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The Ontological Importance of Being a Perceptual Attitude

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Abstract: Current philosophical debates about perception have largely ignored questions concerning the ontological structure of perceptual experience, so as to focus on its intentional and phenomenological character. To illustrate and put pressure on this tendency, I revisit the controversy between doxastic views of perception and Gareth Evans's objection from over-intellectualization. I suggest that classic versions of the doxastic view are to a good extent driven by an ontological characterization of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive states or dispositions, not by a cognitively complex picture of perceptual content. Conceived along these lines, the doxastic view unveils an ontologically significant story of perceptual experience for at least two reasons: on the one hand, that characterization avoids the line of reasoning leading up to sense-datum theories of perception; and, on the other, it bears on recent discussions about the temporal structure of perceptual experience. Although I do not endorse the doxastic view, my goal is to highlight the importance of the relatively neglected ontological motivations thus driving that kind of account.

Keywords: Nonfactivity; perceptual attitudes; processes; relationalism; representationalism; states.

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In philosophical debates, opposing sides may talk past each other in spite of apparently sharing a common set of notions and concerns. Although these misunderstandings may have to do with the specific meaning of key terms and claims, they often relate to background assumptions the full import of which even the very participants of the relevant discussion fail to grasp. By making such assumptions explicit, it is not only possible to trace the source of the relevant misunderstanding, but also to get a better grip on what is at stake in the relevant debate and how it could move forward into the future. This piece aims precisely to bring out such conflicting assumptions at the basis of current debates in the philosophy of perception. In broad lines, the thought may be expressed as follows: while an important tradition of philosophical discussion—in particular, the protracted and ever increasingly more complex debate between relationalism and representationalism—has by and large focused on accounting for the intentionality and the phenomenology of perception, a neglected but significant stream has instead been driven by considerations concerning the ontological structure of our perceptual experiences. This contrast does not imply that two detached lines of discussions cut across the philosophy of perception, but that one and the same landscape of philosophical views may be approached from two different but potentially complementary perspectives: one concerned with what and how experience (re)presents the world to us, and another one concerned with what kinds of items perceptual experiences actually are. The *general goal* of this piece is to highlight the existence of both kinds of approaches—in particular, the existence and the importance of the comparatively neglected ontological approach to the study of perception.

To focus this task, I shall build on a well-known controversy in recent philosophical history, namely, that between doxastic views of perception and Gareth Evans's objection from over-intellectualization. I shall argue that classic versions of the doxastic view do not, as it is commonly thought, fall under the scope of Evans's target, and that this is so because the relevant players shared different background assumptions. Evans was mainly concerned with understanding how the contents of perception may ground the ways in which we think and talk about the objective world: understandably, he takes doxastic views to provide cognitively or conceptually complex accounts of perceptual content. However, still under the strong influence of

Rylean and Wittgensteinian conceptual analysis, doxastic views may actually be read as striving to deliver an account of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive states or dispositions. In other words, the comparison between perception and belief picks up on the mental attitudes rather than the contents of the relevant perceptual and doxastic phenomena. Thus understood, doxastic views are not only capable of fulfilling the kind of job they were originally intended to fulfill, namely, that of providing a respectable alternative to theories widely unpopular for their ontological commitment to private objects of perception. They also provide a crucial historical bridge between the mid-Twentieth Century's philosophical and linguistic contributions to our understanding of psychological concepts and recent ontological work on the temporal structure of mental phenomena.

To remain absolutely clear about the scope of this piece. While it is relatively clear that I take distance from Evans's objection, I am not about to defend doxastic theories of perception here—evidence of which, as explained later on, is that a characterization of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive states also fits non-doxastic views of perception, e.g. recent versions of representationalism. My point is that there are important ontological considerations—not only intentional and phenomenological ones, as it is usually assumed—underpinning philosophical reflection about how perceptual experiences should be individuated. The specific controversy I revisit here is thereby intended to illustrate my general goal.

This piece will proceed in five stages. First, I sketch how doxastic views of perception—in particular, D.M. Armstrong's and George Pitcher's classic versions—and Evans's objection are traditionally taken to clash on the notion of perceptual content. Secondly, I explain why Evans's objection misses its intended targets: in a nutshell, the relevant doxastic views rely on notions of belief and concept far too undemanding to over-intellectualize perception. Thirdly, to begin unpacking the ontological import of doxastic views, I explain how their underpinning characterization of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive strives to meet the threat posed by sense-datum theories. Fourthly, I relate a stative characterization of perceptual attitudes to classic as well as fresh discussions concerning the temporal or otherwise ontological categorization of experience. Finally, I wrap things up and briefly refer to the relationship between the ontological picture here developed and

the most popular views of perception nowadays—i.e. representationalism and relationalism.

1. Doxastic views and over-intellectualization

Recent philosophy of perception has mainly addressed questions about intentional *objects* and *contents*—that is, about the worldly items which perceptual experiences present to us and the ways in which such items are thereby presented. By contrast, relatively little systematic attention has been devoted to the nature of the experiential *attitudes* which thus open the world to us.[1] Doxastic or belief accounts of perception classically hold that perceiving consists in acquiring—or being disposed to acquire—beliefs about the perceivable environment. Bearing the previous distinction between experiential objects/contents and experiential attitudes in mind, it is natural to read those views as making a controversial claim about the cognitive complexity of perceptual content: perceiving consists in the acquisition of perceptual information that is conceptually structured; or, relatedly, perceptual experiences are perceptual beliefs, that is, mental phenomena which accurately or inaccurately represent the world in a conceptual or otherwise propositional way. As previously mentioned, however, I believe that doxastic views reveal a deeper ontological characterization of experiential attitudes in terms of nonfactivity and stativity. This characterization aims to illustrate a more general point: an account of perception may be philosophically relevant not only for specifying the objects or contents of experience, but also for describing what kinds of psychological attitudes thereby (re)present the world to us.

Flourishing in the late '60s and the early '70s, doxastic views of perception are materialist alternatives to the then increasingly unpopular sense-datum theories. Armstrong, for instance, held that 'perception is nothing

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[1]   Something along the lines of the present distinction between object/content and attitude features in Tim Crane's work (cf. Crane, 2001, 2003). For the notions of intentional object and intentional content, cf. (Crane 2001; 29, 31). What I term experiential attitude roughly corresponds to what Crane calls *intentional mode* (cf. Crane 2001, 31-32).

but the acquiring of true or false beliefs concerning the current state of the organism's body and environment. […] Veridical perception is the acquiring of true beliefs, sensory illusion the acquiring of false beliefs' (Armstrong 1968, 209). Again, Pitcher claimed that 'sense perception is the acquiring of true beliefs concerning particular facts about one's environment, by means of or by the use of, one's sense organs' (Pitcher 1971, 65), Like current representationalists and relationalists, both writers invoke the notion of belief to throw light on the phenomenon of perception and its relation to hallucinatory and other cognitive phenomena downstream perception. Doxastic views are not as unpopular as it might seem (e.g. Roxbee Cox 1971; Sibley 1971; Craig 1976; Heil 1984; Byrne 2009; Glüer 2009, 2018; among others). But, for present purposes, I shall focus here on Armstrong's and Pitcher's classic portrayals: for, given that their proposals represent two of the purest versions of the doxastic stance, one might assume that, with the appropriate qualifications in place, what holds for them may also hold for other, more nuanced versions.

   To the extent that it emerges in order to resist sense-datum theories of perception, a key motivation of the doxastic view is ontological. Sense-datum theories held that perceptual phenomena should be conceived as psychological relations of awareness between a subject and the objects of perception, where the relevant objects were not items of the publicly accessible world, but mind-dependent, private ones that roughly matched the array of so-called secondary properties (e.g. colours, sounds, etc.). One (but by no means the only) way of motivating the introduction of such mind-dependent items—also known as sense-data—consists in comparing normal or veridical cases of perceptual experience with anomalous ones, e.g. illusions and hallucinations. While common cases of perception naturally lead us to think that we are aware of the mind-independent, medium-sized world, illusory and hallucinatory phenomena indicate that we could be aware of perceivable properties or objects which fail to exist in our ordinary objective reality. By stressing the introspective or otherwise subjective similarities between both kinds of experiences, the sense-datum theorist accounts for both experiential categories in a similar way: whether normal or anomalous, experiences are conceived as psychological relations of awareness between subjects and mind-dependent, private items.

Doxastic views of perception thus emerge as an attempt to account for perceptual phenomena without committing to the existence of private, mind-dependent objects of perception—a point I shall return to in section 3. For the time being, it is important to stress that these accounts are often read as stating that perception is belief, as opposed to merely claiming that perception is *like* belief. Against this interpretative backdrop, they are also taken to make a controversial claim about perceptual content. Armstrong and Pitcher would allegedly suggest that perceptual experiences represent the perceivable environment in a way similar to that in which beliefs do so: in other words, they would assimilate the contents of perceptual experience to those of belief. This reading is crystalized in Evans's *objection from over-intellectualization.*[2] According to it, having beliefs is an affair more cognitively sophisticated than having perceptual experiences: for, on the face of it, the way we or lower-level animals perceive the world, need not be anything as sophisticated as the way in which cognitive states such as beliefs represent it. Since perception is an operation of a relatively primitive informational system, its respective account should avoid relying on more sophisticated cognitive terms. Thus, Evans feels that explaining perception in terms of belief 'gets things the wrong way round. It is as well to reserve 'belief' for the notion of a far more sophisticated cognitive state: one that is connected with (and, in my opinion, defined in terms of) the notion of *judgement*, and so, also, connected with the notion of *reasons.* The operations of the informational system are more primitive' (Evans 1982, 124; also cf. McDowell 1994, 60)

So, the objection seems to run as follows: notions like belief and judgement are closely related to the possibility of ascribing concepts to the relevant cognitive subjects; but conditions of concept-possession intuitively seem to be more stringent than those of experience-ownership—after all, we are ready to identify perceiving organisms (e.g. newborn babies, dogs, bats, etc.) that fail to qualify as subjects of propositional attitudes in the traditional sense of the expression; hence, it seems intuitively misplaced to characterize experiences in terms of concept-dependent states like beliefs. Although it is by no means obvious in what sense the conditions of concept-

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[2]   The force of Evans's objection is still felt in recent philosophical work, e.g. (Heck Jr 2000; Martin 2002; Johnston 2006).

or belief-possession are more cognitively demanding than those of experience-possession, it is clear that the objection may be read as targeting the way in which the doxastic view models the contents of perceptual experience.[3] Thus understood, the worry seems to be that characterizing how our senses deliver information to us as concept-dependent misdescribes the cognitive sophistication of perceptual experiences vis-à-vis beliefs. After all, the realm of items which a subject could experience and the way in which she could experience them, could surely transcend the conceptual repertoire she is endowed with.

To sum up, I have outlined here a widely spread understanding of the dialectic between classic doxastic views of perception and Evans's objection from over-intellectualization. As initially mentioned, my ultimate goal is neither to neutralize the force of Evans's objection nor to vindicate a doxastic view. This local controversy is intended *to illustrate how philosophical thinking about perceptual experiences need not draw on considerations from intentionality and phenomenology alone, but also on claims concerning the ontological structure of perceptual attitudes in particular or perceptual experiences in general.* While I do not endorse a doxastic view, it is important to appreciate its sensitivity to the ontological import of perceptual attitudes, at least to the extent that such an ontological import bears on our understanding of how experiences are individuated.

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[3]   Evans's objection may also be read in a different way: instead of targeting a particular understanding of perceptual content, it could criticize the assimilation of perceptual attitudes to doxastic ones, and it would do so because both kinds of attitudes are functionally different—for example, doxastic attitudes are, unlike perceptual ones, susceptible of rational assessment. However, I shall ignore this alternative reading for two reasons. First, it is by no means straightforward to me how one could account for the conceptual character of belief-attitudes without referring to features, conceptual or otherwise, of belief-contents. Secondly, this alternative reading would not, I think, affect the local exegetical claim I shall make here, which is this: the objection from over-intellectualization does not undermine classic doxastic theories of perception, for the latter do not strive to model perceptual experiences in terms of conceptual structure—at least as normally understood—but in terms of the features of nonfactivity and stativity.

2. Undemanding perceptual concepts and beliefs

Now I move on to show that doxastic theories of perception need not clash with the objection from over-intellectualization, for they need not deliver a story about the conceptual or otherwise cognitive structure of perceptual content, but one about how perceptual attitudes—and, as such, perceptual experiences in general—should be ontologically categorized. In this section, I show that classic doxastic theories did not take issue with an intuitive understanding of the cognitive relationship between perception and belief: since writers like Armstrong and Pitcher invoke notions of belief and of concept that are far too rudimentary to over-intellectualize the contents of perceptual experience, their take on perception does not result in a cognitively demanding depiction of experiential contents. This will set the stage for the next two sections, where I suggest that doxastic views might be ontologically significant for specifying key features of experiential attitudes: a bit more specifically, the suggestion will be that the point of comparing perception and belief may be to outline an understanding of perceptual attitudes as *nonfactive states.*[4]

Do Armstrong and Pitcher over-intellectualize perception, then? They undeniably use the term 'belief' in order to clarify the notion of perceptual experience. Again, they acknowledge the intimate link between the notions of belief and concept (cf. Armstrong 1968, 210; Pitcher 1971, 94). But whether they invoke words like 'belief' and 'concept' or not is only a terminological issue. The crucial point is whether Armstrong and Pitcher wield such terms in a cognitively loaded way. I do not think they did. Doxastic theorists were fully aware of, and provided for, the worry at the heart of the objection from over-intellectualization. Armstrong, for example, notes that the 'word "belief" is a stumbling-block. To talk of beliefs may seem to be to talk in a very sophisticated and self-conscious way, quite unsuited to

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[4]   A terminological note. I do not use the noun "stativity" to refer to the feature in virtue of which certain mental attitudes state or assert how things are, but to refer to an ontological understanding of the members of a given (physical or psychological) category as states—that is, as opposed to, say, processes or instantaneous events. I shall say a bit more about the distinction between states, processes, and instantaneous events later on.

such an unsophisticated thing as perception' (Armstrong 1968, 209). As I shall presently explain, both his and Pitcher's accounts tried to address the relevant worry. For the time being, it is worth bearing in mind that Armstrong continues using that word because he takes it to be less inappropriate than other terms (cf. Armstrong 1968, 209-10).

Armstrong draws a distinction between *perceiving*, *perceptual experience* proper, and *perceptual belief*. The first two notions are relatively straightforward: while perceiving stands for the acquisition of environmental information, perceptual experiences are states of introspective awareness by means of which perceivers track the relevant informational flow (cf. Armstrong 1968, 214-15, 226). The notion of perceptual belief is trickier. At times, it naturally picks up on perceptual attitudes: then, the notion seems to overlap with the previous idea of perceptual experience. But Armstrong also wants to fix a special use in which perceptual beliefs simply stand for the environmental information that the previous attitudes convey to the perceiver (cf. Armstrong 1968, 210). Thus understood, the notion picks up on information included within the content of experiences. This is, I believe, the use Armstrong more frequently relies on when claiming that perceptual beliefs are sub-verbal or fail to presuppose linguistic abilities: 'since perception can occur in the total absence of the ability to speak, we are committed to the view that there can be concepts that involve no linguistic ability' (Armstrong 1968, 210). Or again, when he holds that the conditions of concept-possession underpinning the relevant beliefs are less demanding than Evans would allow. Armstrong would, for example, ascribe colour-concepts to a baby capable of being systematically responsive to blocks of different colours (cf. Armstrong 1968, 246; also cf. Smith and Jones 1986, 104). According to him, a subject possesses a concept C if she is capable of systematically distinguishing worldly items that instantiate C from those that fail to do so. Since acts of perceptual discrimination count as forms of behaviour, he is prepared to ascribe C to an organism if the latter is capable of discriminating items which instantiate, say, the property or the relation that falls under C from items which fail to do so. And while this constraint on concept-possession is not trivial, it is relatively undemanding: it allows for concept-ascriptions (say, to babies or other primitive creatures) which other theories of concept would forbid. Armstrong thereby takes himself to

describe features of experiential contents: accordingly, he would reject the charge of modeling the contents of experience in a cognitively heavy-duty way; according to him, perceptual phenomena simply involve the acquisition of sub-verbal information that endowed perceivers with capacities of discriminatory behaviour.

Specific and terminological differences aside, Pitcher also strived to circumvent the threat of over-intellectualization, and he did so with the help of a distinction between conscious and unconscious beliefs. Although it is controversial to classify beliefs either as conscious or as unconscious (cf. Crane 2001), all Pitcher aims to do here is to draw a line between mental states that differ in cognitive sophistication. Thus, *conscious beliefs* are states we usually associate to conceptually sophisticated tasks, such as those 'of entertaining propositions and assenting to them, of making (conscious) judgments, or anything of that sort' (Pitcher 1971, 71). By contrast, having *unconscious beliefs* does not involve entertaining and assenting to propositions, or judging: 'to have a belief of this kind is to have a complex disposition to act (or behave) in certain ways under certain specifiable conditions' (Pitcher 1971, 71). Like Armstrong, Pitcher aims to keep his notion of perceptual belief apart from sophisticated cognitive connotations. To pull this off, he characterizes perceptual experiences as unconscious beliefs. The foregoing remarks, I think, suggest that Armstrong as well as Pitcher strived to model the controversial notions underpinning their theories of perception in ways that avoided the problem of over-intellectualization.

Since Armstrong and Pitcher do not take perceptual beliefs to stand for cognitively sophisticated states—quite the opposite, they made efforts to deny that that is the case—their accounts are not targeted by Evans's objection. The former's views and the latter's critique talk past each other insofar as they trade in terms of different notions of concept and belief. What Armstrong and Pitcher have in mind is a relatively rudimentary notion of concept as a discriminatory capacity that human adults, babies, and even certain lower-level creatures (e.g. cats and dogs) possess: on that basis, they build their perceptual beliefs as cognitively rudimentary attitudes in virtue of which subjects are sensitive to certain kinds of environmental information. Evans, meanwhile, grounds his understanding of beliefs on the notion of concepts which we know and love—that is, those abstract items

which set fully developed adults apart from babies and snails. Armstrong's and Pitcher's beliefs need not relate to the notions of judgement and of reasons; those of Evans's have to. In vernacular philosophical language, we should perhaps say that Armstrong and Pitcher are not talking about beliefs, but about a structurally similar albeit still different kind of dispositional state. This is the reason why the objection from over-intellectualization does not target the relevant doxastic accounts of perception.[5]

But if a doxastic account need not model perceptual experiences as cognitively sophisticated attitudes, why do they expose themselves to potential confusion by using the word "belief"? This concern actually gestures at two different questions: (i) if the concept that doxastic theories express by means of the word "belief" is so broad that does not map onto the ordinary concept expressed by the use of that word, what justifies calling it "belief" at all; and (ii), whether we could use an alternative terminology—e.g. that of "representation"—instead of the potentially confusing one of "belief" in the present context. To address (i), it is necessary to spell out what sort of positive claim doxastic theories might be making: since I turn to the latter point in the next section, I thereby postpone my answer until then.

As for (ii), Armstrong plausibly argues that there are not obvious and uncontroversial replacements. Since doxastic accounts of perception actually evolved into representationalist proposals by the early 1980's, it seems natural to think that the term "representation" is better suited than that of "belief" to account for perceptual experiences. Things are not so simple, though. First, if "representation" simply means environmental information conveyed to the conscious subject, it simply fulfills the same role as the notion of perceptual belief that he stipulated. Secondly, I believe that the notion of representation is easily susceptible of the same sort of criticism that Armstrong directly advances against the notion of a map: like maps,

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[5]   More recent versions of the doxastic view construe perceptual content as propositional but nonconceptual. If anything, such approaches only highlight that doxastic accounts need not commit to a cognitively demanding view of perceptual content. Kathrin Glüer, for example, espouses a view according to which experiential beliefs ranges over what she calls phenomenal contents, that is, contents specifiable in terms of looks-locutions, where the concepts required to formulate such locutions need not be had by the subjects of the relevant experiences (cf. Glüer 2009, 2018).

representations are things which we then use to tell how things are, whereas perceptual beliefs 'essentially refer beyond themselves to the objects they [would] claim to map' (Armstrong 1968, 210).[6] And thirdly, "belief" has a methodological advantage over "representation." Expressions of belief may be applied more or less literally to an account of mental phenomena insofar as they refer to a primarily psychological notion. The idea of representation, in turn, derives from a pictorial context, not a psychological one: hence, its primary application to a story of perceptual experience will be metaphorical or analogical. The point may seem trivial, but I think that, a few notable exceptions aside (cf. Austin 1962; Hacker 1987; Snowdon 1992; Travis 2013), contemporary philosophers of perception easily slip into metaphorical or otherwise broad characterizations of perceptual phenomena when using pairs of terms like "presentation"/"representation," or, relatedly, "direct"/"indirect."

At any rate, choice of words is not the crucial point here. For present purposes, I am interested in the fact that, for doxastic theorists, the notion of belief need not serve the purpose of specifying perceptual content: as I begin explaining next, it may also throw light on the question of what kind of items perceptual attitudes are.

3. The ontological import of perceptual attitudes: nonfactivity

If my foregoing remarks are along the right lines, it is not compulsory to read doxastic theories as controversial stories of perceptual content. What else may such accounts spell out, then? In a nutshell, the suggestion is that the perception-belief comparison might be used not to relate perceptual content to conceptual or propositional content, but to relate perceptual attitudes to doxastic ones. In line with their ontological motivation as a reaction to sense-datum theories, a doxastic account of perceptual phenomena may deliver a story of perceptual attitudes—as opposed to perceptual contents—where, in analogy with doxastic attitudes, the relevant experiential

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[6]   This succinct critical claim has, I believe, been subsequently developed in far more ambitious and sophisticated ways by Charles Travis in his more recent attacks of representationalism (cf. Travis 2013).

attitudes are characterized by the features of *stativity* and *nonfactivity*. As previously mentioned, these considerations are not thereby intended to defend doxastic views. What I want to show is that, whether the reader take that proposal or leave it, she should appreciate the importance of philosophically describing perceptual attitudes independently of considerations regarding the intentionality or the phenomenology of perception. As I shall explain towards the end of the next section, the present characterization of perceptual attitudes has significant ontological punch to the extent that it opposes different forms of ontological reification: on the one hand, nonfactive attitudes avoid the key Phenomenological Principle underpinning a subjectivist approach to perceptual contents; and, on the other, specifying such attitudes as states avoids potentially obscuring our understanding of what perceptual experiences are made of.

To unpack the relevant ontological message, let's go back to (i), the question whether doxastic views of perception pick up on psychological attitudes that one could most suitably call "beliefs." This worry—or one quite similar to it—is voiced by Frank Jackson when objecting to the ontological significance of a belief-theory of perception vis-à-vis sense-datum theories:

> One of the main aims of any belief analysis of perception is to avoid the Sense-datum theory's commitment to the existence of something F when something looks F to someone. The belief analysis achieves this because, despite the considerable controversy over the semantic structure of belief statements, we know enough about them to know that a statement like 'I believe (am inclined to believe) that there is something F in front of me' can be true without there being anything F in front of me. However, if the belief in question is not merely a common or garden one, but, rather, a special kind—a perceptual belief, where a perceptual belief is defined in terms of looking F—then the whole question of ontological commitment to there being an F is thrown back into the melting-pot. (Jackson 1977, 45)

As I also strived to highlight in the last section, Jackson correctly claims that the perceptual beliefs posited by the doxastic theory are not common or garden ones. But does this mean that doxastic views of perception like those of Armstrong's and Pitcher's lose the ability to counteract the

controversial ontological commitment at the basis of the sense-datum theorist? It does not. To resist a story of perception in terms of mind-dependent items, the doxastic theorist need not assimilate the contents of perception and belief: all she has to secure is a characterization of perceptual experiences as nonfactive attitudes.[7] Let's unpack this point.

To undermine the line of reasoning leading up to the introduction of sense-data, doxastic accounts challenge a key but implicit premise behind the previous understanding of illusion and hallucination: if something seems F to a subject, then something with that quality exists. This claim—nowadays known as the *Phenomenal Principle* (cf. Robinson 1994, 32)—relates to the feature of *factivity*. As traditionally understood, if a given psychological attitude towards a given content p is factive, then p is true whenever a given subject instantiates that attitude. Knowledge is a standard example: if you know that 2+2=4, then it is true that 2+2=4. According to doxastic views of perception, however, we need not commit to the Phenomenal Principle: just like beliefs, perceptual experiences might be thought to involve nonfactive attitudes—that is, attitudes where things *seem* a certain way even though they fail *to be* so. Beliefs are intuitively nonfactive in the sense that, although we always take the beliefs we endorse to be true, it does not automatically follow that their contents convey true propositions: one may believe that p even when p is not the case. Drawing on the *comparison*—and, in principle, nothing more than a comparison—between perception and belief, the doxastic theorist goes on to show that perceptual experiences may likewise constitute counter-examples to the Phenomenal Principle. Just like beliefs, experiences might be the kind of mental phenomena capable of (re)presenting things that do not exist. In other words, perceptual experiences may be conceived as phenomena that deliver accurate information—as they do in normal perception—as well as inaccurate information—as they do in perceptual illusion and hallucination—about the

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[7]   Which does not mean that doxastic views have nothing to say about the way the sense-datum theorist understands the notion of perceptual content: their objections grounded on representational or phenomenological considerations (e.g. the discussion of the speckled hen) are well-known. My point is only that, to an important extent, such proposals are ontologically driven: they rest on a particular understanding of what sort of psychological attitude perceptual experience is.

world. In this specific regard, perception would be *like* belief. And if the Phenomenal Principle thus breaks down, it is at least not obvious how reflection about the phenomena of illusion and hallucination lead up to the postulation of mind-dependent objects. The present outline is no doubt sketchy, but it highlights a key ontological motivation driving the emergence of doxastic views: they aim to describe perceptual phenomena in a way that avoids invoking controversial items like sense-data.

Even Jackson himself notes that the thrust of doxastic views against sense-datum theories does not concern the cognitive complexity of perceptual content, but the nonfactive character of perceptual experiences in general. The sense-datum theorist's mistake was to assume that, if something F appears to a subject, then there must be an object which instantiates F. As far as I can see, this claim may concern the way we think about experiential attitudes rather than the cognitive complexity of experiential contents. Hence, although Jackson is certainly right in claiming that the relevant perceptual beliefs are not common or garden ones in regard to the conceptual or propositional sort of content we usually ascribe to them, the doxastic view could still make a case against sense-data by conceiving perceptual experiences as nonfactive attitudes.[8] So, in spite of incorporating an idiosyncratic notion of belief into its description of perception, the doxastic view could still combat the sense-datum theory: after all, the relevant comparison with beliefs may be intended to model perceptual experiences as nonfactive, a feature that, as far I can see, need not characterize what sort of content perceptual experiences incorporate, but what kind of psychological attitudes they are.

4. The ontological import of perceptual attitudes: stativity

A characterization of perceptual attitudes as mental states, in turn, relates to past and recent debates about the temporal structure of perceptual

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[8] A possible reply consists in relating the nonfactivity of beliefs to their concept-dependence: as such, the doxastic theorist's ascription of nonfactivity to perceptual experiences would entail the conceptual character of their contents. It is unclear to me how such a suggestion could be specifically be fleshed out, though.

experience. Claiming that either beliefs or perceptual experiences are mental states may seem inane if, as it is relatively common in current philosophy of mind, "state" is regarded as an umbrella or otherwise general term more or less exchangeable with "event," "episode," "phenomenon," etc. (cf. Byrne 2009, 432). A wider philosophical and linguistic tradition has, however, acknowledged that the difference and the relationship between all their corresponding notions are anything but trivial: for, among other things, the relevant terms are capable of codifying different ways in which items exist in time.[9] I shall presently return to this point. For the time being, it is important to note that writers like Armstrong and Pitcher are well aware of the above categories and apply them to the categorization of psychological phenomena. Pitcher stresses that his account of perceptual beliefs/experiences is *dispositional* (cf. Pitcher 1971, 70-71), a characterization the full import of which involves at least a partial understanding of how occurrent categories (e.g. event, process) logically relate to nonoccurrent ones (e.g. state, disposition, property, etc.) (cf. Braithwaite 1932-33; Ryle 1949; Armstrong 1973; Chisholm 1957). To draw the aforementioned distinction between perceiving, perceptual experience, and perceptual beliefs, meanwhile, Armstrong explicitly relies on the categories of states, processes, and events. He spells out the latter categories as follows: a *state* 'endures for a greater or a lesser time, but it exists entire at each instant for which it endures;' a *process* 'is not entire at each instant that the process is occurring,' but 'takes time to complete, and at any instant while the process is going on a certain amount of the process has been completed while a certain amount remains to be completed;' and an *event* is 'the coming to be or

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[9]   Discussions of such notions already feature in Aristotle's *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, and *Nichomachean Ethics* (cf. Barnes 1984; for discussion, cf. Mourelatos 1978, 1993; Gill 1993; Charles 2015, 2018). In the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of action, contributions by Ryle, Vendler, and Kenny reignited interest in the distinction between processes, events, and states (cf. Ryle 1954; Vendler 1957; Kenny 1963; Steward 1997, 2013, 2018; Soteriou 2007, 2011, 2013, 2018; Crowther 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011; Thompson 2008; Stout 2018). Likewise, Vendler's work triggered a massive wave of contributions in the interface between linguistics and philosophy (cf. Comrie 1976; Taylor 1977; Dowty 1979; Rothstein 2004; Galton and Mizoguchi 2009; Galton 2018).

passing away of a state, or the initiating or terminating of a process' (Armstrong 1968, 130-31). With this framework in place, Armstrong defines *perceiving* as the *event* of acquiring information about one's own surroundings, and *perceptual experience* as the *state* of introspective awareness by means of which we keep track of the processive flow of environmental information. Although these definitions no doubt raise delicate issues—e.g. how we should precisely define the previous ontological categories, whether categorizing perception as instantaneous or near-instantaneous occurrences might lead straight up to a snapshot view of perception, or how introspection is supposed to underpin perceptual phenomena—the relevant point here is that Armstrong does not use the term "state" lightly, but is aware of its ontological import. In short, both writers seem to be sensitive to the ontological implications of characterizing perceptual attitudes along stative or dispositional lines.

As previously mentioned, the aforementioned ontological categories relate to a prominent—even if not mainstream—philosophical tradition devoted to clarify different aspects of mind in terms of their temporal structures or the ways in which the relevant aspects "fill" time. While the project of specifying the intimate but enigmatic relationship between mind and time is as old as philosophy itself, its systematic development in Anglo-American philosophy may be traced to a rich line of work in the interface between philosophy and linguistics (cf. references in footnote 9). This literature has not only promoted a fruitful debate about how natural languages encode certain temporal distinctions: it has also provided a neat framework of ontological categories that could in principle accommodate different temporal features of mental phenomena in accordance with the ways in which we think and talk about them. Two background conditions probably played an important role configuring this pro-metaphysics landscape. First, still very much under the grip of Wittgenstein's and Ryle's works, an important number of Anglo-American philosophers did not automatically dismiss a form of conceptual analysis that bore striking structural similarities to old-school Aristotelian ontology.[10] Secondly, a lively discussion about the epistemic credentials of introspective knowledge at the time posed significant

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[10]   For a persuasive defense of the claim that the philosophies of ordinary language championed by Moore, Ryle, and Wittgenstein, could not avoid but being covered forms of proper ontological or epistemological analysis, cf. (Ayer 1963).

pressure on any attempt to read philosophical insights about perceptual experiences off of their respective contents.[11] However, with the advent of the Australian school of psycho-physical reductionism, mainstream philosophy of mind started taking a harsher stance towards metaphysical thinking—in fact, one in line with a more general but now declining bias against metaphysics as a fully respectable subject in analytic philosophy (cf. Simons 2013)—and redirected its efforts to the development of a coherent conceptual framework for the empirical sciences of the mind. Against this backdrop, philosophical work on phenomena like perceptual experiences soon concentrated on matters of representation and intentionality.

Philosophical fashions are cyclical, though. Metaphysics has not only been making a healthy come-back as a respectable discipline on its own: its absence has also been duly noted among philosophers of mind. Only two recent examples. In line with the historical narrative outlined here, Matt Soteriou succinctly depicts the current state of philosophy of perception:

> […] the focus of enquiry tends to be directed more or less exclusively on the nature of these phenomenal, what-it-is-like properties, and it is rarely made explicit how we are to think of the temporal profile of the experiences to which such properties are attributed. For example, it's not often made explicit whether the bearers of these phenomenal properties are mental events, or mental states, or mental processes. Moreover, there isn't much discussion of the relevance that these ontological considerations might have in accounting for our knowledge of what it is like to have conscious experiences. Implicit is the assumption that such matters have little to contribute to a philosophical account of sensory consciousness. (Soteriou 2013, 2)

Again, Geoffrey Lee surveys different debates concerning the temporal structure of consciousness, in order to adopt what seems to be a pro-metaphysics attitude: 'we can't hope to get the right view of the constitution of

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[11]   A method of first-person (introspective) knowledge of perceptual experiences like that famously expressed by G.E. Moore, was critically assessed by powerful but somewhat neglected figures like George Dawes Hicks and G.A. Paul (cf. Dawes Hicks 1917; Moore 1925/1993; Paul 1936; and, for more recent discussions of that debate, also cf. Martin 2000; Snowdon 2015; Gomes 2017, 138ff.).

the stream of consciousness without thinking carefully about the possible metaphysical forms it could have, and about the relationship it stands in to its neural realization in the brain' (Lee 2014, 19). The background thought is, I believe, that what one might call an attitude of ontological indifference underpins contemporary debates about the stream of consciousness. Indeed, such an attitude has widely dominated and impoverished discussions about the intentional and the phenomenological character of perceptual experiences.

At the same time as a renewed interest in the ontological structure of mental phenomena gains strength, doubts concerning our alleged introspective access to the contents of experience progressively build up. Over the past three decades, the two main accounts of perception—viz. representationalism and relationalism—have clashed on which proposal best accommodates the intentional or the phenomenological character of perceptual experience, as unveiled by introspective awareness. Of course, this dialectic assumed that introspection provides a relatively reliable picture of what our senses (re)present to us and of their corresponding phenomenology. However, just as G.E. Moore's first-person method of introspective inquiry met a significant amount of pressure, claims about the introspective transparency of experience that only a few years ago drove the philosophical debate, are now the object of serious scrutiny (cf. Spener 2012; Zimmerman 2012).

Given the previous conditions, it is thereby no coincidence that philosophers of perception are coming to realize that a study of perceptual content will not on its own carve perceptual experiences at their joints. Correspondingly, a stimulating debate over the temporal structure of perceptual experience—as a discussion over and above one about temporal content—has been taking shape. In what is quickly becoming the philosophical orthodoxy, a number of writers have suggested that perceptual experience has to be conceived in terms of phenomenally conscious processes, the parts of which are not as it were reducible to objects, properties, relations, or states conceived as instantiations of properties/relations: according to this proposal, perceptual experiences involve processes that are constituted by further processes down to their infinitesimal or quasi-infinitesimal parts (cf. O'Shaughnessy 2000, Ch. 1; Soteriou 2007, 2011, 2013). To the extent that they conceive experiences in terms of necessarily processive or dynamic

items, these accounts may be characterized as a restricted form of *Heracliteanism*. Experiential Heracliteanism is often driven by phenomenological motivations—in broad lines, the thought being that certain features of the temporal phenomenology of experience (e.g. temporal transparency, experience's stream-like or continuous character, etc.) are best accommodated by an ontology of necessarily or irreducibly dynamic processes. Non-Heraclitean approaches may, by contrast, concede the phenomenological data, but deny that it is therefore necessary to espouse an experiential ontology involving irreducible change.[12] By characterizing perceptual attitudes in terms of nonfactive states rather than irreducible processes, doxastic views of perception seem to go non-Heraclitean. This whole ontological debate is naturally far too complex and delicate to be dealt with here. For present purposes, the foregoing remarks only aim to give the reader a taste of how a characterization of perceptual attitudes in terms of temporal or otherwise ontological categories like states and processes fits into an important tradition in the philosophy of mind.

As previously mentioned, I believe that a characterization of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive and stative avoids different ways of reifying perceptual experiences. Bearing the content-attitude distinction in mind, an ontology of experiential contents as well as one of experiential attitudes may invoke dubious entities. For example, accounts that resorted to sense-data and other forms of qualitative entities tended to reify the contents of experience. Something like Experiential Heracliteanism, in turn, models perceptual attitudes in terms of *necessarily dynamic* processes: to the extent that physical and psychological but nonconscious processes are generally taken to involve properties, relations, or the instantiation thereof, the introduction of irreducibly processive items into our understanding of conscious reality constitutes a serious and controversial ontological commitment. In

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[12] Experiential non-Heracliteanism need not go *Parmenidian*, that is, it need not deny that experiences are dynamic phenomena. Heracliteanism and non-Heracliteanism may share that thought: they would specifically clash with each other on the question whether such dynamic phenomena should be accounted for in terms of dynamic or non-dynamic components. The dialectic is thereby structurally similar to that between dynamic and static theories of time or that between dynamic and static theories of experienced temporal passage.

short, the notion of necessarily dynamic conscious processes seems to reify perceptual phenomena on the attitude-side the same way that sense-data reified them on the content-side. A characterization of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive states could avoid either threat: on the one hand, the Phenomenal Principle need not force it to posit items we could be aware of in veridical as well as hallucinatory experiences; and, on the other, that characterization could afford describing the conscious and the nonconscious world in similar ontological terms.

To sum up. I have examined doxastic views of perception in order to unveil ontological—as opposed to purely intentional or phenomenological—motivations driving a description of perceptual attitudes. While this dimension seems to be reemerging in a new wave of literature about perception, it probably passed unnoticed among philosophers who, like Evans, primarily strived to individuate perceptual experiences in terms of their contents. By setting the historical record straight, I have not thereby intended to espouse a doxastic view of perception, but to highlight a line of ontological thinking that could enrich traditional debates about the intentionality and the phenomenology of perception.

5. Conclusion

Classic doxastic accounts of perception like those of Armstrong's and Pitcher's do not seem to have the counterintuitive consequence Evans accused them of, and I think it is philosophically instructive to examine why this is so. The objection from over-intellectualization would affect them only had they aimed to model perceptual content along the lines of the far more cognitively sophisticated contents of our garden beliefs. However, if a reading along the lines sketched here is sound, that is not what they aimed for: a doxastic stance primarily compares perception and belief in order to develop a particular story of perceptual attitudes—more specifically, one of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive states. Pace Jackson, such a characterization would not be ontologically irrelevant: for, on the one hand, the notion of nonfactivity plays a crucial role against the infamous Phenomenal Principle; and, on the other, a stative conception of perceptual attitudes bears on past as well as recent discussions about the temporal structure of

experience. To stress this point once more: my intended conclusion is not that we should endorse a doxastic view of perception; but, instead, that recent and current philosophical theories of perception should not be framed and assessed only in terms of intuitions about the intentionality and the phenomenology of perception, but also in terms of independent claims about its ontological structure.

I have chosen to ground the present discussion on the controversy between Evans's objection and classic doxastic views of perception because that debate as it were epitomizes a paramount crossroads in Twentieth Century's philosophy of perception. Armstrong and Pitcher belong to a philosophical tradition that includes the works of writers like Moore, Wittgenstein, Ryle, Vendler, among other Oxbridge figures—in short, philosophers with a keen interest in the ontological or otherwise conceptual structure of mental phenomena in general. Evans, in turn, represents a fashion of empirically informed philosophy of mind that systematically avoided old-school metaphysics—much of this attitude influenced by the work of Quine, Sellars, Dennett, and to some extent Davidson—so as to focus on a systematic analysis of mental content and its related phenomenology. Hence, both sides of the previous controversy apparently represent two traditions that unfortunately talked past each other, a misunderstanding of a general sort that current philosophers of mind are slowly coming to appreciate and rectify. Fortunately for us, we do not have to choose: to understand perceptual experiences, philosophers of mind may benefit from inquiring into the nature of perceptual contents as well as that of perceptual attitudes. To conclude, I shall briefly comment on possible cross-overs.

Throughout this piece, I have repeatedly mentioned that the present discussion should not be understood as a defense of doxastic views. To illustrate this claim, note that a non-doxastic form of representationalism also accommodates a characterization of perceptual attitudes as nonfactive states (cf. Tye 1995; Pautz 2010; Siegel 2011). As to the question which specific account of experience we should thereby endorse, this piece remains completely silent. For present purposes, however, it is important to bear in mind that the representationalist rejection of the Phenomenal Principle—and, hence, of sense-datum theories—is usually grounded on considerations from perceptual phenomenology, introspective transparency, and objective

thought. And while such considerations are for sure philosophically relevant, my general point is that the same account of experience could also be framed or motivated by thinking what kind of items perceptual attitudes are.

Again, Matt Soteriou has recently engaged in an ambitious project of relating the traditional representationalism-relationalism debate to the aforementioned discussion between Heraclitean and non-Heraclitean views of experience. After binding relationalism to Heracliteanism and representationalism to non-Heracliteanism, he strives to drive a wedge between both pairs of views. In broad lines, then, his objective is to show how considerations about the ontological structure of experience bear on a defense of the relationalist view of perception he seeks to endorse. Soteriou's individual arguments are profound and his emphasis on ontological issues heavily influences this piece, but I believe—a point I can only voice here—that the links he draws between both pairs of account deserve further attention. For example, his critique of a non-Heraclitean account of perceptual experiences heavily draws on considerations about representationalism's alleged failure to accommodate the phenomenology of temporal passage. According to this line of reasoning, non-Heracliteanism and representationalism stand or fall together. But while Soteriou goes to some lengths to show that the representationalist has to go non-Heraclitean, he does little to show that Experiential non-Heracliteanism necessarily involves a representationalist view of experience. As far as I can see, the relationship between the ontology and the phenomenal/intentional character of perception is looser than Soteriou wants to make it seem. If states are conceived as instantiations of properties or relations, for example, it is then tempting to depict perceptual states along relationalist lines. Such a characterization would not, however, rely on claims about the ways in which we think or are introspectively aware of an objective world conveyed by the senses: it is motivated by considerations regarding what kind of items our perceptual experiences are.

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The Content of the Body Representations that Guide Everyday Action

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue that activities as crossing the road, riding a bike or going through a door involve body representations with non-conceptual mental content. Firstly, I discuss some key objections to the notion of body representations for action, in order to draw out their main consequences. Then I introduce an approach to the content of body representations involved in the guidance of everyday action, which seems to satisfy crucial demands in exchange for moving away from conceptual views on mental content. I conclude by discussing a potential objection to that proposal and presenting some thoughts on the relationship between conceptual and non-conceptual content in this field.

Keywords: Action; body representations; Merleau-Ponty; non-conceptual mental content.

1. Introduction

The notion of body representation has been at the center of a long-held controversy that has involved cognitive scientists, phenomenologically-oriented theorists and philosophers of mind. One of the essential points in this

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discussion is whether body representations are required for action. However, it is not at the level of actions that seem to result from explicit deliberation and reflection (i.e., choosing to be a philosopher, changing jobs, getting married, buying a house, etc.) that the notion of body representation raises most quarrel. The debate rather revolves around the kind of activities we perform all the time in our everyday lives: crossing the road, riding a bike, going through a door, etc.

Do we need body representations to perform these kinds of everyday actions? Are we actually forced by certain considerations to dispose of those body representations? In this paper, I attempt to propose an answer to both questions. The goal of my argument will be to defend the claim that body representations are involved in the guidance of everyday actions by pinning down the specific structure their content must have. To that end, I begin by discussing some arguments against the notion of representation, focusing on some criticisms to the notion of body representation as well as to the claim that those representations guide everyday bodily action. Next, I draw out two consequences of those arguments, which constrain the claim I want to defend. Then, I concentrate my attention on the second constraint and outline an approach to the content of such representations that fully satisfies that constraint. Later, I consider a possible objection to the kind of specification I suggest to the proposed content and conclude with some remarks regarding the issue of the relationship between conceptual and non-conceptual mental content.

2. Some criticisms to the notion of body representation

The kind of approach used by cognitive scientists typically explains the way we find out about our bodies in terms of body representations. For instance, sometimes the distinction is made between a sensorimotor representation of the spatial properties of the body, used for the planning and control of action (the "body schema"), and another representation that is supposed to gather all body mental content not used for action (the "body image") (see, for instance, de Vignemont [2010]).

However, over the years, the general notion of representation and that of body representation in particular, as well as the idea that those

representations play a major role in the guidance of everyday actions, have received strong opposition. For instance, it has been called into question that the body can be represented in a way that captures the distinctive manner we find out about it (see Gallagher [2006]). Hence, the conclusion is drawn that in everyday actions there are not body representations. In addition, it is maintained that the notion of body representation weakens the role of the body itself in an explanation of actions, making the relationship between body and action unnecessarily mediated and indirect (see, for example, Sheets-Johnstone [2011]).

Authors as Hutto and Myin (2012) and Chemero (2009) have maintained that, instead of the possession of representations and representational content, cognition consists in appropriate behaviors directly driven by interactions with aspects of the environment. So, in their view, it is dynamic systems theory that provides the tools required to explain cognition in general (see also Beer [2000]; Port and Van Gelder [1995]; Thelen and Smith [1994]).

Both Hutto and Myin (2012) and Chemero (2009) address the reply coming from 'representation-hungry' problems (Clark 1998), which seem to force one to admit that some cognitive tasks require representations. According to Chemero (2009, 40), his approach is able to explain representation-hungry tasks (although, the example he provides is not particularly persuasive, and it is unclear that it leaves representations utterly out of the picture; see Chemero [2009, 40-42]). Meanwhile, Hutto and Myin (2012, 46-55) reply that those tasks might need characterization in dynamic terms, because the representational explanation is unable to capture all the requirements for successfully performing particular motor acts (which are tied to a unique and changing context). Even so, what follows from that consideration is that the representationalist account need to be supplemented by the dynamic one, not replaced by it.

One of Hutto and Myin's (2012) main criticisms to representationalism is that it resists naturalization. It is usually claimed that the minimal condition for a system to be representational is that some parts of it have the function to carry information, and other parts the function of using it to guide behavior. However, Hutto and Myin maintain that the only notion of information that is naturalizable is that of covariance, but that

representational content is seen as having additional properties that make it irreducible to covariance relations between states of affairs. Although they acknowledge that there are naturalistic attempts to account for representations (especially teleosemantics; Millikan [1989]), they counter that teleological explanations are extensional and to that extent it is unclear that they are able to accommodate the additional intensional properties of representational content. Nevertheless, Hutto and Myin seem aware that information conceived in terms of indication relations allows for intensional properties and is a naturalistic conception of information (Dretske 1988; Miłkowski 2015). About information as indication, however, Hutto and Myin do not say much (beyond expressing some general suspicion).

For his part, according to Chemero, neither we need representational explanations nor are they of much use when appealed to. On the one hand, the dynamical systems theory explanation, he claims, is a precise, general, counterfactual-supporting (whereby able to predict behavior) mathematical description of behavior, that "tells us everything *important.*" In other words, we have the complete story and there is nothing left to be explained. On the other hand, Chemero holds that representational explanations do not predict anything about the system's behavior that could not be predicted by the dynamical explanation alone, and they do not add much to our understanding of the system (see also Gallagher [2008, 364]).

Nonetheless, although Chemero speaks of the dynamical explanation in the present tense, he is aware that the full version of such an explanation is not available at the moment. When asking how far beyond minimally cognitive behavior that explanation can get, his answer is that this is an "open question" and that "only time will tell to what extent this will be possible." He even professes his optimism in saying "once one has mathematical covering laws for psychology, laws that predict the behavior of agents in their environments with great accuracy, there may be no need for teleological explanations in psychology." As enthusiastic as it may sound, it is reminiscent of the eliminative materialism; in fact, it seems to possess similar problems: its relation to folk psychology, its futurism (in this case, 'dynamical explanation's cross-fingered scalability'), its completeness, and so on. Thus, regardless of whether it will become an alternative to representationalism or not, currently it is not.

Now, doubts and suspicions specifically about the notion of body representation can be traced to the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945), one of the earlier critics of body representations. According to Merleau-Ponty, if the body were represented, it would become (for us) just another physical object (1945, 108). However, he continues, the body is (for us) what makes perception and cognition possible. It would follow that, given the way we experience it (i.e., *as what makes my perception and cognition possible*), the body cannot be represented. Merleau-Ponty adds that representing the body could even lead to an infinite regress (1945, 107): as the body is what makes possible perception and cognition, and if perceiving and representing involve apprehending the intentional object as external, it would follow that in order to perceive it, one would need another body to make its perception possible, and so on. To avoid the regress—or to avoid stopping it arbitrarily—it might seem better to admit that the body, insofar as it is experienced as what makes perception and cognition possible, is not an object of perception and representation.

Nonetheless, why does Merleau-Ponty think that if the body were represented, it would become (for us) just another physical object? His assumption seems to be that representing necessarily means apprehending the intentional object as external and 'fully constituted.' Yet, this assumption is not binding, for intuitively we could represent things that are either not fully constituted (for example, given some specific perceptual conditions or given our knowledge of them) or not represented as external (for example, mental objects). So, if we set such an assumption aside, the possibility of the body being represented would be compatible with the idea that the body is not, for us, just another physical object.

Instead of body representations, Merleau-Ponty proposes acknowledging the existence of a form of intentionality located between what we could call "epistemic intentionality" or "intellectual intentionality" on the one hand, and mere mechanical responses on the other. This "motor intentionality" would explain the kind of bodily interactions we engage in on a daily basis. These do not follow from explicit and deliberate planning or reasoning, but neither are they automatic or mechanical bodily movements. It would be neither intellectual intentionality nor a stimulus-response explanation, but rather, motor intentionality that would account for everyday actions.

Nevertheless, it is unclear that the notion of motor intentionality dispenses with representational content. Keeping with the kind of example Merleau-Ponty uses, when we physically prepare ourselves to grasp an object, we do it in light of the way the object is given to us. That is, the hand's arrangement, disposition or movement is guided by the way things that surround us are given to us. This way of being given that guides bodily interaction is representational, mental content (see Cussins [2002, 133]). It does not imply, of course, that in order for our surroundings to be given to us, we must engage in some kind of deliberation, reflection or reasoning.

This rough characterization of Merleau-Ponty's view on body representations for everyday action reveals that his considerations do not force us to get rid of those representations. On the one hand, Merleau-Ponty's attack on the notion of body representation depends on a non-binding assumption and, on the other, it is not clear that his notion of motor intentionality dispenses with representational content in the guidance of everyday actions. Should we simply overlook his argument and continue using the classis notion of body representation to account for the guidance of action? I think we should not. It seems to me that behind the rejection of body representations and within the notion of motor intentionality lays deep and reasonable insight. Indeed, some of Merleau-Ponty's considerations would constrain an explanation of the content of body representations guiding everyday action. Now I will present two main constraints that those considerations seem to impose on an acceptable conception of such content.

3. First constraint: the distinctiveness of the body as an intentional object

The first constraint derives from Merleau-Ponty's claim that our body is not represented as a physical object like any other.

Of course, our body is a physical object governed by the same physical laws that govern any other object, subject to the same patterns of causal interaction like other physical objects. When we travel in a vehicle and it takes a turn, our body continues in the direction it was heading prior to the turn. If we fall, we do so at the same speed as any other physical object. In

addition, our body has sensible properties also possessed by other physical objects: color, shape, texture, etc. We have access to these properties through perceptual experiences (visual and other modalities), as in the case of other objects. Nevertheless, there is a fundamental sense in which, for us, our body is radically different from any other physical object.

Some features of the way our body is made available to us are so familiar that we tend to overlook them. However, they are of great importance in order to realize the singular way in which the body is represented. Firstly, the body is typically available to us, as Merleau-Ponty says, "sous le même angle" (1945, 106)—this is why it sounds incoherent to say that I could change my location with respect to my body. Further, the location of our body—unlike the location of any object—is made available to us as the center of our perceptual perspective of the world. All of our perceptions are 'perspectival,' and the point of origin of this perspective is the spatio-temporal region where our body is located.[1]

The distinctive character of our body as an intentional object is enhanced by the fact that we have no need of the intervention of typical sense modalities in order to know the posture and location of our body and body parts. Moreover, the amount and kind of information we receive about the state of other objects does not compare with that we receive from our own body: it is the only object in which part of its internal situation is immediately and permanently available to us.

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[1]   It seems that this aspect of the way our body is given to us can, nonetheless, be disturbed. Olaf Blanke and Christine Mohr (2005) have studied cases of autoscopy, in which subjects (1) have the experience of seeing their own body from an outside perspective; (2) feel as if they were outside their bodies; and (3) experience that their bodies are in extra-personal space. According to their research, this phenomenon may be due to functional disintegration of multisensory processing and to an abnormal processing in the temporo-parietal area.

The extent to which the body that is seen in autoscopy is given *as* one's own (with all the coloring it involves—say, the proprioceptive quality) and the status of the viewpoint from which it is observed are yet to be clarified. For instance, that the proper description of this visual experience is "I experience this seen body as my own body" and not something like "I see *a* body that looks pretty much like mine" needs to be substantiated.

Finally, another outright difference between the way we find out about our body and the way we find out about objects is that one's body seems to be the only object one can immediately or directly move at will: whereas I can only move things through the medium of my body, I do not move my body by means of anything else. Our body is, as Brian O'Shaughnessy (1980) put it, the direct object of the will.

It is true that the body is a physical object, but it is not made available to us as any other physical object is. Its role in perceptual perspectivity, its particular informational availability and the direct control we have over it make part of the way our body is made available to us, and differentiate it from the way we find out about other objects. Thus, no theory about object representation can be, by itself, a theory about body representation. A theory of content that neglects the difference between the body as an intentional object and any other intentional object, will be unsuitable for the task of accounting for the content of body representations that guide everyday actions.[2]

4. Second constraint: an immediate link to action

A second constraint for an account of the content of body representations that guide everyday actions comes from a central feature Merleau-Ponty ascribes to motor intentionality. In our experience of performing every day activities, we do not need to deliberate or reason each time we carry them out. So, the content at issue must be sufficient to bring actions about, having a direct, immediate connection to action—leaving no room for gaps, pre-established harmonies, or the like.

However, it is unclear that some representations are sufficient to produce bodily action or that they have an immediate link to action. That is what Merleau-Ponty seems to express when he says "Il reste à comprendre par quelle opération magique la représentation d'un mouvement suscite

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[2]   Of course, the distinctiveness of the body as intentional object does not need to conflict with its perceptual or representational character. That the body is not experienced as any other physical object does not mean that it cannot be represented at all (see, for instance, O'Shaughnessy [1980; 1995]).

justement dans le corps ce mouvement même" (1945, 63). A belief, for instance, does not necessarily imply bodily action and, to that extent, it is not clear that beliefs are sufficient to give rise to actions. As Adrian Alsmith and Frédérique de Vignemont (2012) point out, beliefs are apt for multiple purposes (e.g. to guide abstract thought). A belief, they say, "as such, it is not intrinsically action-centred [...] the person's belief does not suffice to trigger her action" (2012, 6).

That beliefs and other propositional attitudes can directly lead to (and guide) bodily activities can be seen as a 'natural' thought, contravened by this constraint. It could be said, for instance, that what makes me act as if it was raining is the belief that it is raining. Think, however, of someone riding a bike. She may do it with the intention of traveling somewhere. But why does she push the pedals with her feet at a certain rate? Why does she turn at a certain speed and inclination? Someone may answer that she *knows that* if she keeps *that specific pedaling rate*, she will go at a certain speed, or that she *believes that* if she turns her body at *that specific speed* and with *that specific inclination* she will not fall, and that she does not *desire* to fall. But it seems doubtful that those beliefs are *necessary* to perform such an intentional activity. Even if a subject needs to maintain a certain pedaling rate, speed and body inclination when skillfully riding a bike, and even if those things (pedaling rate, speed and inclination) are somehow given to the subject, it is also clear that subjects who do not have the concepts of "speed," "inclination," and so forth—and *eo ipso* cannot have beliefs (conscious or non-conscious) about speeds and inclinations— can ride a bike. Even more, having those beliefs is not sufficient either to be able to ride a bike: there is nothing extraordinary in the case of someone who has those beliefs and thoughts and, still, is unable to ride a bike. Those beliefs and thoughts are neither necessary nor sufficient condition for being able to perform the activity.

Perhaps propositional attitudes as desires may appear more promising than beliefs. Following Davidson, one could say that it is the conjunction of belief and desire which constitutes the sufficient cause of an action, and that whereas the former constitutes the rational element, the latter constitutes the motivational one. However, the preference for belief over desire in theorizing about propositional attitudes (what Lycan calls "[belief's]

overwhelming social preeminence over the other attitudes" [2012, 213]) is not without reason. To begin with, it is not obvious that desire is a propositional attitude: it is debated whether desires are for states of affairs or for objects as well (Brewer 2006; Thagard 2006); only if they are for states of affairs their content would be necessarily propositional. Yet, folk psychology seems to admit that some desires are for objects—and their specifications in terms of states of affairs seem artificial. In addition, Lycan (2012) has showed that the propositional attitude account of desire leaves out key features of desire satisfaction, capturing only "semantic satisfaction" but not the "real satisfaction" of desires. As Lycan puts it, regarding desire "there is a serious issue about the nature of its contents" (2012, 212). Most importantly, desire's connection to action may be contingent: according to Strawson (1994), it is conceivable that creatures who lack dispositions to act still have desires (if those creatures have dispositions to feelings of pleasure and displeasure for things). Their desires would be for those things that would please them. If so, our precedent remarks about beliefs would apply to desire as well—namely, they might be neither sufficient nor necessary to bring actions about.[3]

The claim that certain representations are not sufficient to produce bodily action and that they lack an immediate link to action is reminiscent of Searle's (2001) attack on the thesis that reasons and intentions (that he calls 'prior-intentions') cause us to act. Searle contends that having sufficient reasons and forming intentions does not always cause agents to do things (2001, 61). He adds that although prior intentions may lead to action, when they do is because of their relation with "intentions-in-action" which directly cause and guide behavior (and so are causally sufficient for it).

Nonetheless, intentions-in-action have to meet some conditions to fill this role (see Pacherie [2000]), otherwise the problem would have been merely displaced. As Cussins (2012) has argued, the only way the represen-

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[3]   Certainly, we do not intend to render propositional attitudes useless in explanations of action theory—there are cases in which those attitudes and their propositional contents seem appropriate for rationalizing our actions. Our claim about them here is that they are not sufficient causes to bodily action.

tational content of a mental could be sufficient for action would be by having an intrinsic motor value for its subject. In other words, content's link to action is to be characterized by means of an inherently motivational way in which the subject's surroundings are given to her.[4] If so, to conceive of the content of body representations that guide everyday bodily activities as something with a primal relationship to action involves conceiving its basic structure as intrinsically motoric. In Alsmith and de Vignemont's words, it has to be "directly exploitable for action" (2012, 7).

5. The second constraint and non-conceptual mental content

Everyday bodily actions are not mere automatisms, rather, they are guided by mental content. When we cross the road, we do it in light of the way our surroundings and our body are given to us. Mental content has been traditionally seen as conceptual content, that is, as consisting of a proposition in which concepts are involved (Bermúdez and Cahen 2015; Crane 1998). For instance, the belief that the grass is green (whose content is the proposition "the grass is green") will involve the concepts "*grass*," "*green*" and "*is.*" In that sense, if Jane does not master those concepts, she could not have formed such a belief.[5]

Nevertheless, we found that representations with conceptual content (as propositional attitudes) do not meet the second constraint. To recap, the

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[4]   In this regard, remember that "motor intentionality" is sometimes described by Merleau-Ponty as a drive or pull to move that it could not be characterized independently from bodily activity.

[5]   How can we tell that Jane understands said concepts? Of course, any answer to that question will be heavily tied to a specific view of what a concept is. Bermúdez and Cahen (2015) recommend to sticking to a criterion that will not be committed to views on concepts that may be either too loose or too stringent. So, a widely accepted criterion for concept possession meeting this requirement is known as the "generality constraint" (Evans 1982, 104). According to this criterion, a subject masters the concepts "*a*" and "*F*" involved in the proposition "*a* is *F*" if she is able to entertain the propositions "*a* is *G*," "*a* is *H*," and so on, as well as the propositions "*b* is *F*," "*c* is *F*," and so on.

content of body representations that guide everyday actions must be sufficient to bring actions about, having a direct, immediate connection to action. That involves conceiving its basic structure as intrinsically motoric. Yet, representations with conceptual content might not be sufficient to produce bodily action. If so, the content of body representations that guide everyday action is not conceptual content.

Now, could there be a relation a subject can have with conceptual content (an 'attitude') that contextualizes it and makes it directly prone for motor execution? Let us look at what could be considered the epitome of 'contextualized' content, namely, certain content that is specified using demonstratives. It is generally agreed that grasping this content demands the subject to be in a certain perceptual situation: for instance, if John says to Jane "that is green," Jane must be able to see the object (otherwise she would be unable to grasp what the demonstrative refers to) (see Evans [1981; 1982]; Kaplan [1989]; Burge [1991]). Moreover, grasping that demonstrative content requires John, the utterer, to make a 'demonstration' by somehow pointing at the referred object. As it can be seen, this content is highly contextualized, that is, reliant on the context in which pointing and perceiving take place (which might facilitate its use for action). Nonetheless, for this very reason it has been claimed that it cannot be fully conceptual (Cussins 2002; Kelly 2001; Tye 2005): for instance, to the extent that the demonstrative does not have the same content as a name or description (Perry 1979; Evans 1982; Kaplan 1989), it would not be suitable for the style of objective, general specification conceptual content needs (see Cussins [2002; 139]).[6,7]

As Cussins (2002, 134) points out, conceptual content presents the world as divided up into objects, properties, etc. (a structure that demands putting conceptual skills into play). For its part, content prone for action in a specific context will arguably present the environment in terms of what is relevant to the ongoing activity—for which it suffices presentations of

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[6]   *Eo ipso* it would not allow subjects enjoying demonstrative content to fulfill the generality constraint either

[7]   We will leave aside so-called "demonstrative concepts" (McDowell 1994), restricting ourselves to endorse strong doubts on the notion put forward by authors as Kelly (2001), Heck (2000), Tye (2005), and Bermúdez and Cahen (2015).

things as what summons certain action in a context at a time. None of that implies labelling things as elements of a set, neither allowing for reidentification, among other core conceptual abilities.

Therefore, (1) the dependence on a context of activity seems to prevent 'contextualized' content from exhibiting the traits of objectivity and generality that belong to conceptual contents (as well as subjects enjoying that content from fulfilling Evans's constraint) and, in addition, (2) in order to enjoy content suitable for action-guidance in a context the subject would not need to exercise fundamental conceptual abilities. It follows that contextualized mental content will not be the same conceptual content of a belief, and that there cannot be an 'attitude' that contextualizes conceptual content and makes it directly apt for action guidance.

If anything, conceptual content directly entails more conceptual content, not bodily movements. Paraphrasing Cussins, conceptual content constituents may be "truth-makers," but what we need is "action-makers." More than a conceptual structure, the content of body representations that guide everyday activities must have an action-oriented, non-conceptual structure.

In order to secure both its action-oriented and intentional character, that non-conceptual, motor-intentional content (that we will refer to henceforth as MIC) must be such that it not only produces in its subject a drive to act on certain environmental items, but such that through this prompting it is about those items. How could MIC achieve that? If (a) it makes environmental items non-conceptually available to the subject, and (b) it does so at the same time that it drives the organism to act, a natural supposition is that (c) it makes those items available to the subject in terms of specific actions that she is able and summoned to perform—that is, as intrinsically motivational possibilities for action. Those possibilities for action are about environmental items in the sense that it is the apple that is given as edible, and it is the doorway which is given as passable, etc.[8]

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[8]   Even though both are conceived as possibilities for action, MIC and affordances have important differences. First and foremost, it could not be possibly overlooked that for James Gibson (1979), the concept of an affordance is a theoretical construct devised instead of representational content. He never treated affordances as a form of content, despite the fact that they provided information about the environment

That form of cognitive access to environmental items, that is, the fact that they are given as possibilities for action with intrinsic motor value, allows us to understand how MIC can guide our everyday activities without the need of inferences or conceptual content—why when we act, we do not always act on the basis of plans, prior intentions or the like. This is how MIC could be directly exploitable in the guidance of action without need of the intervention of deliberation, reasoning or reflection. By the same token, this is how MIC does not involve concept possession but only being prompted to act.

It is worth underlining some consequences of this way of conceiving the content of body representations that guide everyday action. First, as we noted, content given in terms of specific actions a subject is directly prompted to perform only needs to make available what is contextually relevant to the subject, given the requirements of the ongoing activity (see also Clark [1998]; Wheeler [2005]). Specifically, that content does not have to label environmental items as elements of a set or allow for reidentification—characteristic traits of conceptual content. In this regard, we also noted that the strong dependence on the context of bodily activity that a form of content directly exploitable for action must have is conducive to an enormous deviation from the objective, general and context-independent conceptual contents. As Cussins (1992) has argued, content's context-dependence, by virtue of which it can have direct connection to action, does not fit the generality and objectivity of conceptual content. Thus, it seems that either content keeps properties as generality and objectivity, or it is directly connected to action.

The second consequence has to do with the content-attitude distinction. "Attitudes" are the relations in which a subject may stand to mental contents. They have been seen as capturing the "cognitive mode" of the intentional state, given the neutrality of its purported content. Since the content was thought of as general and objective, it was the "attitude" that was

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and about the animal. Instead, he insisted that affordances could be fully understood in terms of the laws of "ecological optics," without any resort to intentional explanation. For its part, MIC has been explicitly introduced as a form of mental, representational content.

supposed to grasp differences in content's cognitive significance: p *as believed*, p *as desired*, etc.

But MIC is not neutral, neither general, nor objective, so we do not seem to need an independent account of its cognitive significance. Furthermore, we could not have content given in terms of intrinsically motivational possibilities for action paired with a non-motoric cognitive significance—just as we could not have another kind of content (conceptual, non-action-oriented) with an intrinsically motoric significance (see above). So, in regard to MIC, the separation between an attitude and a content would end up being artificial and idle.

5.1. The specification of MIC

The characterization of MIC conforms to Millikan's (1995) principle that in order to determine representational content, we need to look at how it is used (in this case, its use for action). As in Millikan's notion of representation, MIC varies in accordance with what it makes available. Moreover, like "pushmi-pullyu representations" (PPRs), it could be said that MIC mediates the production of a certain kind of behavior that varies as a direct function of environmental variations. However, unlike PPRs, the way that MIC maps onto the world cannot be simply specified descriptively or directively. Remember that, according to Millikan, although PPRs have both descriptive and directive functions, they are more primitive than purely directive or purely descriptive representations, whereby PPRs content is not equivalent to the conjunction of a descriptive and a directive representation. Still, Millikan grants specifications of PPRs content in terms of a telic proposition plus a thetic one (and, perhaps, the disclaimer that the actual content of the PPR is simpler than that conjunction).

In regard to MIC, not just any descriptive specification would suffice, because it should include not only those aspects of the world that are contextually relevant for the subject, but their connection to actions that can be carried out in that context. So, descriptive sentences that only mention categorical properties do not seem suitable for the task. A better candidate for the specification of MIC would be sentences that include adjectives referring to possible actions (climbable, edible)—those sentences could also

be said to have a somehow directive ingredient, in the sense that they point out what can be done.[9]

The kind of specification Millikan grants for PPRs seems to give up on the enterprise of grasping their cognitive significance, remaining close to the specifications of beliefs and desires. Meanwhile, the rationale behind the specification we suggested is that there are mental contents beyond those of propositional attitudes, whose particularity can be grasped in their specification.

Now, since there are many possibilities for each action, someone could expect of MIC that it allows for a more detailed specification of an action that is given as available to a subject. After all, if a cup of coffee is given as reachable (that is, in a way that prompts to reach for it), one may wonder: Reachable how? At what speed should I move my hand? What hand? With how a strong or open a grip? Among others. Moreover, can we really say that a subject represents the cup of coffee in terms of action she is prompted to perform if these specifications were not included in her MIC?

It is not clear to me that allowing for such a detailed specification should be a requirement for MIC. First of all, considering that a requirement would be a form of what is sometimes called "strong instructionism" (Wheeler 2005; Wheeler and Clark 1999; "strong instructionalism," see Gallagher 2008), the claim that an item X codes for an outcome Y iff X specifies every feature of Y. Yet, representationalists need not be committed to such a claim, for it suffices for something to be a representation that it has the function of [non-exhaustively] coding for information about something else (Clark 1998, 146; Wheeler 2005, 197). In other words, for representationalists, X can code for Y even if the former does not specify every feature of the latter.[10]

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[9]   Of course, it does not mean that such a specification is not without limitations (particularly in grasping the intrinsically motivational character of the afforded action, which seems to be something that must be added to the specification).

[10]   At the subpersonal level, instructions might be issued about hand speed, direction, grip strength and aperture. But this is by no means a description of our experience of grabbing a cup of coffee (at the personal level). The environment might also play a role in establishing a number of features of my hand movement, but it does not mean that content plays no role at all.

However, even granting that something can be a representation of an outcome without being strongly instructional, two related questions arise: in which sense does MIC present things as possibilities for action if actions are not fully specified by it? What does it mean that MIC prompt us to act if we do not say what actions it prompts us to perform? I will try to answer both questions by means of an example.

Let us concede, for the sake of the argument that, as Martin (1993, 208) contends, bodily sensations inform us about the state of a body location. Instead of raw feelings, itches, for instance, would indicate to one something about a part of the body. Itches characteristically prompt an action as well: scratching. Noteworthily, those two traits of itches seem to be intertwined, for there does not seem to be anything else to what itches indicate about the body part beyond the afforded scratching. So, it could be said that itches present body locations as 'scratchable.' Nonetheless, in order to present the body location as scratchable and to prompt an action, itches do not need to include the full specification of the hand with which to scratch, of whether to scratch the body part with one's nails or with a stick, etc. Just like itches, MIC may present things as possibilities for action and it may prompt the subject to act without fully specifying the afforded action—to use Wheeler's expression, MIC might do both in a "partial and patchy" way (2005, 239).

6. Non-conceptual mental content: possession and specification

I would like to inquire now into a potential difficulty for the specification in terms of possibilities for action that we have just proposed for the content of body representations that guide everyday action. Cussins (1992, 664) has remarked that a certain train of thought leads to the conclusion that all content is conceptual content: if something is a form of content, then it is a presentation of the world, and that any presentation of the world presents it as being one way or another. If the world is the way the content presents it, then the content is true. However, Cussins says, the content that is said to have truth conditions is conceptual content. Thus, in order to avoid that conclusion, he infers that we must commit to the claim that non-conceptual

content must not bear a truth value. How could a presentation of the world lack truth value?

To answer that question, Cussins's (1992) introduces a "featuring-place language" (FPL), a language without subject/predicate structure, such that the semantics of its sentences do not involve the identification of particulars, but just the placing of features. Inasmuch as their semantics prevents us from considering them as utterly referential sentences, FPL sentences cannot be considered as either true or false. Furthermore, insofar as the ability to discriminate a feature does not require the ability to identify something as an object or a particular place, the significance of such sentences is restricted to the indication of the general area of incidence of features. Therefore, the specification of non-conceptual content in terms of FPL sentences (that the theorist might enhance with "ordinary" sentences; 1992, 666) would capture its distinctive availability for the subject—it would be *canonical*.

The specification we have proposed—something like "the apple is available to the subject as edible" or "the wall is given to the subject as climbable"—is far from the specification in terms of FPL sentences. According to Cussins's argument, our specification would be true or false and therefore conceptual. Nevertheless, it seems that some elements of the train of thought Cussins begins with can be treated differently from the way he does (or grants). In particular, it seems to me that claims as "if the world is the way the content presents it as being, then the content is true" (1992, 664) and that the content that is said to have truth conditions is conceptual content, are not sensitive enough to distinctions that it is healthier to keep in mind.

The condition that must be met for a token to have the representational content it has is sometimes called its "truth condition." When this designation is used, the fact is conveyed that, if this condition is met, (1) it renders true some propositional specification of such content, and (2) the content can be said to reliably map the environment (and, to that extent, it is "true" in some loose sense). The possibility of non-conceptual content depends on granting that (i) the subject is not supposed to understand that propositional specification. Furthermore, non-conceptualists have granted that (ii) content can reliably map the environment without being *a fortiori* conceptual

content (Christopher Peacocke's [1992] scenarios would be a good example of this). Note that (i) implies that, for nonconceptualists, content possession is not necessarily the same as understanding its propositional specification. Moreover, inasmuch as truth or falseness are properties of sentences or propositions, the non-conceptualist must bear in mind that *stricto sensu* (iii) it is only propositional specifications of content that are true or false.

Therefore, that the propositional specification of certain content is true when its condition is met (i.e., that it has a truth condition), does not mean that this content is conceptual. In other words, the truth of the propositional specification of that content does not imply that the subject actually enjoys conceptual content or that in such content something is given to a subject as a portion of an independent world structured in terms of objects and properties. Thus, specifications of non-conceptual mental content may be propositions and then involving concepts, although non-conceptual content does not present the world to its subject as divided up into objects, properties, etc. We would not be forced to adopt FPL specifications, because having true propositional specifications does not make non-conceptual content conceptual.

In any case, it could be said that FPL specifications are more faithful to the distinctive way in which some aspect of the world is non-conceptually available to a subject than any propositional specification could be. The idea would be that FPL specifications capture content's cognitive significance; in other words, that they are *canonical*.

Let us pose a naive question. Since every linguistic, theoretical specification of mental content is, to a greater or lesser extent, propositional and conceptual, how is it possible to achieve canonicity with respect to non-conceptual content? The answer is that what a theory of non-conceptual content ascribes to a subject is what its favored concepts refer to, not the understanding of the concepts themselves. In specifying non-conceptual content, the theorist can use concepts the subject does not need to have *because* what he is attributing is what her concepts refer to, not the possession of the concepts themselves. In this regard, FPL specifications are on an equal footing with other specifications of non-conceptual content.

7. MIC and its relation to other kinds of content

I would like to finish by delving into an observation made by Alsmith and de Vignemont (2012) about the connection of representations with different kinds of content to action. Evidently, exhaustively addressing the issue would require deeper treatment of other subjects (for instance, related topics of philosophy of action, rationality, and decision-making, among others), which goes beyond the scope of the present work. Accordingly, we will restrain ourselves to make a few suggestions taking into account our previous discussion.

In discussing the nature of "action-centered" representations and the role other representations may play in action, Alsmith and de Vignemont point out that "the role of representations in action is not a matter of all or nothing […] Here, and arguably elsewhere, the connection between representation and action is a matter of degree; it is a matter of how direct or immediate the transition is from representation to action" (2012, 6). They go on to illustrate this observation with the following example: "A person goes to the kitchen, and intends to do so because she believes that there is chocolate there," which they contend illustrates the fact that "even highly cognitive states at the personal level can be causal antecedents to action (or at least explanatorily implicated by an action)" (Alsmith and de Vignemont 2012, 6).

The idea that content's relevance for action is a matter of degree has implications on what we previously said in regard to the fact that generality and objectivity, on the one hand, and context-dependence and action-value, on the other, do not integrate well. Arguably, generality and objectivity are also a matter of degree: for instance, egocentric and indexical contents are arguably less general than the content of highly abstract forms of knowledge, but still have conceptual elements. At the same time, the former are more context-dependent and seem to have higher action value than the latter. Generality/objectivity and action-value could be then described as inversely proportional features of mental content, so that the higher its action-value and context-dependence, the lower its generality and objectivity, and vice-versa.

The above considerations are in consonance with Cussins's (1992, 684) claim that generality and objectivity are a single trajectory within the

"space which is available for representation," and within which conceptual content is "confined to a tiny region." They are also in consonance with Clarks' views (1998, 147), which speak of a "continuum of possibilities," within which we find not only typical representations (that he locates in its "upper reaches"), but also action-oriented "biological cognition" which would fall "somewhere near the middle of this continuum" (1998, 114).

Consequently, only in the case of the highest degree of action-value, content would exhibit direct o immediate exploitability for action. I have argued that content is exploitable in this way only if it has intrinsic motor value or motivational dimension, which would be achieved by content structured in terms of prompting possibilities for action; any other kind of content will have a more or less *mediated* relationship to action. That is, given the lack of the required "format," supplementary steps need to be added to link conceptual content to action. What is the indirect process through which content with lower degrees of action-value succeed in influencing action? In Alsmith and de Vignemont's terms, how does the "transition" take place?

The privileged account of how this transition takes place is the notion of a "practical reasoning." Very roughly, this is a kind of reasoning in which propositional attitudes, perceptual judgments and the like, figure as premises, and the conclusion has the form of an intention. For instance, if Juan believes he has to leave the room, sees that the room's door is locked and knows that in order to leave the room he has to unlock the door, he would make a practical reason like this:

P1.   I have to leave the room.
P2.   The door is locked.
P3.   In order to leave the room, I have to unlock the door.
C.   I will unlock the door.

The idea, then, is that in order for mental states with a low action-value (such as beliefs) to lead to action, they must be framed in an inferential process leading to the formation of an intention.

However, if there is a gap between our prior intentions and our actions (Searle 2001), the production of the intention could be insufficient for the production of the action. As we noted earlier, Searle attempts to bridge that

gap by introducing intentions-in-action, which are conceived of as directly causing and guiding the action. We argued therein that filling this role is only possible if the content of intentions-in-action has intrinsic motor value. To that extent, MIC could be seen as a candidate for the content of intentions-in-action (see Pacherie 2000). If intentions-in-action are needed in order for the conclusion of a practical reasoning to lead to action, surely the content of those intentions will have intrinsic motor value and will be structured in terms of the local conditions of the activity. Therefore, the transition to action would be possible for content with low action-value because of MIC that directly guides the action.[11]

8. Conclusions

Over the last two decades or so, much has been said about the role of the body in cognition. However, the ways in which we come to know about our bodies have been a less hot topic, even though there is much to clarify about it. In this regard, we focused on the issue of body representations and

[11] Stephen Butterfill and Corrado Sinigaglia (2014) have advanced a proposal devised to explain how intentions would relate to action through motor representations. They claim that action's directedness to an outcome is dependent not only on intentions but on the motor representations involved in its execution (which can be considered representations of action outcomes). When one particular action is guided by an intention and by a motor representation at the same time, they are non-accidentally related, because some intentions involve demonstrative action concepts ("*do that!*"), which refer to actions by deferring to motor representations. Demonstrative action concepts would be the link between intention and practical reasoning on the one hand, and motor processes, on the other. However, Butterfill and Sinigaglia do not make clear what kind of representational mental content characterizes motor representations—especially if this content is conceptual or not—neither what gives this content its distinctive motivational or motor character. Even though some inklings can be found when they claim that "unlike intentions, motor representations cannot feature as premises or conclusions in practical reasoning" (2014, 119) because of the "distinctively motor, non-propositional format of motor representations," the lack of overt, explicit answers to those questions prevents us from considering their approach to be sufficient to explain the relation between intentions and action.

their role in action, and proposed an approach to the mental content of body representations involved in the guidance of everyday actions.

In order to arrive at that proposal, we first analyzed and rejected some arguments against the notion of representation and against the notion of body representation. In particular, we argued that Merleau-Ponty does not succeed in undermining the role of body representations in the guidance of everyday actions. However, we also found that his insights cannot be disregarded and, even more, they become constraints to any explanation of the content those representations have: such an account must acknowledge the unique way in which its body is given to a subject and must show how the relevant content is directly connected to action in a way that makes it sufficient for the production of action. It was through this latter constraint that we arrived at the notion of a motor-intentional, non-conceptual mental content guiding everyday actions. MIC was introduced as a form of cognitive access to the world, presenting things in terms of specific actions that the subject is prompted to do with its body, a strongly context-dependent content in which the applicability of the content-attitude distinction is unclear.

The kind of specification we proposed for MIC, a sort of description of the possibilities for bodily action given to the subject, was confronted with Cussins's argument about the need of a featuring-place language. We contended that the specification proposed by Cussins is not mandatory, and that the kind of specification we proposed may still be adequate. Lastly, we made some remarks as to the relation that representations with different kinds of content have to action. Those remarks led us to infer that MIC would be required if contents with low action-value are to influence action.

There might be the question of what body representations can be regarded as having MIC. As I noted earlier, the distinction is usually drawn between body schema and body image (see de Vignemont [2010] for a review and de Vignemont [2018, 163] for a reconsideration of the distinction). Following that distinction, if the body schema's function is to guide everyday action, according to our argument, its content must be non-conceptual. As Hanna and Maiese (2009, 69) concur, the body schema would thus be the prime example of an action-guiding body representation with non-conceptual mental content (see also de Vignemont [2018, 191]). In this paper we

focused on the consequences derived from the second of the two constraints that were put forward. A thorough development of the notion of MIC, of course, necessitates a detailed account of how the body non-conceptually figures in it. MIC's relation to different approaches to the notion of body representation available in the literature of cognitive science should be addressed as well. Finally, it is worth considering whether MIC is of some use when dealing with certain issues of body cognition (such as the sense of ownership toward one's body and the location of bodily sensations, among others). For the time being let's our previous discussion be enough in regard to the consequences of the second restriction, allowing forthcoming research to develop those further topics.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Harman on Mental Paint and the Transparency of Experience

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Abstract: Harman famously argues that a particular class of anti-functionalist arguments from the intrinsic properties of mental states or events (in particular, visual experiences) can be defused by distinguishing "properties of the object of experience from properties of the experience of an object" and by realizing that the latter are not introspectively accessible (or are transparent). More specifically, Harman argues that we are or can be introspectively aware only of the properties of the object of an experience but not the properties of the experience of an object and hence that the fact that functionalism leaves out the properties of the experience of an object does not show that it leaves out anything mentally relevant. In this paper, I argue that Harman's attempt to defuse the anti-functionalist arguments in question is unsuccessful. After making a distinction between *the thesis of experiencing-act transparency* and *the thesis of mental-paint transparency*, (and casting some doubt on the former,) I mainly target the latter and argue that it is false. The thesis of mental-paint transparency is false, I claim, not because mental paint involves some introspectively accessible properties that are different from the properties of the objects of experiences but because what I call *the identity thesis* is true, viz. that mental paint is the same as (an array of) properties of the object of experience. The identification of mental

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paint with properties of the object of experience entails that the anti-functionalist arguments Harman criticizes cannot be rightly accused of committing the fallacy of confusing the two.

Harman (1990) famously argues that a particular class of arguments against functionalism about mental states or events (in particular, perceptual experiences) can be defused by distinguishing "properties of the object of experience from properties of the experience of an object" (31).[1] Functionalism is broadly defined as the view that mental states such as a perceptual experience as of seeing something red should be exclusively accounted for in terms of their relations, relations between those mental states and perceptual input, relations between those mental states and other mental states, and relations between those mental states and behavioral output. The arguments belonging to the class Harman addresses against functionalism rely on as their major premise the thesis that introspective awareness (or attention) reveals that perceptual experiences have some intrinsic qualities, qualities they have "apart from their relations to other things" (33), and conclude on the basis of this idea that given its exclusive concern with the relational features of perceptual experiences, functionalism leaves out and cannot account for those intrinsic qualities.[2] Harman's reply is, in its essentials, to reject the major premise and maintain that "when we clearly distinguish properties of the object of experience from properties of experience, we see that we are not aware of the relevant intrinsic features of the experience" (49) but aware only of "what are experienced as intrinsic features of the intentional object of experience" (39). And, if the major premise in question is false, as Harman claims it is, then "the fact that functionalism

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[1]   All page references that follow are to this seminal work, unless otherwise noted.

[2]   In this paper, I will be almost exclusively concerned with visual experiences (rather than other sorts of perceptual experiences or mental states in general); and by "experience" or "perceptual experience," I will solely mean visual experience including deceptive as well as veridical experience, unless otherwise noted.

abstracts from the intrinsic character of experience does not show it leaves out anything you are aware of" (41).

The object of one's experience is, on Harman's account, the object one's experience represents as being in a certain way.[3] The object of my current visual experience, for instance, is the coffee cup on my desk which my perceptual experience represents as being red, being located "in front of" the board marker, subtending a particular angle "from here," and so on. The properties of the object of my experience are the properties my experience represents it as having (or, equivalently, the properties I experience it as having).[4] Among these properties of the object of my experience are those properties my experience represents its object as having intrinsically (or apart from its relations to other things in my visual field or to me), and its redness stands out at least as a plausible candidate for being an intrinsic property of (the surface of) the coffee cup (and let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that it *is* an intrinsic property of [the surface of] the coffee cup).

Given Harman's conception of experience as a form of representation, the distinction he wishes to draw between the properties of the object of experience and the properties of the experience of an object amounts to being a specific version of the more generic distinction between the properties of a represented object and the properties of a representation of that object, in which case some *other* specific versions of the latter might prove useful in understanding the former. Harman thus writes:

> (In a painting of a unicorn) the unicorn is pictured as having
> four legs and a single horn. The painting of the unicorn does

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[3]   In his paper, Harman assumes, unproblematically given his purposes, that the intentionality of experiences is to be accounted for in representational terms (34). I will adopt the same assumption in this paper, and use such locutions as "the object of experience," "the object represented by the experience," "what the experience represents," and "the object the experience is of" interchangeably.

[4]   Harman writes: "When you attend to […] your experience of the redness of an apple, you are attending to […] *a quality of the apple*" (41, emphasis mine). My experience of the redness of an apple is an experience that represents the apple as red, and to say that the apple being the object of my experience is red is to say that my experience represents its object, the apple, as red (more on this below).

> not have four legs and a single horn. The painting is flat and covered with paint. The unicorn is not pictured as flat or covered with paint. Similarly, an imagined unicorn is imagined as having legs and a horn. The imagining of the unicorn has no legs or horn. The imagining of the unicorn is a mental activity. The unicorn is not imagined as either an activity or anything mental. (35)

Just as we need to distinguish the properties of the object represented, on different occasions, by the painting and the imagining, which is in this case the properties of the unicorn, from the properties of what is doing the representing (i.e., the painting and the imagining), we also need to distinguish the properties of the coffee cup represented by my visual experience from the properties of what is doing the representing (i.e., my experience). Furthermore, just as the unicorn pictured and imagined on these occasions can be plausibly thought of as having four legs intrinsically and neither the picture, we can suppose, nor the imagining is four-legged, my experience of the coffee cup might well not be red despite its object being intrinsically red. So, that my experience is intrinsically red does not follow from the fact that its object is intrinsically red, and a fortiori, it is false that if the object of my experience is intrinsically red, introspective awareness shall reveal that my experience itself is intrinsically red.

Harman's distinction between the properties of the experienced object and the properties of the experience establishes that the properties of the experienced object are not necessarily properties of the experience, but it falls short of establishing that they never are. This is because the more generic distinction between the properties of the represented object and the properties of the representation of that object does not exclude the possibility that there are cases in which those two sets of properties coincide. In fact, there are some clear cases in which the two coincide. So, for instance, the color of the unicorn represented by the painting is (non-accidentally) the same as the color of that part of the painting of the unicorn representing the color of the unicorn: if this unicorn is represented as white in the painting, (the relevant part of) the painting qua the representation is also white (and non-accidentally so). This means that the argument against functionalism from the intrinsic properties of

experiences has not yet been fully defused at this stage of the dialectic, by the distinction between the properties of the experienced object and the properties of the experience. There is still room for the proponent of the argument to argue that some intrinsic properties like redness might well be of both the experienced object and the experience, in which case the argument from the intrinsic properties of experiences may proceed as before.

A proponent of an argument from the intrinsic properties of experiences does not need the thesis that all properties of the experienced object are necessarily the properties of the experience but could work with the weaker thesis that they sometimes are. Given this, the success of the attempt to defuse that argument requires further considerations to be brought in. And, this is where Harman appeals, though he never uses the term in the paper, to the *transparency* of visual experiences.[5] His famous illustration of Eloise turning her attention to her visual experience of the tree goes like this:

> 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 this is true of you too. (39)

Harman's distinction between the properties of the experienced object and the properties of the experience discloses a possible ambiguity in the major premise of a particular class of anti-functionalist arguments, viz. that when we have perceptual experiences, we are introspectively aware of

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[5]   The use of the term 'transparency' in the context of philosophical discussions about the nature of visual experiences dates back to Moore (1903), which says the following regarding "the sensation of blue:" "The term blue is easy enough to distinguish, but the other element which I have called 'consciousness'—that which sensation of blue has in common with sensation of green—is extremely difficult to fix […] And, in general, that which makes the sensation of blue a mental fact seems to escape us; it seems, if I may use a metaphor, to be transparent, we look through it and see nothing but the blue" (Moore 1903, 446). The term's wide currency in the recent literature owes to Tye (1992).

(the) intrinsic properties (of *something*); and, it makes clear that those arguments can only be successful if the properties we are thus introspectively aware of are not *only* the properties of the experienced object but also the properties of the experience.[6] It is at the next stage, however, Harman's defusing attempt is completed, where it is maintained that our introspective findings tell us that the *only* properties to turn our attention to in such phenomenological inspections are properties of the experienced objects. According to Harman, we have "no access at all" (39) to the intrinsic properties of our experiences.

What exactly is it that we can never be aware of when we try to turn our attention to our experiences? There are two possible candidates here, depending on whether one takes as one's model for the representational aspects of visual experience the imagining of a unicorn or the painting of a unicorn. The imagining of a unicorn, as Harman notes, is "a mental activity" (35) whose intentional object is a unicorn; and, if we understand the transparency of visual experiences along the dimension of such "activities," then it amounts to the thesis that when we try to turn our attention to our visual experiences of objects, we can never be aware of the intrinsic properties of *the experiencing* of those objects. Let me call this thesis the thesis of *experiencing-act transparency.* On the other hand, the painting of a unicorn is not an activity (notwithstanding the ambiguity of the term 'painting'), let alone a mental activity (though it seems to require some), but, well, "a thing" by virtue of the particular pattern of the paint on which it takes a unicorn as its intentional object; and, if we understand the transparency of visual experiences along the dimension of such "things," then it amounts to the thesis that when we try to turn our attention to our visual experiences of objects, we can never be aware of, to use Harman's gripping term (39), *the mental paint*, those intrinsic properties (of what one might call the 'mental canvas') by virtue of which those experiences are experiences of those objects (or represent what they

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[6]   As Harman notes in (1995), introspective awareness in question is "direct" (Harman 1995, 75) or "non-inferential."

represent). Let me call this thesis the thesis of *mental-paint transparency*.[7, 8]

It seems clear that the thesis of experiencing-act transparency is not equivalent to the thesis of mental-paint transparency. Mental paint consists

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[7]   There are two points I want make about the notion of mental paint I adopt in this paper. First, Harman himself defines mental paint in the way I have just defined, i.e. as an array of properties by virtue of which an experience is of the objects that it is of (or represents what it does). Harman writes: "In the case of her visual experience, I want to say that Eloise is not aware of, as it were, the mental paint by virtue of which her experience is an experience of seeing a tree" (39), and in his response to Block (1995), "The issue is whether we can become directly or introspectively (as opposed to inferentially) aware of those aspects of perceptual experience—the mental paint, etc.—that serve to represent what we experience" (Harman 1995, 76).

Second, the notion of mental paint is sometimes broadly understood as accommodating both properties of the experiencing act and properties by virtue of which an experience represents what it does. For instance, Block (2010) writes: "Are phenomenological characters of perception—e.g., what it is like to experience redness or roundness—philosophically reducible to the redness or roundness of the objects one sees or to representation of redness or roundness? If there is no such reduction, then there can be said to be mental paint" (Block 2010, 23–24). My use of the notion of mental paint is narrower than Block's; and by "mental paint," I mean only those properties of an experience by virtue of which it represents what it does.

[8]   Of course, if experiences are brain states, then there will be more to experiences than their objects and the properties of those objects just as there is more to sentences, e.g. their syntactical and morphological features, than the objects and properties they refer to (Block 1995, 26). The question Harman is dealing with, however, is not simply whether there is more to experiences than the properties of their objects but what "psychologically relevant" features of an experience are there that we can be introspectively aware of. Harman writes: "According to functionalism, the *psychologically relevant* properties of an internal process are all functional properties […] I have been considering the objection that certain intrinsic features of experience must be *psychologically relevant* properties apart from their contribution to function, since these are the properties we are or can be aware of" (41–42, emphases mine). So, the thesis of mental-paint transparency is better understood as asserting that when we try to turn our attention to our visual experiences of objects, we can never be aware of those intrinsic "psychologically relevant" (or mental) properties by virtue of which those experiences represent what they do.

in those intrinsic features of a visual experience by virtue of which that experience has, say, the tree as its object, and it is *not* by virtue of the intrinsic properties of the experiencing act that that experience has the tree as its object. The idea that it is by virtue of the intrinsic properties of the experiencing act that an experience is of the object that it is of (or represents what it represents) is inconsistent with the evidently true assumption that the very same (kind of) experiencing act can have different objects on different occasions (e.g., a tree on one, a coffee cup on another, and so on): the very same experiencing act would not be directed towards different objects but would always be directed towards the same object if it were by virtue of its intrinsic properties that it is directed towards an object. Consider the following analogy. I can kick different objects, say, a soccer ball or a basketball. The very same act of my kicking may take different balls as its objects. In case I kick the soccer ball rather than the basketball lying next to it, it is not by virtue of the intrinsic properties of the kicking act that my kicking the soccer ball takes as its object the soccer ball (but not the basketball). Similarly, the visual act of experiencing may take different things as its objects; and in case it takes a particular thing as its object, it is not by virtue of its intrinsic properties that it takes as its object that thing (but not another thing).

The distinction between the thesis of experiencing-act transparency and the thesis of mental-paint transparency enables a suitable taxonomy of some visual phenomena that are typically appealed to by the opponents of the sort of representationalism advocated by Harman. Two such phenomena are blurred vision and double vision. In the case of some typical examples of blurred vision, it seems that blurriness is not presented as a property of the objects of experience but as a property of the experiencing act itself: what introspectively seems to be blurred is not the objects but the experiencing itself. So, blurred vision is better conceived as militating against the thesis of experiencing-act transparency.[9] In the case of some typical examples of double vision, on the other hand, what introspectively appears to be

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[9]   Smith (2008) writes: "Suppose a myopic person were suddenly to start seeing more and more clearly until he ended up with 20/20 vision. This change in experience would not be taken by this person to be a change in the features of the objects seen. It would immediately be taken for what it is: a change in the character of the visual

double seems to be neither the objects of experience nor the experiencing-act itself but could reasonably be taken as those features of the experience by virtue of which the experience represents what it does. So, double vision is better interpreted as militating against the thesis of mental-paint transparency.[10]

In order for Harman's defusing attempt to be successful, both the thesis of experiencing-act transparency and the thesis of mental-paint transparency must be true. If the thesis of experiencing-act transparency is false and the visual experiencing of a particular object has intrinsic properties that can be identified through introspection, then the anti-functionalist arguments that Harman targets go unscathed by the distinction between the properties of the experienced objects and the properties of *the experiencing act*.[11] And, if the thesis of mental-paint transparency is false and introspective awareness reveals the mental paint by virtue of which experiences are

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experience itself. Blurriness is not a way that things in the world *seem to be*. It is, however, a feature of experience of which we are usually aware when it is there. The Transparency Thesis is therefore false" (Smith 2008, 201). Smith argues that in the case of blurred vision, objects are "seen blurrily" (Smith 2008, 202), and therefore, Smith's conclusion that the transparency thesis is false is to be understood as the thesis that the thesis of *experiencing-act* transparency is false. (See also Boghossian and Velleman [1989], Pace [2007], and Allen [2013].)

[10]   Boghossian and Velleman (1989) write: "If you press the side of one eyeball, you can see this line of type twice without seeing the page as bearing two identical lines of type. Indeed, you cannot even force the resulting experience into representing the existence of two lines, even if you try. Similarly, you can see nearby objects double by focusing on distant objects behind them, and yet you cannot get yourself to see the number of nearby objects as doubling […] None of these experiences can be adequately described solely in terms of their intentional content. Their description requires *reference to areas of color in a visual field*, areas that split in two […] without anything's being represented to you as being so" (Boghossian and Velleman 1989, 94, emphasis mine). I suggest that Boghossian and Velleman are to be understood as arguing against the thesis of mental-paint transparency. For a defense of representationalism against objections from such visual "oddities" as double vision and blurred vision, see Tye (2002).

[11]   In his response to Block (1996), Harman writes: "What it is like to see something as ahead and to the right is not normally the same as what it is like to hear something as ahead and to the right" (Harman 1996, 76). This strongly suggests that Harman

experiences of objects that they are actually of, then the anti-functionalist arguments in question go unscathed by the distinction between the properties of the experienced objects and the properties arranged in such a way as to constitute *the mental paint*.

My main concern in this paper is the thesis of mental-paint transparency, but I cannot help making a few (and admittedly quick) critical observations, some of which are familiar and more persuasive than others, about the thesis of experiencing-act transparency, the one that in any case occupies, historically speaking, the more prominent position among the two. First, if the experiencing act does not have intrinsic properties that we are aware of or can be revealed by introspection, as the thesis of experiencing-act transparency claims it does not, then it is at least not clear that we can plausibly claim that when we turn our attention to our visual experiences, we are aware of the properties of the experienced *objects*. This is, in effect, Moore's main problem in his famous "The Refutation of Idealism" (1903), the work which still continues to set the stage for philosophical investigations into the transparency of experience. In that work, Moore's putative refutation of idealism rests on the thesis that introspective reflection provides good reason to prefer the act-object model of experience over its competitor (which is what Moore himself calls, somewhat confusingly when viewed from the contemporary perspective, "the content view" [Moore 1903, 447], a forerunner of the adverbial account), and the problem Moore faces is why, if experiences have an act-object structure, we do not typically find

is an "intramodal intentionalist" in Byrne's sense: "*Intermodal* intentionalists hold, while *intramodal* intentionalists deny, that the phenomenal difference *between* perceptual modalities—between visual and auditory experiences, for example—is determined by a difference in content" (Byrne 2001, 205). Intramodal intentionalists typically account for the phenomenal difference between perceptual modalities by an appeal to their distinct functional roles in one's overall cognitive economy (see Dretske [1995] and Tye [1995]). I do not wish to claim here that the phenomenal difference between perceptual modalities cannot be adequately accounted for by a functionalist story, but that the anti-functionalist arguments Harman is targeting can be undermined *solely* by making the distinction between properties of the experience of the object and properties of the experience of the object (along with the deliverances of introspection), as Harman intends to do in his (1990), only if the thesis of experiencing-act transparency is true.

the act component in our introspective queries. Moore assumes, rightly I think, that introspection can provide positive support for the act-object model only if both components are introspectively accessible, and the apparent resistance of the act component to introspective access appears to undermine that model. Moore's solution is, as far as I can see, captured by his following remarks: "Yet it [the experiencing act] *can* be distinguished if we look attentively enough, and if we know that there is something to look for" (Moore 1903, 550). So, I take it that for Moore, it is only difficult but not impossible to introspectively attend to the act component of experiences.[12] The point I wish to make is not that what I take to be Moore's solution to the problem is adequate, but that the very problem he realizes and struggles with also afflicts Harman's view about experiences. The problem is that it is not clear that we can plausibly adopt the talk of the "objects" of experiences, as Harman does, without endorsing the act-object model because the only plausible answer to the question of what the object of an experience should be 'combined,' 'supplemented' or '(inter)penetrated' with in order to get the experience of the object appears to be *the experiencing act*. And, it is at least dubious that we can plausibly presume that introspection prefers the act-object model to its rivals (e.g. the adverbial model), as Moore himself is so acutely aware, if the act component is not introspectively accessible.

Secondly, even if we set aside Moore's problem and grant that the idea that experiencing acts are not introspectively accessible looks plausible when such acts are inspected intra-modally (within a perceptual modality), there are good reasons, as various philosophers have pointed out before, to doubt that idea when those acts are inspected inter-modally (across different modalities). This is because it is not clear that we can plausibly distinguish perceptual modalities as different as vision, tactition, and olfaction, without pointing out the intrinsic phenomenological differences between acts that accompany those senses, like seeing, touching, and smelling. There is, it seems, all the phenomenological difference between seeing and feeling a square object; however, given the sameness of the object, it is not clear how we can account for the difference without appealing to the intrinsic

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12   For an influential defense of this idea, see Kind (2003, 229).

phenomenological differences between seeing and touching. It is on the basis of such inter-modal considerations Grice (1989), among others, defends the introspective accessibility of the intrinsic features of visual experiencing when he writes:

> In addition to the specific differences between visual experiences, signalized by the various property-words employed, there is a generic resemblance signalized by the use of the word "look," which differentiates visual from nonvisual sense-experience. This resemblance can be noticed and labeled, but perhaps not further described. (Grice 1989, 267)

Furthermore, though Grice's (mild) skepticism about the prospects of describing the distinctive characteristic of visual experiences appears to be widely shared, some philosophers have gone some significant way towards describing the intrinsic phenomenological differences among various sorts of perceptual modality. For instance, comparing the main forms of perception from what he calls a "purely phenomenological point of view" (Broad 1952, 30), Broad writes:

> In its purely phenomenological aspect *seeing* is ostensibly *saltatory*. It seems to leap the spatial gap between the percipient's body and a remote region of space. Then, again, it is ostensibly *prehensive* of the surfaces of distant bodies as colored and extended, and of external events as color-occurrences *localized* in remote regions of space. In its purely phenomenological aspect *hearing* is ostensibly prehensive, not of bodies, but only of events and processes as occurrences of sound-qualities. It is not ostensibly saltatory, for these events or processes are not heard as localized in remote restricted regions of space. They are heard rather as emanating from remote centers and pervading with diminishing intensity the surrounding space. (Broad 1952, 32)

One might agree or disagree with Broad's observations here (I, for one, am inclined to agree with a good portion of them), but their availability counts not only against Grice's (and others') skepticism about the prospects of providing the relevant descriptions but also, and more importantly for the purposes of this paper, against the thesis of experiencing-act transparency.

This is because if that thesis were true, then Broad would not be able to provide the account above of what "phenomenologically" differentiates seeing from hearing. Or, we can say this at the least: the fact that Broad, for one, has provided an account along the lines above is a formidable challenge to the proponent of the thesis of experiencing-act transparency.

Thirdly, and finally, if the thesis of experiencing-act transparency is true, then it is not clear in virtue of what perceptual experiences are conscious. A visual experience of seeing, say, a red object is a (phenomenally) conscious experience: there is something it is like to have that experience. Now, it cannot be solely in virtue of the redness of that object that the experience in question is conscious given the fact that the redness of that object is not conscious in any sense of the term: there is nothing it is like for that object to be red. The only other candidate that appears to remain and we might appeal to is the act component, the visual experiencing-act: it must at least in part be in virtue of some intrinsic properties of the visual experiencing act that the experience of seeing a red object is conscious. Let us call those intrinsic properties of the visual experiencing act by virtue of which a visual experience is conscious its *conscious properties.*[13] Now, the thesis of experiencing-act transparency claims that the intrinsic properties of the visual experiencing act are not introspectible. So, according to this thesis, the conscious properties of the experiencing act are not introspectible. But this is at least confusing because it does not seem that we can make sense of the idea that introspection is limited with respect to its power to detect conscious properties, that there might be conscious properties that are closed in principle to introspection. And this is in turn because it does not seem that there is any other criterion for the identification of conscious properties than appealing to introspection. This does not mean that introspective awareness is required for consciousness or that it possesses such ideal epistemic virtues as infallibility, incorrigibility, or perfect reliability; however, it means that introspective accessibility is the arbiter by which we can tell conscious properties. Hence the idea that experiencing acts have

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[13]   The notion of conscious properties here is similar to Sundström's (2018) notion of "consciousness properties:" "*Consciousness properties* are properties that contribute to making up what things are or can be *like* for subjects" (Sundström 2018, 681, emphases original).

some conscious properties that are in principle introspectively inaccessible appears to be barely intelligible.[14]

I now want to turn to the main topic of this paper, the thesis of mental-paint transparency, viz. that mental paint is not introspectively accessible (or that the intrinsic properties by virtue of which visual experiences are of the objects they are of are not introspectively accessible). As we have seen, Harman's defense of this thesis rests, in effect, on the distinction between the properties of the objects of experience and the mental paint (the properties by virtue of which experiences are of those objects they are of), and the deliverances of his introspective queries. I grant, and agree with Harman, that the properties of the objects of experiences are introspectively accessible but I want to deny that mental paint is not introspectively accessible. This is, unlike the main line of opposition to the thesis of mental-paint transparency one typically finds in the literature, not because mental paint involves some introspectively accessible properties that are different from the properties of the objects of experiences but because what I shall call *the identity thesis* is true, viz. that the properties of the objects of experiences *are* the properties by virtue of which those experiences are of the objects they are of (or represent what they represent).[15] The upshot is

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[14] Compare Goldman's (1993) "rock objection" to higher-order (thought) theories of consciousness: "How could possession of a meta-state confer subjectivity or feeling on a lower-level state that didn't otherwise possess it? Why would being an intentional object or referent of a meta-state confer consciousness on a first-order state? A rock does not become conscious when someone has a belief about it. Why should a first-order psychological state become conscious simply by having a belief about it?" (Goldman 1993, 368) Furthermore, it is worth noting that the intimate tie between being conscious and being introspectible in principle has nothing much to do with Searle's rather controversial thesis that there are no unconscious-in-principle mental states, that "we have no notion of the unconscious except that which is potentially conscious" (Searle 1992, 152).

[15] Two points (one clarificatory, the other qualificatory) need to be made here. First, the identity thesis is *not* the thesis that properties of the object of experience are identical to properties of the experience of an object but the thesis that properties of the object of experience are identical to a subclass of properties of the experience of an object (namely, properties by virtue of which an experience represents what it does). Surely, a given experience might have a property (like occurring on a certain

that Harman's distinction between properties of the objects of experience and mental paint turns out to be a distinction without a difference (while the distinction between properties of the objects of experience and properties of experiencing act need not be and, I believe, is not).

Let us go back to my visual experience of the red coffee cup. The object of my experience is represented as being red, and given that, for Harman, the properties of the object of experience are those properties it is represented as having, the object of my experience *is* red. So, one of the properties of the object of my experience is redness. Now, what are those properties of my experience by virtue of which it is of a red object? I maintain that redness is one of those properties by virtue of which my experience is of a red object because, if the object of my experience were represented not as red but, say, as green, then the object of my experience would be green and hence my experience would not be of a red object. It is by virtue of redness being represented as being instantiated by the object of experience that the experience represents what it does (i.e. a red object). If this strikes you as truistic, then note that this counts in favor of the identity thesis because if the identity thesis is true, then it *is* truistic. Try to conceive of a visual experience whose intentional object is red, and the property by virtue of which the experience is of a red object is not redness but greenness. I predict that you will feel an immediate difficulty in envisaging a scenario with these two features: the idea that the object of the visual experience is red appears to "cancel out" the idea that the property by virtue of which the experience

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day) that its object does not (or need not) have. Secondly, the identity thesis thus clarified needs a qualification, given that properties by virtue of which an experience represents what it does might involve a property (like being caused by its object) its object does not (or need not) have. The identity thesis suitably qualified may take one of the following forms: it is to be understood either as the thesis that properties of the object of experience are identical to *mental* (or, as Harman puts it, *psychologically relevant*) properties by virtue of which an experience represents what it does (see fn. 8), or as the thesis that properties of the object of experience are *among* properties by virtue of which an experience represents what it does. I will argue that the identity thesis qualified in one of these ways undermines Harman's response to the anti-functionalist. For convenience, however, I will suppress the qualification and take the identity thesis in its unqualified form, since the qualification has no direct bearing on my argument.

is of a red object is greenness, and vice versa. Similar observations can be made about the shape properties of the objects of experiences. The object of my current experience is represented as being coffee-cup shaped, and hence, it *is* coffee-cup shaped. One of its properties is having a coffee-cup shape. Now, what are those properties by virtue of which my experience is of a coffee-cup shaped object? I maintain that being coffee-cup shaped is one of those properties by virtue of which my experience is of a coffee-cup shaped object because, if the object of my experience were represented not as coffee-cup shaped but, say, as rectangular, then the object of my experience would be rectangular and hence my experience would not be of a coffee-cup shaped object. More generally, there is no property that I find in my experience in question of the red coffee cup that is a property of the object of my experience but not a property by virtue of which my experience is of that object. Mental paint qua properties by virtue of which an experience is of the object that is of is, as it were, right before our eyes and as introspectively accessible as properties of the object, and this appears to be so evidently because mental paint is the same as (an array of) properties of the object of experience.

The identification of mental paint with properties of the object of experience should not come as a surprise if a trap that Harman seems to fall into here is avoided. Consider a non-transparent representation, for instance, a painting of a unicorn. "In the case of a painting," Harman notes, "Eloise can be aware of those features of the painting that are responsible for its being a painting of a unicorn. That is, she can turn her attention to the pattern of the paint on the canvas by virtue of which the painting represents a unicorn" (39). In the case of a painting of a unicorn, we can, Harman maintains, clearly distinguish the vehicle of representation (the painting) from the object of representation (the unicorn), and turn our attention from one to the other. However, in the case of a (hallucinatory) visual experience of a unicorn, we cannot clearly distinguish the two (the mental paint and the unicorn) and turn our attention from one to the other. The conclusion Harman draws from this asymmetry between paintings and visual experiences is that mental paint is not introspectively accessible. However, this is a non-sequitur because it rests on the unwarranted assumption that if the object of representation is introspectively accessible, then

the vehicle of representation can only be introspectively accessible if it can be introspectively distinguished from the object of representation. This assumption is unwarranted because there is nothing in the original definition of mental paint that places such a constraint as introspective distinguishability from the object of representation on the introspective accessibility of mental paint. Mental paint consists, recall, in those properties by virtue of which an experience is of the object that it is of, and the question whether mental paint is introspectively accessible is the question whether *those* properties are introspectively accessible: if they are accessible, mental paint is accessible; if not, not. Accordingly, the fact that the mental paint is not introspectively distinguishable from the properties of the object of experience has no tendency to show that the mental paint is not introspectively accessible. Once the unwarranted assumption in question is discarded, it is clear that just the opposite is indeed true: the fact that the mental paint is not introspectively distinguishable from the properties of the object of experience supports the thesis that the former is as introspectively accessible as the latter and, at one remove, the thesis that the two are identical.

The truth of the identity thesis is what makes visual experiences (and other perceptual experiences), at least to some extent, philosophically troubling and fascinating. It captures, for instance, what various philosophers have, on one clear interpretation, meant by claiming that visual experiences are "self-presenting" states, that they are such that their objects *present themselves* to the subject without any other intermediary objects functioning as representational mediums.[16] An interesting philosophical question

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[16]   For a theory of knowledge that builds on a notion of self-presenting states, see Chisholm (1966). However, note that the notion of self-presenting states Chisholm adopts is, unlike the interpretation I prefer of that notion, more epistemological than ontological. According to Chisholm, a self-presenting state is such that if the subject is in that state, then it is *evident* to her that she is in that state (or, *roughly*, she is justified in believing that she is in that state). I believe but will not argue that one can consistently hold that there are self-presenting states in the ontological sense of the term without there being self-presenting states in Chisholm's epistemological sense of the term. (Additionally, one might argue, though I will not in this paper, that the connection between the epistemological and ontological notions of self-presenting states is that the fact that their objects present

here is how such self-presenting states are to be accounted for, where the duality of the object of representation and the vehicle of representation (in our case, mental paint) collapses into a peculiar sort of unity. Furthermore, the thesis that mental paint is the same as properties of the object of experience accords well with William James' following eloquent characterization of the history of philosophy of perception:

> The whole philosophy of perception from Democritus's time downwards has been just one wrangle over the paradox that what is evidently one reality should be in two places at once, both in outer space and in a person's mind. 'Representative' theories of perception avoid the logical paradox, but on the other hand they violate the reader's sense of life, which knows no intervening mental image but seems to see the room and the book immediately just as they physically exist. (James 1904, 81)

Consider the painting of a unicorn again. The painting of a unicorn does not give rise to a problem similar in structure to the problem (or "the paradox") that we encounter in the case of visual experience. In the case of the painting, "what is evidently one reality" is *not* (and does not appear to be) "in two places at once," both out there in the wilderness as a canvas-independent object and on the canvas: the unicorn is not (represented as being) on the canvas, and the canvas is not the unicorn. And, this is plausibly because the properties of the vehicle of a pictorial representation and the properties of the object of a pictorial representation are different and can be clearly distinguished. However, in the case of visual experience, James points out, what is evidently one reality is (or appears to be) in two places at once, both in outer space and *in the experience*. And, this is plausibly because the properties of the vehicle of a visual representation (that is, mental paint) and the properties of the object of a visual representation

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themselves without any other intermediary objects (the ontological notion) explains why it is difficult to see how one can be in those states without its being evident to one that one is in those states (the epistemological notion).) For an excellent discussion of the notion of self-presenting states, see Lehrer (2002). Lehrer is emphatic that in the case of conscious mental states including visual experiences, the distinction between the vehicle of representation and the object of representation disappears (Lehrer 2002, 422, 426).

cannot be distinguished and indeed are identical. Why does the unicorn, an object distinct from the visual experience of a unicorn, appear to be *in* (in some clear sense) the visual experience of a unicorn (but *not* in the painting of a unicorn)? The answer is that the properties of the vehicle of a visual experience cannot be distinguished from the properties of its object, while the properties of the vehicle of a pictorial representation can be distinguished from the properties of its object.[17] This means that the problem that James thinks defines "the whole philosophy of perception from Democritus's time downwards" arises because of the indistinguishability or identity of the mental paint and the properties of the objects of a visual experience.

There are three objections I want to address, in an order ascending in force, against the identity thesis and one objection regarding the bearing of the identity thesis on Harman's defense of functionalism. First, it might be objected that the identity thesis entails the thesis that visual experiences present us with mental paint, which is in turn what only a sense-datum theorist would wish to endorse. So, the objection goes, since the sense-datum theory is false, the identity thesis must also be false.

This objection trades on the ambiguity of the term 'mental paint.' The sense in which the sense-datum theorist defends the thesis that visual experiences present us with mental paint is not necessarily the sense in which the identity thesis entails that visual experiences present us with mental paint. The sense-datum theory holds that visual experiences present us with mental paint in the sense that they present us with mental (or internal) objects and properties rather than public (or external) objects and properties. The paint we are presented with in having visual experiences is, on (a traditional version of) that theory, *mental* in the sense that the objects and properties we thereby see (or "sense") are such things that can only be 'located' in the subject's mind. However, the sense in which the identity thesis entails that visual experiences present us with mental paint is consistent with the thesis that the paint we are presented with in having visual experiences is *not* mental, that the objects and properties we see are such things that can (only) be located in the public (or external) world. On this

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[17]   Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pressing on this issue.

sense, to say that visual experiences present us with mental paint is to say that visual experiences present us with those properties by virtue of which those experiences represent their objects and properties, *whether those objects and properties themselves be mental or not*. Briefly put, mental paint in the sense that is of concern to us need not be mental in the sense-datum theorist's sense and, accordingly, visual experiences may present us with mental paint in the former sense without presenting us with mental paint in the latter sense.

Secondly, it might be objected that the argument I have presented for the identity thesis works only if, for Harman, the properties an experience represents its object as having are the properties of that object; however, if the properties an experience represents its object as having are the properties of that object, then it is not possible for the experience to be illusionary or hallucinatory (or to *misrepresent* its object in one way or another). Since Harman explicitly allows that possibility (34), as any bona fide representationalist would do, Harman should not be viewed as holding that the properties an experience represents its object as having are the properties of that object.

There are two things I would like to say in response. First, the thesis that the properties a visual experience represents its object as having are the properties of that object does not exclude the possibility of misrepresentation. Suppose that there is a red cup before me on the table, which my visual experience represents as green. In that case, the object of my experience is a green cup, and it is actually because the object of my experience is a green cup that my experience misrepresents what is really there (or is illusory). Secondly, Harman's treatment of hallucination as a form of perceptual misrepresentation supports the thesis that he holds that the properties an experience represents its object as having are the properties of that object. Suppose that it looks to Eloise as if there is a tree before her, while there is no such thing in the environment. In such a case, Harman says, "what Eloise sees before her *is a tree*, whether or not it is a hallucination. That is to say, the content of her visual experience is that she is presented with a tree, not with an idea of a tree" (36, emphasis mine). It is clear that the object of Eloise's experience ("what she sees before her") can *be* a tree, as Harman claims, only because her

experience *represents* it as being a tree, given that there is *ex hypothesi* no tree in the environment.[18]

Thirdly, it might be objected that it does not make sense, or is at least odd, to say that my experience of the redness of the coffee cup is red or to say that my experience of the coffee-cup shape of the coffee cup is coffee-cup shaped: experiences can neither be red nor be coffee-cup shaped. Given that the mental paint consists in the properties by virtue of which my experience is of the object that it is of, then, the objection goes, it seems that claiming that the mental paint is the same as the properties of the object of experience, I am committed to make such absurd or at least odd remarks. Hence, the mental paint cannot be the same as the properties of the object of experience.

I would like to respond to this objection by reiterating the distinction between experiencing act and mental paint. I agree that experiences *qua* experiencing acts cannot have such properties as color or shape, but it is clear that the identity thesis does not imply anything to the contrary, given that mental paint is not experiencing act. Furthermore, just as one can consistently claim that the object of experience is red without claiming that the experience itself is red, one can also consistently claim that the mental paint is red without claiming that the experience itself is red, if the identity thesis is true. However, the basic concern behind the objection might perhaps be clarified by emphasizing that mental paint is the properties *of an experience* by virtue of which the experience is of the object that it is of, and hence, that if mental paint is the same as such properties of the object of experience as redness and being coffee-cup shaped, then one cannot avoid the conclusion that those properties might be (and, in some cases, are) the properties *of an experience*. My reply now is twofold. First, it is not clear

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[18]   The notion of the object of experience Harman has in mind is very similar to the notion of the object of experience Valberg (1992) defines in terms of what is *present* in experience: "By an 'object of experience' we shall mean something present in experience: something which is right *there*, available for us to pick out or focus on, and refer to demonstratively" (Valberg 1992, 21–22). Of course, however, Harman rejects the conclusion of what Valberg calls "the problematic reasoning," that "what is present in experience (present to us, present) is always an internal object; that external objects are never actually present to us" (Valberg 1992, 19).

that we cannot sensibly talk about redness (and being coffee-cup shaped) being a property of an experience, where by "experience," we mean mental paint but not experiencing act. If the paint in a painting representing a red object might be red, then it is not clear that experiences qua mental paints (but not qua experiencing acts) representing a red object cannot be red. Secondly, even if it is agreed that there is *no* sense in which redness might be a property of an experience, the allegedly problematic consequence follows only on the condition that mental paint is to be defined as the properties *of an experience* by virtue of which the experience is of the object that it is of. This problem disappears simply by devising a technical term such as "a property *featuring in* an experience" and define mental paint as the properties *featuring in* an experience by virtue of which the experience is of the object that it is of, where a property features in an experience just in case that property is either a property of the experience or a property of one of its (same-level) "components" (such as its object). A definition along these lines adequately captures all the relevant contours of the dialectic here without simply begging the question against the identity thesis. (The anti-functionalist, for instance, is to be construed, on this interpretation, as claiming that there are some properties *featuring in* [but *not* necessarily *of*] an experience but left out by the functionalist story.) This being so, however, Harman's original distinction between properties of the object of experience and properties of the experience of an object, where mental paint belongs to the latter, has deservedly taken its hold in the literature, and it is best, I believe, to keep it as it is because it is crisp and sharp; however, it must be noted that the sort of of-ness deployed in the articulation of mental paint is better taken with a grain of salt.

The final objection I want to consider concerns the bearing of the identity thesis on Harman's defense of functionalism against the argument from the intrinsic properties of experience. It might be argued that the truth of the identity thesis does not threaten Harman's defense of functionalism. After all, it might be claimed, Harman holds that, given its concern with the nature of experience but not with the nature of the objects of experience, properties of the object of experience pose no problem for functionalism; and, if mental paint is identical to properties of the object of experience, as the identity thesis claims, then a proper response available to Harman is

simply that as with properties of the object of experience, mental paint poses no problem for functionalism.

However, this objection misapprehends the structure of the dialectic between Harman the functionalist and the anti-functionalist. The anti-functionalist originally argues that introspection reveals that there are some intrinsic properties of experience, properties which, given its exclusive concern with relational features of experience, functionalism is not in a position to account for. Harman's response is that the anti-functionalist argument commits the fallacy of confusing mental paint with properties of the object of experience. According to Harman, introspection reveals properties of the object of experience, which is not to be confused with mental paint, properties of the experience by virtue of which it represents what it does. However, the point is that if the identity thesis is true, then properties of the object of experience are properties of the experience by virtue of which it represents what it does: the identification of mental paint with properties of the object of experience entails that pace Harman, the anti-functionalist argument cannot be rightly accused of illegitimately conflating the properties of the experience of an object with the properties of the object of an experience. In other words, if the identity thesis is true, then among the properties introspecting reveals about a given experience are *its* intrinsic properties, and Harman's response is thereby undermined.[19]

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[19]   The central aim of this paper is to argue that Harman fails to defend *functionalism* against an objection from the intrinsic properties of experience. Still, I wish to make a number of points about how the truth of the identity thesis bears on *representationalism*, the view that the phenomenal character of a given experience ("what it is like" to have that experience) is *exhausted* (Block 1995, 20) by its representational content, especially given that the philosophical focus with respect to experiential transparency has shifted away from functionalism and towards representationalism. There are two broadly distinct alternatives concerning the representationalist conception of mental paint. On one alternative, the sense the representationalist attributes to 'mental paint' is the same as Harman's (i.e. properties by virtue of which an experience represents what it does), and the representationalist argues that the intrinsic qualities that we are aware of when we introspect our experiences are only those properties of the object of experience, which figure in the "content" of experience, but that we are never aware of mental paint (in Harman's sense). If the identity thesis is true, then the representationalist is mistaken to think that we are

I want to stress this point because it is very important. Harman's objection to the anti-functionalist arguments from the intrinsic qualities of experiences is captured by the idea that when one attends to one's experience of the redness of an apple, one is not aware of an intrinsic quality of the experience but of an intrinsic quality the apple. Harman argues that since redness is not (and is not experienced as) a quality of the experience, the fact that a functional definition of the visual experience of redness does not capture that quality does not detract from the truth or plausibility of that definition. However, if mental paint by definition consists in properties of the experience by virtue of which it represents what it does, then given that, as I have argued, the identity thesis is true, redness is not only a property of the object of experience but also a property of (or, using the jargon introduced above, featuring in) the experience by virtue of which it represents what it does. So, the anti-functionalist defending the argument above is to be interpreted as claiming that redness, that very feature of the object of experience, is a feature of my experience that resists a functionalist treatment. The anti-functionalist need not deny and indeed might fully embrace Harman's point that redness is a quality of the object of my experience but still consistently, and plausibly, argue that that point hardly defuses the objection that redness is a quality of (or in) my experience that is left out by a functionalist account. The upshot is that Harman's distinction between properties of the object of experience and mental paint does not help the functionalist because the anti-functionalist cannot be confusing the two, given their identity: Harman's attempt to defuse the anti-functionalist arguments from the qualities of experiences misfires and is therefore unsuccessful.

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never aware of mental paint. On another alternative, the sense the representationalist attributes to 'mental paint' is different from Harman's and the representationalist argues that we are never aware of mental paint in *that* (different) sense. What bearing the truth of the identity thesis has on representationalism depends on how that sense is specified, and the possibility that the identity thesis is consistent with representationalism is left open. So, the answer to the question regarding the bearing of the identity thesis on representationalism requires the clarification of the notion of mental paint as the representationalist conceives it, a task which falls beyond the scope of this paper and must await another occasion. (Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for raising this worry.)

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Family Meal as Fiction

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Abstract: Stacie Friend's theory of fiction departs from those approaches that seek to identify the necessary and sufficient conditions for a work to count as fiction. She argues that this goal cannot really be achieved; instead, she appeals to the notion of genre to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction. This notion is significantly more flexible, since it invites us to identify standard—but not necessary—and counter-standard features of works of fiction in light of our classificatory practices. More specifically, Friend argues that the genre of fiction has the genre of nonfiction—and only that genre—as its contrast class. I will refer to the particular way in which Friend elaborates this claim as *the contrast view*. I have, nevertheless, the impression that this view unnecessarily narrows down the array of perspectives and attitudes from which we can approach works of fiction. I will thus develop a line of reasoning to the effect that the contrast view should rather be construed as picking out a particular way of relating to works of fiction that lies at the end of a continuum defined by different degrees of reflectivity and estrangement. This implies that the contrast view is false as a general claim about how we experience works of fiction, even though this view may appropriately depict a specific way of approaching such works.

Keywords: Fiction; genre; parenthetical; ritual; theatricality.

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A theory of fiction must ultimately account for the role of fiction in our practices and institutions. We can certainly delimit a domain for which a specific theory of fiction could be developed, provided that such a delimitation enhances our understanding of the phenomenon of fiction in this particular domain. I take it that the theory of fiction that Stacie Friend proposes has this localized or partial character, since it focuses exclusively on works of fiction, leaving aside any other manifestation of the phenomenon of fiction. The line of argument in this paper might ultimately be construed as an attempt to show that the way she delimits works of fiction fails to meet the explanatory constraint I just mentioned, namely: that it should enhance our understanding of the role of fiction in this particular domain. But the specific purpose of this paper is rather more modest and will focus on a particular claim in Friend's theory of fiction.

Friend's approach departs from those theories of fiction that seek to identify the necessary and sufficient conditions for a work to count as fiction. She argues that this goal cannot really be achieved; instead, she appeals to the notion of genre to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction. This notion is significantly more flexible, since it invites us to identify standard—but not necessary—and counter-standard features of works of fiction in light of our classificatory practices. More specifically, Friend argues that the genre of fiction has the genre of nonfiction—and only that genre—as its contrast class. I will refer to the particular way in which Friend elaborates this claim as *the contrast view.* I have, nevertheless, the impression that this view unnecessarily narrows down the array of perspectives and attitudes from which we can approach works of fiction. I will thus develop a line of reasoning to the effect that the contrast view should rather be construed as picking out a particular way of relating to works of fiction that lies at end of a continuum defined by different degrees of reflectivity and estrangement. This implies that the contrast view is false as a general claim about how we experience works of fiction, even though this view may appropriately depict a specific way of approaching such works.

This paper is structured as follows. In section 1, I will briefly present Friend's approach to fiction as a genre as well as the contrast view as she defends it. In section 2, I will examine a passage from Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, in which Ulrich, the protagonist, compares his

Excellency's sense of theatricality with that of a play staged in a theater to entertain the middle class; while the former seems integrated into His Excellency's life, the latter responds to a rather divided and schizoid life that manifests itself in many other practices such as the way in which the middle class participate in religious services or how bourgeois males conceive of their sexual activities. We may thus say that middle class members experience fiction as parenthetical with regard to their daily lives. Needless to say, this *parentheticality*[1] squares quite nicely with the contrast view, even though it leaves out other sorts of attitudes toward fiction that may be present not only in His Excellency's sophisticated conversation but in many other rituals and practices, such as a family meal or a conversation between friends. In sections 3 and 4, I will further elaborate this proposal by addressing two objections that could be raised against the idea that His Excellency's conversation—and some other practices and rituals—may actually challenge the contrast view. In section 3, I will thus examine the most obvious objection, namely, that this conversation may be a case where theatricality or fictionality is involved, but it could hardly count as a work of fiction. Hence, insofar as Friend's account is exclusively concerned with works of fiction, Ulrich's remarks fail to provide a straightforward case against the contrast view. I will reply, however, that our reluctance to identify His Excellency's conversation and many other practices and rituals as works of fiction presupposes in turn the contrast view and, more specifically, the idea that parentheticality as an all-or-nothing matter is a crucial feature that works of fiction standardly possess and non-fiction standardly lack. Hence, no independent argument seems to have been provided to deny that His Excellency's conversation or a family meal could count as a work of fiction. In any event, it seems that only parentheticality as an all-or-nothing matter stands in the way of regarding some rituals and practices as works of fiction. In section 4, I will argue however that parentheticality comes in degrees and that, once conceived of in this way, it can easily be recognized as a rather common phenomenon. Thus, I will conclude that the contrast view is false insofar as (a) it presupposes that parentheticality is an all-or-

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[1]   'Parentheticality' is a neologism that I have finally decided to employ in this paper for the sake of simplicity. It refers to the ability to experience a certain activity as parenthetical or encapsulated with regard to one's ordinary life.

nothing matter, and (b) His Excellency's conversation does not constitute an exceptional case but a manifestation of an attitude that is present in many of our practices and rituals that, once we acknowledge the gradual nature of parentheticality, can easily be recognized as works of fiction. Hence, I will conclude that, if we are to understand how we experience and evaluate of works of fiction and theatricality, we better accept that the contrast view is false and also that the experience of fiction as the contrast class of nonfiction constitutes a rather specific—however, dominant in our cultural context—way of relating to works of fiction that lies at the extreme of a continuum with various degrees of reflectivity and estrangement.

1. Fiction as a genre

According to Stacie Friend, a theory of fiction must address the two following questions: "First, what are the criteria of membership in each category? And second, what are the effects of classification on our engagement with particular works?" (Friend 2012, 180) She sees these questions as closely interlocked because a suitable criterion must not only fit with our pre-theoretical intuitions about fiction and nonfiction but meet an explanatory constraint, namely: it must account for the effects of classification on our engagement with a certain work.

Standard theories of fiction assume that an answer to the first question must provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for a particular work to qualify as fiction or as nonfiction. The most promising among such theories view fiction as a prescription to imagine and nonfiction as an invitation to believe. These theories must handle in one way or another the fact, however, that some works of nonfiction do include an invitation to imagine and works of fiction frequently comprise statements that the reader is assumed to believe. For this purpose, some theories of fiction have shifted from works to statements and have focused on the necessary and sufficient conditions for both fictive and nonfictive statements. Works of fiction would, as a result, come up as a patchwork of fictive and nonfictive statements (Currie 1990, 49).

Friend objects, though, that this kind of approach can hardly address the second question, that is, shed some light on how a certain combination of fictive and nonfictive statements may invite a specific, unified attitude toward a certain work, instead of a continuous shift from imagining to believing, and vice versa. This is the patchwork problem in Friend's terms (Stock 2011; Friend 2011). She then leaves aside this project and explores an alternative approach. In particular, Friend proposes treating fiction as a genre, and nonfiction as its contrast class:

> Classification as fiction or nonfiction, like classification in other genres or categories of art, influences the way we experience, understand and evaluate a work by specifying a contrast class against which the work's properties stand out as being *standard*, *counter-standard* or *variable.* (Friend 2012, 188)

A work will thus count as fiction inasmuch as it possesses some standard features that are identified as such within certain categorization practices.[2] A standard feature is not a necessary condition, since counter-standard features often serve some narrative purpose that may eventually enhance the aesthetic value of a work, as happens with Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* or Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire.* More specifically, Friend identifies the actual genre of a certain work in terms of a cluster of non-essential criteria that include not only some standard features as they are identified within contemporary practices of categorization but the author's intentions as well:

> As with other genres and categories of art, classification turns on a cluster of non-essential criteria: the possession of standard features (including those identified by fictive utterance theorists), the intention of the author that the work be read in a particular category, and the conventions associated with contemporary categorization practices. (Friend 2012, 195)

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[2]   "In attempting to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction, we should consider, not how the parts of a work add up to the whole, but instead how the whole work is embedded in a larger context: in particular, the practices of reading, writing, publishing, and so on. I therefore construe fiction and nonfiction as different *genres* into which works may be categorized" (Friend 2011, 175).

As we see, the intention of the author Friend is concerned with does not consist in an invitation or prescription to either imagine or believe, as some standard theories might assume, but has to do with the idea of producing "a work in a certain category. The fact that Tacitus intends readers to engage in mere-make-believe is not in conflict with his intention to write nonfiction history, and it is the latter, not the former, that matters for classification" (Friend 2008, 165).[3]

What are, though, the standard features of fiction and nonfiction? Despite Friend's impulse to depart from standard theories of fiction, much of what she says when distinguishing between fiction and nonfiction relies on dichotomies that are central to those theories, such as the contrast between asserting and inventing, between believing and imagining, or between names that refer and names that fail to do so:

> If we take a text to be fiction, for example, we will expect it to engage us imaginatively through narrative; to deploy certain literary devices; to include invented elements, such as descriptions of what has never happened and names that fail to refer; to make

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[3]   This appeal to the author's classificatory intentions may conflict with the role ascribed to contemporary categorization practices as the context where the standard features of fiction are to be determined, for the intention to produce a work in a certain category could only be relative to the categorization practices of the time, which may in turn differ from the contemporary ones so that a significant number of features that were standard at the time are not so at present, and vice versa. It follows that a work might eventually qualify as fiction in light of the categorization practices of the time when it was produced and as nonfiction according to contemporary categorization practices.

Some might reply, however, that there must be some continuity among such categorization practices for them to be identified as being concerned with fiction as opposed to some other category. This emphasis on continuity across variations in our categorization practices fits quite nicely with Friend's approach and, more specifically, with her claim that counter-standard features may eventually play a relevant narrative function. It is still unclear whether this continuity across time will suffice to ground the claim I intend to challenge, namely: that fiction and nonfiction are each other's contrast class. Even though this claim were true of our contemporary categorization practices, it may be rather alien to those practices at the time the work in question was produced.

claims that are not assertions by the author; and so on. If we take a work to be a nonfiction, on the other hand, we will expect an effort to be faithful to the facts; references to real people, places and events; assertions that convey the author's views; and so forth. (Friend 2012, 189)

As it goes, it seems that the main disparity between standard theories and Friend's approach does not lie so much in the sort of features relevant to the process of categorization, but in the fact that Friend does not view those features as necessary—and all together sufficient—conditions but as forming a cluster of non-essential standard features, so that a certain work may include some counter-standard features of fiction and still count as such. Friend is committed to contextualism insofar as she assumes that categorization of a work as fiction or as nonfiction depends on some categorizing practices that may vary over time. Some features that are regarded as counter-standard at some point may become standard at some later stage, and vice versa. Still, the fact that fiction and nonfiction are each other's contrast class is not presented as contextual; on the contrary, the contrast view is a philosophical claim about the genre of fiction and as such it is supposed to hold across all contexts.

Be it as it may, Friend does not present the distinction between fiction and nonfiction as either exhaustive or exclusive (Friend 2012, 205). Regarding exclusiveness, she argues that some works can reasonably be approached both as fiction and as nonfiction, although, of course, they will be experienced, understood and evaluated differently in each case. It seems, however, that exclusiveness should apply to paradigmatic cases of either class, since, if we were to allow for each work to be alternatively approached as fiction and as nonfiction, it is unclear whether we could coherently specify what approaching a certain work in one way or the other may consist of. We can, indeed, mention the reader's specific attitude in each case, but the question is how the content of this attitude is to be individuated if we cannot point out some paradigmatic cases that are presented as exclusively fiction or nonfiction.[4] In any event, Friend also rejects exhaustiveness because neither

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[4]   A similar perplexity will be raised when considering in section 3 whether Friend can provide a non-viciously circular criterion to reject some rituals as works of fiction.

fiction nor nonfiction is individuated by a sheer denial of the standard features of their respective contrast class; therefore, some specific works may fail to sufficiently meet the standard features in both categories. It is clear, however, that the contrast view can only survive if such cases do not spread, that is, if they are rather exceptional, for, otherwise, there is no clear sense in which fiction and nonfiction could still count as each other's contrast class.

So far so good regarding the virtues of fiction as a genre to provide a demarcation criterion that tracks our pre-theoretical intuitions regarding the distinction between fiction and nonfiction. Friend stresses, however, that any suitable demarcation criterion must also meet a certain explanatory demand, namely, that it must make sense of how classifying a work as fiction or as nonfiction influences our experience, understanding and evaluation of a given work.

Friend is convinced that standard theories of fiction fail not only because they are unable to specify a demarcation criterion that tracks our pre-theoretical intuitions about the contrast between fiction and nonfiction, but also because the most promising standard theories fail to provide the required explanation, since, according to Friend, they incur the patchwork problem and, therefore, there is no way in which they could make sense of a unified attitude toward a work of fiction. Apparently, Friend's account in terms of genre does not face this problem, since fiction is no longer identified as a suitable combination of fictive and nonfictive statements but by a cluster of non-essential features in the context of our contemporary categorization practices. It is in light of this cluster that the appropriate attitude on the side of the reader toward a certain work is determined. The assumption is that contemporary categorization practices deliver a unified attitude toward a work of fiction that contrasts with the attitude toward a work of nonfiction. And this is why Friend concludes that a view of fiction as a genre provides a demarcation criterion that satisfies the explanatory demand she placed for any successful theory of fiction.

Friend emphasizes that a proper demarcation criterion must account for how the classification of a work as a work of fiction *influences* our attitude toward it, but her understanding of fiction as a genre obliges her to recognize that the way we experience, understand and evaluate a work must in

turn contribute, in an exercise of reflective equilibrium (Goodman 1983, 62-
63; Rawls 1999, 19, 42; 2001, 29-32; Ryle 2008, Ch. 2), to determining how
it is to be classified. Hence, I take it that Friend should recognize that her
demarcation criterion must meet an explanatory demand that goes both
ways, that is, how classification conditions our attitude toward a certain
work but also how our attitude contributes to the way it is classified. This
explanatory constraint forces us to examine the different ways in which we
relate to works of fiction. Specifically, in the following section, I will suggest
that the presence of theatricality in aristocratic manners challenges a cen-
tral aspect of Friend's theory, namely: her eagerness to understand works
of fiction as opposed exclusively to nonfiction, as if there were not many
other—and genuinely significant—ways in which we may relate to works of
fiction. In sections 3 and 4, I will elaborate my suggestion by addressing
two objections that could be raised against the idea that the theatricality
of some practices and rituals might actually challenge the contrast view.

2. Aristocratic manners

Ulrich, the protagonist of *The Man Without Qualities* by Robert Musil,
spots a theatrical instinct in the aristocratic manners of his Excellency. He
compares such theatrical instinct with the middle-class custom of going to
the theater, as an art that can be rented at a modest price:

> Ulrich had time for such reflections because he had to wait awhile
> for His Excellency to speak. The theatrical instinct for disguise
> and transformation, one of life's pleasure, could here be seen in
> all its purity, without the least taint or awareness of a perfor-
> mance; so strongly did it manifest itself here in this unconscious,
> perennial art of self-representation that by comparison the mid-
> dle-class custom of building theaters and staging plays as an art
> that can be rented by the hour struck him as something quite
> unnatural, decadent, and schizoid. (Musil 1995, 85)

As we see, Ulrich places within the domain of theatricality both the
behavior of his Excellency and a performance on the stage. He associates
theatricality with a taste for disguise and transformation. He is surprised,

however, by the fact that his Excellency manifests no awareness of a performance, while staging a play in a theater requires two sorts of awareness on the side of both actors and spectators: one focused on the content of the play itself and another oriented toward their real lives. Friend's approach to the genre of fiction seems to regard this split between two forms of awareness as an important standard feature of works of fiction. After all, she opposes inventing to asserting, imagining to believing, what one actress pretends to be to what she really is offstage. By contrast, Ulrich does not regard this schizoid form of awareness as constitutive of theatricality; he interprets his conversation with his Excellency as theatrical despite the absence of such a split or dissociation:

> And when His Excellency finally parted his lips and said to him: 'Your dear father…' only to come to a halt, there was something in his voice that made one notice his remarkably beautiful yellowish hands and something like an aura of finely tuned morality surrounding the whole figure, which charmed Ulrich into forgetting himself, as intellectuals are apt to do. For His Excellency now asked him what he did, and when Ulrich said 'Mathematics' responded with 'Indeed, how interesting, at which school?' When Ulrich assured him that he had nothing to do with schools, His Excellency said, 'Indeed, how interesting, I see, research, university.' This seemed to Ulrich so natural and precise, just the way one imagines a fine piece of conversation, that he inadvertently took to behaving as though he were at home here and followed his thoughts instead of the protocol demanded by the situation. (Musil 1995, 85)

In the kind of theatricality that inspires this conversation, Ulrich feels unified with the protocol; he follows its constraints as if he were following his own trend of thought; he is not complying with some external demands. The idea of the unity of our conscience emerges again as essential to a kind of theatricality that Ulrich vindicates as superior. This unity opposes to the divided experience that prevails in the ordinary life of the middle-class, as it manifests itself not only when they go to the theater, but also in the way members of this class participate in a religious service or in how middle-class men experience their sexual activities:

'How much more beautiful she is when she goes wild,' Ulrich
thought, 'but how mechanically it all finished again.' The sight
of her had excited him and enticed him to make love to her, but
now that it was done he felt again how little it had to do with
him personally. Another abundantly clear demonstration of how
a healthy man can be turned with incredible speed into a frothing
lunatic. But this erotic transformation of the consciousness
seemed only a special instance of something much more general:
for an evening at the theater, a concert, a church service, all such
manifestations of the inner life today are similar, quickly dissolv-
ing islands of a second state of consciousness that is sometimes
interpolated into the ordinary use. (Musil 1995, 119)

If Ulrich were right in his description of middle-class awareness as schiz-
oid or split and in his view of the art of his Excellency as theatrical despite
the absence of a divided consciousness, we should then acknowledge that
Friend's characterization of the genre of fiction suits only the kind of the-
atricality that is typical of the middle class. For in such cases fiction has
nonfiction as its contrast class, since fiction as experienced by the middle
class presupposes a divided kind of awareness, namely, a sense of *parenthe-
ticality* or encapsulation from their daily affairs and concerns. But this is
not at all what happens when his Excellency cultivates his outstanding the-
atrical instinct: there is not a real life external to his theatrical experience,
no private life waiting for his Excellency once his conversation with Ulrich
is over. His Excellency's identity is not divided between his public and his
private life; the manners that inspire his conversation with Ulrich constitute
the fabric of his entire life, the terms in which he will assess its failure or
success.[5] All this suggests that the contrast view may misrepresent the genre

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[5]   In *The Remains of the Day* (Ishiguro 1989), we hear the narrative of an English
butler who takes very seriously the demands of his profession; still he has a private
room where he relaxes at the end of the day and any interference is regarded as
intrusive; moreover, the title of the novel points to those days that remain once
retired as an opportunity to reconsider the value of his life as a butler and to initiate
a new life of his own. By contrast, the protagonist in *An Artist in a Floating World*
(Ishiguro 1986), a Japanese artist confesses his state of despondency after the defeat
in the World War II, but the way he examines his life leaves no room for a sphere

of fiction because it inadvertently focuses on some specific social practices leaving aside other ways in which works of fiction may be experienced, understood and evaluated. There are various reasons, however, why the presence of theatricality in his Excellency's conversation may be discarded as irrelevant to the contrast view. In section 3, I will address the most obvious complaint: the contrast view is exclusively concerned with works of fiction and His Excellency's conversation could hardly be identified as such. I will conclude that only the assumption of parentheticality as an all-or-nothing matter stands in the way of acknowledging that certain practices and rituals can be approached as works of fiction. Hence, in section 4, I will defend the claim that, contrary to what the contrast view assumes, parentheticality is a matter of degree and, as a result, I will conclude that those cases where fiction has nonfiction as its contrast class constitute a rather specific attitude toward works of fiction and theatricality that lies at the extreme of a continuum with various degrees of reflectivity and estrangement.

3. Theatricality and works of fiction

To begin with, Friend might certainly object to an unduly transition from theatricality to works of fiction in my previous remarks. Ulrich's considerations dwell on the idea of theatricality but there may be a long way from theatricality to fiction or, more specifically, we may allow for forms of theatricality that are alien to works of fiction. And nothing in Ulrich's observations makes us think that his Excellency's delight in theatricality involved the notion of a work of fiction. After all, we may admit that theatricality is overwhelmingly present in our social rituals but this does not make of them works of fiction.

Let us examine carefully, however, what a theater play consists of, for it may not be so easy to deny that some rituals are theatre plays; in fact, we may ultimately be forced to recognize that those rituals are after all

of privacy, alien to the strict rules and values that govern his social environment. The sort of unity that articulate his life is also present in *Il Gatopardo* (Visconti 1963), where the Prince has no existence external to his aristocratic condition.

works of fiction. To begin with, we could say that theatre plays admit—and often require—actresses and actors to improvise. The script sets out some guidelines but the actress has to breathe life into them, fill in the gaps, improvise to a larger or lesser degree. We could thus say that Ulrich's conversation with His Excellency adjusts to the idea of a script on which one improvises more or less skillfully. And this applies to all activities in which His Excellency may participate without distinguishing between a public and a private domain.

Friend could retort—as she did in conversation—that the works of fiction she had in mind only concerns written texts, scripts, regardless of their specific implementation in one or another performance.[6] At first glance, this restriction seems somewhat arbitrary. Why should a work of fiction be only a text? Isn't a film a work of fiction? Should we consider that only the script is? After all, a theatre play, even if it is not staged, is a text whose point depends on its being staged by some actresses and actors. We can disregard any particular staging but we must still rely on the idea that it has to be staged.

Some could reply, however, that the existence of a written text is at least a necessary condition for the existence of a work of fiction while Ulrich's conversation with His Excellency is not inspired by any particular text. It is clear, however, that the words and props that compose a theatrical play or a work of fiction could respond to guidelines that are transmitted orally. This is the case with the stories that my grandmother told me, which only in some cases—and accidentally—had been put in writing. So, it does not seem essential that the words that a work is composed of are put in writing for it to exist.

Moreover, just as some rituals are more structured than others, there are also theater plays that are more freestyle than others. There are, indeed, some theater plays that are performed on a stage, but many others tend to blur the idea of a stage by mixing actors and audience. In this case, the story is always in a process of elaboration and the particular words used in

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[6]   "My focus is on fiction as a representational work, contrasted with the category of non-fiction" (Friend forthcoming, Ch. 1). "The concept of fiction is familiar… As these examples suggest, the categories of fiction and nonfiction apply first and foremost to works [as opposed to parts of works]" (Friend forthcoming, Ch. 1).

each performance will depend on how each particular audience responds. The linguistic fabric thus created is as ephemeral as a conversation might be. Of course, nothing prevents that fabric from being put in writing, but the same goes for the guidelines and directives of His Excellency's conversations, which could easily be reflected in a protocol book. All this corroborates the accidental character of the connection between writing and theater or, in general, between writing and works of fiction.

Friend could object that the absence of a text is a counter-standard feature—i.e., a feature that deviates from the standard of a previously written text—that some plays may use as an aesthetic resource. In reply to this, I should firstly say that it is far from clear that such a feature is genuinely counter-standard at the moment, but, even if it were, it would again be a totally accidental circumstance. We could easily imagine a context where they were standard and, therefore, it would be quite unreasonable to ground a theory of fiction—whose claims are not meant to be just contextually true—on such a circumstantial aspect of our theatrical practice. And, secondly, I should mention that sometimes the expressive potential of the above-mentioned feature, namely, the one that Friend might regard as counter-standard, lies precisely in the ability to highlight the continuity between theater plays and other practices in which we also use a script and improvise with greater or lesser success. Such practices include Ulrich's conversation with His Excellency, but also many other less striking practices, such as a conversation between friends or a family meal, whose scripts may certainly vary from one to another culture or context.

One could insist, however, that a script open to improvisation is not enough for the creation of a theater play, not even for the presence of theatricality. Religious rituals respond to a script and are open to a certain degree of improvisation, but they are not theater plays. But what else is then required to produce a theater play? Perhaps, the fact that the script is invented and also that it includes invented characters, that is, characters who are known not to exist.

It is true that this last condition may be fulfilled by many works of fiction but, as Friend herself stresses, it is far from being a necessary condition, for there are many works of fiction that, in a more or less direct way, speak about events that have really happened or people that do exist or

have existed, even though they are often adorned or elaborated with invented or counterfactual features. Friend could reply, though, that her theory of fiction is not concerned with providing necessary and sufficient conditions for fiction, but only standard, counter-standard and variable features, whereby my reply may sound irrelevant.

However, once we realize that the presence of invented characters is not a necessary condition for fiction, it is easy to show that the fact that this feature may turn out to be standard depends on the context. Thus, I will later suggest that there are a number of relevant contexts where this feature is not standard but just variable. Enough for now regarding invented characters; as to the invented nature of the script itself, haven't we invented the script of our conversations? Are they not, after all, institutions that we have created?

Maybe then what is missing in a conversation between friends or in a family meal is that participants are not aware of following a script. Should we then accept that, if the participants were aware of this circumstance, a family meal would thereby become a theater play? But such awareness is often present in our practices and celebrations; let us think, for example, of the rituals involved in a Christmas meal.[7] Some participants may be aware of a script, but do people act in such circumstances in the way actresses and actors do on the stage? The answer to this question may depend on whether a certain participant may identify herself with that ritual; in the event that no such identification occurs, one could participate in a Christmas meal the way a member of a rental family might do, as the film *Familia* (León Arenoa, 1996)) so comically depicts. In this movie, the protagonist, Santiago, rents a party of actors and actress to act as his relatives for his 55th birthday. The action runs for 24 hours in Santiago's country house. But all this is unknown to the viewers who for a long while are convinced that they are just watching a movie whose plot revolves around a family gathering to celebrate Santiago's birthday. Their naive approach is apparently confirmed by the fact that Santiago angrily manifests his dislike for his son's

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[7]   The specific rituals associated with a Christmas meal will certainly vary from one family to another and from one to another culture; still, such meals tend to be highly ritualized, so that certain attitudes and behavior are normatively required and expected.

present or even when Santiago claims that his son is insincere when the latter claims to love him. From time to time, some details strike us as strange, though; like when the protagonist complains that he had not ordered a child with glasses, but the viewers may still leave aside such remarks as a joke or a peculiarity of the script. Little by little, however, it becomes clear that all these people are just members of a theater company that Santiago has rented to perform a birthday celebration. Perhaps, Friend would like to reserve the idea of a theater play to a certain kind of participation in this performance, namely, as a member of the rental family. But this proposal sounds rather arbitrary at this stage. In fact, the movie invites us to distinguish how actors and actress participate in the celebration from Santiago's own attitude toward the situation, given that the latter's aspiration is to feel for a few hours that he does have a family after all, that is, to experience for a while that family as his own. But the contrast between the members of the rented family and Santiago himself suggest the plurality of our relationship to a script and, therefore, that our attitude toward it is not confined to the contrast between fiction and non-fiction, that is, to the contrast between an actress onstage and offstage.

Friend might, nevertheless, reply that Santiago is not really confronting the script as a work of fiction and, as a result, stick to the idea that a theater play is only such if we relate to the script the way the members of a rented family do. However, this response sounds viciously circular. If a demarcation criterion is to be of any interest, it is necessary to identify in advance the set of objects for which one intends to offer such a criterion; otherwise, any criterion would be trivially correct. However, if the criterion to demarcate a set of objects depends on whether we have a certain attitude toward them and any object before which we do not have that attitude is excluded from the set, then this demarcation criterion becomes trivial and devoid of any explanatory power, contrary to the explanatory constraint that Friend herself proposed for an adequate theory of fiction proposed. The only way to avoid this circularity is to have a preliminary classification of the objects at issue and then, in an exercise of reflective equilibrium, to elucidate the criteria to which this classificatory practice may respond to. From this point of view, it does not seem that Friend could so easily reject that there is a variety of ways in which a family celebration may be

experienced as a work of fiction. Thus, we should include that of the members of the theater company, Santiago's and even our experience in those situations where we may not feel seated at the table with our own family but with a provisionally adopted or an adoptive family. Quite often it is not so much that we feel that we are not seated with our own family, but rather that our way of being there has lost the naturalness that we attribute to our childhood or, in other words, that our experiences as adults imply a degree of reflectivity and estrangement similar to that of our relationship with a family that we adopt in order to relieve the sorrows of emigration or exile, or a family that adopts us in our orphanage.[8]

All this seems to lead us to the extravagant conclusion that a family meal is a work of fiction; but is it really so extravagant? That it seems so extravagant responds, in my opinion, to the tendency to conceive of our life as divided and, therefore, to leave aside or misinterpret any practice that does not respond to this pattern. We could, however, imagine some social contexts were performances on stage were an extreme case of theatricality, like in a society in which people called 'guernicas' bas-reliefs similar to Pablo Picasso's Guernica. In this context, the latter would appear as peculiar for its bidimensionality. This example, suggested by Friend herself, shows that the fact that a certain feature is standard or counter-standard depends on the context.[9] Relatedly, I will argue that the relevant class of contrast when

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[8]   See, in this respect, Truffaut (1959, 1968, 1970, 1979) whose protagonist needs so desperately to adopt a family that he seems to fall in love only with girls who are members of an ordinary, respectable family, and also Livingston (1990) and Butler (1993) regarding the ball culture developed in New York City by some Afro-American, Latino, gay and transgender communities. Participants in these balls are arranged in 'houses' whose masters are referred to as mothers because of the complex, protective role they play in their lives. All this suggests that such houses act as surrogate families for their otherwise abandoned and isolated members.

[9]   "As a painting Guernica's flatness counts as standard, but as a guernica that is the most salient feature of the work, the one that distinguishes it from other works of the same kind… What has happened here is that we have switched the relevant contrast class: the set of works with which the work of in question is compared, a set with different standard, contra-standard, and variable features. As a result of the switch, we focus on different features of the work, taking some features as more

relating to works of fiction may equally vary from one to another context. Some might think that contextualism should not be a problem for Friend's approach, given she is remarkably a contextualist concerning those features that may be regarded as standard for a work of fiction. Still, Friend could hardly be a contextualist with respect to the contrast view itself, given that as a philosophical claim this view should hold across all contexts. Hence, it seems that the contrast view must presuppose that parentheticality holds across all contexts; moreover, it can be argued that the contrast view must conceive of parentheticality as an all-or nothing matter because, otherwise, the transition from fiction to nonfiction—or vice versa—ought to be approached as a continuum, contrary to what the contrast view trivially defends. Hence, we can conclude that the contrast view presupposes that parentheticality is an all-or-nothing matter that holds across all contexts. This is, however, the presupposition I intend to dispute in the next section.

4. Parentheticality

In section 2, I argued that the contrast view is committed to the claim that our relation to works of fiction involves the idea of a parenthesis and, therefore, to the claim that the split between two sorts of awareness that Ulrich presents as constitutive of the way the middle-class experiences theater, sex and religious services is necessarily a standard feature of fiction. Ulrich is convinced, however, that theatricality does not require such a parenthesis and can be imbricated in our daily practices and rituals. Besides, I have just suggested that what stands in the way of regarding such practices and rituals as works of fiction is just an understanding of parentheticality as an all-or-nothing matter. Now, I will examine a number of practices and rituals to vindicate a gradual understanding of parentheticality. But, before engaging in this discussion, it may be relevant to introduce a terminological qualification. So far, I have been referring to works of fiction as the main target of my exploration given that this is the explicit purpose of the contrast view. But, from now on, I will mainly talk of fiction in general,

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salient and foregrounding these while leaving others in the background" (Friend forthcoming, Ch. 3).

without confining myself to works of fiction. To motivate this shift I will rely on the conclusion reached in the previous section, namely: that many of our activities and rituals could be understood as works of fiction, only if parentheticality were not an all-or-nothing matter. Hence, if I succeeded in motivating that parentheticality is a gradual matter in some such activities, I would also have proved that the parentheticality of our relation to works of fiction should be construed as a matter of degree and, therefore, that some of our activities and rituals can legitimately be individuated as works of fiction and such that the contrast view will turn out to be false. Let me now sketch a defense of the gradual nature of parentheticality.

My discussion in the previous section already suggests that parentheticality is a matter of degree. There, I stressed the plural ways in which a person may regard a certain group of people as her family, namely: as a member of a rental family, as the renter of such family, as an exile who forms a temporary family with their compatriots, or as someone who is adopted by a family much like members of the family-in-law typically are. But the gradual nature of parentheticality can be perceived in many other activities as well. Think, for instance, in how seriously we take—or we may reasonable take—our commitment to certain goals. Consider the way that an amateur runner sets a goal for one of her ordinary training sessions and compare the seriousness of her commitment to that of her decision to run the London marathon this year. We can in turn see how this second commitment may differ in seriousness and prominence in her life compared to some of her family or professional projects. The runner's attitude toward these disparate goals and endeavors varies in seriousness and prominence. It could then be argued that those different degrees of seriousness and prominence reveal to what extent the corresponding activity is regarded as more or less parenthetical, since the goal of an ordinary training session may be perceived as important in the context of that activity even though the importance attached to it can hardly trespass the boundaries of this particular activity. There is, indeed, room for variation from one to another person, but someone who took the specific workout of each ordinary training session too seriously, who placed it at the center of her life and were thus unable to perceive that its importance is only relative to a certain context and therefore parenthetical, will be regarded as weird or even insane. Our

capacity to discern how seriously we can reasonably be committed to certain goals—and, thus, our capacity to acknowledge different degrees of parentheticality—contributes to outlining the boundaries of sanity or weirdness.

The previous remarks suggest not only that parentheticality is a matter of degree, but also that parentheticality may not be a specific standard feature of our relation to fiction as opposed to nonfiction. To confirm this last point, we may consider the experience of many pilgrims on Saint James' Way. It is very common among them to share very intimate aspects of their lives during their long daily walks or when gathering in the evening to have dinner or a drink. One could say that in a few days one gets to know more intimacies about a bunch of people and get a deeper sense of bonding with them than with those other people that one has known for years. And, yet, this happens partly because of the parenthetical nature of the experience. Of course, while on the Way, pilgrims promise each other to meet afterwards; in their normal life, so to say, but such later meetings rarely occur. And this is not an accident because the intimacy and transparency reached is favored—and, almost, enabled—by its parenthetical condition, that is, by the fact that it will have no direct implications for one's daily life where one does not want to meet those eyes who know so much about oneself. Some may be tempted to regard those experiences of intimacy and transparency as deceitful or fictional just because they are parenthetical but, in such a case, we should acknowledge that the way we relate to fiction is not just by contrast to nonfiction because sincerity is constitutive of the experiences I am reporting. If, on the contrary, one should deny that the idea of a parenthesis is not a feature specific to fiction as opposed to nonfiction, then Friend still owes us a standard feature that might ground the idea that fiction and nonfiction are each other's contrast class, for, if I am right, her contrast between the genres of fiction and nonfiction hinges on the opposition between parenthetical vs non-parenthetical activities or experiences. I must finally stress that the parenthetical experience on Saint James' Way is far from exceptional and is to be found in various degrees in many other social practices, such as a therapy session, a teenager's Summer camp, a trekking, a touristic trip, a club, and so on. All this suggests that, if we are to understand our relation to theatricality and works of fiction, we better consider that those cases where fiction has nonfiction as its contrast

class as a rather specific attitude toward works of fiction and theatricality that lies at the extreme of a continuum with various degrees of reflectivity and estrangement.

5. Conclusion

Friend's theory of fiction, unlike others that seek to provide sufficient and necessary conditions, focuses on the ways in which we interact or relate to works of fiction, that is, the way in which we experience, understand and evaluate them. I do celebrate this opening of fiction theory to the plurality of our social practices. My concern is, however, that Friend's approach may not have gone far enough in this respect, given that it is confined to an experience of fiction that views nonfiction as its contrast class. In defense of her view, Friend may take refuge in the idea that her research is not interested in the phenomenon of fiction as such, but only in the way we relate to works of fiction. Friend vindicates the concept of a work of fiction as autonomous and as trivially opposed to that of nonfiction, so that a theory of fiction should only be concerned with a demarcation criterion that takes into account the disparate ways in which we relate to a work depending on whether it is fiction or nonfiction. I have argued, though, that the alleged autonomy of works of fiction, the sharpness of their contours, which Friend takes for granted, is not genuinely independent of the contrast view itself. To this end, I have examined some experiences of theatricality that have, at first sight, a bearing on the phenomenon of fiction and, in the light of Ulrich's reflection on his conversation with His Excellency, I have suggested that the contrast view may provide a reasonable account of the way the middle class relates to works of fiction but fails to express a more general truth about how we experience and evaluate works of fiction.

In sections 3 and 4, I have addressed some objections to the relevance of Ulrich's remarks as a challenge to the contrast view. The first objection has been that, even though his Excellency's performance may include elements of theatricality, it can hardly be considered a theater play and, therefore, a work of fiction. I have thus explored a number of criteria in virtue of which Friend could distinguish certain practices and rituals, such as his Excellency's conversations or a family meal, from works of fiction.

Yet, none of these criteria have been really useful. I have thus reached the seemingly extravagant conclusion that a family meal is a work of fiction. I have suggested, however, that our perception of their extravagance depends on a way of conceiving of our lives as divided between the public and the private, between our working hours and our leisure time; in other words, it seemed that only parentheticality as an all-or-nothing matter stands in the way of recognizing some of our practices and rituals as works of fiction.

I have then argued, though, that parentheticality does come in degrees. I have thus dwelled on the different ways in which one can participate in a family celebration; in such circumstances, the degrees of awareness one may have of the script to be followed or the degree of pretense imposed by the need to adapt to a script that one does not feel fully identified with. I have distinguished occasions where one could feel like a genuine participant in a meal with one's adopted or adoptive family, in contrast with the idea of being a member of a rental family, as comically depicted in *Familia.* If, in order to defend the contrast view, we insisted that we are only dealing with a theater play if we relate to the script of a family meal the way in which members of a rental family relate to each other; then we would be trapped in a vicious circle, since, on the one hand, we would identify a work of fiction on the basis of the kind of estrangement that is specific to this situation and, on the other, we expect our demarcation criterion to explain our ability to take this kind of distance. Moreover, I have suggested that parentheticality is a rather common phenomenon that is hardly confined to our relation to fiction or, complementarily, I have invited the thought that parentheticality is hardly a standard feature of our experience of fiction as opposed to nonfiction, contrary to what the contrast view defend. All this has allowed me to reject the contrast view and conclude that, if we are to understand how we experience and evaluate of works of fiction and theatricality, we better consider that the experience of fiction as the contrast class of nonfiction is a specific way of relating to works of fiction that lies at the extreme of a continuum with various degrees of reflectivity and estrangement.

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Self-knowledge, Discriminability, and Demonstrative Thoughts

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Abstract: According to content externalism, the content of our thought is partly determined by the linguistic environment responsible for it. However, there is growing skepticism about the compatibility of content externalism and self-knowledge. The skeptical position holds that, if content externalism is true, then we cannot know our own thought content because we would not be able to discriminate it from relevant alternative thought contents. This argument rests on the proposition that knowledge requires some type of discriminability. In this paper, I argue that this requirement does not apply to a particular type of demonstrative thoughts, more specifically, that in a typical case where we demonstratively denote an object without taking it as anything in particular, our second-order judgment about our own thinking, whose content includes this use of a demonstrative, constitutes knowledge without due discriminability.

Keywords: Content externalism; demonstrative thought; discriminability; indefinite use of demonstratives; self-knowledge.

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1. Introduction

Content externalism claims that the content of our thought is determined in part by our external environments. The classic argument for content externalism is inspired by Hilary Putnam (1975)'s famous Twin Earth thought experiment. Imagine that in remote place in the galaxy there is a planet where everything is the same as Earth except that, instead of water, it contains a substance exactly similar to but chemically different from water. We may call this substance *twater*, which is composed of XYZ, as opposed to H₂O. When a normal inhabitant of Earth utters a sentence containing the word 'water,' she thereby expresses a thought about H₂O. For instance, when she says, 'Water is wet,' she naturally expresses a thought whose content is that *water is wet*. Therefore, her utterance would be true if and only if H₂O is wet. On the other hand, if her Twin Earth counterpart utters the same sentence, she would express a thought whose content is that *twater is wet*. This utterance would be true if and only if XYZ is wet. Given that the inner states of the two persons are exactly the same when they utter the sentence, it follows that the mental contents of their intentional states are not solely determined by the intrinsic properties of their cognitive mechanism.

Although content externalism has recently gained popularity, many philosophers have worried about a skeptical view which asserts that the doctrine of content externalism is incompatible with a natural assumption about self-knowledge: that we can know *a priori* (or "from the armchair") the contents of our own thoughts without investigating our environment pertinent to them. One version of this skepticism is established by relating knowledge to some type of discriminatory ability. With some stipulation, the earthian of the aforementioned Twin Earth case does not seem to be able to discriminate *a priori* her occurrent thought content (that water is wet) from the alternative thought content (that twater is wet). Provided that knowledge requires some type of discriminatory ability, the skeptic may argue that she does not know *a priori* her occurrent thought content. The reasoning behind the skepticism can be represented by an argument as follows:

(DA1) If content externalism is true, we cannot discriminate *a priori* our occurrent thought content from any relevant alternative thought content.

(DA2) If we cannot discriminate *a priori* our occurrent thought content from any relevant alternative thought content, then we do not know *a priori* our occurrent thought content.

Conclusion. If content externalism is true, we do not know *a priori* our occurrent thought content.

Let us call this *the discrimination argument*. Many philosophers have argued against it to establish the compatibility of content externalism and self-knowledge.[1] The strategies of compatibilists tend to move in two directions: either they show that content externalism, despite the worries stemming from the discrimination argument, does not fail the discriminatory ability, or they show that knowledge does not require an ability to discriminate the occurrent thought content and any alternative content.[2] Quite a number of compatibilists take the former direction, as it seems pressing that knowledge requires some type of discriminatory ability. A classic example that illustrates the discriminability requirement is given by Alvin Goldman (1976, 772–73). Henry is driving in an area which has many barns and papier-mâché facsimiles looking just like barns. Without knowing that some of them are facsimiles, he points to an object, which happens to be a real barn, and says, "That's a barn." Although he correctly identifies the object, he does not seem to *know* that it is a barn. The most natural explanation for his failure of knowledge is that he could not tell the object at hand from other fake barns, and thus would still believe that he was seeing a real barn even if the target object were a fake barn. This example suggests that an ability to discriminate an external object from other alternative objects is required for perceptual knowledge. Though this example purports to establish the discriminability requirement for perceptual knowledge,

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[1]   For some influential works on this issue, see (Bar-on 2004; Boghossian 1989; Brown 2004; Brueckner 1990; Burge 1988; Falvey and Owens 1994; McKinsey 1991; McLaughlin and Tye 1998; Parent 2017).

[2]   Here the first and the second strategies amount to rejecting the first and the second premises of the discrimination argument, respectively.

some people might argue that the same applies to knowledge of our thought contents. Those compatibilists who accept this view are bound to endorse (DA2), while remaining opposed to (DA1).

This type of strategy often appeals to the notion of relevance. According to this strategy, if content externalism is granted, we *can* discriminate *a priori* our occurrent thought from other alternative thoughts, *as long as the alternatives are relevant.* Thus, earthians can normally discriminate *a priori* the thought that water is wet from the thought that gin is wet or that petroleum is wet, insofar as they live in linguistic environments where the gin- or petroleum-involved thoughts are widely available. Someone may not be able to discriminate his or her thought content that water is wet from the putative alternative content that twater is wet, but for anyone in normal circumstances this alternative content is irrelevant. In other words, unlike Henry's case, the situation where someone is thinking that twater is wet, as described in the beginning of this section, is not a relevant alternative to the situation where a normal earthian is thinking that water is wet.

Many commentators, however, agree that "the slow switch" case provides a scenario where the twater-involved content *is* a legitimately relevant alternative to a normal water-involved content (Burge 1988, 652–53; Boghossian 1989, 13; Falvey and Owens 1994, 111–12; Brown 2004, 39–40). Imagine that Sally, a fellow earthian, unwittingly traveled to Twin Earth. She resided long enough to replace her old concept of water with the new concept of twater shared by the indigenous inhabitants.[3] Assuming the truth of content externalism, her utterance 'water is wet' now expresses the content that twater is wet. Suppose she has unwittingly traveled back and forth between the two planets a number of times, and at each stay, she spent sufficient time to switch the concepts involving water or twater.

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[3] It is widely accepted that the concept someone has retained in one linguistic environment, whether it is the concept of water or of twater, will be replaced by the other if he or she stayed long enough in the other environment and engaged in communicational activities using the concept along with the fellow members of the linguistic community. It may be debatable whether the new concept supersedes or supplements the old concept. But I will not press the issue here. It suffices to say that the water- or twater-related concept he or she retains at each stay would differ from the concept retained in the previous stay of the other environment.

Under these circumstances, if she resides in earth and forms an occurrent belief that water is wet, then the thought that twater is wet *is* a relevant alternative, because considering her itinerant history between the two planets, she could have been on Twin Earth thinking that twater is wet. Nevertheless, since Sally is unaware of her trips, she would sincerely believe that the thought she currently has by entertaining the content of 'water is wet' is the same as the thought she had by entertaining the content of the same sentence earlier while she was (unwittingly) staying on Twin Earth. Then, Sally seems to lack the ability to discriminate *a priori* between her occurrent thought that water is wet and a relevant alternative thought that twater is wet. In sum, in the slow switch case, the twater-thought can reasonably be considered a relevant alternative to the water-thought, but the subject is not able to discriminate one from the other.[4]

This type of example is threatening to those who attempt to reject the incompatibility of content externalism and self-knowledge, as specified in (DA1). A number of philosophers have attempted to get round the problem raised by the slow switch case. On the other hand, we may question the truthfulness of the discriminability requirement as specified in (DA2). As we have seen, (DA2) states that knowledge of our thought content requires some type of discriminatory ability. Hence, we can still refute the discrimination argument by showing that we *can* know *a priori* our occurrent thought content without being able to discriminate it with relevant alternative contents. Kevin Falvey and Joseph Owens (1994, 109 ff), for example, distinguish what they call introspective knowledge of content, which

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[4]   Peter Ludlow (1995) offers a less fancy example of this sort. There may be actual cases where the denotation of a word can be switched to a similar, albeit distinct, kind of object in a different linguistic community—a kind of object deemed internally identical to the subject. For instance, an international traveler may entertain a thought containing the word 'chicory' in England, and then move to the United States and entertain the corresponding thought that contains the same word, while unaware that the contents of her thoughts in the two occasions differ from each other. This view is sometimes referred to as social externalism. Though I do not discuss the slow switching cases involving social externalism in this paper, my argument here can faithfully be applied to the skepticism of self-knowledge stemming from social externalism as well. For a criticism of social externalism, see (Pollock 2015).

involves whether you can epistemically access your occurrent thought contents directly and authoritatively, from what they call introspective knowledge of comparative content, which involves whether or not you can tell the difference between any pair of your occurrent thought contents directly and authoritatively. According to their argument, the slow switch case cannot be tenably applied to the former kind of self-knowledge.[5] In this paper, I aim to offer a novel explanation for why the sort of discriminatory ability that concerns content externalism is not required to establish self-knowledge of our occurrent thought content when focusing on a particular type of using demonstratives. My argument depends on the notion that we cannot possibly misidentify a target object when we refer to it with a demonstrative expression without attributing any particular identificatory property to it. I first build up an argument for a version of the discrimination argument that appeals to a principle of thought individuation suggested by Gareth Evans. Then, I contend that the distinctive feature in the aforementioned use of demonstratives undermines this argument, which reveals the untenability of the discriminability requirement. Finally, I respond to a possible objection to my argument, which claims that even demonstrative denotation allows room for misidentification.

2. An argument for the discriminability requirement

Bertrand Russell famously distinguished knowledge by acquaintance from knowledge by description. As a classical foundationalist, Russell held that knowing a proposition must eventually depend on acquaintance with the relevant particulars. In defense of this view, he said that "it is scarcely conceivable that we can make a judgement or entertain a supposition without knowing what it is that we are judging or supposing about" (Russell 1912, 58). Evans gives an interesting interpretation of this remark to establish a substantial principle about individuating thoughts. While dubbing it Russell's Principle, Evans understands this remark as stating that thinking

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[5]   For a different approach that rejects the discriminability requirement, see (Goldberg 2005 and 2006).

about an object requires us to possess the ability to discriminate it from anything else. He writes:

> In order to make Russell's Principle a substantial principle, I shall suppose that the knowledge which it requires is what might be called *discriminating knowledge*: the subject must have a capacity to distinguish the object of his judgment from all other things. (Evans 1982, 90)

It may be debatable whether Evans correctly interprets Russell's view here. Nevertheless, Evans seems to impose a quite sensible requirement for the individuation of singular thoughts. We can encapsulate the requirement as follows:

(E)   If S is thinking (or making a judgment) about x, then S can discriminate x from any object other than x.

With regard to (E) and the discrimination argument, compatibilists might hope that, by satisfying (E), we may be able to discriminate *a priori* between the actual scenario where we have an occurrent thought, and relevant alternative scenarios where we are thinking alternative thoughts, including the Twin Earth analogue of the actual occurrent thought. (E) states that the discriminatory ability is a necessary condition for a subject to think about an object x. Let the content of the actual occurrent thought be represented by the form: x is F. Given the truth of (E), if we think x is F, then we must have the discriminatory ability between x and any other object, including an exact duplicate of x (call it y). Then, it may be suggested that if (E) is true, then by thinking that x is F, we must be able to discriminate *a priori* between the actual scenario where we are thinking that x is F and any other scenarios where we would be thinking different thoughts, including an alternative scenario where we are thinking that y is F.

However, this view is vulnerable to a counterexample. Suppose I am witnessing a seemingly supernatural phenomenon featuring a UFO. A saucer-shaped aircraft appears in the sky, flies in irregular patterns, and then quickly disappears from my sight. Suppose also that, unbeknownst to me, there is another flying object in the vicinity qualitatively identical to the saucer that I witnessed. Let us call the two aircrafts U_1 and U_2: U_1 is the one that I witnessed and U_2 is the one in the vicinity. At t_1, while looking

at U_1, I think to myself, 'That moves fast.' Then, without my noticing, U_1 is switched to U_2. After a while (at t_2), upon looking at U_2, I think, 'That moves fast,' taking myself to be thinking about the same object. At this point, I seem to satisfy (E) both at t_1 and at t_2. At t_1 I stand in a certain perceptual relation to U_1, by virtue of which I visually identify U_1 and place it at a certain location. Thus, I successfully refer to U_1 within my representational system, where no other relevant alternative objects, including U_2, exist in that system at t_1. So, I am thinking about U_1 at t_1, and not about anything else. In the same way, at t_2 I visually identify U_2 and place it at a certain location. So, I successfully refer to U_2 within my representational system, which does not contain any other relevant alternative objects, including U_1 at that time. Hence, it is true for me that I am thinking about U_2 at t_2 and not about anything else. However, by stipulation of my thought experiment, I am unable to distinguish between U_1 and U_2. In particular, I cannot discriminate *a priori* between the content of the thought I had at t_1 that that (U_1) moves fast and the content of the thought I had at t_2 that that (U_2) moves fast.[6] On being asked, I would sincerely answer that I was thinking the same proposition on both occasions. Thus, this case illustrates that we can distinguish the object of our occurrent thought from any other object, while remaining unable to discriminate the content of our occurrent thought from any relevant alternative contents. In particular, we can think a perceptual demonstrative thought about an object x ('That (x) is F'), while remaining unable to distinguish it from a relevant alternative thought about y ('That (y) is F'), where $x \neq y$.

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[6]   Here I follow Jessica Brown (2004, 86–89), except that Brown mentions that the subject would not be able to discriminate between her current situation where she thinks a perceptual demonstrative thought and a relevant alternative situation where she thinks the twin analogue of the demonstrative thought (Brown 2004, 89). This is clearly mistaken: in general, people *can* distinguish their current experiences from phenomenologically identical experiences occurring at different times. To rectify the mistake, here I refer to the discriminatory ability between two tokens of *thoughts*, as opposed to two different situations, occurring at different times: I am unable to distinguish between my thought that that (U_1) moves fast, occurring at a certain time, and the relevant alternative thought I am thinking that that (U_2) moves fast, occurring at a later time.

The preceding observation reveals that satisfying Evans's requirement for thinking about an object—namely, securing an ability to discriminate between the currently perceived object and any other object—does not entail the ability to discriminate between occurrent thought content and other relevant alternative contents. Hence, compatibilists would not be successful in using (E) to cope with the discrimination argument. Nevertheless, they may claim that (E) can be revised to secure the basis for a special kind of self-knowledge.

To demonstrate this point, let us note that (E) concerns our thought about an *object*: it aims to show that thinking of a particular object requires an ability to distinguish it from any other object. Compatibilists may argue that thinking of our own *thought contents*, as opposed to thinking of external objects, gives rise to an interesting result. Tyler Burge (1988) famously argues that what he calls *basic self-knowledge* is self-verifying. According to him, basic self-knowledge consists of judgments of the following form: S judges that S is thinking that p. Burge goes on to claim that, when a person thinks (or judges) that she is thinking that p, she is thereby entertaining the thought content that p. Entertaining (the content) that p is a type of thinking that p. Thus, by judging that she is thinking that p, she is indeed thinking that p. In other words, when we think:

(*)   I am thinking that p,

by entertaining the content (*), we thereby make (*) true. Thus, when we make a judgment about our thinking a particular content, our judgment is self-verifying.

On the Burgean approach, this type of first-person introspective judgment is applicable to the aforementioned slow switch case. Suppose Sally, while on Earth, makes this type of first-person judgment when she thinks that water is wet. Then, we would report her thought by saying that she judges that she is thinking that water is wet. In expressing this judgment, she entertains the thought that water is wet, and thereby is thinking that water is wet. She cannot falsely believe, for example, that she is thinking that twater is wet. The same point applies to the case where Sally is on Twin Earth. When she thinks, 'I am thinking that water is wet,' she makes the judgment that she is thinking that twater is wet. In making this

judgment, she entertains the thought that twater is wet, and thereby is thinking that twater is wet. Her current aquatic environments render it the case that she cannot falsely be engaged in the water-thought. This shows that Sally cannot be mistaken about her cogito thoughts.

Can the Burgean approach to the self-verifying nature of basic self-knowledge shed light on the compatibility of content externalism and self-knowledge? In my view, the skeptic may use Evans's requirement to argue that the discrimination argument still stands with respect to second-order first-person judgments of our own thought contents. (E) states that thinking of an object requires some type of discriminability. Likewise, the skeptic may suggest that thinking a second-order judgment regarding our own thought from the first-person perspective requires the ability to discriminate between our occurrent thought content and relevant alternative contents, including the twin analogue of the occurrent thought. We can articulate this proposition as follows:

(E′)   If S thinks that S is thinking that p, then S can discriminate *a priori* between S's occurrent thought that S is thinking that p and any relevant alternative thought that S is thinking that q (where $p \neq q$).

Apart from this, we can naturally assume that knowledge of a particular proposition entails thinking about its content. Hence, it is reasonable to accept the following principle.

(K)   If S knows *a priori* that S is thinking that p, then S thinks that S is thinking that p.[7]

Applying simple rules of propositional logic to (K) and (E′), we can derive:

(DA2′)   If S cannot discriminate *a priori* between S's occurrent thought that S is thinking that p and any relevant alternative thought that S is thinking that q (where $p \neq q$), then S does not know *a priori* that S is thinking that p.

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7   Here I intend that (K) is restricted to our occurrent thought. Surely, when I know that a particular proposition is true, I need not concurrently entertain its content.

This principle states that knowledge also requires discriminatory ability in terms of second-order judgments of our own thought contents. The initial slow switch case is put forward to illustrate that content externalism is incompatible with securing due discriminability in terms of ordinary *first-order* judgments about an object. The skeptic might argue that the same is true of introspective second-order judgments about our own thought contents. In the aforementioned slow switch case where Sally judges that she is thinking that water/twater is wet, we noted that we would report her judgment differently depending on whether she makes the judgment on Earth or on Twin Earth. Hence, the two tokens of the introspective second-order judgments are distinct from each other. However, by the stipulation of the story, Sally would not be able to tell the difference. If asked about the identity of the two judgment tokens, she would sincerely answer that she made exactly the same judgment both times (or so we can stipulate the story). Sally lacks the discriminatory ability as to the introspective second-order judgments about her own thought contents. We can recapitulate this point as follows:

(DA1′) If content externalism is true, then S cannot discriminate *a priori* between S's occurrent thought that S is thinking that p and any relevant alternative thought that S is thinking that q (where $p \neq q$).

From (DA1′) and (DA2′), we can easily draw the conclusion about the incompatibility of content externalism and self-knowledge involving the second-order judgments of our own thought contents.

This may sound unfavorable for compatibilists. Quite the contrary, however, I think that the preceding observation opens a possibility for them to reject the discrimination argument. Let us first note that (DA2′) is an instance of (DA2): while (DA2) concerns the discriminatory ability involving *any* type of thought, (DA2′) concerns the discriminatory ability on a special type of thoughts—namely, the ability to discriminate among second-order judgments concerning our own thought contents. It means that the soundness of the discrimination argument as suggested in the beginning of this paper entails the soundness of this particular version of the argument. Then, since (DA2) entails (DA2′), compatibilists can reject (DA2) by successfully

refuting (DA2′), and if (DA2) is rejected, then the discrimination argument collapses.

Compatibilists may refute (DA2′) by disproving either (E′) or (K). (K) seems indisputable. However, I think that (E′) can be disproven. In what follows, I argue that a standard case where we have a second-order judgment regarding our own perceptual demonstrative thought and in which we do not attribute any identificatory property to the referent, constitutes a counterexample to (E′). In addition, I argue that this sort of case, due to a characteristic feature of this use of demonstrative thoughts, can be used to show that (DA2′) is vulnerable to counterexamples as well.

3. Demonstrative thoughts and the discrimination argument

As the first step, I would like to note a distinctive feature of demonstrative thoughts. In thinking a demonstrative thought, we do not necessarily *take* the object at hand *as* some particular thing. For instance, when I look at a peach in a fruit store and think, 'That looks delicious,' my use of the demonstrative may denote the peach without attributing any identificatory property to it. I may unwittingly have seen the peach before, and I might even have thought that it looked unpalatable at that time. However, as long as I do not remember these facts, I am taking it as *some peach or other* in my occurrent thought. When we demonstratively denote a perceived object without taking it as some particular thing, I would like to call it the *indefinite* use of a demonstrative expression. In employing the indefinite use of demonstratives, we are guaranteed to correctly refer to the intended object. For instance, when I see a tree and think, 'That is an elm,' I cannot possibly be mistaken because of misidentification. Of course, I may be erroneous because I falsely ascribe a certain property to the object—e.g., the tree may be a beech. However, in that case, the reason why I am mistaken is not because I misidentify the object. My use of the demonstrative correctly picks out the intended object. It is just that the correctly identified object lacks the property I ascribe to it. In general, when we indefinitely use a demonstrative to denote a perceived

object, we are bound to be free of error in identifying the object at hand.[8]

The indefinite use of demonstratives contrasts with the definite use. In employing the definite use, we take the object as some particular thing. This usage allows us to misidentify the object. Suppose I am watching races in a track meet in which my daughter participated. From a distance, I see that a girl, who dresses like my daughter, wins a race. Thinking that she is my daughter, I may proudly shout to the person next to me, "That's my girl!" Here, I am taking the girl as a particular person (namely, my daughter), and thus, there is a sense in which I may be mistaken in identifying the object I intend to identify.[9] However, insofar as we engage in the indefinite use of a demonstrative and do not take the object as anything (or anyone) in particular, there is no room for us to be mistaken in referring to the intended object.[10]

My contention is that a typical case where we are engaged in the indefinite use of a demonstrative amounts to a counterexample to (E′) and to

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[8]   I do not mean to suggest that, in employing the indefinite use of a demonstrative expression, we can never be mistaken in presuming that the referent in fact exists. We can surely demonstratively refer to a hologram projection of a car, falsely believing that we are seeing a real car. I only want to claim that, in referring to an object with the indefinite use, what we intend to refer to must be identical to what we actually refer to.

[9]   Even in this case, there are two senses as to how we *intend* to identify an object. See my discussion of two different interpretations of intended objects in the next section.

[10]   It may be doubted whether the indefinite use of a demonstrative is possible, given that demonstratives are context-dependent. For instance, drawing upon the Kaplanian approach to indexicals, someone might claim that the same demonstrative expression uttered in different contexts may convey different contents, though have the same character; but a demonstrative should always be definite in a given context. However, in my usage of the term, whether a demonstrative expression is used indefinitely or definitely depends on the epistemic attitude of the subject; and it is surely possible for us to demonstratively refer to an object, and not anything else, in a given context, while at the same time not regarding the object as anything in particular. Therefore, my understanding of the indefinite use of a demonstrative is compatible with the Kaplanian picture. I thank Jihee Han for helping me clarify this point. See (Kaplan 1989) for the details of the Kaplanian view of indexicals.

(DA2′) altogether. To illustrate this point, consider a variation of the afore-mentioned UFO example. There are two aircrafts, U_1 and U_2, in the vicinity of the sky I am observing. But this time I do not observe one craft after the other. I only watch U_1 and think, 'That moves fast.' Though I did not see U_2, under the circumstances, U_2 could have been in the place of U_1 at the exact moment when I witness U_1, and could have flied and disappeared exactly the way U_1 did. If that had happened, let us suppose, I would have thought to myself, 'That moves fast.' So, there are two tokens of demonstrative thoughts expressed by the sentence, one actual and the other counterfactual. Let us call the actual and the counterfactual thought contents p and q, respectively. According to content externalism, p and q are tokens of two different thoughts, since p stands for a thought about U_1 while q stands for a thought about U_2. Now, suppose that while looking at U_1, I introspectively make a judgment, 'I am thinking that that moves fast.' Then, we would report my second-order judgment by saying that I think that I am thinking that p. Let us stipulate that if I had witnessed U_2 instead, I would have formed the corresponding second-order introspective judgment involving q. This counterfactual second-order judgment is a relevant alternative to the actual second-order judgment involving p, given that I could have witnessed U_2 instead of U_1, and thus that I could have had the thought with the content q instead of the thought with the content p.

Nevertheless, it is natural to assume that I cannot discriminate *a priori* the contents of the two second-order introspective judgments. Compare the above-mentioned UFO example with the original version of the story where I witness the movements of the two aircrafts one after the other, mistakenly believing that they are one and the same. In the original version, imagine that, at each of my observations, I make the second-order introspective judgment, 'I am thinking that that moves fast.' Since I did not know that the aircrafts are not identical, I would think that I made the same judgment twice (or so we could stipulate the story). If I am asked, I would sincerely report that the content of the judgment I made at each time was exactly the same. Here, the actual situation where I make the second-order intro-spective judgment featuring U_2 does not significantly differ from the coun-terfactual situation where I make the same second-order judgment involving q in the above-mentioned variation of the story. Therefore, we could

reasonably infer that, in the above-mentioned variation of the story as well, I would not be able to tell the difference between my actual second-order judgment involving p and the counterfactual second-order judgment involving q. Still, when I make the second-order introspective judgment in the actual situation, the content of my judgment involves p, and not q, since I make this judgment while looking at U_1. Thus, it is clear that, in the actual situation, I think that I am thinking that p, as opposed to thinking that I am thinking that q. This shows that (E') is vulnerable to a counter-example.

The preceding observation shows that I can think a second-order introspective thought with a demonstrative content without necessarily being able to discriminate it from any relevant alternative thought with a different demonstrative content. This is in part because I indefinitely used the demonstrative expression in denoting the perceived object. When I think, 'I am thinking that that moves fast,' my use of the demonstrative expression enables me to refer to the object without attaching any identificatory characteristics to it. Due to this feature, I am guaranteed to be successful in referring to the object that I am in fact referring to. That is, my thought is guaranteed to be about my first-order thought with the U_1 content as opposed to, say, the U_2 content (or any other content, for that matter). I need not be able to distinguish the thought with the U_1 content from any relevant alternative thought such as one with the U_2 content, because when I refer to U_1 with the indefinite use of the demonstrative, the truth condition of my utterance does not require that I successfully refer to U_1.

Furthermore, I want to claim that, in the above-mentioned variation of the UFO story, I can be said to *know* the content of my thought without having the ability to discriminate between the two introspective thoughts. Since I had never seen the UFO I witnessed in this incident before, when I think, 'I am thinking that that moves fast,' I would not take "that" as anything in particular. I would only take it to be *some thing or other*, just as I would take the peach as some peach or other in the fruit store. When I introspectively think, 'I am thinking that that moves fast,' I make a judgment that I am thinking that that (U_1) moves fast—i.e., I make a judgment that I am thinking that p. Following the Burgean approach, this judgment is self-verifying because, in making it, I entertain the thought that p, and

thus am thinking that p. I cannot falsely believe, for example, that I am thinking that q, because, given that I never encountered U_2 before, and thus would not take the flying object I am currently watching *as* any particular thing, there is no ground for me to think that the content of my thought concerns U_2. I cannot misidentify the object in the content of my thought as something else simply because I do not attribute any identificatory property to the object I am witnessing. We can articulate this observation as follows:

(D)   Insofar as S refers to x with the indefinite use of a demonstrative expression, S's judgment that S is thinking that x is F is self-verifying.

Now, suppose I am a devoted epistemologist, and (D) is the conclusion I reached as a result of my academic research on how demonstratives work. For this reason, let us stipulate, I was ready to resort to (D) when I witnessed the UFO incident. If (D) is correct, then when I see the aircraft and think, 'I am thinking that that moves fast,' I judge that I am thinking that that (U_1) moves fast—i.e., I judge that I am thinking that p. This judgment is true and self-verifying, and by virtue of knowing (D), I am entitled to know the truth and the self-verifiability of my judgment. Thus, I can justifiably claim that I know that I am thinking that p, although I admittedly cannot discriminate *a priori* between my actual occurrent thought with the content p and a thought with a relevant alternative content such as q. Thus, the UFO story constitutes a counterexample to (DA2′).

Here my knowledge about the content of my occurrent thought partly depends on my understanding of how the demonstrative works in the statement expressing my thought. Since I am aware of (D), in judging that I am thinking that that moves fast, I know that what I am thinking is about whatever is designated by my indefinite use of the demonstrative expression. I also know that in using the demonstrative, I do not attribute any identificatory property to the referent. For this reason, I know that I cannot be mistaken in designating the referent with my use of the demonstrative expression. Consequently, I am entitled to know that the content of my thought is the very proposition containing the demonstrative, as opposed to an alternative proposition whose content is indistinguishable to me. In

other words, when I know (D), if I judge that I am thinking that *p*, then I know what I am thinking is the content *p*, as opposed to the content *q*, where *p* and *q* are distinct but nonetheless indistinguishable contents to me. This line of reasoning can be suitably extended to accommodate the skeptical view about content externalism involving the slow switch example. Suppose, in the aforementioned slow switch case, Sally is a prominent Burgean scholar who is well aware of the self-verifying nature of basic self-knowledge. She would know that she cannot possibly misidentify the referent of 'water' in uttering the word, whether her current aquatic environments involve water-thoughts or twater-thoughts. Then, when she thinks, 'I am thinking that water is wet,' she knows that she cannot be mistaken about the content of her first-order thought. This is because she knows that there is no possible way she could mistakenly judge that she is thinking that water is wet, when she in fact judges that she is thinking that twater is wet in the twater-environments. Likewise, she knows that there is no possible way she could falsely judge that she is thinking that twater is wet when she in fact judges that she is thinking that water is wet in the water-environments. However, she cannot *ex hypothesi* discriminate between the water-thoughts and the corresponding twater-thoughts. Once again, (DA2′) is falsified.[11]

This completes my argument against the discrimination argument. I now turn to a possible objection to the key idea of my argument, and attempt to defend my argument against it.

4. Demonstrative thoughts and immunity of error through misidentification

The core of my argument lies in the proposition that while thinking a thought where we demonstratively refer to an object without attributing any identificatory property to it, we cannot possibly misidentify it.[12] Along

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[11]   I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for *Organon F* for pressing me to clarify the discussion in this paragraph.

[12]   In particular, my argument involves the impossibility of misidentification in second-order demonstrative thoughts. However, here the impossibility of misidentification ultimately resorts to the impossibility of misidentification in a typical case of

this line of thought, in the preceding UFO example, when I look at the unidentified aircraft and think, 'That moves fast,' there is simply no room for me to misidentify the object, given that I do not take the aircraft as some particular object.[13] To use philosophical jargon, my thought (or judgment) may be said to be "immune to error through misidentification" (IETM, henceforth).

To reject my argument, defenders of the discrimination argument may argue that judgments that demonstratively denote an object are not necessarily IETM. The following example by Sydney Shoemaker may illuminate their purpose.

> Suppose that I am selling neckties, that a customer wants a red necktie, and that I believe I have put a particular red silk necktie on a shelf of the showcase that is visible to the customer but not to me. Putting my hand on a necktie on that shelf, and feeling it to be silk, I might say "This one is red." (Shoemaker 1968, 558)

Shoemaker points out that, in this case, there is a disparity between the intended reference and the actual reference. When the subject utters, "This one is red," he intends to refer to the necktie he believes he put on the shelf earlier, while it is possible that the intended object is not identical to the object he is in fact referring to. So, he can sensibly ask himself, 'There is some red silk necktie on the shelf, but is it *this* one?' In other words, in making the utterance "This one is red," he can possibly make the following inference: "x = the necktie that I put on the shelf; the necktie that I put on the shelf was red; thus, x is red." It might be argued that the fact that this sort of inference is possible indicates the disparity. According to this objection, since this inference clearly involves the identification of the intended reference and the actual reference, surely there is room for misidentification. Consequently, the subject's utterance is not IETM.

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the indefinite use of first-order demonstrative thoughts. For this reason, in this section I will only discuss more plain cases of such impossibility that do not involve the second-order thoughts. However, the discussion in this section can faithfully be applied to the corresponding second-order demonstrative thoughts as well.

[13]   Here, I stipulate that what I am seeing does exist—i.e., I disregard the possibilities that I am daydreaming, hallucinating, and so on.

I think that compatibilists can give at least two answers in response to this objection. First, they may question whether there really is a disparity between the intended reference and the actual reference in Shoemaker's example. Instead, they can say that there may be two different senses of intended reference. Shoemaker speaks of the disparity because the subject intends to refer to the necktie he believes he put on the shelf earlier, but what he actually refers to may not be that necktie. However, it is also correct to say that in uttering "This one is red," the subject intends to refer to the object he is currently touching, and what he is touching is what he is actually referring to at that moment. Thus, the intention of the subject is doubled in this case: he intends to refer to the necktie which he believes he put on the shelf earlier, but at the same time, he intends to refer to the object with which he is currently in tactual contact. We may call the two senses of his intentions descriptive and non-descriptive intentions. In this example, the subject descriptively intends to refer to the necktie he believes he put on the shelf earlier, in the sense that what he intends to refer to is the object that exactly fits the description at hand (namely, "the necktie he believes he put on the shelf earlier"). On the other hand, he non-descriptively intends to refer to what he is currently touching because in this case it is not by virtue of fitting the description that he successfully refers to the intended object: the description does not play any role in his denoting the referent. Speaking of non-descriptive intentions, there is no disparity between the actual and the intended references in Shoemaker's example, since he wishes to refer to the necktie that he is currently in tactual contact with, and he successfully refers to it.

Note that it is non-descriptive intention that is pertinent to my argument against the discrimination argument. My argument appeals to the indefinite use of demonstratives, where the subject's demonstrative expression denotes the object without recourse to any descriptive characterizations. For instance, in the original UFO story, when I look at the UFO and think that that moves fast, I do not refer to the aircraft by attributing any description to it, such as "the shiny flying saucer with irregular patterns." I simply refer to the visually perceived object as "that." By contrast, the subject of Shoemaker's example *takes* the intended object *as* some particular thing: he takes the necktie he is currently touching as the one which he had

put on the shelf earlier. However, this does not entail that there is room for him to misidentify the object. Suppose it turns out that the necktie he is currently touching is actually not the one he put on the shelf earlier. When the subject utters, "This one is red," he does not intend to refer to the object he believes he put on the shelf earlier *no matter what that object is*. Rather, he intends to refer to the object with which he is in contact, falsely believing it is the necktie he put on the shelf earlier. Hence, what he is doing is *ascribing* such-and-such property to the object with which he has a perceptual contact, as opposed to (mis)*identifying* the object with which he is in contact with the object he characterizes with a certain description. As a result, opponents of my argument are misguided in saying that, in Shoemaker's example, the judgment of the subject is not IETM. His judgment may be erroneous: however, if there is an error in his judgment, it would not be due to misidentification; rather it would be due to *misattribution*, because in that case he would be attributing a wrong property to the correctly-identified object.[14] This consideration reveals that Shoemaker's example does no harm to my argument.

Second, even if we grant that not all uses of demonstratives are IETM, certain uses of demonstratives are; and as a canonical case of perceptual demonstrative use, the demonstrative expression used in my argument is IETM. In his discussion on self-reference, Shoemaker (1968, 558) compares the case quoted above with a plain case where the subject points to a red necktie he is seeing and says, "This is red." He acknowledges that in the latter, unlike the former, the subject does not identify the object as some particular thing, and thus there is no room for misidentification. Here we may sensibly ask what causes the difference between the two cases. Why is it that the subject's utterance in the latter is IETM while the same utterance in the former is not? In my view, this is because, in making the utterance in the latter, unlike the former, the subject has a perceptual contact

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[14]   Similarly, in the slow switch case, Sally can be mistaken if she thinks on Twin Earth, 'I am thinking that water is composed of H_2O.' However, in that case, the error occurs because she misattributes the property of her thought: it is not due to misidentification. In fact, Sally would need to accurately represent her first-order thought in order to misattribute a property to it at all. I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for *Organon F* for this point.

with the object in the *relevant* way. This is not to say that the subject in the former is not in *any* way perceptually in contact with the object, since he is clearly in contact with the object tactually. However, the *tactual* contact is not pertinent to his judging the object as a *red* one—it may only be relevant to judging it as a *silky* one. When making a perceptual judgment, to judge that an object has certain color, the subject is required to have visual contact with the object. Touching the necktie is simply irrelevant to telling its color—though, again, it may be relevant to making a judgment about its texture. In this sense, the subject in the former case fails to have the relevant type of perceptual contact with the object. On the other hand, the subject in the latter case has visual contact with the object, and this perceptual contact *is* relevant to his judgment of the object as being red. From this observation, I contend that a demonstrative judgment is IETM if the subject is in the relevant type of perceptual contact with the object in making the judgment, even if not all demonstrative judgments are IETM.[15]

Let us now reconsider the UFO example. We can easily note that I am in the right sort of perceptual contact with the aircraft when I make the judgment that that moves fast, given that I make this judgment on the basis of my *visual* experiences. For instance, I may make this judgment based on how fast it *looks*. As a standard case where we use a demonstrative to denote a perceptually recognized object, this example is analogous to the case where the subject simply looks at a red necktie and says, "This is red." Hence, in making the judgment about the UFO, my use of the demonstrative expression is IETM, whether or not all demonstrative thoughts are IETM.

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[15] In fact, we might argue that it is not surprising that not all demonstrative uses are IETM. It is well-known that Ludwig Wittgenstein (1958, 66–67) once distinguished two uses of the term 'I': 'I' as subject use and 'I' as object use. Among them, it is widely accepted that 'I' as subject use is IETM. It may be argued that the uses of demonstrative terms can be divided in a similar way: the ones that involve the judgment of which the subject has the right sort of perceptual contact with the object, and the ones that do not. In my view, the former is IETM while the latter may not.

5. Conclusion

It is widely held that knowledge requires some sort of discriminability. We may call this requirement the discriminability thesis. The discriminability thesis gives rise to the skeptical view that content externalism is incompatible with self-knowledge of our own thought content. This skepticism is embodied by the discrimination argument, which claims that knowledge of our own thought requires the ability to discriminate between our occurrent thought content and any relevant alternative contents. In this paper, I argued that understanding the nature of the indefinite use of a demonstrative helps us to see that the discriminability thesis does not apply to self-knowledge. In my view, when we demonstratively denote an object without taking it as anything in particular, our second-order judgment about our own thinking, whose content includes the indefinite use of a demonstrative, constitutes knowledge without due discriminability, thereby making a case against the discriminability thesis in terms of our own thoughts. I also showed that this approach can be faithfully applied to handle the skeptical view that references the slow switch case. Given the wide acceptance of the discriminability thesis, my argument is worth noting.

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DISCUSSION NOTE

Response to Kosterec

Daniela Glavaničová*

Miloš Kosterec raised four objections against the analysis of fictional names proposed in my paper on fictional names (see [Kosterec 2018] and [Glavaničová 2017], respectively). The paper was devoted to two analyses of fictional names within Transparent Intensional Logic (TIL). The former was the analysis actually proposed by the founder of TIL Pavel Tichý in his "green bible," *The Foundations of Frege's Logic.* Tichý analysed fictional names in terms of free variables. This analysis was briefly explained and assessed in the paper. The latter analysis was my own, in its very first version. This second analysis made use of Tichý's notion of individual roles (offices, things-to-be). I reminded the reader of the affinity of this analysis to the account of fictional names known as *role realism.*[1]

Kosterec in his discussion of my paper rightly observes that there is some tension between roles as understood in TIL and roles as understood in my paper. While the former is a functional, intensional object, the latter is much closer to an individual concept, which is a hyperintensional object, or to the

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[1]   The most prominent advocates of this position are Wolterstorff (1980), Currie (1990), Lamarque and Olsen (1994) and Lamarque (2009; 2010). Arguably, a version of role realism was also formulated in (Tiedke 2011).

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hyperintensional analysis of (im)possible individuals suggested by Cmorej (2015a, 2015b).[2]

This paper explains the main objection formulated by Kosterec and shows some preliminary evidence in my defence (Section 1). Subsequently, a clarification is made, providing necessary means for responding to Kosterec's worry (Section 2). Subsequently, my analysis in its current state is briefly explained (Section 3). Finally, the paper responds to the main objection formulated by Kosterec (Section 4). As further worries and challenges largely depend on the main objection, I will postpone the response to these other objections until the main objection is thoroughly discussed.

1. The main objection

The main objection formulated by Kosterec was as follows: In TIL, there is only one necessarily empty individual role. As the fictional names are analysed in terms of necessarily empty roles, the very same object is assigned to all fictional names.

I acknowledge that this is true if the notion of roles is precisely the same as the one used in TIL. Yet the reader was reminded several times that this is clearly not so (though, granted, the provided analysis was just a preliminary one). To begin with, I differentiated between hyperintensional, intensional, and extensional occurrences of fictional names (Glavaničová 2017, 397). Moreover, I stated clearly that the proposal requires such a notion of roles that allows for different (constructions of) necessarily empty roles (Glavaničová 2017, 398 and 399).

Above I have said that the employed notion is "much closer" to individual concepts, but haven't said it was "identical." This has been no accident! The upshot is that there are at least two ways how to individuate roles to avoid the problem of ending up with just one necessarily empty role. One of them is employing the notion of hyperoffice, the other is to individuate

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[2]   Some challenges were raised in (Koťátko 2017). A brief suggestion to extend Cmorej's approach to fictional entities can be found in (Zouhar 2017, 134, footnote 3).

roles also in terms of their requisites. However, it needs to be said that the former option seems to be much more plausible if we find ourselves within the framework of TIL, the latter seems to be more plausible if the notion of roles as used in role realism is employed. For roles of role realism can be understood (with possible further corrections, amendments and clarifications) as sets of requisites.

2. The clarification: roles

To keep the matters precise, let me make some clarifications. In the paper under the discussion, I oscillated between three readings of the term role:

(i)   role understood as an intensional object within the TIL hierarchy: a function from possible worlds (and times) to individuals—this is the notion of roles (or offices) as used in TIL community; and this is the notion of roles Kosterec rightly worries I have in mind when speaking about fictional characters;

(ii)   role as construed by role realism, which amounts to a requisite set in TIL— roles in this sense can be understood as sets of essential properties of fictional characters; note, however, that a precise specification of which properties fall into this heading and which do not is not an easy task even in particular cases— and probably is not even a task for a semanticist, but a task for a literary critic; a general procedure for generating these properties is not easier than a procedure for generating truth(s) in fiction; and

(iii) individual concept, a hyperintension (TIL construction) constructing an intensional role.

From now on I will use the term *individual role* for (i), the term *role* for (ii), and the term *individual concept* for (iii).

3. My analysis: the present state

While the paper under discussion contained only some basic ideas of my future account, my chapter (Glavaničová 2018) presents the analysis more clearly, with the focus to the class of standard problems in the area and ways how to account for them. Yet both (Glavaničová 2017) and (Glavaničová 2018) were rather informal, and both oscillated between roles in three different senses explained above.

The proposal in its current, more elaborated state, can be summed up as follows: There are fictional names *de dicto* and fictional names *de re*. De dicto analysis of fictional names is a form of hyperintensional role realism. The sense of a fictional name is an individual concept (a hyperintension) associated with a set of requisites. The requisite set is basically the same thing as a role of role realism (for instance, *being a detective* is a requisite of Sherlock Holmes; *being an unhappily married woman* is a requisite of Thérèse Raquin). While the sense is an abstract entity, the reference, if any, is a concrete person. However, while the sense exists, the reference does not. Moreover, there is (necessarily!) no reference, no full-blooded Sherlock Holmes.[3]

One can formulate two semi-formal analyses within the above setting. The first one is a TIL-friendly analysis. This analysis distinguishes hyperintensional, intensional and extensional occurrences of fictional names.

The second analysis is a simplification of the first analysis that partially departs from standard TIL analyses. The second analysis distinguishes *de dicto* (hyperintensional) and *de re* (extensional) occurrences only. One level disappears, which means that the work done on this level had to be moved "upwards" (hyperintensionality) or "downwards" (extensionality). My suggestion is to move upwards. The work previously done by intensions is thus done by hyperintensions.

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[3]   A similar suggestion (fictional characters being impossible) was made in (Vacek 2018). See also (Vacek 2017) for the framework employed.

4. The response

Now on either of the two analyses explained in the previous section, the Kosterec's worry does not arise. For the individual concept pertaining to the name *Holmes* is different from the individual concept pertaining to *Watson*. I am an individual numerically different from Miloš Kosterec. Similarly, Holmes-concept is numerically different from Watson-concept. Now this distinctness might have different reasons. Probably the best explanation is that the Holmes-concept is joined with a different set of requisites than the Watson-concept. In this way, a crucial usage of roles is made.

Yet at least one worry remains. The notion of requisites was formulated only for things that are at least possible. However, I can reveal that the first attempts to overcome this limitation have been made within the TIL community. Yet still a lot of work remains to be done till we arrive at a hyperintensional notion of requisites which would be sufficient for generating requisites of fictional characters.

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BOOK REVIEW

Kevin Elliott: *A Tapestry of Values: An Introduction to Values in Science*
Oxford University Press, 2017, 208 pages

Shih-Hsun Chen*

1. Introduction. Traditionally, people have subscribed to the belief that scientific research should be as neutral as possible and avoid value influence. For example, a scientific claim would be regarded as misleading if the researchers had adopted an inappropriate methodology to court the interests of industry. It is important to ensure that the conclusion reached by scientific research is objective. This point of view is called the value free ideal (VFI). Ensuring science maintains a value-neutral stance is critically important as sound scientific knowledge informs us about the world and leads to advancements which improve the human condition. It is reasonable to expect that the claims made by scientists are valid and reliable, and do not reflect the disguised interests or values of a minority group. If scientists claim that a chemical substance is harmless to humans below certain doses, we expect this claim is based on a series of rigorous experiments and sound evidence, not merely from fabrications of evidence or as a result of a deliberate attempt to ignore certain results which may lead to a conflict of interest. Society has attributed to science the role of intellectual authority because of its great success in the past. Compared to other non-scientific disciplines (such as astrology), society has greater confidence in scientific claims, and even regards science as the most reasonable means to the acquisition of knowledge.

Despite science being the best road to knowledge about the natural world, there have been many inconsistent scientific claims, such as the safety of genetically modified foods or diet strategies. These disputed findings are presented in the media and are usually accompanied by statements such as "results from

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reliable scientific research." Hence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the confusion.

In this regard, we can ask two questions.

1. Although value free science sounds good in theory, at the practical level, are there ways to avoid the impact of values at all stages of scientific research, especially non-epistemic values, that is, values that do not contribute to the acquisition of knowledge?

2. If it is unavoidable that values have an influence on scientific research, is the VFI approach better than the value-regulating approach?

The value-regulating approach is one where values can influence science appropriately according to the context, and scientists should consider the aspect of value influence when they make decisions on their research. That is, if scientists can't actually avoid the value impact, instead of adhering to VFI, the value-regulating approach seems to be a better option as it demonstrates the objectivity and authority of science.

Elliott provides many case studies in this book to demonstrate that value influence occurs at many stages of scientific research. Instead of trying to avoid value influence when making decisions regarding research, a thorough examination of the value judgments which affect research will help science maintain its objectivity and will enable scientists to meet their moral responsibility.

In comparison to the moral responsibility of scientists advocated by Heather Douglas, that is, scientists as general agents have a responsibility not to make reckless mistakes and then cause some foreseeable harm to others, Elliott extends this moral responsibility and argues that scientists have the responsibility to benefit society, stating:

> [...] given that we as a society provide scientists with a great deal of financial and institutional support, it would be surprising if scientists did not have at least some responsibilities to do their work in a manner that benefits society. Thus, we will find that values have a legitimate role to play in many aspects of science because they help scientists to achieve their goals of serving society. (p.14)

The book review comprises four sections. Section 1 is the introduction, Section 2 introduces the main subjects of the book, Section 3 details the differences between Elliott's approach and VFI, and Section 4 draws the conclusion.

2. Subjects of the book. Elliott provides many examples of modern science (toxicology, biology, environmental science, anthropology) where value effects occur and have a significant impact on society. Elliott focuses on the following five features of scientific research and argues that values play an important role in scientific reasoning: 1. Topics that scientists investigate; 2. The methods scientists use, the assumptions they employ, and the specific questions they ask; 3. The aims of scientific inquiry; 4. How to respond to scientific uncertainty, and 5. How to communicate and frame scientific information.

To elaborate on these five features of scientific research, Elliott compares relevant cases which show that values play an important role in scientific activities, and we can determine which value impacts are appropriate and which are not. One advantage of this book is that, in such an abstract philosophical discussion, Elliott cites many examples (not just the event itself, but detailed information about the context) to help readers capture the importance of the problem quickly. Furthermore, Elliott provides discussion questions on each chapter to help readers reflect on related issues.

Even though most of these examples are policy-related studies, such as FDA's methods for drug toxicity testing and measuring environmental pollution and climate change, Elliott expands the scope of the case studies and claims that value judgments affect all areas of science. Quantum physics, which is removed from our daily lives, often faces the problem of value judgments. In relation to the allocation of research funding and how to convey the results to the public or policymakers, these are also crucial for quantum physicists since it will not be the first choice to fund a scientific project such as quantum physics due to financial considerations.

To provide a more thorough analysis, Elliott suggests the following three conditions to evaluate the appropriateness of the values which may influence science: 1) transparency, that is, scientists should ensure that value influences are made as transparent as possible so that others can analyze the research comprehensively; 2) representative, that is, value influences should be representative of important social and ethical priorities; 3) engagement, that is, the impact of values should be examined carefully by researchers and stakeholders to reflect on their appropriateness. Elliott claims that scientific research that satisfies these three conditions may play the role of authority better than VFI does. Not only that but going by this way can also meet the moral responsibility of scientists.

Traditionally, we would expect scientists to uphold their responsibility by screening out their values. This implies that scientists should uphold their

responsibilities by providing a correct description of the world. Elliott's approach is that it is the responsibility of scientists to not only provide an accurate description of the world, given that scientists often need to make choices in uncertain situations, many of which affect the outcome or can have terrible consequences for society, scientists should ensure that their choices are underpinned by appropriate value judgments in order to meet their moral responsibility.

We doubt whether scientific research will lose its neutrality and thus undermine the authority of science. Of course, we believe that wishful thinking is not acceptable in scientific reasoning. Under the requirement of transparency, we can carry out retrospective work. We can clearly know the details of scientific research, including the judgments made in marginal cases, whether the methodology is accepted by the relevant scientific community, etc., and thus we can thoroughly scrutinize the process of scientific activity.

Elliott's approach (value-regulating approach and the three conditions) seems to be a more appropriate way of dealing with the issue of values impacting on scientific research rather than rejecting the involvement of values and ignoring the real influence of values. In addition, through the two conditions of representativeness and engagement, scientists can play a better role at a practical level, not only providing more appropriate scientific advice (including good communication with stakeholders), but also meeting their moral responsibility.

3. Comparison with VFI. Elliott provides many examples from different fields of science to show that values play a role in scientific research. We can also try to analyze whether particular values are appropriate or not in a specific context. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2, studies on the cognitive differences between males and females will not be a social priority in today's modern world. Regardless of whether there are glaring errors in the research process about gender cognitive differences, such as deliberately ignoring specific evidence, the research results could easily cause confusion in its dissemination via the media, or the results could be manipulated by particular groups.

Research exploring differences in gender cognitive abilities is likely to be magnified or over-interpreted through stereotypes. This is not to say that this kind of research is worthless or wrong. In light of the current situation, information about gender cognitive differences is sensitive and may easily have a significant (harmful) impact on society. Although conducting such research will help us discover some facts about ourselves as human beings, scientists not only

need to be cautious about the accuracy of their research but also need to be careful about their social responsibilities.

Here, we analyze the relation between the position of VFI and the three conditions that Elliott proposes (transparency, representativeness, and engagement). In relation to transparency, whether or not one supports the notion of VFI, it is clear that transparency is an important scientific virtue. Of course, transparency is controversial at some point. For example, the transparency of information related to biological weapons may cause significant harm to public safety. However, in general cases, this is an essential requirement for scientists. Many problematic types of research often lack transparency and establish inappropriate links between evidence and conclusions but cannot be immediately examined.

Supporters of VFI may have some different opinions on the other two conditions: representativeness and engagement. At first glance, Elliott's approach demonstrates that accepting the appropriate influence of values leads to decisions that best meet the priorities of society and stakeholders. However, supporters of VFI may respond by saying that surely a scientist's priority is to conduct accurate research, not to meet the priorities of society and stakeholders.

In the past, there have been several examples of research which has been compromised by political repression or false results, however, if several parties participate in engagement, the shortcomings of compromised research are more likely to become apparent (for more detail refer to Chapter 7). However, it is important to note that VFI is concerned with the satisfaction of epistemic aims, or in other words, improving the accuracy and reliability of research. Obtaining more information from different groups can help scientists to conduct more comprehensive policy-related research. But this does not mean that weighting the tradeoffs of values can improve the accuracy of research. In other words, values cannot play a role as evidence. Academics living in ivory towers are unpopular today, but this does not mean that decisions made by scientists should be based on specific values, such as acceptable values under stakeholder consensus.

This is not to say that Elliott's approach is not concerned about the accuracy of scientific research, rather it attempts to satisfy both epistemic and non-epistemic aims at the same time. From the perspective of objectivity, whether a particular value to guide scientific research can fulfill both epistemic and non-epistemic requirements is still a debate between Elliott's approach and VFI.

In relation to representativeness, which is an issue concerning the social responsibility of scientists, the expectations for scientists in today's society do

not seem to be concerned with merely the rigor of scientific research activities. We expect that scientists will meet some social responsibility in information dissemination, such as how scientists should shape their reports to the public and policymakers, and how to engage in effective communication with society. For example, the use of terminology will have an impact on society. "The greenhouse effect" and "global warming" may cause an unnecessary misunderstanding about the level of severity (for more detail refer to Chapter 6). Strictly speaking, this is not the concern of traditional scientific activities. The main job of scientists is to focus on the accuracy of their research, rather than how to convey scientific messages to laymen. VFI does not focus on message communication. Of course, for supporters of VFI, considerations like how to communicate with the public and policymakers may not be a primary part of the process of research.

4. Conclusion. The influence of values in scientific activities, as reflected in the author's use of the word "tapestry" in the title, is intertwined and complex. In the many detailed case studies presented by Elliott suggest that instead of circumventing value influences, a careful review seems to be a better choice. Finally, it is worth mentioning that in addition to providing research-related advice, it is also invaluable for institutional-level advice. For example, the patent system is one of the main reasons why today's drug markets are so chaotic. We can blame the pharmaceutical factory for producing a lot of "me-too" drugs, but we can still evaluate the current system to see if it is suitable for society. It is not reasonable for us only to ask scientists or the scientific community to take on the whole responsibility. How to conduct reviews and recommendations involves many aspects, including scientists, stakeholders, policies and institutions and this book is a good start for readers to investigate this issue of the impact of values on scientific research.