to which the 'core subjective character' of a perceptual experience is given by citing the representational content of that experience. For use of 'intentionalism' in something like my sense see the use of 'strong intentionalism' in Crane (2000). For use of 'representationalism' in something like my sense see Tye (2014) and Block (2010). The phrase 'strong representationalism' is also sometimes used to refer to the view I am concerned with in this chapter. For this usage see Tye (2002) and Kind (2003).

105 This is compatible with such approaches being relational in some other sense of that term. For example, it is compatible with Pautz's description of such views as relational. See Pautz (2010), p. 259.

106 To clarify further, my use of 'externally-directed' is meant to mark the idea that certain psychological features make essential reference to external matters, i.e. to matters which are beyond the psychology of the subject in question. I use the term 'externally-directed' to pick out psychological features which are this way. I use the term 'non-externally-directed' to name psychological features which are not this way.

The reason intentionalism is an externally-directed view is that intentionalists typically understand perceptual representation to be representation of an external environment, not just representation of *anything.*[107] So the representational properties that the intentionalist identifies with phenomenal properties are properties of the form representing the environment as being thus and so. In this way the intentionalist has it that phenomenal properties necessarily concern or are necessarily directed at an environment which is external to the perceiving subject that is representing it. Thus, intentional views accept:

> [INT] Properties of the form having a perceptual experience with phenomenal character K are identical with properties of the form representing the environment as being F.[108]

Given that intentionalists conceive of perception as externally directed in this way, how does an intentional approach differ from relational theories? That is, in endorsing [INT] why must one reject [REL]?

Given certain assumptions about representation, [INT] and [REL] are incompatible as I eluded to above. In particular, it seems natural that representation does not require the existence or truth of what is represented. For example, if I draw a man with dreadlocks, thus representing such a man, there needn't be an actual dreadlocked man that I have represented. That is just not how drawing works and it is often assumed that it is not how representation works in general.[109] Thus, if the proponent of [INT] is appealing to a notion of representation which is meant to conform to this general constraint on representation then [INT] and [REL] will be incompatible.[110] This is because if phenomenal properties are identified with representational properties, then it is not the case that if a phenomenal property is instantiated one must be perceptually aware of something. But if [REL] is true the instantiation of phenomenal properties must involve the awareness of an item. Thus, if [INT] is true, [REL] is false and same the other way around. Hence the non-relationality of the intentional approach to perception.

In contrast with the externally-directed intentional view, qualia views provide an example of non-relational views which are non-externally-directed. Michael Tye defines the qualia theory, what he calls 'qualia realism', as follows. 'Qualia realism is the thesis that experiences have intrinsic features that are non-intentional and of which we can be directly aware via introspection. Such features are commonly known as qualia. According to the qualia realist, the phenomenal character of an experience is one and the same as the cluster of such intrinsic features.'[111] So the qualia theorist accepts:

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107 Pautz, (2010) p. 257. See also Crane (2000) and Pace (2007).

108 There are a number of ways in which my statement of [INT] needs to be filled out. For example, what are the permissible range of properties which can be substituted for F in [INT]? Furthermore, how exactly should we understand the representational content of a state which represents the environment as being F? Should this content be merely existential, of the form there is an o which is F? Or should the content be set out in terms of particular objects? For the issue of the permissible range of properties see e.g. Siegel (2010). For the issue of the nature of perceptual content see, e.g. Tye (2014) and Speaks (2009).

109S ee, e.g., Harman (1990).

110 That intentionalist appeal to a notion of representation which does conform to this constraint is suggested by the claim, made by many intentionalists, that intentionalism is well placed to explain cases of illusion and hallucination. For discussion of this see Byrne (2009) and Harman (1990).

111 Tye (2014), p. 41. It is surprisingly difficult to find theorists who identify phenomenal properties with qualia. Though many theorists hold that the phenomenal character of a perceptual experience is partly a matter of

> [Q] Properties of the form having a perceptual experience with phenomenal character K are identical with properties of the form having a perceptual state with qualia, i.e. properties which are (i) non-intentional, (ii) intrinsic to the state in question and (iii) such that we can be directly aware of them introspectively.

The truth of [Q] is incompatible with the truth of [REL], hence the non-relationality of qualia views. The incompatibility of [Q] and [REL] falls out of the fact that qualia are non-relational properties. Because qualia are non-relational properties, instantiating qualia does not require that one be perceptually aware of anything.[112] If instantiating a quale *required* that one be perceptually aware of something, then that quale would be a relational property. But qualia are typically understood as non-relational properties. Hence, [Q] is incompatible with [REL] and so is a form of non-relationalism about perceptual experience. The incompatibility of [Q] and [INT] falls out of the non-intentional nature of qualia. The instantiation of qualia does not require the instantiation of any representational or intentional properties. Thus, if phenomenal properties are identical with qualia, then phenomenal properties cannot be identical with representational properties as [INT] requires. Thus the two views are incompatible. The incompatibility of [Q] and [INT] is connected to the sense in which qualia views are non-externally-directed. It is to this issue that I now turn.

What makes the qualia view non-externally-directed, and so importantly different from the intentional view, is that the properties the qualia view explains perceptual experience in terms of, *viz.,* qualia, do not evoke the external world in any essential way. Rather, the qualia theorist understands perceptual experience as a matter of the having of certain psychological features that make no essential reference to one's environment. This is just what it means to say that qualia are *non-intentional* properties. Qualia do not point to anything beyond themselves.

To sum up, I have distinguished between non-relational and relation accounts of the nature of perceptual experience. The sense-datum view and naïve realism are relational views while intentionalism and the qualia view are non-relational. I then distinguished between the sense-datum view and naïve realism in terms of how these views differ in how they regard the nature of the items of which we are necessarily aware when we perceive. I then distinguished between intentionalism and the qualia view in terms of whether the psychological properties these views appeal to in characterizing perceptual experience make essential reference to the environment. Having distinguished between the views just mentioned we are now in a position to assess the way in which many philosophers have thought transparency to impact the debate between these competing views.

III. Transparency and the metaphysics of experience, the received view.

Commentators have typically supposed that transparency plays a negative role, giving us reason to rule out certain theories, and a positive role, giving us reason to adopt certain views. In terms of its negative role, transparency has generally been supposed to be hostile to qualia and sense-

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instantiating qualia. Such theorists include Peacocke (1983), Block (1996) and Block (1997). For a very useful historical overview of the term 'qualia' see Crane (2000a).

112 The possibility of a relational version of the qualia view according to which in having a perceptual experience one is perceptually aware of qualia is discussed below. On my view there is no significant difference between views which accept [SD] and relational versions of the qualia view.

datum approaches.[113] Positively, transparency has typically been discussed as supporting intentional approaches to perception.[114] There has also been some recent discussion of the idea that transparency supports naïve realism.[115] I begin my foray into the metaphysical significance of transparency by focusing on the putative negative role of transparency. I then turn to transparency's putative positive role.

III.I. Transparency's negative role.

Why have philosophers thought that transparency is hostile to qualia and sense-datum approaches to perception? The basic thought seems to be that transparency shows that there are no such things as sense-data or qualia. This is because, whatever else qualia and sense-data are, they are distinct from the mind-independent items which exhaust the items of which we are aware in perception according to transparency. As Martin describes the point, "The charge here is that qualia (or equally sense-data) are absent from any introspective search of the mind and that this conflicts with the hypothesis that such things need to be posited... in explaining the phenomenological character of sensory experience."[116] What I want to do now is elaborate the reasoning just mentioned and see whether the reasoning holds up if we understand transparency in terms of [PT].

III.I.I Transparency and [Q].

Here my focus will be on Michael Tye's arguments from transparency to the falsity of the qualia view, or what I described as [Q] above. I consider Tye's arguments because he sets the issues out more explicitly than anyone else in the literature that I know of. Here is Tye's 'preferred version of the transparency argument based on attention' against qualia views:

> "(14) If one is aware of one's visual experience or any of its qualities when one introspects, then in normal cases one can attend to one or more of those items directly on the basis of that awareness.
> (15) But one cannot so attend.
> So,
> (16) One is not aware of one's visual experience and/or its qualities when one introspects in normal cases.
> So,
> (17) Qualia realism is false."[117]

The basic complaint here is that the qualia view is committed to our ability to be aware of aspects of our perceptual experiences, *viz.*, their qualia, and that this is incompatible with transparency. Tye holds that 'the key transparency claims' are: "(1) We are not aware of features of our visual experience. (2) We are not aware of the visual experience itself. (3) We cannot attend to features of the visual experience. (4) The only features of which we are aware and to which we can attend are external features (colors and shapes of surfaces, for example)."[118]

113 See, e.g., Tye (2014) and Martin (2002).
114 See, e.g., Tye (2002), Tye (2014), Martin (2002) and Harman (1990).
115 See, e.g., Kennedy (2009) and Pautz (MS).
116 Martin (2004), p. 381.
117 Tye (2014), p. 45.
118 Tye (2014) p. 40.

Presumably (15) is meant to follow from (3). Thus (15) is derivative of Tye's commitment to transparency.

The argument is simple enough and it is valid given the commitments of qualia realism as Tye understands them. However, the argument is unsound insofar as (15) is supported on the basis of transparency. This is because it is not obvious that [PT] entails (15), even if one grants (14). That is, it could be that all we seem to be aware of in perceptual experience are mind-independent elements but it nevertheless be true that we can attend to qualia in experience. In such a situation we would simply be mistaken as to the nature of what we are aware of in perceptual experience. A.D. Smith briefly mentions this possibility in connection with transparency arguments against the sense-datum view when he writes that "If there are such things as sense-data, then there is no reason why one should not be aware of them *as* sense-data."[119] It seems to me that the same point can be made with respect to arguments from transparency against qualia views.[120] That is, [PT] could be true while it is also true that we are aware of qualia in perceptual experience. The compatibility of these claims rests on the possibility that we might be aware of qualia but mistake qualia for mind-independent elements and so fail to be aware of qualia as qualia.

In an earlier and more sprawling discussion of transparency and metaphysical theories of perceptual experience Tye makes comments which can be interpreted as intended to head this kind of response off. Tye writes that 'To suppose that the qualities of which perceivers are directly aware in undergoing ordinary, everyday visual experiences of things are really qualities of the experiences would be to convict such experiences of massive error. That is just not credible. It seems totally implausible to hold that visual experience is systematically misleading in this way.'[121] It would seem that Tye's suggestion is that the thought that we might mistake qualia for features of the external environment is a non-starter. But this is not obviously so. The discussion in chapter 1 shows that something like this possibility has been taken seriously throughout the history of philosophical debate about perception. Indeed, as I pointed out it isn't clear how philosophical debate about perceptual experience could be coherent unless this was a genuine possibility. If we could not be mistaken in the way Tye supposes we cannot, how could there be genuine disagreement about perceptual experience among reflective and forthright theorists? Indeed, how could there be a *theory* of perceptual experience if it was not possible for our experiences to be other than they seem to us? In light of this, it is not at all clear that this possibility can be set to one side on the grounds that it is 'totally implausible' or 'just not credible'. Yet such a premise is required to get an entailment from [PT] to something like Tye's (15). It is for this reason that Tye's argument fail. To bring this out more clearly it will be useful to consider how Tye's argument would looked when (15) is replaced with a cognate premise which is, at least arguably, available on the basis of [PT]. Here is how the argument would look if we made this replacement:

> (14) If one is aware of one's visual experience or any of its qualities when one introspects, then in normal cases one can attend to one or more of those items directly on the basis of that awareness.

119 Smith (2008), p. 197.

120 Indeed, the quote from Smith is advanced as a comment on theorists who use transparency as a "...criticism of accounts of perception that appeal to sense-data or qualia." Smith (2009), p. 197.

121 Tye (2002), p. 139.

(15*) One does not seem able to so attend.
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(16) One is not aware of one's visual experience and/or its qualities when one introspects in normal cases.
---
(17) Qualia realism is false.

This argument is invalid. Specifically, the move from (14) and (15*) to (16) is invalid. In the original argument (16) was a deductive consequence of (14) and (15). But in the revised argument (16) is supposed to be a deductive consequence of (14) and (15*). But, as I argued above (14) and (15*) could be true while (16) is false.

III.I.II Transparency and [SD].

Tye also holds that considerations of transparency show that the sense-datum theory is false.[122] I think that many philosophers suppose that the considerations Tye appeals to in the argument above suffice to refute [SD] as well.[123] Here is how an argument of this kind would go:

P1) If one is aware of sense-data, then in normal cases one can attend to sense-data directly on the basis of that awareness.
P2) In normal cases we cannot attend to sense-data.

C) One is not aware of sense-data.

C1) Therefore the sense-datum view is false.

This argument suffers from the same problem as Tye's argument against the qualia view. The sense-datum theorist can simply reject the second premise on the grounds that while it may not seem to us as though we are attending to sense-data, this is actually how things are with us.[124] As it stands, the argument provides no reason why this could not be so, Tye's insistence notwithstanding.

Up to now I have been looking at *negative* arguments of this kind, arguments which try to show that the transparency of perceptual experience shows us that perception is *not* certain ways metaphysically. I have found such arguments wanting on the ground that they turn on a false understanding of transparency. When this false understanding of transparency is replaced with [PT], the arguments are either invalid or require a premise which is not obviously true. What I want to do now is look at how some philosophers have thought of transparency as giving positive reason to endorse certain theories. What will be found is that such arguments also fail because they rely on a false understanding of transparency.

III.I.III Transparency's positive role.

Generally, commentators have supposed that transparency supports intentional and relational approaches to sensory experience. To finish off this section I want to look at that idea more

122 See Tye (2014), p. 50. While Tye does not explain in any detail what he understands the sense-datum view to be, he does describe as involving the claim that we are aware of mental objects in perceptual experience. If this view is false then [SD] will be false as well.

123 See, e.g., Leeds (2002), pp. 109-11.

124 Sense-datum theorists were in the habit of making just this protest. See, e.g., Broad (1956).

closely. I begin by considering arguments which seek to establish intentionalism on the basis of transparency. I then consider arguments which attempt to establish naïve realism on the basis of transparency.

III.I.IV Transparency and [INT].

In addressing the connection between transparency and intentionalism I will again focus on the work of Michael Tye. As before, I focus on Tye because he sets out his argument from transparency to intentionalism more clearly than anyone else in the literature.

Recently Tye has given a very compact argument from transparency to what he calls "...the most basis [*sic*] thesis of representationalism...", the view that "...necessarily (visual) experiences that are alike with respect to the qualities they represent are alike phenomenally."[125]. Here is the argument:

> "If, as I believe, the transparency thesis can be extended to cases of abnormal perception, then it follows that the qualities of which one is aware when one tries to introspect a visual experience are not qualities of the experience. What, then, are they? A plausible hypothesis is that they are qualities represented by the experience. Since these are the only qualities of which one is (and can be) aware, a further plausible hypothesis is that these are the qualities that fix or ground the phenomenal character of one's experience. If this is so, then necessarily (visual) experiences that are alike with respect to the qualities they represent are alike phenomenally."[126]

Tye's argument begins with the claim that transparency is true of "cases of abnormal perception". For Tye, this entails that the qualities of which one is aware when one tries to inspect such a visual experience are not qualities of one's experience. Tye does not explain how the notion of an abnormal perception is to be understood but it is reasonable to suppose that Tye has illusions and hallucinations in mind.[127] The second move Tye makes is related to the first: given that one is aware of qualities in abnormal visual experience and that such qualities are not qualities of one's experience, what are such qualities qualities of? Thirdly, Tye puts forward a hypothesis about the nature of the qualities of which one is aware in abnormal visual experience. According to Tye it is "plausible" that these qualities are "qualities represented by the experience". Finally, Tye concludes that because these represented qualities are the only qualities of which we can be aware in experience, a further plausible hypothesis is that such qualities, and only such qualities, determine the phenomenal character of experience. Tye advances this as a conclusion about all perceptual experiences, whether or not they are abnormal and this is just the thesis of representationalism as Tye understands that doctrine.

Having set out Tye's argument I will make a number of critical points. I begin with concerns about the argument which do not focus on how the argument understands transparency. I then consider in detail how the argument understands transparency and how this relates to [PT].

The first problem with Tye's argument concerns his appeal to abnormal cases of perception. It should give one pause that Tye feels the need to appeal to such cases in arguing for

125 Tye, (2014) p. 46. [INT] entails this thesis of representationalism as Tye understands that view here. However, the entailment does not hold in the other direction. That Tye's appeal to transparency fails to establish his representationalism entails that it fails to establish [INT].

126 Tye (2014) p. 46.

127 Tye (2014) p. 40.

representationalism. This is because it is not obvious why, in giving an argument from transparency, one should appeal to illusions or hallucinations. By Tye's own lights transparency applies to perfectly ordinary visual experiences. So why appeal to cases of abnormal perception which bring in additional complications?[128] The answer is that the argument Tye gives depends essentially on considerations of illusion and hallucination in such a way that it becomes unclear whether Tye's argument should be regarded as an argument from transparency or rather as a hybrid argument which conjoins transparency to considerations of illusion and hallucination.[129] If Tye's argument is in fact a hybrid argument of this sort, then transparency fails to provide a distinctive motivation for representationalism.

That Tye's argument depends in an essential way on illusion and hallucination is brought out by the third move in Tye's argument where he puts forward a hypothesis about the nature of the qualities of which one is aware in visual hallucination and illusion. Tye asserts that it is plausible that these qualities are qualities that are represented by one's experience. Unfortunately, Tye does not explain what makes this hypothesis plausible. One possibility is that Tye thinks that this hypothesis is plausible because it is the only possible hypothesis which does not suffer from obvious problems. It is here that we see considerations of illusion and hallucination creeping in. For example, the initially appealing hypothesis that such qualities are qualities of mind-independent objects in the environment might seem to fail because in cases of illusion the relevant illusory quality will not be a quality of any mind-independent object and in cases of hallucination one need not be aware of any mind-independent elements at all. Similarly, perhaps Tye thinks that such qualities cannot be qualities of any mental objects like sense-data.[130] Lastly, the hypothesis that such qualities are qualities of one's experience has already been rejected. So perhaps the plausibility of Tye's hypothesis boils down to the putative fact that it is the only viable hypothesis as to the nature of the qualities of which one is aware in abnormal visual experience.

But, importantly, the hypothesis that the qualities of which one is aware are qualities of ordinary mind-independent objects in the environment is only implausible, if it is indeed implausible, in cases of illusion and hallucination. This is because in a normal case of perception the most plausible hypothesis as to the nature of the qualities of which we are aware in having such an experience is that those qualities are qualities of the ordinary mind-independent objects in our environment. In such a case there is no explanatory work for an appeal to representation to do. One might think, however, that things are otherwise in cases of abnormal perception. But, if one thinks this at all, it will be with respect to cases of abnormal perception. In this way Tye's argument crucially depends on considerations other than transparency.

Turning to the role that transparency plays in Tye's argument, it is clear that the argument departs from a purely phenomenological understanding of transparency.[131] This is because

128 Indeed, in arguing against qualia realism on the basis of transparency Tye holds that we should avoid the contentious issues which cases of abnormal perception raise by'...restrict[ing] ourselves to cases of normal visual perception and... tak[ing] the thesis of transparency to be directed to the experiences that occur then.' Tye (2014), p. 41.

129 Tye makes a similar move in his (2002); see p. 140. This confirms that the move is essential to the argument.

130 This is suggested by Tye's discussion at p. 50 of his (2014).

131It is no less clear that Tye thinks that transparency, as he understands it, can be established just on the basis of introspection. See, for example, his appeal to the quotes from Moore, Harman and Tye with which he begins his paper. Thus, given the way that Tye motivates transparency, transparency must be a phenomenological thesis. But Tye does not treat transparency this way.

according to Tye transparency entails that "...the qualities of which one is aware when one tries to introspect a visual experience *are not* qualities of the experience."[132] This is false. A proper phenomenological understanding of transparency according to which we only seem to be aware of mind-independent elements only entails that we do not *seem* to be aware of any qualities of our experience. However, that we do not seem to be aware of any qualities of experience does not entail that we are not aware of any qualities of experience and nothing Tye says gives us independent reason for accepting this entailment. Thus, that these qualities are qualities of experience is not ruled out by [PT]. As such, that the qualities we are aware of in abnormal visual experiences are qualities of experience is, so far as transparency is concerned, a plausible hypothesis. Furthermore, such a hypothesis would be consistent with Tye's appeal to abnormal cases in a way that the hypothesis concerning qualities of mind-independent objects is arguably not. Because Tye's argument fails to rule out the hypothesis that we are aware of qualities of our experience in abnormal cases of visual experience Tye's argument fails to establish representationalism.

III.I.V Transparency and [NR].

In this section I discuss arguments which seek to found naïve realism, i.e. views of perceptual experience which endorse [NR], on the basis of transparency. Before turning to these arguments it will be useful to consider arguments which seek to establish [REL] on the basis of a claim that is in a certain way more minimal than transparency. Seeing where these arguments go wrong will help to illuminate why transparency does not provide a direct argument for naïve realism. I begin with H.H. Price. Price famously wrote that

> "When I see a tomato there is much that I can doubt. I can doubt whether it is a tomato that I am seeing, and not a cleverly painted piece of wax. I can doubt whether there is a material thing there at all...One thing however I cannot doubt: that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape, standing out from a background of other colour-patches, and having a certain visual depth, and that this whole field of colour is presented to my consciousness...'[133]

This passage from Price is often interpreted as claiming that the truth of something like [REL] can be known on the basis of first-personal reflection on experience.[134] That is, Price is suggesting that it is certain that in having the experience that he does he is aware of something. It is true that Price asserts something more than this, *viz.,* that what he is aware of in having his experience is propertied in certain ways. But at root, Price's concern is that a relational conception of perceptual experience can be known to be true just on the basis of the kind of reflection which he engages in. Similarly, C.D. Broad writes that

> "…whatever else may or may not exist it is quite certain that what we perceive exists and has the qualities that it is perceived to have. The worst that can be said is that it is not also *real,* i.e. that it does not exist when it is not the object of someone's perception, not that it does not exist at all."[135]

As with Price, Broad asserts something stronger than [REL], *viz.*, that the items of which we are necessarily aware in perceptual experience have the qualities they are perceived to have. Even

132Tye (2014) p. 46, emphasis added.
133Price (1932), p. 3.
134See, e.g., Pautz, (2007) and Martin (1998).
135Broad (1914), p. 3.

so, Broad is committed to the thought that the truth of [REL] '...is a matter of simple inspection.'[136] More recently, A.D. Smith presses a similar point when he writes that

> "...we need to be able to account for the *perceptual attention* that may well be present in hallucination. A hallucinating subject may, for example, be mentally focusing on one element in a hallucinated scene, and then another, describing in minute detail what he is aware of. In what sense is all this merely "mock"? Here it is not enough to say that the subject is exercising concepts, having visual imagery, and engaging in descriptive thoughts. The sensory features of the situation need to be accounted for. How can this be done if such subjects are denied an object of awareness?"[137]

Here Smith contends that the 'sensory features' of experience can only be accounted for by supposing that sensory experience, even hallucinatory sensory experience, involves an object of awareness. Given that the sensory features of experience are open to first-personal reflection, Smith holds that something like [REL] can be known on the basis of such reflection. So Price, Broad and Smith all contend that something like [REL] can be established on the basis of first-personal reflection.[138] Is this true?

My view is that it is not. This is because I hold that first-personal reflection alone can only yield claims about how our experiences seem to us.[139] Thus, all Price, Broad and Smith are entitled to is the claim that in having a perceptual experience we seem to be aware of element or set of elements. But this claim does not entail [REL]. In response to a reply of this kind Smith complains that it is not clear what it would be for it to seem to one that one is aware of some element but for this to fail to be so.[140] Absent such an account, Smith holds that '...we are left without any means of distinguishing the hallucinatory cases we are interested in from such quite different states as post-hypnotic suggestion, gross mental confusion, inattentiveness, jumping the gun, and so on.'[141] As should be clear from the first two chapters, I am not unsympathetic to Smith's concern. However, the preceding chapters should make it equally clear that I do not think that it is impossible to give such an account as Smith apparently does.[142] Thus, in response to Smith I would provide the account of the relevant seemings which I developed in the preceding chapters. Having discussed the extent to which [REL] can be established on the basis of first-personal reflection on experience I now return to the issue of transparency and [NR].

Matthew Kennedy claims that the "...true beneficiary of transparency is... naïve realism."[143] Similarly, Michael Martin has written that "...naïve realism appears to offer us an alternative account of the phenomenal transparency of perceptual experience."[144] So there has been discussion of the thought that transparency can be used to argue for naïve realism. It is not unclear how such an argument might go. One might first suppose that perceptual experiences are transparent in the sense that in having such experience we are only aware of mind-independent

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136*Ibid.*

137Smith (2002), pp. 224-5.

138In a very useful discussion, Hellie (2007) attributes this view to Moore as well.

139See chapter 1.

140Smith (2002), p. 225.

141*Ibid.*

142In the relevant passages Smith does not argue that such an account couldn't be given, he simply complains that such an account is wanted.

143Kennedy (2009), p. 574. Though I will not discuss the issue in the chapter, it is worth noting that Kennedy also asserts that transparency gives us reason to reject representationalism.

144Martin (2002), p. 393.

elements. Naïve realism is then supported by an appeal to transparency in virtue of the fact that naïve realism claims that perceptual experience is a matter of one's being aware of mind-independent elements. Indeed, it is difficult to see any substantive difference between naïve realism and transparency, so conceived. Unfortunately, such an argument would fail because it depends on an unsupported ontological conception of transparency. However, when one looks in detail at the considerations which Kennedy and Martin discuss it is not obvious that they rely on a false conception of transparency. Moreover, the way in which Kennedy and Martin seek to motivate naïve realism on the basis of transparency shows how one might use a proper phenomenological conception of transparency in deciding between metaphysical theories of perception. To finish this section I look at the arguments from Kennedy and Martin in some detail. This serves as a jumping off point for the next major section of the chapter in which I discuss how [PT] is relevant to metaphysical theories of perceptual experience. I begin with Kennedy.

Kennedy understands transparency as involving two 'data points'.[145] The first data point is that 'material objects' have a 'dominant', 'manifest' or 'substantial' presence to us in visual experience. That is, in '...paradigmatic cases of visual experience, material objects seem to exhaust the territory of which we have a view.' and such objects '...are, at least apparently, the only things of which we are aware.'[146] The second data point involved in transparency is that '...as compared to the objects of experience, our experiences themselves lack any such immediate, obvious, dominant presence.'[147] As a result of this, 'When we try to become aware of our experiences, it is natural to conclude that such awareness is impossible.'[148] Finally, for Kennedy, these data points are supposed to have '...a phenomenological basis or source."[149]

As to the formulation of naïve realism, Kennedy holds that "...a perceiver's subjective state includes the object of perception as a constituent..." and that "Treating material particulars as constituents of veridical experience is naïve realism's distinctive commitment."[150] While this formulation of naïve realism differs from [REL-MI] in a number of ways, it is sufficiently similar to [REL-MI] to warrant discussion in this context.[151] Having explained Kennedy's conception of transparency and naïve realism, we can now consider how Kennedy conceives of transparency as supporting naïve realism.

Kennedy writes that "In perception, material things seem to be dominant components of our subjective situation." As we have seen, this is one aspect of Kennedy's understanding of transparency. Kennedy then goes on to claim that "...naïve realism offers a view on which material particulars are dominant components of our subjective situation..." and that this commitment of naïve realism achieves "...a good descriptive fit..." with transparency. Furthermore, Kennedy holds that theories other than naïve realism "...cannot match its level of

145Kennedy (2009) p. 576. It is unclear whether calling these aspects of data points is supposed to be substantive for Kennedy.

146*Ibid.*

147*Ibid.*

148*Ibid.*

149Kennedy (2009) p. 577.

150Kennedy (2009) pp. 579-80.

151Among other things, Kennedy restricts naïve realism to veridical experiences where [REL-MI] does not. The restriction of naïve realism to veridical experiences is common practice, as in Millar (2014) and Martin (2006. Another possible contrast between Kennedy's naïve realism and [REL-MD] arises from the possible difference between Kennedy's 'material particulars' and [REL-MI]'s 'mind-independent elements'.

descriptive accuracy."[152] In particular, Kennedy thinks qualia and representational views of experience cannot provide a satisfactory explanation of why, in perception, material objects ..."exhaust the territory of which we have a view."[153] Thus, Kennedy seems to hold that naïve realism is uniquely positioned to explain how our perceptual experiences seem to us. This way of thinking of the connection between naïve realism and transparency is also discussed by Martin, to whom I now turn.

As Martin conceives of it, naïve realism is a theory of the nature of veridical perceptual experiences. More specifically, Martin describes naïve realism as holding, with respect to the example of a veridical visual perception of a white picket fence, that "No instance of the specific kind of experience I have now, when seeing the white picket fence for what it is, could occur were I not to perceive such a mind-independent object as this."[154] Martin's naïve realism holds that mind-independent objects are constituents of veridical perceptual experiences and is thus similar to Kennedy's naïve realism.

Martin conceives of the motivation for naïve realism as primarily consisting in the thought that naïve realism '...best articulates how sensory experience seems to us to be just through reflection.'[155] But how, on Martin's view, does sensory experience seem to us just through reflection? In his paper on the transparency of experience Martin describes transparency as an aspect of how our perceptual experiences seem to us on reflection.[156] Martin describes transparency as the claim that '... introspection of one's perceptual experience reveals only the mind-independent objects, qualities and relations that one learns about through perception. The claim is that one's experience is, so to speak, diaphanous or transparent to the objects of perception, at least as revealed to introspection.'[157]

Given Martin's understanding of naïve realism and transparency it is no surprise that he holds that naïve realism offers an explanation of transparency and is thus supported by it.[158] This is because as Martin understands the theory, naïve realism seems to affirm that our perceptual experiences are how they seem to us. Thus, naïve realism seems to offer a straightforward explanation of why our perceptual experiences seem to us as they do.[159]

The explanatory relation that Martin cites as holding between transparency and naïve realism is similar to the explanatory relation between transparency and naïve realism which Kennedy claims to identify. For both theorists transparency supports naïve realism because naïve realism affirms that perceptual experience is as it seems to us and so explains why our experiences seem to us as they do.

To conclude this section I want to draw two morals from my discussion of Kennedy and Martin. The first is that both Martin and Kennedy can be read as understanding transparency phenomenologically. Though neither are as explicit as one would like on this issue, both Kennedy and Martin variously appeal to how perceptual experience 'seems' to us or to how perceptual experience is 'at least as revealed to introspection'. I propose that Kennedy and Martin

152Kennedy (2009), p. 580.
153For Kennedy's argument for this claim see Kennedy (2009), pp. 585-7.
154Martin (2006), p. 357. Also see Martin (2002), p. 393 for a similar statement of naïve realism.
155Martin (2006) p. 354.
156Martin (2002) p. 378.
157*Ibid.*
158Martin (2002) p. 393. See also Martin (2006) p. 355.
159For skepticism about this kind of argument see, e.g., Pautz (MS).

be understood as advancing a phenomenological conception of transparency akin to [PT] rather than an unsupported and controversial ontological understanding of transparency as is the case with Tye.[160] Secondly, both Kennedy and Martin conceive of transparency, phenomenologically construed, as supporting naïve realism on the grounds that naïve realism would explain the transparency of perceptual experience. Rather than treating naïve realism as a deductive consequence of transparency, Kennedy and Martin understand transparency as an explanatory constraint on an adequate theory of perceptual experience. This second moral relates to the first. This way of thinking about the role of transparency in debates about the nature of perceptual experience opens up the possibility of a phenomenological construal of transparency impacting what we should say about the nature of perceptual experience. It does this not by turning a 'seems' to an 'is' but by emphasizing the need to explain why our perceptual experiences seem to us as they do. On this approach first-personal reflection on experience is not treated as a kind of vision by which the nature of perceptual experience is revealed. Instead, first-personal reflection on experience is treated as generating claims about how perceptual experience seems to us which any adequate theory of perceptual experience must explain. In the next section I apply these morals to the relation between transparency and theories of perceptual experience and re-examine the debate about transparency by considering how [PT] can be used as an explanatory constraint on any adequate theory of perceptual experience.

IV. [PT] as an explanatory constraint on theories of perceptual experience.

Other things being equal, an adequate theory of the nature of a phenomenon should explain why that phenomenon seems to us as it does. In some cases this will fall out of the fact that a theory describes the nature of a phenomenon in a way which comports with how that phenomenon seems to us. For example, suppose that observers hold that a shirt in an adjacent room looks or otherwise seems white to them. I then 'theorize' that the shirt is white. In describing how the t-shirt actually is, *viz.,* white, I also offer an intelligible explanation of why the shirt seems white to observers. In such a case the explanation of how the shirt seems flows directly from my account of how the shirt actually is in itself.

An explanation for how a phenomenon seems can also be provided in such a way that it does not flow directly from the intrinsic nature of that phenomenon. Consider a case where a white shirt looks pink under red illumination, In this case the shirt may look pink despite its failing to be pink. Thus we must appeal to something more than the shirt's whiteness to make it intelligible that the shirt looks pink. That is, we need an 'error theory' which explains why we are mistaken about the shirt's color.[161] Moreover, our error theory must not attribute to the shirt any feature which is incompatible with the shirt's whiteness. An appeal to the red illumination offers an acceptable explanation of why the shirt looks pink and thus constitutes an adequate error theory.

These cases make it appealing to endorse a general principle according to which a theory T of the nature of x is inadequate if T leaves how x appears or otherwise seems unexplained. This is because T leaves a certain fact about x, *viz.,* how x appears or otherwise seems, mysterious. In virtue of its generality, this principle applies to the theories of perceptual experiences which were discussed above. Thus, any such theory can be held accountable to

160At the very least we can interpret their discussions as restricted to claims of this kind without removing the force of the arguments they give. This contrasts with the arguments from Tye which I discuss above.

161For discussion of an error theory in the philosophy of perception see, e.g., Smith (2002), p. 16. The notion of such an error theory is also discussed by Martin (2006).

explain why our perceptual experiences seem to us as they do. Any theory which fails to meet this explanatory constraint is, other things being equal, thereby inferior to any competing theory which does meet this constraint. It is in this way that transparency plays an indirect role in deciding between theories of perceptual experience. In the remainder of this section I explore this idea in more detail. In the following section I reconsider the theories of perceptual experience discussed in section II in light of the explanatory constraint imposed by [PT] with the goal of providing a preliminary assessment of which theories meet the explanatory constraint and which do not.

Consider three theories of the nature of perceptual experience: theory A, theory B and theory C. Suppose, furthermore, that [PT] is true. Additionally, suppose that while theory A holds that the metaphysics of experience is as [PT] alleges, theory B and theory C deny this. That is, theories B and C give a theoretical account of perceptual experience which does not simply confirm [PT]. Given what I have said above this would, other things being equal, give us reason to prefer theory A to theories B and C. Importantly, that we should prefer theory A to theories B and C on this score is not founded on some presumption to the effect that things must be as they seem. Rather, we should prefer theory A to theories B and C because theory A is more *explanatory* than theories B and C. Theory A is more explanatory than theories B and C because theory A explains why experience seems to us as it does while theories B and C do not.

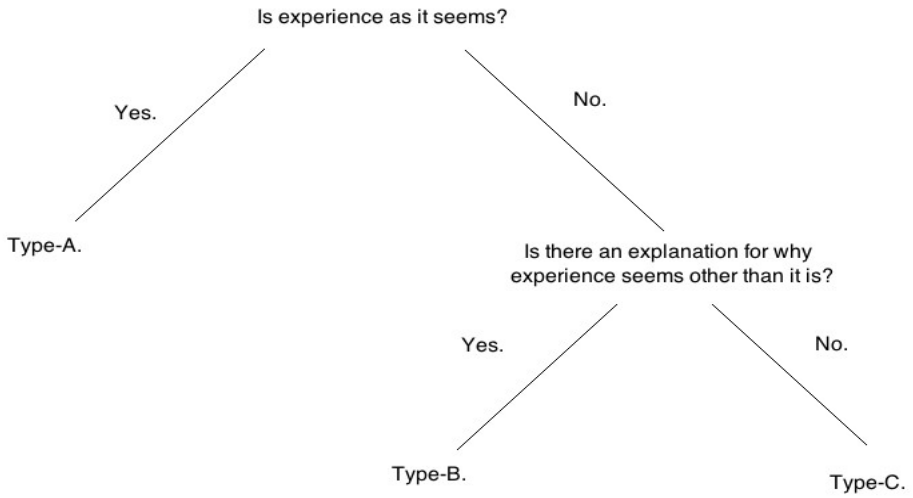
Now consider a second case. As before, suppose that [PT] is true and that theory A is as it was in the previous case. Furthermore, as before suppose that theories B and C both give metaphysics of perception which differ from how perception seems to us. However, unlike the previous case suppose that theory B is able to explain why perception seems other than it is to us while theory C is unable to do this. That is, theory B is able to give a satisfactory explanation of why perceptual experience seems to us to be other than it is, where this explanation flows both from how theory B describes the nature of perceptual experience and additional factors.

In such a scenario it is clear that theory B is preferable to theory C, other things being equal. As before, this is not a consequence of there being some presumption to the effect that things must be how they seem. Indeed, neither theory B nor theory C obey such a presumption. Instead, what makes theory B preferable to theory C is just the same consideration that made theory A preferable to theories B and C in the first scenario: theory B is explanatorily superior to theory C. In such a case, absent further considerations there is no reason to prefer theory A to theory B.

Consideration of these two cases shows that theories can explain how perceptual experience seems to us in at least two different ways. Type-A theories explain how perceptual experience seems to us by describing the nature of perceptual experience in such a way that perceptual experience is how it seems to us. Type-B theories explain how perceptual experience seems to us by describing the nature of perceptual experience in such a way that perceptual experience is not how it seems to us but where this nature, together with other considerations, makes it intelligible why perceptual experience seems to us as it does. Type-C theories are theories of the nature of perceptual experience which fail to give an explanation of how perceptual experience seems to us.

The distinction between type-A, type-B and type-C theories is exclusive. If a theory is of one type it is therefore not of any other type. Taken together, these theory types are also

exhaustive of the kinds of theories of perceptual experience one could give. This is brought out by the following decision tree:



The tree above shows that there are eight ways the logical space of views in the philosophy of perception may be filled out. Each way corresponds to a permutation of the types of theory I have discussed above. It is useful to illustrate this these possibilities with a table.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
A-Yes	A-Yes	A-Yes	A-Yes	A-No	A-No	A-No	A-No
B-No	B-Yes	B-Yes	B-No	B-No	B-No	B-Yes	B-Yes
C-No	C-No	C-Yes	C-Yes	C-No	C-Yes	C-Yes	C-No

Here is how to read the table. (1) corresponds to a situation where the logical space of views is populated by type-A views but by no type-B or type-C views. (2) corresponds to a situation in which there are type-A views, type-B views and no type-C views, (3) corresponds to a situation where there are instances of all three types of view, and so on.

Given the reasoning above, type-A and type-B theories will always be on a par with respect to [PT] and both views will be explanatorily superior to type-C theories with respect to [PT]. Thus, whether or not [PT] will play a role in deciding between theories will depend on the kinds of theories which we have to choose from. For example, if logical space is described by (3) [PT] will play a role and give us reason to go with a type-A or a type-B view over a type-C view. However, if logical space is described by (2), [PT] will play no role. Thus, in order to assess whether [PT] has an argumentative role to play we need a characterization of the actual logical space of views in the philosophy of perception in terms of the distinction between type-A, type-B and type-C views. That is, we need to know which cell of the above table describes the actual

logical space of views. Answering this question will require reexamining the views described in section II and that is what I shall do in the next section.

V. Assessing theories of perceptual experience with [PT].

In this section I argue for a provisional taxonomy of [SD], [INT], [Q] and [NR] in terms of the distinction between type-A, type-B and type-C views. The provisional nature of this taxonomy should be stressed. My main concern in this chapter has been to provide a framework for thinking about the role of transparency in metaphysical theorizing about perception which can be applied by theorists working in this area. However, despite the speculative nature of what follows, the application of the framework to particular views helps to elucidate the nature and the appeal of the framework itself. With that cautionary note in place I begin with [SD].

V.I. [PT] and [SD].

Given the characterization of perceptual experience which [SD] gives, perceptual experience is other than it seems to us. This is because while [PT] holds that perceptual experience seems to be a relation of awareness to mind-independent elements, [SD] conceives of perceptual experience as a relation of awareness to mind-dependent elements. Given that mind-dependent elements are distinct from mind-independent elements, [SD] must be of either type-B or type-C. The difference between type-B and type-C is important. If [SD] view turns out to be of type-C then it can be rejected from the point of view of [PT]. If [SD] is of type-B then it is supported by, or at least consistent with, [PT]. So can we decide whether the view is of type-B or type-C?

To assess this issue it is worth noting that there is partial agreement between [PT] and [SD]. This is because [SD] accepts [REL] and, arguably, the truth of [REL] would offer a partial explanation of the truth of [PT]. This is because [PT] entails that in having perceptual experience we seem to be aware of elements and [REL] affirms that this is how perceptual experience is.[162] However, [SD] departs from [PT] in virtue of its treatment of perceived elements as mind-dependent. That [SD] departs from [PT] in this respect points to at least one way [SD] could be of type-B: [SD] could explain why the mind-dependent elements of perceptual awareness seem mind-independent to us. Can [SD] provide such an explanation?

Perhaps the central strategy deployed by sense-datum theorists in addressing this question is to distinguish between the sensory core or 'given' of perceptual experience and its cognitive or conceptual interpretation.[163] On such an approach, the awareness of mind-dependent sense-data would constitute the sensory core of perceptual experience and the seeming mind-independence would be located in the interpretation of that sensory core. Whatever other questions this distinction may raise, one can reasonably ask why mind-dependent sense-data are interpreted as being mind-independent elements in the environment.

One possibility is that we mistakenly interpret sense-data as mind-independent elements because sense-data have sensible qualities, such as color and smell, in common with mind-independent objects. Whether this option is available to the proponent of [SD] will turn on a number of complicated issues. The correct nature of the sensible qualities will be relevant. This is because such a theory will determine whether or not sense-data could instantiate sensible qualities. But it is not at all clear what the correct theory is. Related to this, resolution of this issue would also seem to require a further characterization of the nature of sense-data. [SD]

162For a discussion of something like this issue see the discussion of 'item awareness' in Pautz (2007). See also the discussion of perceptual 'presence' in Campbell (MS).

163See, e.g. Price (1932), especially chapters 1 and 6. For a precursor to this idea as it appears in the sense-datum tradition see Reid (1969), especially II.16, p. 249.

commits the sense-datum theorist to the view that sense-data are mind-dependent and capable of entering into the relation of perceptual awareness, but it is not clear whether this has any bearing on the issue of whether, e.g., sense-data are non-physical. However, the question of the physical or non-physical status of sense-data is related to the issue of whether or not sense-data could instantiate the sensible qualities which ordinary objects in our environment instantiate. In light of these considerations it is very difficult to assess whether [SD] could explain the seeming mind-independence of experienced elements by appealing to the idea that sense-data instantiate the same sensible qualities that ordinary mind-independent elements do. Whether it could would depend on how [SD] is developed.

If the proponent of [SD] holds a view according to which sense-data cannot instantiate the same sensible qualities which ordinary mind-independent elements do, another option is that we mistakenly interpret sense-data as mind-independent elements because sense-data instantiate other properties, call these sensible properties*, which are easily mistaken for the sensible properties which ordinary objects instantiate.[164] For example, one might appeal to illusions of apparent motion to give a model for how this proposal might go. In such a case one views an array which does not involve the instantiation of any motion properties but which is mistaken for an array which does. So the proponent of [SD] could hold that for each mind-independent sensible quality S that we mistakenly seem to experience, there is some mind-dependent sensible quality*, S*, of a sense-datum which is experienced and which is such that the experience of it explains why we mistakenly seem to experience a mind-independent quality. Could such a strategy succeed?

I introduced this strategy by appealing to an example of apparent motion. However, this example is misleading in a certain respect and considering the way in which it misleads helps to illuminate the challenge that the proponent of [SD] faces in pursuing the option which appeals to sensible qualities*. In cases of apparent motion one mistakes an array which does not instantiate any dynamic sensible qualities for an array which does instantiate dynamic sensible qualities. But this is not a case of confusing sensible qualities* for sensible qualities. Instead, it is only a case of confusing one kind of sensible quality with another kind of sensible quality. This highlights the fact that in pursuing this option the proponent of [SD] must offer a characterization of sensible qualities* which (i) explains what sensible qualities* are and (ii) which explains why sensible qualities* would be mistaken for sensible qualities. It is not obvious that this cannot be done, but it also not obvious that it can be. As before, this is because the viability of such a proposal would depend on, among other things, a more precise characterization of the nature of sense-data.

At this point in the discussion it is unclear whether [SD] is of type-B or type-C. We have seen that while [SD] does satisfy one aspect of [PT], *viz.,* that perceptual experience is a matter of the awareness of some elements, it is not clear whether [SD] can offer an explanation of the seeming mind-independence of experienced elements which [PT] insists on. I do not propose to discuss the matter further and leave it to the reader to make their own assessment. But however this issue is to be resolved, the discussion of the relation of [SD] and [PT] helps to illuminate the kind of explanatory constraint [PT] places on theories of perceptual experience. I now move to consider the relation between [PT] and [Q].

V.II. [PT] and [Q].

164This approach is perhaps similar to Peacocke's notion of 'primed properties'. See Peacocke (1983), chapter 1.

[Q] provides my understanding of the qualia view and [Q] is incompatible with [REL]. As I suggested above it is plausible that any type-A view must accept [REL]. This is because [PT] entails that perceptual experience seems to be a relation of awareness to something. Thus, [Q] is not a type-A view. So is [Q] of type-B or type-C?

I think it is difficult to see how [Q] could fail to be of type-C. Given that [Q] analyzes perceptual experience in terms of the having of qualia, the having of qualia should explain why one seems to be aware of mind-independent elements. Whether or not this will be intelligible will depend on the kind of property that qualia are. The difficulty is that the non-intentional nature of qualia make it unclear why having qualia should result in the sense that one is perceptually aware of anything, let alone perceptually aware of mind-independent elements. The situation for [Q] is then in a way worse than it was for [SD]. While it is not obvious that [SD] can give a satisfactory explanation of why sense-data seem mind-independent to us [SD] does explain why perceptual experience seems to be a matter of perceptual awareness. Because [Q] denies [REL], [Q] does not even make it this far.

One possible response is to amend [Q] in such a way that it is compatible with [REL].[165] On such a view, call it [Q*], we would be aware of qualia in the sense of awareness that is relevant to [REL]. Thus [Q*] would seem to achieve the explanatory adequacy relative to [PT] that I have described [SD] as having. However, it would also seem that [Q*] would run into problems that parallel the problems I described [SD] as facing. This is because, like [SD], [Q*] offers a description of experienced elements which is not obviously consistent with how experienced elements seem to us according to [PT]. For example, as defined above, qualia are intrinsic features of experience. Yet it is not obvious why we would mistake such features for features of mind-independent objects in the environment. This is not to say that this could not be made sense of. It is only to point out that [Q*] would face barriers which are similar to those which I described [SD] as facing above. However the matter is resolved with respect to [Q*], it does seem to me plausible to provisionally classify [Q] as type-C. I now move to consider the relation between [PT] and [INT].

V.III. [PT] and [INT].

Is [INT] of type-A, type-B or type-C? As I have mentioned above, many philosophers have supposed that transparency provides strong support for an intentional view. So we should expect that [INT] is either of type-A or type-B. But is it? Here I will argue that it is hard to understand how [INT] could be either type-A or type-B.

As I understand the view, [INT] it is incompatible with [REL]. This means that [INT] will have to provide an explanation of the seemingly relational character of perceptual experience which does not appeal to the actual relational structure of perceptual experience. The basic point I will make is that [INT] seems to suffer from the same problem that [Q] in that [INT] cannot provide such an explanation.

As I think of it, the situation for the proponent of [INT] is something of an inversion of the situation for the proponent of [SD]. While the sense-datum theorist could explain the seemingly relational structure of perceptual experience the view struggled to explain the seeming mind-independence of experienced elements. In the case of intentionalistm, while the intentionalist could explain the seeming mind-independent nature of the elements of perceptual awareness in terms of the externally-directed nature of the representational properties with which

165Kennedy (2009) considers a relational version of the qualia view along these lines.

intentionalists identify phenomenal properties, the intentionalist has difficulty explaining the seemingly relational character of experience. This being so, it doesn't matter very much that [INT] could explain the seeming mind-independence of experienced elements. That the view cannot explain the seeming relational structure of experience precludes it from even raising the question of how experienced elements seem to us?

Why can't the intentionalist explain the seemingly relational character of perceptual experience? Or, more minimally, why does it seem like the view would have difficulty in explaining this? The main concern is that there is no reason to suppose that representation and the kind of awareness at issue have anything to do with one another. One manifestation of this is that it is difficult to see why an appeal to representation should make it seem that one is aware of anything. But this is what the intentionalist must claim.

The concern I am raising is distinct from a generic concern about why representation should result in or constitute an episode of consciousness, one aspect of the so-called 'hard problem' of consciousness. This generic concern may also cause a problem for the intentionalist, but I am pressing a more specific problem. The problem is that representation does not seem relevant to the specific kind of consciousness which perceptual experience seems to involve.[166]

As I have mentioned, when we undergo perceptual experience there seems to be a subject matter which is presented to us in a distinctive way. I described this in the first chapter by stressing that perceptual experience seems to involve a distinctive kind of awareness of its subject matter. When I see or otherwise visually experience a mango, there is a distinctive way in which the mango seems to be present to my mind. This contrasts with the way a mango is present to me in thought, if it is even true that it is present to me in such a case. It is of course true that my thoughts, desires and imaginings about mangos are intentional in that they are about or directed at mangos. However this intentionality does not manifest itself in consciousness in the way that the intentionality of our perceptual states does. My perceptions of mangos are about mangos in a way that seems just obviously different from the way in which my thoughts, desires and imaginings are about mangos. It is this difference which the intentionalist's appeal to representational properties seems ill-equipped to explain.

One way of responding to this concern is to prize perceptual representation apart from a generic notion of representation.[167] Unsurprisingly, this is how many intentionalists have responded to the problem I have been discussing. For example, John Searle points out that perceptual experience '...is directly of the object. It doesn't just "represent" the object, it provides direct access to it. The experience has a kind of directness, immediacy and involuntariness which is not shared by a belief which I might have about the object in its absence.' [168] Searle addresses this problem by distinguishing between representations and what he calls presentations, the suggestion being that perceptual experiences are presentations rather than representations and that this accounts for the difference I have been highlighting. However, Searle simply describes presentations as a special subclass of representations and offers no explanation as to why the presentational nature of perceptual experience would explain the seemingly relational character

166For discussion of this point see Campbell (MS).

167If one is concerned about the hard-problem style worry that I mentioned above then this move would be a non-starter insofar as perceptual representation is a specific kind of representation. Here I set this worry aside in order to consider how an appeal to a specifically perceptual style of representation might meet the specific concern I have raised.

168Searle (1983), p. 45.

of perceptual experience.[169] So it is not at all obvious that Searle's appeal to presentation gives the intentionalist any purchase on the issue I have been discussing.

Another approach would be to appeal to some specific kind of phenomenal representation, i.e. a form of representation which makes it the case that one seems to be aware of what one is representing. An intentionalist could then distinguish between perceptual experience and forms of consciousness which do not seem to involve awareness on the grounds that perceptual experience is a matter of phenomenal representation while the other forms of consciousness are not.

However, it is not at all obvious how to make sense of a notion of phenomenal representation as a species of representation. This is because the notion of representation is typically understood to essentially involve the possibility of the non-existence of what is represented. While this feature of representation may seem appealing in other contexts, e.g. in explaining hallucination, it seems to frustrate the possibility of articulating a notion of phenomenal representation which is a genuine form of representation.[170] This is because the whole point of phenomenal representation was that it was meant to guarantee the experiential presence of what is represented. But if phenomenal representation is not a form of genuine representation then it is not clear what phenomenal representation is supposed to be. In turn, this would make it unclear whether a view which appealed to phenomenal representation would count as an instance of [INT] or whether such a view would collapse into a view which accepts [REL]. Thus it is tempting, though a matter of some controversy, to understand [INT] as type-C.

Whether or not [INT] is of type-C, the foregoing discussion is still of interest. This is because whether or not [INT] fails to explain [PT], it is clear that it is not obvious that [INT] can explain [PT]. That this is so is somewhat ironic given that transparency is commonly held to constitute a major consideration in favor of intentionalism. To finish this section I consider the relation between [PT] and [NR].

V.IV. [PT] and [NR].

Finally, we can turn our attention to [NR] and naïve realism. Is [NR] of type-A, type-B or type-C? I find it tempting to say that [NR] is of type-A. However, there are reasons to be skeptical of this. First I set out the reasons for thinking that [NR] is of type-A and then I turn to the reasons for doubting this.

The reason for thinking that [NR] is of type-A is straightforward and was previewed in my discussion of Kennedy and Martin above. The basic thought is that [NR] is of type-A because [NR] affirms that perceptual experience is how it seems to us where [PT] is understood as an articulation of how perceptual experience seems to us. In particular, [NR] seems able to explain both the seemingly relational structure of experience and the seemingly mind-independent nature of perceived elements. This is not to say that first-personal reflection on experience shows that [NR] is true, though it is to say that first-personal reflection on experience gives us some reason to endorse [NR]. Indeed, so far as [PT] is concerned [NR] would seem to provide the simplest and most direct explanation.

All of that being so, one may reasonably complain that [NR] could not account for [PT] where [PT] applies to non-veridical experiences. This is because there is some reason to suppose

169*Ibid.*

170In my view an appeal to representation is not helpful in explaining hallucination because hallucinations are such that in having them we seem to be aware of elements. However, I do not pursue the point here.

that [NR] could not be true of non-veridical experiences at all.[171] However, if we restrict [NR] and [PT] to veridical perceptual experiences, this problem dissolves. This restriction is not ad hoc given that [NR] is often advanced as a claim just about veridical perceptual experience.

Another concern with the explanatory link between [NR] and [PT] is that [PT] is far less articulate about how perceptual experience seems to us than [NR] is about how perceptual experience is structured. That is, the contention is that [NR] is in some way too theoretical or detailed to be supported by [PT].[172]

In evaluating this sort of concern it is worth pointing out that it would seem to apply equally to all the views I have discussed. This is because all such views are in some sense theoretical. So if this is a concern for [NR], [NR] is not alone in this. However, I do not think this is a concern for [NR], nor do I think it is a concern for any of the other views I have discussed. This is because claiming that [NR] can explain [PT] does not mean that one is somehow able to introspect the truth of [NR]. I think such a claim would be open to the complaint that [NR] is too theoretical to be established in this way. In place of this, I have been suggesting only that [NR] is positioned to explain the truth of [PT]. Another way of putting this is that the truth of [NR] would predict that perceptual experience seems to us as [PT] alleges. Thus, the truth of [PT] would constitute a reason to adopt [NR] given that [NR] would predict [PT]. All of this is compatible with the thought that one cannot simply look within and divine the truth of [NR] or of any other theory of the nature of perceptual experience. I conclude the chapter by elaborating on this thought further.

VI. Conclusion.

In closing I'd like place the discussion of this chapter in a broader context. In particular, I want to explain how I think of the results of this chapter as connecting with my discussion in the first chapter.

In the first chapter I argued that we should understand transparency as a claim about how perceptual experience seems to us which is available to us on the basis of first-personal reflection on experience. This was meant to contrast with an understanding of transparency as a claim about the nature of perceptual experience. In this way the discussion of the first chapter suggested a certain modesty about first-personal reflection on experience. That is, such reflection is only able to directly establish or reject claims about how perceptual experience seems rather than claims about how perceptual experience is. The arguments of this chapter build on this modesty. They have done this by indicating that first-personal reflection on experience must be supplemented with other broadly theoretical considerations in order to yield any sort of verdict about the nature of perceptual experience. In particular I have emphasized the role that considerations of explanatory adequacy play in deciding on a theory of perceptual experience. Of course, it should not be surprising that explanatory adequacy plays a role in theory choice. However, one may find it surprising in the case of theorizing about perceptual experience if one is immodest about the role of first-personal reflection in this area. Such immodesty treats first-personal reflection on experience as a kind of direct access to the nature of perceptual experience

171For discussion of this point see, e.g., Martin (2006).

172Pautz (MS) discusses a related concern in connection with a view similar to my [REL]. His concern is with whether or not something like [REL] could be established on the basis of introspection. This idea is also discussed by Block (1990) as a diagnosis of Harman (1990). As I make clear in the main text, I do not contend that the truth of [PT] would establish the truth of [NR]. Nor do I claim that [NR] can be known just on the basis of introspection.

and so finds no use for sustained theoretical argument. I hope that the arguments of the first chapter and the present chapter have done something to call this immodesty into question. In the next chapter I address this issue further by thinking through how [PT] relates to our ability to think and know about our own visual experiences. There I argue that if [PT] is true we have reason to be even more modest about the utility of first-personal reflection on experience.

Chapter 4: Transparency and Epistemic Access to one's own Visual Experiences.

In the last chapter I discussed the extent to which first-personal reflection on experience could reveal the nature of perceptual experience. There I argued that the results of first-personal reflection on perceptual experience constitute one consideration among many, rather than a conclusive reason, in deciding between metaphysical theories of perceptual experience. The argument for this was that when first-personal reflection of this kind is applied to perceptual experience the most that could result would be a thesis like [PT]. I then argued that [PT] has an indirect evidential status in that it does not itself rule for or against any particular theory of perceptual experience.

In this chapter I continue my discussion of the efficacy of first-personal reflection on perceptual experience. Here I discuss how the truth of [PT] would impact the extent to which first-personal reflection on experience can reveal contingent facts about one's own conscious perceptual psychology, as opposed to facts about the nature of this psychology. The moral that I draw is in a way similar to the conclusion of the preceding chapter in that first-personal reflection on perceptual experience runs up against surprising limits. Throughout the chapter I will focus on visual experience.

In the first section of the chapter I argue that the truth of [PT] would require us to revise how we think about the way in which we are epistemically connected to our own visual experiences. In particular, the truth of [PT] would require us to give up the idea that our epistemic access to our own visual experiences is direct and first-personal, ideas which I will discuss in detail. My argument for this is twofold. The first component of the argument is that view of our epistemic connection to visual experience which are compatible with [PT] fail to deliver directness and first-personality precisely because they are compatible with [PT]. Secondly, views of our epistemic connection to visual experience which do deliver directness and first-personality are incompatible with [PT]. In the second section of the chapter I connect the results of the first section to how [PT] would impact our ability to think about ourselves in terms of visual experience. As I shall put it, because the truth of [PT] excludes directness and first-personality, the truth of [PT] raises a puzzle about our ability to acquire a concept of visual experience. In the third section of the chapter I propose an answer to the challenge raised in the second section and consider a key problem that such a solution would face. In the fourth section I make some concluding remarks to finish the chapter.

I. [PT] and our epistemic connection to visual experience.

In this section I argue that the truth of [PT] would require us to revise the way we think about our epistemic connection to our own visual experiences, i.e. the way or set of ways in which we are connected to our own visual experiences such that we can think and know about them. I first set out the aspects of our epistemic connection which I think [PT] will ultimately require us to revise. After that I give the argument for thinking that [PT] would require us to reject these aspects.

I.I Directness and first-personality.

It is intuitive to think of our epistemic connection to our own visual experiences as being direct in some sense. That is, when we have a visual experience it is typically obvious to us that this is so. Ordinarily we are able to appreciate the fact that we are having a visual experience without having to observe our own behavior, scan our brains or, indeed, do anything else but have the

experience and be minimally reflective. For example, Descartes thought that we could have an appreciation of our own visual experiences even if we were skeptical about whether there was an external world at all and it is not obvious that Descartes was wrong to hold this. In this way our appreciation of our own visual experiences is direct in that it seems to depend on little or nothing else.

This contrasts with our epistemic access to the visual experiences of others, as well as with our epistemic access to other aspects of ourselves. For example, when I come to appreciate that you are having a visual experience I am only able to do so because I appreciate other facts about you, e.g. the direction of your gaze. Similarly, my appreciation of what is going on with my kidneys is typically indirect in that it is mediated by an appreciation of something else about myself, e.g. that such and such a test produced such and such a result.

How exactly to understand this notion of directness is a delicate issue. I have been describing directness as coming to the idea that one has direct access to a fact if one can appreciate that fact not in virtue of the appreciation of some other fact. This makes it seem like directness comes to an absence of inference and there is a long tradition of treating directness in this way.

However, it is not obvious that the relevant sense of directness that I am appealing to here can be captured just in terms of the absence of inference. This is because there are cases where inference is absent but where the relevant kind of directness is missing too. For example, subjects with blindsight are able to make judgements about objects in their blind field.[173] On the assumption that these judgements are expressive of beliefs, it is plausible that such beliefs are non-inferentially formed as blindsight patients describe these beliefs as 'guesses'.[174] While the relevant judgements are made non-inferentially, they do not seem to be direct in the relevant sense. This is because consciousness is absent in cases of blindsight. However, it seems plausible that the fact that our visual experiences are conscious is relevant to our having direct epistemic access to them. So there must be some role for consciousness to play in addition to the absence of inference in the notion of directness at issue. More specifically, it seems plausible that it is because our visual experiences are conscious that we have non-inferential access to them.

In addition to having direct epistemic access to our own visual experiences, it is also plausible that our epistemic access to our own visual experiences is first-personal in an important way. That is, it seems that we have a way of thinking about our own visual experiences which is not available to others and which differs importantly from the way that others are epistemically connected to our own visual experiences. Amy Kind puts the point nicely when she says such first-personal access consists in "...the fact that no one but I can acquire knowledge via this sort of access to my mental states, and correspondingly, in the fact that this way of knowing about my own mental states is completely different from the way in which I know about the mental states of others."[175]

It is certainly natural to think of our epistemic access to our own visual experiences as involving other features. For example, it may seem that such access confers beliefs which result from it with a special epistemic status.[176] It should be noted that directness and first-personality

173 Weiskrantz, L., Warrington, E., Sanders, M., and Marshall, J. (1974).

174 Weiskrantz, L. (1996).

175 Kind (2003a) pp. 39-40. See also Carruthers (2010) pp. 76-7.

176 For a helpful overview of the various ways in which such beliefs may be epistemically special see Alston (1971).

only concern the way we form beliefs about our own visual experiences and say nothing about the epistemic status of such beliefs, e.g. whether such beliefs are infallible, incorrigible or self-warranted. In this chapter I will only be concerned with whether or not our epistemic access to our own visual experiences is direct and first-personal. With these comments in place, I now turn to reasons for thinking that directness and first-personality are incompatible with [PT].

I.II. [PT], directness and first-personality.

How would [PT] threaten the thought that we have direct and first-personal access to our own visual experiences? The idea I want to pursue is that theories of our epistemic access to visual experience which take transparency into account are such that they inevitably give up on either direct or first-personal access. Such theories do not discuss [PT] directly, though the versions of transparency which they do consider comport with [PT] in the relevant respects. My focus will be on theories advanced by Evans, Bryne and Peacocke. I will then consider a view of our epistemic access to visual experience which does deliver directness and first-personality which understands our epistemic access to visual experience on the model of an inner form of perception. However, such an account is incompatible with [PT]. The result of this discussion is that it is hard to see how a theory of epistemic access which is compatible with [PT] could deliver directness and first-personality.

I.II.I Evans' view.

Evans begins his discussion of the self-ascription of perceptual states by making a number of claims about the nature of perceptual states themselves.[177] For my purposes it is necessary to focus only on one of Evans' views about the nature of perceptual states. As Evans thinks of them, perceptual states are informational states, i.e. states which represent the world as being a certain way. Furthermore, Evans holds that informational states are such as to be evaluable for truth and falsity. For example, given my present visual experience represents my immediate environment as being a certain way, e.g. as having a computer screen at a certain location, one can ask whether things are as my experience represents them as being. Thus my experience will be true, or veridical, just in case the world matches the informational content of my visual experience.

Given this picture of the nature of perceptual states Evans sketches how one moves from perceptual states to judgements about the environment which are based on that state. On Evans' view, in making such a judgement the subject '...does not in any sense gaze at, or concentrate upon, his internal state.'[178] Evans' view is rather that being *in* a perceptual state puts one in position to make the relevant judgement because of the information which the perceptual state encodes. So while judgements about one's environment are based on one's perceptual states, such judgements are not made possible by anything like an inner awareness of one's perceptual state. Rather it is because one is in an informational state which encodes certain information and that one has the capacity to conceptualize this information that one is able to make an environmental judgement.

In my view, Evans' insistence that one does not 'gaze' at his internal state marks Evans' commitment to transparency. Or, more carefully, it is what makes it the case that Evans' view would be compatible with [PT]. This is because according to [PT] one seems unable to 'gaze' at one's experiential state. Given that Evans' proposal does not require one to do so, Evans' proposal is consistent with [PT].

177 Here I discuss Evans (1982).
178 Evans (1982), p. 227.

With this in place Evans offers the following proposal about how a subject can make a judgement about his own perceptual informational state itself, as opposed to a judgement about the environment.

> "...a subject can gain knowledge of his internal informational states in a very simple way: by re-using precisely those skills of conceptualization that he uses to make judgements about the world. ...He goes through exactly the same procedure as he would go through if he were trying to make a judgement about how it is at this place now, but excluding any knowledge he has of an extraneous kind. The result will necessarily be closely correlated with the content of the informational state which he is in at that time. Now he may prefix this result with the operator 'It seems to me as though..."[179]

The proposal has two stages: (i) the making of an environmental judgement, a judgement which concerns how it is at this place now and (ii) the transmutation of this judgement into a judgement about one's perceptual state. I discuss these stages in turn.

(i) involves the making of an environmental judgement on the basis of one's perceptual state. This process has already been outlined above. However, Evans points out that in the case of self-ascription of perceptual experience (i) must include the suspension or exclusion of extraneous knowledge that may impact the environmental judgement one makes. We can get the sense for what Evans means here by considering an example. For a non-naïve subject, in looking at the Müller-Lyer lines one knows that the lines are of equal length even though they look to be of unequal length. Thus, if one were to make a judgement about the relative length of the lines one would, all things considered, judge that they are equal in length. However, if one went on to judge on this basis that 'It looks to me as though the lines are equal in length', one would judge something false. It is for this reason, at least, that Evans requires the suspension of extraneous knowledge.

Stage (ii) of Evans' procedure takes the result of stage (i), an environmental judgement that p, as input and prefixes the sentential operator 'It seems to me that...' to yield a judgement of the form 'It seems to me that p.' as output. Thus we see the importance of the exclusion of extraneous information in step (i). The exclusion of such information will ensure that the environmental judgement obtained in (i) is in step only with the content of the perceptual state on which the judgement is based. Only if this is done can we ensure that stage (ii) of the procedure yields an accurate judgement.

In a way which mirrors the account of self-ascription of belief, Evans points out that this procedure is only available to a subject who possesses a concept which corresponds to the sentential operation 'It seems to me that...'. Though Evans does not explicitly discuss this, it would seem that the procedure could be utilized to make more fine-grained judgements, e.g. 'It looks to me as though P', 'It sounds to me as though P' and so on. As such the procedure would require the possession of a suite of perceptual concepts corresponding to each of these sentential operators. It is only against the background of the possession of these concepts that the procedure outlined about would '...constitute a complete account of what it is to have [the] capacity for self-knowledge.'[180] Having explained Evans' proposal in this way we can now ask whether or not his view is able to account for direct and first-personal access. I think that it is not.

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179 Evans (1982) pp. 227-8.

180 Evans (1982) p. 228.

Evans' proposal fails to meet the first-personal condition because the procedure for self-ascription which Evans outlines is available to others in a straightforward way.[181] For example, if Evans is right that I self-ascribe by appending the sentential operator 'it seems to me that' to a environmental judgement, I can use the very same procedure to ascribe perceptual states to you. Suppose you and I are sitting on the beach. Your gaze is turned oceanward. I consider how things are at that place now, where 'that' refers to the place which you would refer to by 'this place now'. I can sort out where that place is by noting the direction of your gaze. Your line of sight roughly corresponds with a stretch of water just outside the kelp beds. I then attend to this area and make an environmental judgement about it and judge that it is blue there. I then suspend any extraneous information and judge that it looks blue to you there. In this way I am able to use Evans' procedure for self-ascription to ascribe a perceptual state to you. Thus, the procedure Evans describes for self-ascription is one which fails to be first-personal.

Evans' proposal also fails to capture directness. This is because on Evans' view one's ability to self-ascribe perceptual states depends on one's ability to make an environmental judgement. Thus, in the language I used above, Evans' view holds that one can only appreciate that one is having an experience of such and such a kind if one appreciates that one's environment is such and such a way. So Evans' view is not obviously non-inferential.

That Evans' view fails to capture first-personality and directness is not to say that the view is false. However, it is to say that it is revisionary insofar as we have initial reason to suppose that directness and first-personality characterize our epistemic access to our own visual experiences.

It is also important to note that it is plausible that it is the compatibility of Evans' proposal with [PT] which makes it the case that Evans' proposal fails to capture directness and first-personality. In particular, that Evans' view is compatible with [PT] appears to be what causes the model to fail to capture first-personality, which in turn causes it to fail to capture directness. The compatibility with [PT] causes the view to fail to capture first-personality because [PT] entails that, from the subject's point of view, all that is available to them is the environment. Yet access to the environment is precisely what is shared by an individual seeking to self-ascribe, call this person A, and another individual wishing to ascribe to A, call this person B. So [PT] makes it the case that *both* A and B have the same raw materials, as it were, to make their ascriptions to A. Moreover, Evans' proposal holds that both A and B go through the same kind of process in making their ascriptions to A. So given that B's ascription to A must be indirect, it seems as though A's self-ascription must be similarly indirect given [PT].

I.II.II. Byrne's view.

Inspired by Evans, Byrne endorses what he calls the 'transparency proposal' of self-ascriptions of seeing.[182] According to the transparency proposal I "...know that I see a hawk by an inference from a single premise about the hawk-infested landscape beyond."[183] As is suggested by the

181 That Evans' model for self-ascription might generate beliefs which are more epistemically secure than ascription of such beliefs to others is not to the point. As before, first-personality concerns *how* such beliefs are formed.

182 Byrne (2012).

183Byrne (2012) p. 14.

name of Byrne's proposal, Byrne is keen to articulate a model of self-ascription which is compatible with the transparency of perceptual states.[184]

Byrne's discussion involves a considerable amount of detail and sophistication, but the barebones of his view will serve for the purposes of this chapter. Byrne's basic idea is a very simple one: we come to believe and know that we see a hawk by inferring this from a belief to the effect that there is a hawk before me. In this way we infer the fact that we see from a purely environmental premise concerning what is before our eyes. Understood in this way, can Byrne's view deliver direct and first-personal access?

Given that the view is explicitly advanced as an inferential view, it is clear that the view fails to capture the directness condition. Additionally, Byrne's view fails to meet the first-personal condition. The reason for this is very simple. As with Evans' view, on Byrne's view the difference between self and other-ascription consists in a difference in complexity rather than a difference in kind. On Byrne's view self-ascription involves an inference from a single environmental premise to a belief that one is seeing such and such. Similarly, on his view other-ascription involves a more complicated pattern of environmental inference than does self-ascription. Other-ascription involves an inference which turns both on a premise about the hawk infested landscape beyond as well as premises concerning the other's orientation to that landscape. In this way one's self-ascriptions are not the result of some procedure which differs in kind from the process by which one other-ascribes. So Byrne's view fails to meet the directness condition and the first-personal condition.

As was the case with Evans, the failure of Byrne's model to capture directness and first-personality does not show that it is false. These failures only show that it is revisionary insofar as we have initial reason to regard our epistemic access to our own visual experiences as direct and first-personal. Additionally, it is plausible that Byrne's model fails to capture directness and first-personality because it is compatible with [PT]. The reasoning for this is just as it was in the case of Evans so I will not set it out again.

I.II.III. Peacocke's view.

Peacocke holds that "...it is by sight that you know that you see."[185] However, Peacocke is emphatic that one does not come to know that one is seeing because one's seeing is an object of sight. As Peacocke puts it "...the perception is not given in some further perceptual mode."[186] In this way Peacocke's proposal is consistent with [PT]. So while we know we are seeing by seeing, this is not because the seeing is an object for us or because we are aware of our own seeings in a perceptual way. So how, then, is it that we know that we see by seeing on Peacocke's view?

Peacocke's idea is that part of the possession conditions of a concept of seeing that one forms the judgement that one is seeing that P when it seems to one that one is seeing that P. On Peacocke's view if one has a concept of seeing and one seems to be seeing these conditions simply result, at least normally, in the judgment that one is seeing. It is in this way that one knows that one sees by seeing: the seeing itself occasions the judgement that one is seeing against a background of the possession of the relevant concept.

Peacocke spells his view out by suggesting that possession of a concept of seeing involves the use of what he calls the Core Rule (CR). According to Peacocke (CR) involves the

184See the discussion of Dretske (2003) in Byrne (2012).

185 Peacocke (2005) p. 2.

186 Peacocke (2005) p. 6.

'rational transition' from a seeing that P to the self- ascription that one is seeing that P. So we have something like:

(1) Seeing that p

—

(2) I see that p.

It is important to note that while (2) is a self-ascription of seeing, i.e. a belief or judgement to the effect that one is seeing, (1) is a seeing and so not a belief or judgement. In this way following the core rule is to make a rational transition from a seeing to a state of a different kind, viz., a belief or judgement to the effect that one is seeing. That one makes this transition, as opposed to a transition from (1) to a self-ascription that one hears that p is a further consequence of one's possession of the concept of seeing. As Peacocke puts it, possession of a concept of seeing "...requires a differential *sensitivity* to the cases in which one sees that something is the case, as opposed to perceiving it in some other modality, or knowing it not through the senses at all."[187] In this way Peacocke holds that one's ability to self-ascribe seeings falls out of one's differential sensitivity to seeings, a differential sensitivity which enters into the possession conditions of a concept of seeing. Does this view capture directness and first-personality?

Peacocke's proposal would seem to capture the non-inferential aspect of directness. This is because on Peacocke's view, while the application of the core rule does involve a 'rational transition' between a seeing and a judgement, it is not clear that this transition is inferential. Indeed, it is difficult to see how one could use a seeing as a premise in an inference. Furthermore, the rational transition Peacocke discusses is supposed to flow from the differential sensitivity one has to whether one is seeing, this differential sensitivity entering into the possession conditions of one's concept of sight. So rather than being the exercise of inference, the rational transition Peacocke discusses constitutes a kind of recognitional capacity for seeings which one has in virtue of the fact that one meets the possession conditions for the relevant concept. In this way Peacocke's proposal seems to satisfy the non-inferential requirement of the directness condition. That said, it is not clear that Peacocke's proposal captures the positive dimension of directness that I cast in terms of consciousness. This is because it is not obvious how the fact that our seeings are conscious is relevant to the successful deployment of (CR). Indeed, nothing on Peacocke's view would explain why a blindsighter could not be such that they successfully follow (CR). But if a blindsighter could follow (CR) in this way, perhaps simply as a result of how their cognitive system is wired up, then this shows that following (CR) does not capture directness in the relevant sense. Having dealt with directness in this way, how does Peacocke's view fair in terms of the first-personal condition?

In an interesting discussion of how his proposal squares with findings in developmental psychology, Peacocke sketches how he thinks of other-ascription of perceptual states. Peacocke begins by discussing how he thinks other-ascription works in the early stages of development, around 24-30 months. Peacocke's proposal is that "...the child, in attributing seeings to others, applies the same Core Rule to others as he does in self-ascribing experiences, but does so taking as input to the Rule not another's seeing-that p, but his own."[188]So the thought is that the child

187 Peacocke (2005) p. 3, emphasis mine.

188 Peacocke (2005) p. 15.

makes the transition from his own seeing that p to the judgement that another person sees that p. In this way, ascription of seeing to others depends on one's ability to self-ascribe seeing. Thus Peacocke holds that a concept of seeing is first-personal in that "...one's knowledge of what it is for an arbitrary thing to have that property [i.e. seeing] makes reference in one way or another to what is involved in first person ascription of that property."[189]

In defense of this picture Peacocke suggests that it explains why 24-30 month olds make certain mistakes about seeing in others. For example, Peacocke claims that his proposal explains why children will put things out of their field of view and into the field of view of an investigator when told to hide an object from the investigator. The explanation is that the child thinks that people can only see what they see and that this is so because they are using (CR) to other-attribute seeings in a way which is insensitive to, e.g. the direction of gaze of the other.

It is at this point that it becomes very clear that the view doesn't capture first-personality, even if Peacocke does get it that other-ascription is parasitic on self-ascription. This is because Peacocke is explicit that the very same rule is used to generate self-ascriptions of seeing and other-ascriptions of seeing. It is true that Peacocke goes on to suggest that in the course of development increased accuracy in ascriptions of seeing to others "...is attained by the child's coming to qualify the conditions under which the Core Rule can be applied in other-ascription...", e.g. by incorporating conditions pertaining to direction of gaze, the layout of the visible environment and whether or not someone else's eyes are open. In this way the child becomes better at applying (CR).[190] But it is still the case that the child uses (CR) to self-ascribe and other-ascribe. In this way other-ascription is a sort of riff on self-ascription, others are treated as 'another I'. Thus, Peacocke's proposals for self-ascription and other-ascription are much too similar to capture anything like our initial intuitions about first-personality. For our intuition concerning first-personality to be satisfied we need a difference in kind between the way we self-ascribe and the way we other-ascribe and we get nothing like this on Peacocke's view. As such, Peacocke's proposal fails to capture distinctive access. Having dealt with Peacocke's account in this way I move on to consider a different kind of view according to which our epistemic access to our own visual experiences is to be understood in terms of the operation of inner sense. While a view of this kind will generate directness and first-personality, such a view is incompatible with [PT]. Discussion of the inner sense view will complete my discussion of directness, first-personality and [PT].

I.II.IV. [PT] and inner sense.

As applied to visual experience the most basic commitment of the inner sense view is that we can know and think about our visual experiences because we are aware of them in a way which mimics our perceptual awareness of outer objects like tables and chairs. We can refine this sketch by saying that an inner sense view is one which holds that we are epistemically connected to our own visual experiences in virtue of standing in a relation R to visual experience where R is similar in certain respects to the perceptual relation we intuitively take ourselves to stand in to our environment. On such a view, one is able to know and otherwise think about visual experience because one bears R to visual experience.

This way of unpacking the inner sense view requires clarification about the ways in which R is similar to the perceptual relation we intuitively take ourselves to bear to the

189 Peacocke (2005) p. 7.

190 Peacocke (2005) p. 18.

environment and it is to this issue that I now turn. My goal will be to identify certain respects in which inner sense is analogous to outer sense in such a way that the conjunction of these respects yields a plausible inner sense theory of our epistemic access to visual experience.

We can begin this task by asking which modality inner sense is best understood as analogous to. Often inner sense is construed in visual terms.[191] However, hewing to a visual model isn't necessary and should probably be avoided given that vision requires a dedicated external organ and that introspection does not.[192] Instead we may follow Armstrong in supposing that it is proprioception which offers the best model for thinking about inner-sense.[193] So in characterizing the inner sense view we should understand R as being akin to proprioceptive, rather than visual, awareness in not requiring a dedicated organ of sense. Are there other ways in which R is similar to proprioceptive awareness?

We can further refine the inner sense view by focusing on what Shoemaker calls the object perception model. According to the object perception model, in perception '...one or more particular things are objects of the perception, and ... it is by perceiving these objects that the perceiver obtains whatever factual information she does from the perceiving.'[194] For example, I might be proprioceptively aware of my right foot and of my left foot and on the basis of this propriocept that my right foot is next to my left foot. In this way R is construed as principally a relation of de re awareness or awareness *of*.[195]

Because R is principally a relation of de re awareness it is plausible, or perhaps necessary, to construe R as involving an attentional component in a way that is similar to perceptual awareness of outer objects. For example, in explaining his version of the inner sense theory Lycan holds that "... awareness is a product of attention mechanisms that are perceptionlike in some ways (though not in all)..." and that "...our introspective attention is under voluntary control. I can ask you to concentrate on your visual field as such, then focus on a particular patch of red, then shift your attention to the upper left quadrant of the fieleld, etc., and you can do those things at will..."[196]

The de re and attentional character of R plausibly lends R a phenomenological feature of directness which mimics the phenomenological feature of directness which applies to the perceptual relation which we intuitively seem to stand in to items in our environment. So in bearing R to visual experience, visual experience will seem to be directly and immediately present to one.

Given these remarks we can say that the inner sense view is true just in case we are epistemically connected to our visual experiences in virtue of bearing R to visual experience where R is characterized in terms of (i) de re awareness, (ii) an attentional structure and (iii) phenomenological directness. (i)-(iii) are all recognizable features of the perceptual relation we intuitively take ourselves to bear to items in our environment and so are appropriate conditions

191 Siewart (2012) describes the inner sense view as holding that your mind is '...a box whose contents it happens only you can see.' p. 131.

192 But see Goldman (2006) p. 244.

193 Armstrong (1968).

194 Shoemaker (1994) p. 252.

195 For further discussion of this distinction see Tye (2014) and Dretske (1999). See also discussion of mental states with an 'act/object' structure, e.g., Broad (1923).

196 Lycan (1996) p. 30 and pp. 16-7.

on a theory of introspection as inner sense. I now turn to whether a theory of this kind could deliver direct and first-personal access to visual experience.

Inner sense would exhibit directness because R can obtain in the absence of any inference, thus satisfying the negative component of directness, and because R is itself a relation of awareness which would make it intelligible that visual experience is 'right there' for us, thus satisfying the positive consciousness component of directness. The inner sense view would also capture first-personality. To see this think again of proprioception. In proprioception the position of one's body is given to one directly in that one can tell straight off how it is spatially with one's body. Furthermore, this mode of access is distinctively first-personal. You cannot extend your proprioceptive awareness to the bodies of others. So if we model R as akin to proprioceptive awareness in this way, we get it that the inner sense view captures first-personality. As such, the inner sense view delivers distinctive access to visual experience and distinguishes itself as capable of vindicating our common-sense thinking about the special way in which we are able to think and know about our own visual experiences. However, as I will now argue, the inner sense view is incompatible with [PT].

Before setting out the argument, it is important to note that my arguments target the inner sense view only as it applies to visual experience. As such, my arguments do not show that the inner sense view is unworkable as applied to other kinds of mental states. With this proviso in place, here's the argument.

The basic idea that drives my argument would seem simple enough: transparency precludes the sort of awareness of visual experience which the truth of the inner sense view requires. However, the point is slightly more subtle than this. Rather it is that the truth of the inner sense view requires that we seem to be aware of visual experience and that [PT] denies this. Let me explain what I mean here.

Consider a case where you are looking at a man who is standing in the corner. You are visually aware of this man and in being so aware you see that he is in the corner. So you know that there is a man standing in the corner and you know this just on the basis of your experience. Unbeknownst to you this man is David Chalmers. So in a certain sense you know of Chalmers that he is standing in the corner. However, in this case you've never heard of Chalmers and have no idea who he is. So while it is true that you are aware of David Chalmers and that you know of Chalmers that he is standing in the corner you do not know on the basis of your experience that it is Chalmers that is standing in the corner.

The explanation for this is simple: you do not know that it is Chalmers that is standing in the corner just on the basis of perception because you are not perceptually aware of Chalmers *as Chalmers*. That is to say, the man in the corner does not perceptually appear to you as Chalmers. Rather, you simply experience Chalmers as the man, whoever he is, that is in the corner. Because this is so, you cannot come to know that it is Chalmers in the corner just on the basis of your perceptual awareness, an awareness which in fact happens to be an awareness of Chalmers. Coming to know that it is Chalmers that is in the corner just on the basis of your perceptual experience would require that you are perceptually aware of Chalmers as Chalmers.[197] But you aren't aware of Chalmers as Chalmers and so you cannot know that Chalmers is standing in the

197 It is a matter of some controversy whether properties like being being David Chalmers are presented in perceptual experience itself. If the reader prefers, the example could be recast in terms of experiencing a geometrical figure as a hexagon. For discussion of the permissible contents of visual experience see Siegel (2010), esp. chapters 4, 5 and 7.

corner just on the basis of your perceptual awareness of him. Reflection on cases of this kind recommends the following general principle.

> [Seem] If S knows that o is F just on the basis of a perceptual experience e, then in having e o must seem F to S.[198]

If we understand the inner sense view as claiming that bearing R to a visual experience e is, other things being equal, sufficient for knowing that one is undergoing e, it will follow from [Seems] that in bearing R to e, e must seem visually experiential. Thus if the inner sense view is true, it must be that in having visual experience we seem to be aware of visual experience as visually experiential. This claim is the first premise of my argument.

> P1) If the inner sense view is true, it must be that in having visual experience we seem to be aware of something as visually experiential.

Although I've argued for this claim in a slightly oblique way, the intuition behind the claim is not hard to make out. If my quasi-perceptual introspective awareness of my visual experience is supposed to be the sole ground of my knowledge that I am visually experiencing, then I had better be introspectively aware of my visual experience as a visual experience. If I am not aware of it in this way, and if we preclude the influence of any theoretical knowledge, it would just be mysterious how I could come to know that I am seeing on the basis of that awareness. To see this take another example. If I know that there is a chair before me just on the basis of perception it would be utterly mysterious if I came into this knowledge on the basis of an experience which I would describe as the seeing of a mango. In much the same way, if I know that I am seeing just on the basis of inner sense, it would be utterly mysterious if I came into this knowledge on the basis of an awareness which I would describe as an awareness of my mind-independent environment.

It is at this point that the argument turns to considerations of [PT]. If [PT] holds, it is false that you seem to be aware of anything experiential in visual experience. This is because according to [PT] all you seem to be aware of in visual experience is a set of mind-independent elements. But if something appears mind- independent to you this precludes its appearing experiential to you. For example, it makes no sense to say of a single thing that it is experienced as chair and as a visual experience, at least not at the same time. Thus if [PT] is true, nothing you seem to be aware of in visual experience is experienced as experiential in any way. This is the second premise of my argument.

> P2) If [PT] is true, nothing you seem to be aware of in visual experience is experienced as experiential.

From P1 and P2 it follows that

> C) If [PT] is true, then the inner sense view is false.

198 There will obviously be further conditions on e in order for it to provide S with the relevant knowledge.

Thus, the truth of [PT] would seem to require that we adopt a conception of our epistemic access to our own visual experiences which rejects directness and first-personality. In the next section of the chapter I discuss how [PT] relates to our ability to think of ourselves in terms of visual experience.

II. [PT] and a concept of visual experience.

The argument of this section builds off the conclusion of the last section and suggests that the revisionary nature of [PT] with respect to our epistemic connection to our own visual experiences raises a puzzle about how we are able to think of ourselves as subjects of visual experience. I will address this issue in terms of [PT] raising a puzzle about how we are able to acquire a concept of visual experience which we can apply to ourselves. The puzzle I wish to raise is in certain respects similar to other concerns which have been raised in the philosophical literature on visual experience. So I'll begin by reviewing those concerns. Then I'll turn to the puzzle I'd like to raise and then to a possible solution to it. I conclude the chapter by raising an objection to this solution and responding to it.

II.I Byrne and Dretske on propositional knowledge of visual experience.

You know that you are having a visual experience right now. But how do you know this? The seemingly obvious answer is: by having visual experience. That is, your visual experience gives you justification for believing that you are having a visual experience. It's conscious character is evident to you as soon as you open your eyes.

As I have mentioned, Dretske and Byrne have both raised concerns about the plausibility of this line of thinking when one takes transparency into account. Here is Dretske on the matter:

> "In normal (i.e. veridical) perception, then, the objects you are aware of are objective, mind-independent objects. They exist whether or not you experience them. . . . Everything you are aware of would be the same if you were a zombie. In having perceptual experience, then, nothing distinguishes your world, the world you experience, from a zombie's. This being so, what is it about this world that tells you that, unlike a zombie, you experience it? What is it that you are aware of that indicates that you are aware of it?"[199]

Byrne gives us a pithy summary of Dretske's point as it applies to the special case of visual experience: "...the world as revealed by vision does not have vision in it."[200]

The difficulty that Byrne and Dretske are pointing to is that nothing you are aware of when you have a visual experience is in any way experiential. Instead, you only find the ordinary mind-independent objects in your environment. So in this sense your visual experience does not provide you with any direct evidence for believing that you are having a visual experience. Furthermore it is unclear how what is revealed to you by your visual experience could give you any indirect evidence for believing that you are having a visual experience. An inference from the fact that there is a hand to the fact that you are having a visual experience would seem feeble at best.

At the root of Byrne and Dretske's concern is transparency. That is, both authors cite the fact that nothing other than the ordinary environment is present to one in visual experience and

199 Dretske (2003) p. 1. For Dretske, a zombie is a creature quite like us but which has no conscious experiences. Thus, in asking how you do not know you are a zombie Dretske is asking how you know that you have a conscious mental life. How you know that you are hving a visual experience is then a special case of Dretske's more general question.

200 Byrne (2012), p. 4.

this is what drives their concern about the elusiveness of propositional knowledge about visual experience. It is also clear that understanding transparency in terms of [PT] would generate the same results that they take their understanding of transparency to generate. As I argued above, even if it is true that one is aware of one's visual experience in having visual experience, unless one *seems* to be aware of one's visual experience such awareness will not ground an ability to know that one is having a visual experience. So the concern which Dretske and Byrne stress would be raised even if they understood transparency in terms of [PT].

Whether or not the issue which Dretske and Byrne raise can be resolved, it is gripping. This is because it seems obvious that we know, in a large number of cases, that we are having a visual experience. But as Byrne and Dretske point out, it seems difficult to make out how we are able to do this given [PT]. What I want to do now is show how this concern can be extended to raise a puzzle about our ability to think about ourselves in terms of visual experiences.

II.II Some preliminaries to the puzzle.

The puzzle I want to raise concerns the effect [PT] has on our ability to acquire a concept of visual experience, rather than on propositional knowledge. The basic challenge is: if our visual experiences are transparent to us, how are we even able to *think* about our visual experiences? Here I discuss some preliminary issues that will need to be put in place in order for the puzzle to be stated precisely. I first discuss how the puzzle I am interested differs from the one I just described Bryne and Dretske as raising. I then define a number of terms which will be integral to my statement of the puzzle in the next subsection.

The puzzle I will raise in the next subsection diverges from the issue raised by Byrne and Dretske in at least two ways. First, the question which Byrne and Dretske raise about propositional knowledge is largely concerned with the issue of epistemic justification or evidence. That is Dretske and Byrne are concerned with how you could be justified in your belief that you are currently undergoing a visual experience where that belief is formed just on the basis of your being subject to visual experience. But it is not clear that the notion of epistemic justification or evidence applies to concept acquisition. What is at issue is our ability to think about visual experience at all, never mind whether such thinking meets the evidential constraints which it must in order to count as knowledge. Secondly, propositional knowledge about visual experience presupposes our acquisition of a concept of visual experience. This is because propositional knowledge, knowledge *that,* is conceptual knowledge. Thus, in raising their concerns about propositional knowledge, Byrne and Dretske suppose that we possess a concept of visual experience. But, as I will argue, [PT] poses a problem for this.

Somewhat more carefully, the question I want to raise concerns our ability to *acquire* a concept of visual experience in light of transparency. Understanding this question requires understanding the notion of concept acquisition which I will be working with. Concept acquisition can be defined in terms of concept possession.

Concept possession concerns the conditions a thinker must meet in order to have a concept in their conceptual repertoire. For example, to have the concept AND, it is plausible that you need to be willing to infer A from A&B. Thus, being willing to make such an inference is one of the possession conditions for the concept AND. Similarly, to have a concept of RED it is plausible that I have to be able to recognize red things. So the recognitional capacity to recognize red things is one of the possession conditions for the concept RED. Concept acquisition concerns the way in which a thinker came to meet the possession conditions for a given concept. For

example I acquired the concept RED by seeing instances of redness and being subjected to certain kinds of training, I acquired the concept PAIN by introspection and I acquired the CHILIAGON by geometrical reasoning.

Having described how I will be understanding the notion of concept acquisition it will be useful to discuss how I will be understanding the content of a concept of visual experience. Here I will understand the concept of visual experience as a concept of a psychological occurrence which connects us to our environment in a distinctive way such that it differs from audition, belief, imagination and the other myriad ways in which one might be psychologically connected to the environment. On this view you may think of visual experience in a way which involves more than the elements mentioned in the characterization above. However, if you do not think of visual experience as something psychological and which involves a distinctive connection to the environment you are not thinking about visual experience.

I doubt that there would be many who would wish to dispute that the characterization given above provides a partial characterization of the possession conditions of a concept of visual experience. Indeed, it is questionable whether any philosophical theory of visual experience would dispute my characterization of the concept. For example, according to [SD] visual experience is construed as a psychological occurrence which connects us to the environment by connecting us to non-physical and mind-dependent representatives of that environment. According to [INT] visual experience consists in being psychologically connected to the environment by representing it in a distinctive way. According to [NR] visual experience consists in being psychologically connected to the environment by being bearing a relation of awareness to that environment According to [Q], visual experience consists in being psychologically connected to the environment by having mental states with non-intentional qualia. Thus the argument I give below cannot be rejected on the grounds that it depends on a philosophically contentious conception of a concept of visual experience. With these preliminaries in place I can now state why [PT] raises a puzzle about our ability to acquire a concept of visual experience.

II.III. Stating the puzzle.

As with the case of propositional knowledge, it seems natural to suppose that we acquire a concept of visual experience by being subject to visual experience. When we are subject to visual experience its conscious character is manifest to us in a way which enables us to think in terms of visual experience. Jackson's Mary is a particularly vivid example of this.[201]

Mary's case is typically discussed in terms of propositional knowledge. Prior to leaving her room it is generally supposed that she doesn't know, e.g., that seeing red is like *this* and that after her exist she acquires the relevant knowledge. But it seems that prior to her exit Mary isn't able to *think* about visual experience of red in the way that we who have seen something red are able to. It's not simply that Mary fails to have epistemic justification for her thought that visually experiencing red is like this, it's rather that she can't think the thought at all. However, after existing the room it is plausible that Mary is able to think thoughts about the visual experience of redness in the way that we are able to. So Mary acquires a concept pertaining to visual experience of red when she exists the room.

This makes it seem like we are able to acquire a concept of visual experience, or concepts pertaining to certain types of visual experiences, just by having the relevant visual experience

201 Jackson (1982).

and by meeting the general psychological requirements for concept acquisition. That is, in order to acquire the relevant concept Mary doesn't have to do any work in addition to having the experience and being minimally reflective. This thought is very compelling and comports with the idea that our epistemic access to visual experience is direct and first-personal. Mary's situation comports with directness precisely because she need only have the relevant experience to acquire a concept pertaining to it. Mary's situation comports with first-personality because it is crucial that it is Mary who has the experience.

It is here where [PT] throws a wrench into things. How could having visual experience provide us with a concept of visual experience in the way that Mary's case suggests if [PT] is true? The problem is that according to [PT] in visual experience all we find are the ordinary mind-independent features of our environment. But how could encountering a table furnish me with a concept of visual experience? On the face of it this is no more intelligible than acquiring a concept of justice by tasting a mango. So this seems to require that our acquisition of the concept is in someway indirect. Furthermore, as I argued above, the fact that [PT] seems to show that all we have to go on in acquiring a concept of visual experience are environmental items. In turn this seems to show that the truth of [PT] entails that the way we acquire a concept of visual experience cannot be substantively first-personal. This is because the materials we have at our disposal for acquiring a concept of visual experience are just the same materials that would be available to others.

Notice that this problem does not seem to arise for certain other psychological states. Take pain, for example. When I feel pain I seem to be aware of something experiential, namely the pain. So it is not deeply mysterious how my feeling pain could furnish me with a concept of pain. But in the case of visual experience there seems to be nothing analogous to the feeling of pain, there is no 'feeling of seeing'. It is for this reason that [PT] frustrates an otherwise appealing account of how we acquire a concept of visual experience.

III. Visual experience as a theoretical concept.

In response to the problem raised in the previous section I will develop an account of our epistemic access to visual experience which is compatible with [PT] and which would explain how we are able to acquire a concept of visual experience. The basic approach I will take is that we should think of our concept of visual experience as a theoretical concept. More specifically, I want to pursue the idea that our concept of visual experience is not acquired by awareness of visual experience but is acquired by being introduced to do certain explanatory work. In particular, a concept of visual experience is introduced to explain observed behavioral and epistemic phenomena which I will discuss. In what follows this is what I shall mean when I say that our concept of visual experience is theoretical.

So conceived, theoretical concepts are familiar from a scientific context where concepts are introduced, and their unobserved referents posited, in order to explain phenomena which are observed. An example of this is Bohr's postulation of the quantized shell model of the atom in order to explain atomic stability. However, theoretical concepts also play a role in daily life.[202] The concept of gravity is appealed to in ordinary life to explain the behavior of the objects we encounter but gravity is not something we experience directly. Social cognition provides a suite of examples of theoretical concepts. Friendliness, kindness, responsibility and its absence are all important ways we have of thinking of ourselves and others and it is plausible that these

202 Sellars (1956) emphases this. See section XII, 51.

psychological states are posited to explain behavior rather than being things which are experienced directly. Thus, treating our concept of visual experience as theoretical does not remove it from day to day thinking.

I will make the case for the claim that our concept of visual experience is theoretical by focusing on a popular theoretical approach to cognitive development. There are a number of researchers in developmental psychology who argue that we should think of the process of cognitive development on the model of scientific theory construction.[203]

What is the evidence for the theory-theory? And, in particular, what is the evidence for thinking that children's understanding of visual experience is theoretical? I obviously cannot survey all of the evidence here. Instead, I will focus on one way of motivating the theory-theory which utilizes the contrast between the theory-theory and nativism that I just mentioned.

On the face of it, it would seem that it would be very difficult to choose between a theory-theory approach and a nativist one. This is because while the theory-theorist will construe sensitivity to evidence as indicating theoretically driven conceptual introduction or change, the nativist will construe it as an environmental activation of an innately specified system of knowledge. To overcome this Gopnik and Meltzoff proposed inserting young children into an 'alternative parallel universe' which differs significantly from our own, e.g. where physical objects behave very differently than they do in the actual world.[204] If children were able to come to understand such a world successfully this would tell in favor of the theory-theory. If children stuck with the understanding that they develop in the actual world this would tell in favor of the nativist approach. Unfortunately, this sort of experiment would be extremely difficult to carry out. However, more local versions of the alternative universe experiment have been conducted in the case of visual experience. The results suggest both that the theory-theory has some traction over nativism and that the theory-theory applies to children's understanding of visual experience.

One such experiment carried out by Meltzoff and Brooks focuses on the initially puzzling finding that 12 month old children will follow the gaze of a blindfolded adult but not an adult with closed eyes.[205] One possible explanation is that while 12 month old children do have first hand experience with eye closing and so understand its effect on seeing, they do not have first hand experience with blindfolds and so do not understand their impact on seeing. This hypothesis predicts that 12 month olds who were given appropriate experience with blind folds would not follow the gaze of blindfolded adults. This is what was found.

In a related study which gets closer to the grandiose 'alternative parallel universe' experiment, Meltzoff and Brooks gave 18 month olds experience with a trick blindfold, a blindfold which looked opaque but which could actually be seen through.[206] This exposure to non-standard evidence impacted the children's understanding of visual perception in that children exposed to the trick blindfold would follow the gaze of blindfolded adults. So here we have children adopting an understanding which describes an 'alternate parallel universe' where blindfolds can be seen through and not the actual world where blindfolds are opaque. It is hard to see how this could be construed as the environmental triggering of an innately specified piece of knowledge.[207]

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203 See, e.g., Wellman & Gelman (1997), Gopnik & Meltzof (1997) and Gopnik & Wellman H.M. (1994).
204 Gopnik & Meltzoff (1997)
205 Meltzoff & Brooks (2008).
206 Meltzoff & Brooks (2008).
207 Meltzoff & Gopnik (2013).

So far all the evidence I have discussed concerns the extension of children's knowledge of their own visual experiences, that they are blocked by blindfolds or that they are not in the case of the trick blindfold, to the visual experiences of others. Is there any evidence in the developmental literature which suggests that children's understanding of their own visual experiences is theoretical?

The thought I want to focus on here is that there is a connection between awareness of an item and appreciation of basic or salient aspects of that item.[208] For example, if an ordinary person is visually aware of a red tomato under ordinary circumstances then they will not be ignorant of or mistaken about its redness. This is because the redness of the tomato is a perceptually basic and salient aspect of the tomato for this perceiver in this situation. If the person was ignorant or mistaken about the redness of the tomato then we would, other things being equal, be suspicious about whether they are visually aware of the tomato. In this way awareness is coupled with appreciation of certain basic aspects of what one is aware of.

What I want to suggest is that the kinds of mistakes children make about visual experience, mistakes about basic and salient aspects of visual experience which seem utterly obvious to adults, are incompatible with their having inner awareness of their visual experiences. This reinforces the argument from transparency above. Furthermore, I want to suggest that the way in which children's understanding of visual experience matures shows that their understanding is theoretical. What we find is children coming to understand visual experience in a piecemeal way, revising their understanding in light of new evidence and applying this new understanding to themselves and to others in order to explain the behavior and problems they encounter. All of this suggests that children's understanding of visual experience is the result of theorizing and not of any kind of inner awareness of visual experience. So what kind of mistakes do young children make about visual experience and how do they learn to overcome them?

One basic element of our understanding of visual experience is that things can look a way that they are not.[209] Children as old as 3 have difficulty understanding that something can *look* one way but actually be another. For example, when familiarized with a deceptive object such as a sponge made to look like a rock, children will make a 'phenomenalist' error and say that the object both looks like a sponge and really is a sponge.[210] These findings are striking because they suggest that there is some sense in which young children do not understand their current visual experiences in that they do not understand how things look to them.[211]

An understanding of the distinction between visual appearance and reality is of course crucial to understanding much of what we encounter in ordinary life. Why did she pick the white one when she was asked for the blue one? Because it looked blue to her even though it is white. Why is he unhappy with the drapes he bought? Because they aren't the way they looked in the store. Thus, as children come to understand the distinction between appearance and reality they

208 Here is this meant to be a claim about the kind of awareness which I have discussed under the heading of *de re* awareness.

209 There is some resistance to this idea in the philosophical literature. For example, Genone (2014) argues that there are no perceptual illusions. Readers who are sympathetic to Genone's position can ignore this portion of my discussion and focus on the other ways in which young children fail to understand visual experience.

210 Flavell et. al. (1986).

211 Children also make the opposite 'realist' error of saying that something really is how it appears. See Flavell et al. (1986). For a sophisticated philosophical discussion of experiments of this kind see Nudds (2011).

come to better understand the behavioral and epistemic situations which were inexplicable to them before they mastered the distinction.

Another facet of our understanding of visual experience is that visual experience serves as a distinctive source of knowledge, one that is importantly different from testimony, reasoning or the deliverances of the other senses. Marking the particular way in which vision contributes to knowledge of the world plays an important role in understanding behavior. For example we can explain why only one of two people knows the color of a passing car by pointing out that while one person sees the car the other only hears it. Furthermore, it is typically obvious to us that we know something on the basis of sight and that certain facts, e.g. about color differences, can only be known first hand on the basis of sight. But at an early age children do not seem to understand this, either about themselves or others. For example, children have difficulty understanding that certain pairs of objects, e.g. two identical balls which differed only in color, could be distinguished only by someone who saw them. In some cases, children knew which of these two colored balls had been placed behind a barrier but could not explain how they knew this.[212] When children learn to appreciate the way in which vision contributes to knowledge of the world they are able to understand, predict and explain behaviors which they were unable to before.

Another aspect of children's understanding of visual perception that is investigated in the developmental literature is the extent to which children understand the perspectival nature of vision. Ordinary understanding of visual experience involves understanding that observers may differ both in *what* they see and in terms of *how* they see a common object. This aspect of our understanding of visual experience is utterly crucial for ordinary social life. For example, it is crucial for successfully navigating and manipulating the environment in conjunction with others.

In the developmental literature it is common to discuss children's understanding of visual perspective my drawing a distinction between level 1 and level 2 visual perspective taking.[213] A child is said to be able to succeed at level 1 if they are able to understand that two individuals may differ in terms of what objects they see. For example, a child that can engage in level 1 perspective taking can understand that though they see a toy rabbit an experimenter cannot, say because of an opaque occluder interposed between the toy and experimenter. Level 2 visual perspective taking involves appreciation of the fact that a single object can be visible to two different people but that it may differ in terms of how it looks to those people. A child who succeeds at level 2 will be able to understand that, for example, while a sheet of paper looks white to them it looks blue to an experimenter who is seeing the paper through a blue colored film.[214]

Level 1 perspective taking has been identified at 24 months.[215] Level 2 is thought to develop between the ages of 4 and 5, though some suggest that it can occur as early as 36 months.[216] Even though this aspect of children's understanding of visual experiences comes relatively early, young children still make systematic errors about the perspectival nature of visual experience prior to their accomplishment of level 1 and 2.

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212 O'Neill et al. (1992).

213 See, e.g. Flavell (1978), Flavell (1992).

214 Another example of level 2 perspective taking is Piaget's famous 'three mountains' test. See Piaget & Inhelder (1967), chapter 8.

215 Moll, & Tomasello (2006).

216 For the later view see Flavell, et. at. (1981). For evidence of level 2 at 36 months see Moll & Meltzoff (2011).

For example, in a task meant to test for level 1 Moll and Tomasello placed two toys such that while the child could see both toys, the experimenter could only see one.[217] The experimenter then asked the child 'Where is the other toy? Where is it? I cannot find it!' and then 'Can you give it to me?'. At 18 months young children had great difficulty understanding that the experimenter was searching for the toy which was occluded from them, thus signaling an inability to understand the perspectival difference between themselves and the experimenter. At 24 months children were much more successful. This advance in their understanding has obvious but important consequences for their ability to explain and coordinate with the behavior of others.

Perhaps more striking are the mistakes that older children make at level 2. For example, Masangkay and collaborators presented children between 4-5 years of age with a drawing of a turtle.[218] The experimenter sat across the table from the child and the drawing sat between them. Children were able to report that the turtle was 'right side up' when its feet were facing them and that it was 'upside down' when its feet were facing away from them. Children were then asked "Do I see the turtle upside down or right side up?" Children ages 3 to 4 years had great difficulty understanding that their experience of the turtle differed from the experimenter's experience. It is remarkable to see linguistic children, perfectly capable of carrying on a rudimentary conversation, making such basic errors about visual perspective.

Even though young children struggle to understand the perspectival nature of visual experience, perspective plays a crucial role in adult understanding of the world as I have mentioned. Perspective can explain why I see some objects and not others. Perspective can explain why one person is able to reach for an object while another is not. Perspective can explain why two people describe a single invariant object in different and incompatible ways. And so on. Thus, when children achieve an understanding of perspective their explanatory purchase on the world is vastly increased.

I have obviously only scratched the surface here, but the kinds of mistakes children make about visual experience, as well as the long developmental timeline I have sketched, suggest that children acquire a concept of visual experience by introducing it in order to explain their world. And we are of course just very big children. So, from this point of view, our concept of visual experience is theoretical as well.

III.I An objection to the theoretical model.

If it is true that our concept of visual experience is theoretical, then it would seem to follow that creatures who do not have visual experience could acquire a concept of visual experience. All they would have to do is learn about its explanatory and functional role in the mind, that it is a distinctive source of knowledge, involves perspective, may misinform and so on. But that seems obviously wrong. Surely there is something that such a creature would be missing!

In reply, I agree that the creature would be missing something. But I reject that it is anything at the level of a concept of visual experience. Instead, the creature is missing concepts pertaining to the visible features of the environment. The creature fails to have such features because it doesn't have visual experience.

217 Moll & Tomasello (2006).
218 Masangkay et. al. (1974).

So, Mary was missing a concept pertaining to a visual experience of red. But this is only because she was missing a concept of redness. The generic concept of visual experience is, on my view, available to her in her room.

IV. Conclusion.

Before ending the chapter it will be useful to make some concluding remarks which place the results of this chapter in a broader philosophical context.

In philosophy there has been a traditional skeptical worry about subjectivist views of perception, like the sense-datum view, according to which these views screen us off from the external world and so frustrate our attempts to achieve perceptual knowledge of that world. Recently some have argued that subjectivist views would also threaten our *conception* of a mind-independent external reality.[219] If all we are aware of in experience is a wall of sensation how could perception put us in a position to so much as think about an external world?

What I have argued is that the truth of [PT] would reverse this traditional picture. Given that visual experience is transparent to the world the problem we face is not how we are able to think of a world beyond experience, for it is precisely this world that our experiences seem to bring us into contact with. The problem is rather how we have the idea that there are such things as visual experiences. This is because the truth of [PT] entails that we have no first-personal access to our visual experiences over and above our access to the world around us. Given that our experiences are not identical with the items we find in our environment, how are we able to form a conception of our experiences?

I have offered a solution to this problem which characterizes our acquisition of a concept of visual experience as being a result of our general ability to theorize. So rather than the external world being a theoretical construction out of perceptual sensations, it is the perceptual sensations themselves which are the theoretical constructs.

This way of trying to meet the epistemic challenge posed by transparency relates to a central theme of the first chapter of this book, the wide disagreement about perception one finds in the philosophical literature. As I pointed out there, such disagreement would be difficult to understand if it were true that our grasp of visual experience was given introspectively. If all it took to understand visual experience was to have an earnest look within, it is unclear how there could be serious disagreement about visual experience. But such disagreement does exist. Treating our grasp of visual experience as theoretical helps to explain this disagreement. This is because rather than being something introspectively given, visual experience is a theoretical construct which we introduce to do certain explanatory work. From that point of view it is unsurprising that there should be disagreement about how best to characterize the theoretical role of visual experience. In this way disagreement about the nature of visual experience is continuous with other theoretical disagreements, e.g., how best to characterize the nature of numbers or gravity.

Even though this approach is well motivated I admit that there is something bewildering about it. Our sense of ourselves as subjects of visual experience does not seem to us to be theoretical and the difference between visual experience and other theoretical entities seems significant. Our visual experiences seem to be things we come into direct contact with and not things which we postulate. Thus, if correct the arguments of this chapter leave us with a nagging

219 See, e.g., Campbell (2012).

puzzle. The puzzle is how to understand the almost irresistible tendency to treat our understanding of visual experience as a result of looking within given that it is not.

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