Chapter Two

The Structure of Appearances

The problem of perception is often treated as a concern with our knowledge of the world around us. Do we have reasons to think that our senses are a reliable guide to the nature of that world? Are there are arguments to show that there must be some 'veil of ideas' between the world and us? If there is such a veil, must we embrace scepticism concerning our claims to knowledge of the world? In contrast, this book takes the root of the problem to lie with our understanding and knowledge of the nature of sensory consciousness. We can make sense of the opposing views about perception, and the ways in which they disagree, only if we see them as making claims about the nature of sensory appearances, and supposing that the claims they wish to make about such states of mind can be grounded in reflection on what experience is like.

The debate here is about what is supposedly obvious to us, but the existence of the dispute shows that it is far from obvious to us exactly what one can claim is obvious. In as much as we have a genuine dispute or disagreement here, we need to find a general framework within which it can take place. Yet, in as much as the various parties all suppose that the theory they offer is obviously correct, it is problematic to find exactly what they can be taken to agree upon. And hence it is difficult to determine what should count as the agreed framework for the dispute.

The aim of this and the following two chapters is to provide such a framework and to place the various disputants in appropriate relation to each other. However the course of this discussion cannot be entirely irenic. I shall argue in what follows that we can only understand certain puzzling aspects of recent debate about phenomenal consciousness and the possible properties of perceptual consciousness through the concerns that I argued in the last chapter animate the different approaches to the problems of perception more narrowly conceived. That there is a commonality here, though, has partly been obscured by the terms in which philosophers have come to debate the nature of phenomenal consciousness. For there has been a tendency for writers to suppose that we can divide and conquer the problematic aspects of the mind by distinguishing its intentional or representational aspects from its qualitative or feeling aspects. At the extreme, the assumption has been that one can offer an account

of each in almost entire independence of the other aspect of mind, and that each is comprehensible in its own terms.

With the mind so conceived, one may wonder, as Richard Rorty does, whether there is a genuinely unified subject matter here. As he complains:

> The attempt to hitch pains and beliefs together seems ad hoc – they don't seem to have anything in common except our refusal to call them 'physical'.[1]

It seems to me that such theories are far removed from phenomenology – perhaps, here I speak only for myself, but I have at least the suspicion that the inner lives of others are as complex, troubling and difficult to articulate as my own. It is no surprise that one may end up with the feeling that the explananda have been lost in the construction of the theory, when confronted with most discussions of the phenomenal and consciousness.

Part of our aim in this discussion will be to gain a clearer understanding of how contentful and qualitative aspects of mind should belong together. In the first half of the paper I raise some problems about how the two are commonly conceived to fit together. First, debate is framed in terms exclusively of notions of representation and subjective quality as if these are exclusive options and exhaustive when we are talking of phenomenal consciousness. Why this should be so is rarely articulated and never defended. Second, although it has become popular to talk of the representational content of perceptual states, and to assume that that has some bearing on the introspective character of experience, we lack a clear account of the connection. Finally, a common way of talking of qualia is confused and equivocal such that a common conception of qualia or subjective qualities is merely chimerical.

In the second half of the chapter, I set out the beginnings of an answer to these problems. When we set the discussion of qualia in the historical context of debate about sense-data we can see that there is an underlying substantive issue about the nature of sensory consciousness and the ways in which a subject can become aware of the qualitative character of his or her own mental states. In turn that gives us the materials with which to understand the core claim of an intentional approach with respect to phenomenal consciousness, and in turn to sketch a framework within which intentional theories of perception and sense-datum theories of the objects of

1. R. Rorty, *Philosophy & the Mirror of Nature* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979) p. 22.

perception can engage in dialogue. In the next chapter, we can then explain the underlying assumptions of this debate.

1. Two Basic Assumptions

Subjective qualities or sensational properties of experience are often introduced by means of an example. So, one might be asked to think about certain bodily sensations, feelings of pain, tickles or itches, orgasms; or one might be asked to reflect on visual after-images; ringing in the ears, the smell of an object. We are also intended to understand the appeal to intentional properties by example. Here, though, the instructions are often more complex. First we are to focus on particular cases of sense perception: cases in which we perceive familiar objects in the world around us, for example, seeing the tree outside one's window, looking at the paper before one, hearing the car backfire in the street. These examples illustrate that some of our sensory experiences relate us to objects in the world around us. The connection with representation or intentional content is then made by noting that the mind relates in judgement or belief to the world independent of mind through its representational powers.

There are two widespread, albeit not universally agreed, assumptions made about the terms of the debate about phenomenal consciousness. The first is that these two sets of properties are entirely disjoint: no subjective quality of experience is an intentional or representational property of experience. This assumption is rarely made explicit and offered a justification, but is commonly implicit in the methods of argument employed. For example, consider a common strategy of debate against purely intentional accounts of experience. Such views seek to explain all aspects of phenomenal consciousness in terms of its representational or intentional properties, how it represents the world to be, together possibly with the kind of attitude that a subject takes towards that content.[2] A common strategy of argument against such views is to argue for the presence of subjective qualities or sensational properties in experience. From this is drawn the conclusion that there are non-representational

2. As already introduced in previous discussion, candidates for pure intentionalism are: (Harman 1990), (Tye 1992) and (Tye 1995), (Dretske 1995).

aspects of experience. Correspondingly, proponents of pure intentionalism take themselves to be committed to denying any role for subjective or sensational elements of perceptual experiences . Yet, if we do not assume that subjective qualities are not representational properties of experience, the dispute would be idle. For merely showing that there are subjective qualities to experience would then leave open whether these are or are not representational aspects of one's state of mind.[3]

The second framing assumption is that the two sets of properties exhaust our options when it comes to giving an account of experience. Again, this assumption is rarely made explicit, and even more rarely defended. Nonetheless, its presence is evidenced by the kind of dispute one finds in discussion of phenomenal consciousness. First, a common strategy of argument against purely subjective accounts of experience, i.e. theories which attempt to explain phenomenal consciousness solely in terms of subjective qualities or sensational properties, is to argue that subjective qualities alone cannot explain the introspective character of experience. As we noted in the last chapter, proponents of intentionalism tend to stress the Transparency of experience: that our experiences are of familiar objects in the mind-independent world around us. These aspects of experience are not explicable directly in terms of subjective qualities of experience, given that the paradigms of subjective experience make reference to mind-dependent qualities or states of affairs. It is then inferred from this that experience must have intentional properties. The inference would not be good unless the only other option to having subjective qualities would be to have intentional properties.

A similar shift is present in the argument against pure intentionalism. One strategy of argument is to argue on more general grounds for the inadequacy of a purely intentional approach, rather than to claim that subjective qualities are manifest in our experience.[4] For example, it is common to argue that we can imagine that two

3. Alex Byrne in 'Intentionalism Defended' suggests that once we construe intentionalism about perception as a supervenience thesis concerning the phenomenal character of experience, then the ascription of sensational properties to experience is entirely consistent with the advocating intentionalism, construed just as the supervenience thesis. As is clear in the text, we are concerned here to attribute a stronger thesis to intentionalism, and consequently one more difficult to defend.

4. Although arguments from inversion as discussed below are the most popular in this area, one should also note Peacocke's 'additional characterization' arguments from (Peacocke 1983), Ch.1. These are criticised in (Harman 1990) and (Tye 1992).

individuals could have colour experience inverted with respect to the other. Imagine, say, that when faced with a red object one experiences what the other person experiences when presented with a green object. And we can imagine this even within the scope of the supposition that the two individuals are the same behaviourally or functionally, or even that they are physically the same. From this conceivability, some philosophers argue that we should also recognise the genuine possibility that the phenomenal character of experience can come apart from its intentional properties. Two individuals may have the same representational properties and yet differ in what their experiences are like.[5] And we then move to the conclusion not only that a pure representational view must be false, but also that some of subjectivism must be true. Yet even if this were a cogent argument for showing pure intentionalism to be false; that alone would not show that there are subjective qualities, unless these two sets of properties exhaust the options. So again, the terms of debate seem to assume that these two sets of properties are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive of the options.

It is unclear how to derive these two assumptions from the methods mentioned above for introducing the relevant terms. First, even if it is obvious that pains or tickles should count as subjective or sensational, it is not obvious that they are thereby non-representational. Moreover, even if one could show that these examples of sensory experience are non-representational, that might not also show that all relevantly similar qualitative aspects of experience are also non-representational. Likewise, that we can find some examples of experience which seem to exemplify subjective aspects, and that we can find others which exemplify representational aspects, do not jointly show that there could not be other interesting facets of experience which are neither subjective nor intentional. To justify the assumptions we need to step beyond paradigm examples of the two sets of properties to discern some underlying principles in terms of which the assumptions can be seen to be justified.

One might respond to this point, by insisting on the importance of introducing the relevant terms only by explicit definition. It is common to assume that we have a handle on what it is for a state of mind to have representational content, and hence

5. The challenge that the inverted spectrum presents functionalism about the mind is explored in (Shoemaker 1984a), and further in (Shoemaker 1984b), and (Shoemaker 1991). For the challenge as one against pure intentionalism see also (Block 1990). [Compare recent discussions of conceivability arguments…]

what it is for a state to possess representational properties. The term 'subjective quality' or 'sensational property' could then be introduced as the complement term. Just such an approach was adopted by Christopher Peacocke in one of his first discussions of perceptual experience:

> Corresponding to the historical distinction between sensation and perception, we can draw a distinction between sensational and representational properties of experience. Representational properties will be properties an experience has in virtue of features of its representational content; while sensational properties will be properties an experience has in virtue of some other aspects – other than its representational content – of what it is like to have that experience.[6]

It is built in to the definition of 'sensational property' that it is a non-representational aspect of experience, and furthermore that is all that is built into it, so there is no option of having something which is non-representational yet non-sensational if we employ the definition. Peacocke's approach, therefore, seems to avoid the issue raised above.

The problem with this is already revealed in the first sentence of this quotation, that the definition in question is intended to mirror the historical distinction between sensation and perception. We can find such definitions useful only where we can tell that they apply appropriately. We can determine whether there must be sensational properties in a given case only where we can determine that two experiences must differ in some way other than representationally. So we need some operational test of when two experiences have the same representational properties. This cannot be provided by definition alone. Likewise, the term sensational property will only echo the sensation side of the historical divide if on the whole it picks up only cases that one would already think of as being cases of mere sensation or subjective quality. And so this takes us back to the more common form of introducing the terms, and the problems that faces.

The assumptions in question are not evident truths that we are immediately moved

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6. (Peacocke 1983), p.5. Peacocke rarely discusses sensational properties in later work (for one example see 'Depiction'; otherwise see footnote x in *A Study of Concepts*). Nor has he responded in print to criticisms of his positive arguments for their existence. Nonetheless he has made clear both that he continues to be committed to their existence but also that he does not mean to restrict the representational content or properties of experience to what I define below as representational.

to assent to. But I do not think that they are simply gratuitous claims without any justification. The justification, it is true, is not to be found in any of the explicit discussions of phenomenal consciousness which employ the terms. Rather, to understand them, we need to locate this debate within a wider context: namely those of the problems of perception we raised in the last chapter.

Prior to that, though, there are puzzles to be raised both about the conception of intentional properties or content of experience and about its subjective or sensational aspects.

2. Representation and Experience

How should we think of the representational, or intentional, content of experience as bearing on phenomenal consciousness? Peacocke, in the passage quoted above, talks of representational properties as being those an experience has in virtue of its content. Although the passage implies that there is some connection with the what-it-is-like properties of experience, no explicit link is made clear.

Someone who held to a purely subjective conception of experience could claim that there is a correspondence between the intentional content of experience and the phenomenal qualities or qualia of the experience. When Block writes of it being possible that we could discover that the phenomenal feel of experience is explained by its representational properties, he clearly assumes that there is not obvious to us that there is any connection here, but that nonetheless one could discover it.[7] Presumably those who wish to offer a representational account of experience would not accept this conception of the link between intentional properties and the phenomenal feel of experience. So it cannot be enough simply to say that intentional properties determine or constitute the what it is like properties, we have to be given some account of how that may be so.[8]

Now there may be some temptation to suppose that it is simply obvious to us that there are representational properties of our experience and that we are aware of them as such. Just such a stance is suggested in Michael Tye's discussion of visual qualia when

7. (Block 1995).
8. Again one should note the exception to this in Byrne, who focuses on merely a supervenience thesis.

he discusses introspective arguments for or against such qualities of experience:

> Standing on the beach in Santa Barbara a couple of summers ago on a bright, sunny day, I found myself transfixed by the intense blue of the Pacific Ocean. Was I not here delighting in the phenomenal aspects of my visual experience? And if I was, doesn't this show that there are visual qualia?
>
> I am not convinced… I experienced blue as a property of the ocean not as a property of my experience. My experience itself certainly wasn't blue. Rather it was an experience that represented the ocean as blue. What I was really delighting in, then, were specific aspects of the content of my experience. It was the content, not anything else, that was immediately accessible to my consciousness and that had aspects that were so pleasing…[9]

Tye denies that we are aware of visual qualia as such, according to him we are only aware of the blue of the ocean not the blue of one's experience. In addition he makes a positive claim about what we are aware of. He claims that we delight in and have access to the content of consciousness. Tye uses the term 'content' in the modern sense in which it combines with 'representational' or 'propositional', as a term which picks up on what otherwise is talked of in terms of propositions. This contrasts with an older tradition of talk of content in contrast with form, and also talk of the contents of consciousness or the mind.[10] In as much as one is aware of the Pacific Ocean and its blue colour through seeing it and in reflecting on one's conscious experience of them, these are both contents of the mind or consciousness in this older sense. But it not at all clear that they count as contents or aspects of content in the modern sense of 'content', meaning propositional or intentional content. On many views of the latter we need sharply to distinguish between contents and what the contents are of or about.[11] Given such conceptions of content, delighting in the blue of the ocean will *not* be

9. (Tye 1992), p.160; cf. (Harman 1990), p. 39. Note that in his more recent work, Tye has qualified his claim that introspection supports Transparency, as we shall discuss later: see, 'On Moderation in Matters Phenomenal'.

10. Cf. (Frege 1977), pp.14-15; (Schlick 1979).

11. This is clearly the case on views which take contents to be pure abstract entities, such as Fregean views, which are particularly insistent on distinguishing entities at the level of reference, what contents are about, and entities at the level of sense, such as contents themselves. The distinction also needs to be in play on nominalist views of content which grant the existence of token utterances, inscriptions or believings and relations of having the same content, but no entities which are contents.

delighting in an aspect of the content of the experience. It is true that if one endorses a 'Russellian' conception of propositional content, one might make some sense of taking the objects and properties that the content is about as its literal constituents.[12] In that case, one might endorse the thought that one delighted in an aspect of content, but unless we also assume that in being aware of a constituent of a content one is thereby aware of the content, it still won't follow from being aware of the ocean and its blueness that the experience's 'content is immediately accessible' to one's consciousness.

Indeed, one might complain not only that is it not clear that, in being aware of the ocean and its colour, one is aware of the experience's representational properties, but also that the only obvious candidate examples of being aware of representational properties would seem to land us back with the kind of view that Tye wishes to oppose.[13] When I look at a notice on the wall, I may come to be aware that it informs me that the management reserve the right of admission, and hence come to be aware of the representational properties or content of the sign. When I look at a postcard of Trafalgar Square, I may see that it depicts hoards of tourists there, and hence come to be aware of its representational properties. In both of these cases of awareness of public representations, I come to be aware of the item's representational properties through also being aware of some of its non-representational properties, including those properties which act as a medium for this representation. But if this applied also to the case of awareness of one's own representational states of mind, then we would be back with the picture that Tye is keen to reject, on which awareness of how one's experience represents the environment as being is mediated through awareness of some of the properties in virtue of which it represents them, and that the mediating properties are themselves non-representational aspects of experience.

Tye's complaint is best seen as a combination of two claims: an expression of what we have labelled, Transparency, that the objects of experience include the very mind-independent objects we take ourselves to perceive in the world around us. This is a positive observation about experience, though Tye does not emphasise this aspect of

12. Here I have in mind accounts closely related to Kaplan's notion of content in (Kaplan 1990); for an application of such an approach explicitly to the case of perception see Thau.

13. Note, of course, that the representational properties of the experience are properties of the experience, and hence not to be identified with the ocean or any of its properties. They must rather be the properties the experience has of representing things to be a certain way.

what he wants to claim. Rather the accent is on an additional, negative claim that nothing else is apparent to us than the features of the external scene. Tye's observation is simply one of lack of any evidence for such features of experience in contrast to the familiar objects in the world around us and the qualities that they typically manifest to us. And it is so, as long as one assumes that visual qualia or subjective qualities would be such as to be evident to introspection as distinct from the features we are inclined to ascribe to objects in our environment.

But the connection between Transparency and the truth of intentionalism remains obscure. No account has yet been given of why experience should be transparent if it possesses an intentional content. The answer, I shall suggest below, lies in a common conception that both intentional theories of perception and sense-datum theories share. That it is natural to think of experience in this way, though, has somewhat been obscured by discussions of the subjective qualities of experience, or qualia. So our next task is to turn to the problems with this talk of qualia or sensational properties of experience.

3. Equivocating Qualia

The problem with attributing intentional content to sensory states is understanding how such content should have a bearing on the phenomenal character of such states. At first sight, it may seem as if no such problem should attend the notions of sensational or subjective quality, or qualia. For, as we noted above, these terms are simply meant to be introduced through suitable ostension of one's phenomenal experience. However, an even more intransigent problem attends these notions than that of intentional content. With suitable supplementation we can see what claims an intentionalist is, or ought to be, making about the nature of experience. But there is no simple such route to understanding talk of qualia, or so I shall argue. For the commonest ways of talking of this notion are simply equivocal, and the equivocation hides a substantive problem, which theorists avoid addressing.

First we must be clear on what we have in mind in talk of qualia. Are these supposed simply to be qualities of what it is like to sense, or is the intention to pick out something more narrowly? Episodes of perceiving – catching a glimpse of scarlet brocade; choking on the acrid taste of burnt meat; hearing the distant rumble of trains;

feeling nylon velvet between one's fingertips – all join feelings, both bodily feelings and sensation and feelings of emotion, imagining, musing or pondering, recalling or trying to recall some name, face or event as elements of the stream of consciousness. Together these comprise what has come to be called 'phenomenal consciousness'.[14] In this, they contrast with aspects of mind, such as states of knowledge, belief, intention, desire, and emotion, which are non-episodic.

It has been common to claim that what is distinctive of consciousness is that there is something it is like for a subject to be so. And it has been common to associate this in particular with episodes of phenomenal consciousness.[15] There certainly is a perfectly common sense usage of the idiom which does not require that the complement explicitly pick out any mental phenomenon. For example, one can say 'You don't know what it is like to be the third son of the twenty-fifth Earl of Bladon'. Yet even in these cases the idiom can be used in a primary sense only of things which are the subject of experience, and the claim that there is something it is like to be *F* requires some, if indirect, connection with experience or phenomenal episodes, or of the pattern of such states. A speaker may, for example, claim, 'You don't know what it is like to have had your internal organs inspected and re-arranged by aliens', implying that the speaker, unlike the audience, does have knowledge of this. Yet it can be part of the story in question that the speaker was anaesthetised the whole time through this troubling incident. It may be appropriate for the speaker to claim that there is something here to know about what it is like to be so simply because supposed knowledge now of the fact that one has so been treated impacts on how the speaker feels about his life and place in the world. The event in question has made an impact on the general pattern or course of the individual's life, and hence there is something that it is like for one's life to be so which is allegedly saliently different from the character of other people's lives.

With the usage that concerns the debate about phenomenal consciousness, talk of what it is like to see a burning sunset, or to savour the smell of white truffle, or to release a tense muscle, is to be taken as talking directly about features of the

14. (Block 1993) introduces the concept of phenomenal consciousness in contrast to access consciousness; (Block 1995) and (Block 1998) accuse various philosophers and empirical researchers into consciousness of conflating the two concepts. In addition see (Lormand 1996).

15. Cf. (Block 1994), p. 211, (Tye 1995), p.3, (Lormand 1996), p. 242, (Chalmers 1996), p.4.

phenomenal episode in question, and not just indirectly to indicate that the event in question has some impact on such episodes. With this somewhat stipulative usage the hand, the assumption is that there are properties or qualities of how one's experiential episodes are for one which are directly picked out by talk of the experience being one which is 'of' these various objects – the entities, events or qualities by which we pick the episode out.

We can make some sense of this restricted usage genuinely picking out some aspect of what it is like for one to see, taste or feel; to suffer an illusion or hallucination of these; to imagine something; or to feel rage. On the other hand, it is less clear that it makes sense to claim that there is something it is like to know or believe that the land mass of North America is greater than that of the British Isles, or to prefer spinach to broccoli.[16] Matters are more delicate yet in the case of conscious thinking or deliberating. It is not absurd to suppose that in any given episode of thinking, there is something it is like for one then so to be thinking. After all our episodes of deliberating about problems, or allowing our thoughts to drift through day dreams can occupy the stream of consciousness. At the same time, though, we don't expect that there need be anything interesting in common across different episodes of thinking which involve the very same thoughts. I might, for example, contemplate the fact that the average rainfall in August is less than ½ inch through visualising a parched sports field, or I might sub-vocalise the English sentence which expresses this thought. Again, the thought might simply strike me, as I look out at a rainy, wind-swept October afternoon. So, to pick out an episode of thinking as one of thinking the thought that the average rainfall in August is less than ½ inch, is not to indicate any salient feature of what the thinking is like in which it is the same or different from any other phenomenal episode.

The contrast here might be explained on the basis of an assumption that goes with the stipulative usage: when we are focused on the case of sensory episodes in particular, but also perhaps feelings and imaginings, our descriptions of them in terms of what it is like for the subject so to experience offer classifications of them as experiential kinds which pick up salient samenesses and differences across the various cases.[17]

Now there is a usage of the term 'qualia' where it is intended broadly to pick out this

16. Cf. (Lormand 1996).

range of similarities and differences which categorise our experiential episodes. When the term is being employed in this sense, it is generally assumed that one cannot deny that there are qualia without simply denying that we are phenomenally conscious. So, for example, David Chalmers writes:

> …a mental state is conscious if there is something it is like to be in that mental state. To put it another way, we can say that a mental state is conscious if it has a qualitative feel—an associated quality of experience. These phenomenal feels are also known as phenomenal qualities, or *qualia* for short.[18]

In so using the term, Chalmers wishes to remain neutral about what the status of qualia are, and whether they are identical or distinct from representational properties of the mind.

It is also sometimes suggested that the existence of qualia, as so understood, is problematic for a purely physicalist conception of the mind. There are at least two challenges made here. The first, and stronger, claim is that phenomenal consciousness and physical properties are entirely distinct: we can tell that it is possible both for objects physically similar to us to exist without phenomenal consciousness, and for things to be phenomenally conscious while lacking our physical properties.[19] The second claim is that we can find no explanation of how phenomenal consciousness could have arisen out of the arrangement and interaction of purely physical phenomena.[20] One common assumption of the debate is that what is problematic

17. Is there a way of picking out exactly when one has an example of such a usage rather than not? One might be inclined to highlight cases of reporting on the supposedly sensory or observable qualities of the world, so talk of what it is like to experience red, or experience a red patch ought to qualify. But of course there are many different ways of experiencing red. Suppose for example, one sees the surface of a table under dappled lighting and sees the surface as of a constant red hue. Is there just one way which picks out a constant experiential aspect which one speaks of by saying that this is an experience as of red?
18. (Chalmers 1996), p.4. We can trace this usage back to Peirce—cf. ‘There is a distinctive *quale* to every combination of sensation…a peculiar *quale* to every day and every week—a peculiar *quale* to my whole personal consciousness.’ (Peirce 1898), par. 223 [LOOK THIS UP].
19. See (Kripke 1980), lect. 3 for a very influential form of this argument. It has also been argued that distinctness is shown through the so-called ‘knowledge argument’ that knowledge of all the physical facts would not be knowledge of all the facts, see (Jackson 1982).
20. For a very clear statement of this argument see (Levine 1983). It is a nice question whether this is one of the concerns of Nagel in (Nagel 1979).

about phenomenal consciousness here does not carry over to the intentional or representational aspects of mind and associated attitudes. Although there is no generally agreed physicalist account of intentional or representational properties, few think that there are insurmountable problems to showing how creatures with such properties can arise from a purely physical origin.

In relation to the latter assumption, the term 'qualia' is often used in a narrower sense to mean explicitly non-representational properties of consciousness, the kind of subjective qualities we mentioned at the outset of this chapter. So in the discussion we quoted above from Tye where we find him denying that there are visual qualia, he is not intending to deny that we have visual consciousness.[21] Rather he denies that there are 'intrinsic, introspectively accessible' properties of visual experience which are distinct from such experience's representational content. In this narrower sense, the term 'qualia' is used to contrast with representational content and properties, often as a matter of definition.[22] In contrast, those who use it only in the broad sense do not take it to be definitional that qualia are non-representational, but rather suppose that it is a matter of argument or further reflection whether qualia are or can arise out of the representational properties of experience.

It is an interesting question why in different authors the term 'qualia' should commute between a supposedly neutral term for aspects of phenomenal consciousness and a particular conception of what those aspects amount to. In part, one might suppose that this is another instance of the general problem of disagreements about the nature of sensory consciousness. Presumably, some suppose that it is just obvious that there are non-representational aspects of experience. Alternatively, they may think that in attending to the aspects of experience in virtue of which there is something it is like to be so we are attending to non-representational aspects.

What this reflects, even about the term in its broader use, is that we are to try to fix on its meaning by reflecting on our own cases. So Ned Block suggests, 'There is no non-circular definition to be offered; the best that can be done is the offering of synonyms, examples and one or another type of pointing to the phenomenon.'[23] The

21. (Tye 1992), p. 158.
22. Arguably this usage traces back to CI Lewis, see (Lewis 1929). Although, as we shall see below, there is an interpretative difficulty in mapping recent discussions onto older debates.

assumption here is that, with appropriate enough context, it should just be obvious to the reader what qualia are.

That cannot be, however, for the most common usage of the term 'qualia' is equivocal, and the most familiar means of elucidating the term, by a kind of inner ostension of one's conscious states simply fails to pick out a unique target. Furthermore, lying behind this confusion is a long-standing dispute about the nature of experience and our knowledge of it.

We can trace the equivocation to the way in which we are introduced to the term. A notable such example is provided by Daniel Dennett in a discussion generally hostile to the notion of qualia. Despite Dennett's hostility to the notion, his opponents have been happy to accept his initial elucidation of the notion right at the outset of his paper. It is worth looking at in some detail:

> 'Qualia' is an unfamiliar term for something that could not be more familiar to each of us: the *ways things seem to us*… Look at a glass of milk at sunset; *the way it looks to you*—the particular, personal, subjective visual quality of the glass of milk is the *quale* of your visual experience at the moment. The *way the milk tastes to you then* is another, gustatory *quale*, and *how it sounds to you* as you swallow is an auditory *quale*. These various 'properties of conscious experience' are prime examples of *qualia*.[24]

Now this gloss on what Dennett complains is 'frustratingly elusive' contains a central, and, I shall argue, significant problem: Dennett equivocates on the term 'qualia' even as he introduces it. As the last sentence of the passage makes clear, and as the course of the paper it comes from also indicates, Dennett assumes, with many other authors, that we should use the term 'qualia' to pick out 'properties of experience'. We may think of seeing a glass, or more neutrally having a visual experience as of a glass, as being a state of mind, the having of an experience. Someone who has such an experience thereby has the property of having an experience of a glass. Qualia are then to be seen either as properties of properties—that is what it is like to have an experience of a glass is a property of having the property of having an experience of the glass. Alternatively, we can think of the ways in which things seem to one as further determinations or specifications of the determinable, having an experience. Each of the specific experiences that you might have: the feeling of the hardness of the chair beneath you,

23. (Block 1994), p.210.
24. (Dennett 1988), p.42.

hearing the rustle of frustration around you, each are different ways of having an experience. Qualia are then just these different ways of having experience.

However, Dennett does not stick with this usage, for the moment he gives us any concrete examples of qualia we seem to shift to something of an entirely different order to that of a property of an experience. For Dennett's examples are themselves not properties of experiences, but properties of the objects we come to perceive. He writes first of the way the glass of milk looks to one, where the object which has the property is itself part of the world around us and not part of the mind, namely a glass. Likewise, it is the particular quantity of milk which tastes some way to one, and the milk, one's throat, (and lack of manners) all together which are responsible for the sound which Dennett picks out as a auditory quale. But surely nothing can both be the property of an object independent of the mind and at the same time a way of having an experience. So Dennett seems to have introduced just the wrong examples to indicate as 'properties of experience'.

It is not difficult to see where the problematic ambiguity is introduced in the discussion. For the phrase 'the ways things seem to us' is itself ambiguous. Dennett, and others, seek to introduce the term 'qualia' by reference to such English locutions for how things look, feel, sound or more generally appear. But the talk which makes explicit how what appears to whom contains an evident complexity which get obscured in the use of such phrases as 'appareances' or 'seeimings'. This complexity allows for abstraction of terms in more than one way. The different instructions for fixing on an example of a quale result from abstracting now in one way, and now in another.

For example, when I tell you:

(1) It looks to Dan as if there is a rosy-hued glass of milk before him

I may intend to emphasise how things are with Dan, and to contrast the fact that Dan has a certain kind of experience with the fact that Mary is asleep, or that Ben has an altogether different kind of experience. So we can imagine that the following underlined aspect of the sentence would be up for substitution in contrasting the way Dan is, with how else he might have been:

(1') It looks to Dan as if there is a rosy-hued glass of milk before him

On the other hand, given that this is in fact a case in which Dan is perceiving the glass

of milk, we might rather be interested in what aspects of the milk are evident to Dan. In this case we may be interested that it is the specific shade that the milk has that is manifest to him, in contrast to the maker's mark on the glass. In that case, the following underlined aspect of the sentence would be open to substitution to contrast ways in which the situation might have differed:

(1")It looks to Dan as if there is a rosy-hued glass of milk before him

So in moving from talk of something appearing *F* to someone, to talk of appearances, qualities of experience or qualia, the loss in complexity of the semantic structure leaves one open to equivocation between properties of what appears and properties of what is appeared to. Just such slippage occurs in the passage quoted from Dennett: within one paragraph we move from properties of experience to properties of the object of experience, the glass of milk, back to properties of experience again.

Dennett is not an isolated example of this shift, but perhaps we can make do with just one other more example. Fred Dretske, like Dennett, is hostile to a tradition of thought which sees qualia as presenting an insuperable problem for a naturalistic account of the mind. In his monograph *Naturalizing the Mind*, Dretske puts forward 'the Representational Thesis' as his account of how the mind can be part of the natural order. The thesis itself consists of two claims: '(1) *All mental facts are representational facts,* and (2) *All representational facts are facts about informational functions*.'[25] When Dretske turns to the issues raised by conscious experience in the third lecture, he makes the following claim:

> The Representational Thesis identifies the qualities of experience – qualia – with the properties objects are represented$_s$ as having.[26]

Whatever one thinks of the Representational Thesis itself, one ought to hesitate before accepting this identity claim as a consequence of it. As the first half of the identity claim makes clear, qualia are assumed to be properties of experiences, properties of properties of one's mind, or ways in which one may come to have an experience. But Dretske, as with most philosophers who ascribe a representational content to

25. (Dretske 1995), p.xiii.
26. *Op. Cit.* p.65: 'represent$_s$' is Dretske's term for sensory or phenomenal representation as opposed to conceptual representation – the details of the distinction he draws has no import for the point made in the text.

experience, supposes that our experiences represent how objects independent of the mind are. Such mind-independent objects cannot have properties which are properties of states of mind. So it is implausible to suppose that our experiences should represent mind-independent objects as having properties of states of mind. Yet this manifest absurdity is what Dretske claims in this passage.

On the other hand, one might think that this claim about identity of what appears to one and what is represented by one's experience falls short of telling us much about what experiences are like. To that extent, Drestke has failed to indicate and how his position differs from those who insist that there are qualia but who reject the Representational Thesis. But the need for Dretske to link up claims about how objects may come to appear to have properties with claims about what our experience can be like is obscured for him by the use of the equivocal term 'qualia'. Since he can now use it in one sense, now in another, it may seem as if he covers all angles at once.

Well, when we try to reconstruct what Dretske might be trying to say here, we can see the same equivocation in play as in the Dennett. Although Dretske starts the sentence by talking about qualities of experience, the only intelligible claim he could be making by the end is one which identifies qualia understood as the properties *objects* appear to have with the properties our experiences *represent* those objects as having. This thesis is perfectly intelligible, even if some people might still be inclined to reject it. So, Dretske seems to equivocate between the beginning of this sentence and the end. What he says avoids absurdity as long as we recognise that he is talking about different things at the beginning and at the end of the sentence.

This example not only increases our sample of equivocal uses, but also directs us towards the significance of this slip of the pen. For it would be mistaken to respond to the problem by claiming that we can easily re-interpret both authors so as to avoid any such equivocation and ambiguity. A charitable response to these problems would no doubt be one which understood both authors as intending strictly just to talk about the properties of what experiences are like when they talk of qualia, and hence to re-interpret any passages where they slip into talking instead of the properties that objects appear to have. But one could undertake this interpretative task only if we could reconstruct the theses put forward solely in terms of properties of experience on the one hand, and properties that objects appear to have on the other. Once we make the distinction we can see that the theories do not offer us any explicit account of how the

two sets of properties are related, even though the equivocation between the two suggests that in interpreting the notion of qualia we are to understand that there should be some important relation between them. So, there seems to be no way of determining exactly what substitution we should make in each case.

The fundamental problem here is that the equivocation hides a substantive issue: how should we conceive the relation between the qualities objects appear to have with the properties of so being appeared to? Now I want to suggest that there is a close connection between this question and the problem we have had spelling out the intended connection between the intentional content of perceptual states and the content of consciousness. But to spell that out more we need to look back to an old problem that belongs in the dusty tradition of debates about sense-data, namely one concerned with the commitments of sense-datum theories of perception and so-called adverbialist responses to them. Embedded within that debate we can discern the two most salient options about the relation between the two sets of properties and the varying attitudes that intentionalists and sense-datum theorists take towards these.

4. Sensing Objects and Ways of Sensing

Consider first a notorious passage from Herbert Price's defence of a sense-datum approach:

> When I see a tomato there is much that I can doubt. I can doubt whether it is a tomato that I am seeing, and not a cleverly painted piece of wax. I can doubt whether there is a material thing there at all… One thing however I cannot doubt: that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape, standing out from a background of other colour-patches, and having a certain visual depth, and that this whole field of colour is presented to my consciousness…that something is red and round then and there I cannot doubt…that it now *exists*, and that *I* am conscious of it – by me at least who am conscious of it this cannot possibly be doubted… This peculiar and ultimate manner of being present to consciousness is called *being given*, and that which is thus present is called a *datum*.[27]

It is common to cite this passage as an example of the kind of unconvincing reasoning that the sense-datum theorists are liable to. For example, Hirst discerns behind this passage an 'argument from differential certainty', one which he has little difficulty in

27. (Price 1932), p.3.

showing is unconvincing. That is, the sense-datum theorist is supposed to reason: a.) I am certain that there is a red, bulgy thing present; b.) I am not certain that there is a tomato present; c.) therefore the red bulgy thing is not a tomato. Of course, even if the first premiss is accepted, the conclusion does not follow – we have here a variant on the ancient masked man fallacy.[28] It is highly doubtful that any such argument is intended by Price, and a more plausible, alternative interpretation of the passage is germane to our current concerns.

First, note that Price, following Moore, means by 'sense-datum' whatever is given to the mind in sensory consciousness. It is not definitional for Price that sense-data are non-physical, so that one is certain that a sense-datum is present does not preclude that the sense-datum should be identical with the tomato or some part of it. Secondly, Price himself is keen to bracket questions about the metaphysics of, and generally the nature of, sense-data until late on in his account. Only in Chapter V, some hundred pages later, does he address the metaphysical status of sense-data. The discussion there is prefaced with the claim that of greatest importance are the relations sense-data stand in, and 'their "presentative" function by which they help make us conscious of…material things'.[29] So that should throw doubt on the thought that the passage is intended to argue for a particular view of whatever it is that is given to the mind. What then is Price's purpose here?

Recall from the last chapter, that Price thinks it absolutely evident and beyond justification that when it appears to him as if there is something brown before him, then there is something brown apparent to him.[30] This is best interpreted, I argued, as Price supposing that this claim is shown to be evidently true by reflection on what one's own episodes of sense experience are like. So, Price supposes that if he gets his readers to reflect on their own visual experience, then each in turn must agree that if it looks to them as if there is something red there, then there is some red thing before them. By asking readers to attend to their own situation, and to pick out whichever red thing they are certain of the presence of, Price supposes he can get them to fix on what

28. The argument is attributed to Price by Hirst, see (Hirst 1959), Ch.2, secs. 2 & 3. On p.32, Hirst admits that 'the conclusion is not explicitly drawn at the time, but it is clearly suggested and is henceforth taken as proved'. Cf. also (Jackson 1977), pp. 11-13.

29. (Price 1932), p.104.

30. (Price 1932), p.63.

he means by 'sense-datum'. For all that is said here, the sense-datum may well be identical with the tomato, but one will be certain of its existence only qua its role as sense-datum, not qua tomato.

That is to say, Price supposes that sensory episodes are essentially relational in structure. They involve: a subject, who apprehends something; the relation of apprehending or being given; and an object, the datum which is apprehended or given in the subject's having of the sensory experience. And Price thinks that these facts about the structure of experience are just evident to one, and open to introspection. Rather than offering his reader an argument for them, Price simply offers a recipe for paying due attention to the obvious.[31] As peculiar as we now find the claims he puts forward in this passage, his method here is really little different from many other authors. After all, as we noted above, most discussions of qualia suppose it obvious that there are such properties.

In addition, and again in common with Moore, Price supposes that our conscious states are 'diaphanous'. As he claims shortly after this passage:

> Are there several different sorts of acquaintance, e.g. sensing, self-consciousness, and contemplation of mental images? I cannot see that there are. The differences seem to be wholly on the side of the data. If so, *a fortiori* there are not different kinds of sensing.[32]

According to Price, the similarities and differences among sensory episodes must just be similarities and differences among the relata involved, since the same relation will be involved in all. With respect to a given subject, their sensory episodes will differ in as much as different data are given, with different characteristics. Furthermore, Price supposes that the existence of some datum and the diaphanous character of experience are both evident to us. So it is plausible to interpret him here as supposing that reflection on one's own sensory episodes not only convinces one of the truth of these claims, but that it does so through revealing the sense-data given to one, their manifest characteristics, and nothing else.

This version of the sense-datum theory, therefore, seems to provide an example of

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31. Compare this with the parallel recipe in Moore, see (Moore 1959), pp.54-5.
32. (Price 1932), p.5. The relevant commitment on Moore's part can be found as early as (Moore 1922), p.25. Moore is cautious here though, for while he claims that at first attention only directs one to the object of consciousness, in the end, one can also notice the relation of being conscious of the object.

one account of how the properties that objects appear to have relate to the properties of being appeared to so. For, on this view, since sameness and difference among one's sensory states is constituted by sameness and difference among sense-data and their characteristics, the properties which such entities appear to have determine one's properties of being appeared to so. Likewise, one's knowledge of what one's experience is like, how it is the same or different from other experiences, derives from one's knowledge of the data of sense, through attending to them and recognising the characteristics that they have. For such a sense-datum theorist, qualia in the sense of properties of being appeared to in a certain way – $qualia_1$, as we might say – are intrinsically connected to the properties which certain entities appear to have, $qualia_2$, as we might say. Likewise our knowledge of $qualia_1$, our knowledge of what our experiences are like, is derivative of our knowledge of what these entities are like, and so our knowledge of $qualia_2$.

If the sense-datum tradition offers us one interpretation of the link between the two notions of qualia, a traditional opponent to sense-datum accounts provides us with a completely contrasting picture of the relation. The main focus of resistance to sense-datum theories has always been on the ontological or existential commitments of such views. For such theories commit us to the existence of strange, non-physical objects of sense. This is comes from the sense-datum tradition adopting an 'act-object' conception of experience, i.e. from claiming that experiential episodes are relational, involving an object being given to the mind. The most prominent opposition to this is so-called adverbialism about sensory states. The epithet for the view here derives from an analogy appealed to by C.J. Ducasse in a critical discussion of Moore on the status of sense-data. Ducasse suggests:

> 'blue,' 'bitter,' 'sweet,' etc., are names not of objects of experience nor of species of objects of experience but of *species of experience itself*. What this means is perhaps made clearest by saying that to sense blue is then to sense *bluely*, just as to dance the waltz is to dance 'waltzily' (i.e., in the manner called 'to waltz') to jump a leap is to jump 'leapily' (i.e., in the manner called to leap) etc.[33]

Although the use of the term 'adverbialism' was at one time widespread, it is less clear what has to be agreed on to be an adverbialist. The most obvious common element is a

33. (Ducasse 1942), pp.232–3.

negative claim, rejecting the ontological commitments of sense-datum theories. Even here, there is some room for disagreement. Price, and Moore initially, insisted that the objects of sense must be independent of our awareness of them, even in the case of illusion and hallucination. The 'act- object' model they advocated, therefore, involved a commitment to non-physical but mind-independent objects of awareness – what Strawson came to call 'objects in the weighty sense'. As we shall see, there are good reasons for a sense-datum theory to reject these elements of the tradition and insist that the non-physical objects of awareness are mind-dependent. If one uses a 'Fregean' criterion of objecthood, such entities will still count as objects: there is no bar on using a singular term for such an entity, and we can think of them as being within the range of first-order quantifiers. Nevertheless, if the 'act-object' conception is supposed simply to be the claim that we are always aware of objects independent of the mind, such a view would count as a form of adverbialism.

Even if we bracket this concern, and narrow adverbialism simply to the denial that experience is a relation to any form of object, we still may not isolate one interesting theoretical position. For intentionalism, as characterised in the last chapter, denies that there is always an actual object of awareness when one has a sensory state. This would be sufficient for the position to be called adverbial on the basis of the denial of the sense-datum approach. Yet adoption of this view does not require one to put any faith in the analogy that Ducasse draws with adverbial modification of action verbs. In contrast to intentionalism, one can find a conception of experience or sensation which relies heavily on the analogy. It is this positive conception for which I shall reserve the label 'adverbialism'. Not only does it make the negative claim, but it offers a picture of sensation and our immediate knowledge of it, which stands in stark contrast to the sense-datum account, and also intentionalism.[34]

The key idea in this picture of sensory episodes is that we should principally think of our experiences as effects upon us by the environment; which effects have a distinctive qualitative character; and are such that they bring about beliefs about the environment.

34. Wilfrid Sellars is often taken to be a defender of adverbialism, and certainly in some respects he would count as a paradigm example. However, his discussions of sensory episodes patently rejects the key assumptions about knowledge of our own sensory states which I focus on here. So he does not count as a target for this discussion. See his (Sellars 1963), and (Sellars 1968), Chs. 1 & 2.

Such states have sufficient dimensions of variation that there can be a reliable correlation between variation in them and variation in the environmental conditions which bring them about. In turn such states will act as the causes of beliefs about the presence of such environmental conditions which reliably correlate with the states of affairs they are about. We can think of our descriptions of experience as being of red, or of green triangles, or of musk, all as indicating the kind of cause which brings them about and correlatively the belief which they could reliably fix. On this view, awareness of the objects of perception and how they appear to be is one thing: the mind is directed out at the world. Attention to one's own experience, when one's attention is directed in at a happening within the mind, is another thing. The experience is a merely a causal intermediary between world and our knowledge of it. Our awareness of experience requires directing attention not at the objects of sense, but rather within the mind.[35]

For example, Chisholm, following Ducasse, suggests that we can think of experience so:

> …in saying 'He is appeared to white,' or 'He senses whitely,' we are not committed to saying that there *is* a thing – an appearance – of which the word 'white,' in its sensible use, designates a property. We are saying, rather, that there is a certain state or process – that of being appeared to, or sensing, or experiencing – and we are using the adjective 'white,' or the adverb 'whitely,' to describe more specifically the way in which the process occurs.[36]

And, Michael Tye, in an earlier incarnation sketching an adverbialist alternative to Frank Jackson's defence of a sense-datum view of vision, indicates the connection between the specific form of the episode or process and the external property:

> [T]he account I favor (in first approximation) is as follows: an even *e* is a sensing *F*-ly if, and only if *e* is a sensing having the qualitative character of sensings which are typically brought about in normal perceivers by their viewing *F* objects in standard circumstances. On this view, the predicate 'is a sensing-redly', for example, really means 'is a sensing with the red qualitative character' where 'red' is a concealed description with a comparative normal cause connotation.[37]

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35. For a further development of adverbialism which takes on the elements described in the text, see (Chisholm 1966), pp.91–98 and (Tye 1984). This approach has its roots in Thomas Reid, see (Reid 1983).
36. Chisholm 1966), Ch.6.

Later, he adds to this:

> It is commonly held that makes a given sensation a sensation of red is the presence within that sensation of a feature which is normally brought about by perceiving red physical objects in standard circumstances. This sort of view provides us with an indirect or extrinsic characterization of sensory redness.[38]

On this conception of adverbialism, the opposition to a sense-datum account takes on the model of sensing being a certain kind of happening to a subject. The various ways we have of characterising such happenings indicate no more than the various determinations of such happening. They are only extrinsically linked to any objects of perception and properties that they have. One is attending to something very different when one attends to one's own experience from what one attends to when one focuses on the objects perceived.

If we leave aside, for the moment, the disagreement about the metaphysics of experience, what is of most interest for us here is the contrasting conception of knowledge of one's experience and what there is to know about. Attention to one's experience is to be contrasted with attention to the world around one, and the properties of the experience are wholly distinct from the properties of objects sensed. The apparent connection between them which is forged by our common use of terms such as 'red' now qualifying objects, now qualifying our sensory states, reflects merely the means we have of picking out the various modes of sensory happening. For Price, there is nothing more to learn of the nature of one's experience than what objects, and what qualities of objects, are given to one. To learn about the properties of one's experience just is to learn what properties objects are presented as having. In contrast, for the adverbialist, properties of one's experience are to be sharply distinguished from properties that objects appear to have. The properties objects appear to have, on the whole, are those which our experiences are liable to cause us to believe that they have. The properties our experiences have, $qualia_1$, are the properties which are responsible for our coming to acquire these beliefs, but they are distinct from the properties that objects appear to have, $qualia_2$. Moreover, our awareness of $qualia_1$ is distinct from our awareness of $qualia_2$.

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37. Tye 1984), pp.204–5.
38. Tye 1984), p.218.

Now this dispute between sense-datum theories and adverbialism offers us competing interpretations of the account we can give of how to interpret the equivocal uses of the single term 'qualia' in the passages quoted earlier from Dennett and Dretske. Furthermore, we can read back this dispute into the claims that both of these philosophers make, so making better sense of the stories told. In Dretske's case, it is clear that the conception of knowledge of experience is closest to the sense-datum approach, although he is surely keen to avoid the metaphysical extravagances of that view. For identifying $qualia_2$ with the properties objects are represented as having will be directly relevant to one's account of $qualia_1$, if one sides with Price. If he assumes with Price that $qualia_2$ determine $qualia_1$, and that we have knowledge of $qualia_1$ through knowledge of $qualia_2$, then he can claim that our knowledge of what experience is like is simply knowledge of how it represents things to be, and hence knowledge of its representational properties. In this way, the identity of $qualia_2$ with properties our experiences represent will be central to the defence of his Representational Thesis.

In Dennett's case, on the other hand, it is clear what we could interpret the passage in either way. For his slip between the two interpretations could be explained in the same way as the Dretske passage. On the other hand, his recipe also fits the adverbialist conception well. If one assumes an adverbialist conception of experience, one will suppose that there are close correlations between properties objects can be perceived to have and the experiences to which those objects give rise. So one assume that thought of the one would be liable to bring to mind the other. Dennett can then be seen as employing a form of metonymy. In mentioning the properties the glass of milk may be perceived to have, he enables his audience to latch on instead to the distinct set of properties which one's experiences would have, were one perceiving the milk. Furthermore, since there is no obvious vocabulary for the qualities of experience so conceived, one might think that this is the most natural and obvious way to introduce such ineffable aspects of the mind into conversation.

Given that there are such opposed interpretations of the recipe on offer, the instructions for fixing the reference of 'qualia' are just inadequate to the task. The instructions provided – simply to direct one's attention inward – are unsuitable to the task of settling which account is the right one. Yet the terms in which philosophers

discuss these matters tend to equivocate, now between talk of properties of experience, now properties of objects. And the ways in which they talk slip between supporting one account of the relation of these properties, and now supporting the other. I suggest it is no accident that these two things come together. As long we simply equivocate over the use of the term 'qualia' we can hide from ourselves the need for answering the difficult question how the properties of experience relate to the properties which things appear to have. We can only make progress here if we can find some vantage point from which to settle the debate between the sense-datum tradition and the adverbialist alternative before returning to the question of qualia.

5. Attending to Things and Attending to Experience

There is a genuine matter of dispute here buried within the equivocating usage, but is there any way to settle the matter? Proper attention to the variety and complexity of our experience, I suggest, quickly indicates that the conception on which there is a total separation between the properties objects appear to have and the properties of what are experience is like is going to be inadequate. This inadequacy is present, but not obvious when we focus just on the simplest descriptions of our experience. If we consider cases in which we are talking just of a visual experience of red, or of a bulgy patch, there may seem to be no reason to suppose that we need a tighter connection between the description of experience and the description of the perceived world than that there is a reliable correlation between variation in the way experience is and the way that its normal environmental trigger is. This might encourage one to suppose that the opposition between the approaches couldn't be grounded simply in reflection on what our experience is like.[39]

This attitude should alter, though, when we consider some more variety in cases, and consider the ways in which both our descriptions of experience, and our ways of interacting with it, can be complex. For in this context, the positive claim that we can in principle separate off the contribution of the qualities of experience itself from the features attributed to our environment becomes much more difficult to make out.

39. Cf. here Chisholm's discussion of the 'phenomenological' objection in (Chisholm 1966), Ch. 6 and Butcharov's riposte in (Butcharov 1980).

Proper attention to experience, I suggest, shows that the adverbialist conception of our knowledge of experience is in the end unintelligible.

To focus on a concrete example, and one not obviously biased by concerns with our current dispute, consider the following passage from a discussion of the nature of shadows by the art theorist Michael Baxandall:

> I am writing this at a table with a wall each side of it, on a day of mixed sun and cloud. The wall on the right is modern, made of brick, and painted white with a matte but even emulsion paint. At the base of the wall the paint is blistering from damp. The wall on the left is much older, rough-cast rendering over undressed sandstone masonry, and there have been various attempts to patch gaps in the rendering with cement of various consistencies. It too is painted white, but with a rougher sand-textured stuff. This is flaking off in places due to an impermeable white flint element in the rough-cast; and in some but not all of these places desultory touching up has been done with a different, slick and clinging white paint, some of it applied by a roller and some boldly by a brush. The conspectus of the walls to left and right is almost as monochrome white, nevertheless…
>
> As the sun comes and goes the various kinds of radiation change level by a large factor, certainly to the point of discomfort – there are windows on three sides – and yet the walls remain white: brightness constancy, of course. But, partly because of these shifts between direct strong light and diffused weak light on the monochrome walls, partly because of a special interest, I am very aware of being in an indescribably intricate ambience of microshadow. It may usually be called texture, a word that somehow invokes the sense of touch, but it consists visually of almost pure shadow – very small self-shadows, derived shadows, and slant/tilt shadings… It is almost purely from shadow that my visual access to the microstructure of the two plane surfaces of the walls derives. I do not think stereopsy is helping much.
>
> What I do not do, or would not be doing but for a special interest, is to attend to the individual microshadows as shadows or as objects of perception in their own right. If I attend to part of a wall I get a sense of its surface quality and that seems enough. Even with a special interest, it takes an effort of will, a decree of the mind, to attend to the same area of wall, to categorize its shadow types, and read the bearing of their lighting. It is not an optical problem of acuity, in this strong light; rather, it seems to go against the grain of the perceptual process…[40]

Baxandall is concerned with the question whether 'we can [attend to individual

40. Baxandall 1995), pp.125–6.

shadows] and at the same time preserve the pattern of our more usual utilisation of the same shadow in the course of normal variously directed perception'.[41] His concern is with the ways in which we can attend to shadows, the difficulty in doing so, and the ways in which our perception of our environment may subtly change as we do so. In the description of his study, we are given familiar types of description of his surroundings, intermingled with observations about the existence and nature of certain types of shadow and visual phenomena, together with some technical commentary on the physical nature of the light array. These three elements mingled together may give one a greater or lesser sense of what it must have been like for Baxandall glancing over his study and staring out at the countryside beyond. The more one knows the kind of room discussed, the more one can link it with one's own knowledge of what it must have been like. The more one follows Baxandall in attempting to attend to elements of the visual array, and discern the structure of shadows, the more one has the sense of what he has done, and how one can do it well or badly. However, the passage is also a bravura display of how one might try to describe a visual scene combining such elements: Baxandall draws our attention at least as much to what he is reporting himself as doing and how he is reporting it, as to what he discerns. We have the sense of what it is like keenly to attend to the visual world, so as to discern various of its elements, and the difficulty and effort involved in drawing out the role of shadow in our visual perception of the world.

One might react to this passage by wondering what bearing it has on the question we are interested in, namely the nature of experience and our first person access to it. One might think that while it tells us much, perhaps more than we wished to know, about what its author perceived that afternoon in the environment around him, it does not tell us about his experience. But such a response, I suggest, would be wrong. What Baxandall does here, and reports himself as doing, is to attend to what it is like for him to look out at the world around him, and attend now to the objects he recognises, now to the shadows by which they come to be visually defined for him.

When we follow the descriptions in this passage of what Baxandall is doing or trying to do, and in turn we ourselves see some surface now as textured and now as covered in skein of shadows, we learn something not only about the object we are attending to but

41. *Op. cit.* p.128.

also how we learn things visually about that object. The relation between the shadows and the texture seem to be ones which are forged within one's experience. It is this type of phenomenological fact which Baxandall focuses on. For this reason, if we are to find anything which deserves the epithet of description of what it is like for one to see, then Baxandall's account deserves such a title. It is, of course, a fragmentary such account, offering only a limited such description, partial in what it highlights and what it omits, and undoubtedly in much of its description highly theory-laden. None of that, I suggest, can take away from the clear sense a reader has, that what Baxandall does in the passage, and can be taken as intending to do, is describe his visual experience of the world, and not merely a description of the objects of perception. But if it is a description of his experience it also has to be a description of the objects he perceives, or takes himself to perceive. For what else could this feature be, if not an aspect of how the wall appears to one to be when one focuses on it now one way, now another?

What does this tell us about how we know what our experiences are like, and what we thereby know? First, the passage articulates much of what the experience is like, while at the same time leaving much unsaid, and perhaps unsayable. So it would be a mistake to suppose that the character of experience is entirely ineffable. Second, Baxandall indicates that he learns things about what it is like for him to view his study by paying careful attention in the way that he does to various features, and we the readers can certainly learn things not only about his inner life, but about our own, through reading the passage, and by following similar procedures. Even if there is a sense in which the character of our own experience is somehow obvious to us, that should not be taken to preclude the possibility that we can make discoveries about what experience is like. Third, and related to the above, learning about one's experience can involve active exploration, primarily of the experienced world around one, but in doing so of one's experience as well. Finally, correlative with the last, attending to what one's experience is like cannot be separated from exploring and attending to features of the world as perceived.

Note that the way we attend to our experiences when we reflect on them involves two distinct ways of attending. One can attend to something simply in thinking about it, as when I attend to the average rainfall in August in thinking that it is less than ½ inch. In general, whatever we are prepared to call an object of thought – be it the things thought about, what one thinks about them, or the proposition one thinks in thinking

these things – we can also take to be an object of attention. Conscious, active thought is simply a mode of attending to the subject matter of such thoughts. When one reflects on one's own state of mind, one attends to it much as one attends to any object of thought.

But we do not think of attention in sense perception in quite the same way. In thought, we are aware of the objects of thought in as much as we are thinking about them, and hence attending to them. In sensory attention, though, we have the sense that we are aware of objects independently of thinking about them. As you read along this line, you may note that there are words ahead of the one your eye rests on at the moment, and that there are lines above, and below this one. Your eyes and your attention shift in turn from one word to the next. Now, as a whim, you might be inclined simply to turn your head away from the page to see what is going on in the world behind you. In that case, you shift your attention to a feature of your environment of which you are not currently aware. But, if you do not turn your head, but simply keep reading along the line, it may seem to you as if your attention is guided from the words that you now focus on, to the next set of words, by shifting among the features of which you are already aware. To the extent that you shift your attention as a matter of voluntary control, rather than having your attention shifted – as when some distraction occurs at the periphery of vision, you seem to have the choice of moving your attention among the range of things of which you are already aware. So in visual perception, focal attention seems to range over objects which are already objects of awareness, and a motive for directing your attention to something, is to find out more. In the sensory case, attention comes with a contrast between the focus of attention, or the foreground, and a background of which one can come to be aware.[42]

Now in the case of reflecting on one's own experience, one attends to one's state of

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42. There is a nice question here as to the correctness of this picture of sensory awareness. For there are at least two lines of empirical research in visual cognition which are discomforting for one who wishes to take this manifest image of the mind seriously. First, there is the now copious discussion of so-called 'change blindness' and 'attentional blink'. This began with work by McConkie in the 1970s, but since Dennett's highlighting of it in *Consciousness Explained* there has been a deluge of work. For attempts to derive the most radical conclusions from empirical results see O'Regan.... Secondly, work by Irvin Rock and associates suggests that there is no awareness of regions of the visual field entirely unattended to, see (Mack and Rock 1998).

mind through directing one's attention over the actual or putative objects of awareness. Whether one is perceiving or merely hallucinating, there is an apparent array of objects for one to direct one's attention across. How things are presented to one as being is surely one aspect of one's current state of mind. Indeed, in a case of hallucination, directing one's attention to what is present will tell one nothing about what is present in one's environment in a case of hallucination. So, for this reason at least, exploiting perceptual attention is a way of coming to know about and attending to one's own experience. When one does so, one can't conceive of what one directs one's attention at as merely a property of one's experience, the way one is affected. For in directing one's attention across a visual scene, one may chose to direct one's attention to the feature on the left, rather than the one to the right. What one selects among are the putative objects of perception, as presented at various apparent locations. We do not think of our own experiences or their properties as spatially arrayed in this way. The only sense that we can make of what one intends to do in attending to one's experience is that one does so through attending to things not taken to be merely properties of the experience.

As the Baxandall passage indicates, just such perceptual attention is exploited in coming to know about one's visual experience. So one cannot in so attending take what one attends to simply to be a way of being modified, as the adverbialist conception of experience claims. In as much as one exploits selective attention in learning about experience, such attention must range over the actual or putative objects of perception. And so attention to experience is not entirely distinct from attending to the objects of sense. To this extent at least, we should side with Price and the sense-datum theorists and not their adverbialist opponents. Of course, to attend to one's own state of mind is not the same thing as attending to some aspect of the world one is interested in, but given that one's state of mind has a certain subject-matter, one can attend to the state of mind, only by attending to that subject-matter. In the case of sensory experience, that requires that one direct one's attention at what is presented to one.

It is easiest to make this point in relation to the case of visual experience, and more generally experience where the subject matter is presented as spatially arrayed. For we clearly do not take entities arrayed spatially to be merely the properties of mind. Yet the conclusion drawn here has much more general application. We have here two contrasting conceptions of experience. On the adverbialist conception, we are to think

of experience as simply being a state of the subject, a way of being modified. We are not to think of this event as intrinsically involving the presentation of anything to the subject, for that would be to import an 'act-object' conception of experience. Instead, experience is to be a modification in the way that being thirteen stone is a way of being modified. What marks the former out from the latter is just that this way of being is a way of being conscious. Its subjectivity is simply a matter of being a mental determination of a subject of consciousness. The subject's own perspective on the state is reflected only at the level of the subject's knowledge of the state. It is shown in the fact that they can come, simply by reflecting on how things are with them, to know what it is like to be so.

The alternative conception of experience places much more weight on the subject of experience, and the subject's viewpoint. On that conception, to have an experience is to have a viewpoint on something. On this picture, experiences are taken intrinsically to possess some subject matter, which is presented to that viewpoint. To understand such experience and what it is like, one has to understand the viewpoint on that subject matter, and hence also to attend to the subject matter as presented to the viewpoint.[43]

So, if we could really just think of our experiences as ways of being affected, where the awareness of a subject matter was not intrinsic to being in such a state, then we would have no reason to reject an adverbialist conception of such states of mind. Perhaps the adverbialist picture is an accurate account of some states of mind. But it does not seem appropriate to the examples of phenomenal consciousness which most interest us here. When we think about sensory states such as visual experience, and more generally experiences of audition, smell, taste, even most bodily sensation, we cannot separate our knowledge of what it is like to be in that state from knowledge of the subject matter presented to one in being in such a state of mind. But that suggests for all such experience that our awareness of what the experience is like is inextricably bound up with knowledge of what is presented to one in having such experience. To know what such experience is like is in part to know how things are presented to one as being.

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43. One can see Nagel's famous discussion of consciousness and physicalism, (Nagel 1979), as principally employing the second conception of experience – it is the role of a subject's point of view within experience which explains why one must adopt a subject's point of view to understand what his experience is like, cf. pp. 166, 172, 173–4.

The adverbialist picture is simply not adequate as an account of perceptual or sensory experience, at least where such experience has a recognisable subject matter to which a subject can direct his or her attention in a non-introspective manner. Adverbialists are principally motivated by metaphysical concerns – specifically through the concern of avoiding any existential commitment to mental items such as sense-data. But when the negative claim that the claims we accept about the nature of experience do not commit us to the existence of such items We need to adopt some account or other which can articulate what it is like to be so in terms of what the subject matter of such states of mind are. And we need some such view which allows for the fact that there is an internal connection between the sameness or difference in character of such states and the sameness and difference in their subject matter.[44]

6. Expression, Ontological Commitment and Introspection

Can we really rest with this conclusion based on just these considerations? Nowhere in our discussion did we establish any ontological claims about the entities that must be present whenever one senses, although we saw that sense-datum theorists such as Price were so committed. The adverbialist's motivation for reconstruing our descriptions of sense experience precisely focused on that concern, and it has not yet been addressed.

Certainly this is the way that the debate has developed in the past. The discussions first between Ducasse and Moore and later between Jackson and Tye (when the latter took the guise of a defender of adverbialism alone and had not yet embraced intentionalism) seem to reflect just such ontological concerns. In *Perception: A Representative Theory*, Jackson argues for the existence of non-physical sense-data on the basis of linguistic analysis. In brief, he argues that our best account of the logical form of statements such as '*X* looks red' is to take it as having the underlying form, '*S* sees a red sense-datum belonging to *X*'; and that we can in general show that colour

44. Block, in (Block 1995), appeals to a claim of Christopher Hill's that attention to our experiences can lead to an alteration in their character (see (Hill 1991), Ch. 5) to argue that phenomenal consciousness may be affected by the intentional properties of experiences. This acknowledgement, however, is not sufficient to answer the observation here that what one's experience is the presentation of is an aspect of what the experience is like – there is no mere causal or nomological connection between the two things.

perception of physical objects is illusory, hence the sense-data in question must be non-physical. In arguing for this position, Jackson makes a number of complaints about the expressive adequacy of adjectival and adverbial paraphrases of such talk of seeing sense-data. Michael Tye's 'The Adverbial Approach to Visual Experience' is a riposte to this which attempts to give a semantics for sensory talk involving adverbial modifiers which meets Jackson's desiderata while avoiding the ontological commitment Jackson argues for.

From the perspective of these debates, the sole concern is over the expressive adequacy of adverbialism measured in a particular way. Namely, that for each sentence which the sense-datum theorist claims describes a distinctively different way in which one's sensory experience can be and which quantifies over or makes reference to objects of awareness, the adverbialist can offer a sentence devoid of such ontological commitment but still differing in truth conditions from any other adverbialist description of experience. That is to say, the adverbialist aims to have at least a one-one mapping from the distinct sense-datum statements to the adverbialist statements. In the context of this struggle, it is tempting to suppose that there cannot be a genuine disagreement with the adverbialist which does not involve asserting some sentence with ontological commitments which the adverbialist does not accept.

This leads both to the thought that there couldn't be a phenomenological objection to adverbialism, or that, if there could be one, a phenomenological observation would simply be to weak an evidential ground to challenge the ontological concerns of the adverbialist. Behind the former thought is the idea that any phenomenological aspect that the opponent fixed on would presumably be one expressible in terms of some statement. If the statement is to be inconsistent with adverbialism, then surely it must take the form of some 'act-object' sentence, or the like. But the whole thrust of the adverbialist challenge is precisely that we can paraphrase all such statements about appearances into a non-act-object form. So there doesn't seem to be any statement the opponent can make which is both expressive of the phenomenological facts and in clear opposition to adverbialism. This, in essence, is Chisholm's position in his 1966 defence of adverbialism. On the other hand, the adverbialist may insist that we should discount introspective or phenomenological objections to adverbialism. For, if the alternative to adverbialism is a sense-datum view, then introspection is being used as evidence for accepting a quite extravagant ontology of non-physical objects. But surely,

no one now supposes that introspection or inner sense can provide the right kind of evidence for such metaphysical extravagance.[45]

Neither of these responses locates what challenge has been made. In the dispute between Ducasse and Moore or Jackson and Tye, the descriptions focused on are those of what we have called the subject matter of the experience. In that context the question becomes, are there any variations in subject matter of sensory experience which cannot be marked by the use of a sentence which lacks the ontological commitment to objects of awareness. That question we have not sought to answer. Our concern is rather with how the adverbialist can conceive of the subject's relation to the subject matter of experience as such. For merely conceding that there is a subject matter to experience to which a subject can direct attention without thereby introspecting seems to require us to conceive of the subject's perspective on experience as taking something like an act-object form. It little matters then whether the sentences used to report the subject matter upon which the subject has a perspective are themselves committal to the existence of objects rather than instances of qualities.

The heart of the introspective challenge is that the adverbialist is in danger of changing the subject: so conceiving of the nature of experience that that could not be what introspection reveals to us. But still does the introspective challenge require that we endorse the ontology of the sense-datum theorists, that we must conceive of all sense experience as actually possessing an act-object structure, with some entity given as the object of sensuous attention whenever one experiences?

Above we argued that the way in which we learn what our experiences are like is by attending first to the objects and features which are presented to us in perception. But there is an obvious problem with this suggestion: we can have perceptual experiences even when we are not perceiving anything in the physical world at all. One might have induced a perfect visual hallucination of a red tomato, rather than simply having the pleasure of seeing one all by itself. Furthermore, one might know full well that that is the position one is in. In such a case, one would not be in a position to scan the elements of the physical scene before one, nor would one take oneself to be in that position. Even in cases of hallucination, there is a way that one's experience is for one, and one can come to know what one's experience is like, yet there are no objects of

45. Cf. Tye, 'The Adverbial Approach to Visual Experience', p.224.

perception for one to attend to.

Nevertheless, the model can still be applied even to this kind of case. For, in as much as an hallucination may be indistinguishable for one from a genuine perception, it will still seem to one as if there is an array of objects there for one to scan and explore. This will not necessarily be banished simply by the knowledge that one is suffering an hallucination, any more than the knowledge one is staring at a M¸ller-Lyer illusion is liable to make one see the lines as entirely equal in length. So in such a situation, one can still be interested in aspects of one's experience, and proceed to explore it by attending to the putative objects of awareness. For the purposes of recounting what experience is like, one needs to enter into the game of supposing that there are entities here for one to attend to, and then go on to proceed as one would were one to take oneself to be perceiving.[46]

That suggests that taking seriously the subject's own perspective on his or her sensory experience as one involving a subject matter to which the subject can attend, and on which the subject reflects in determining how things are experientially, need not in itself be ontologically committing. Rather, in order to articulate the subject's perspective on his or her situation, we need to enter the game or pretence of things being as they would be were one simply to rely on one's experience to drive one's beliefs and judgements – to take one's experience at face value, as McDowell and others have somewhat misleadingly put matters. (For it is not as if experience ever presents us with a face or appearance to be trusted or not as the case varies.)

In relation to debates about the ontological commitments of sentences or statements, this would seem to parallel the suggestion that one should look to a fictionalist construal of the discourse at hand. For of course the question whether the logical form of the sentences employed involves reference to or quantification over certain entities is relevant only if these sentences are asserted or accepted as true. If they are employed within the scope of a pretence, or with an intention to be used as if they were true, then the acceptance relevant to the discourse would not reveal any commitment to the existence of such entities by the participants.

A much more appropriate model is at hand (though one occasionally assimilated to fictionalism in other domains). In the case of talk about numbers, or possible worlds,

46. Cf. here, (Strawson 1979), pp. 43-4.

or even moral facts and properties, the discourse in question has pretension to concern a wider range of reality than belongs with our psychological responses to the world. But in the case of sensory states, with the exception of the early sense-datum theorists, no one supposes that our discourse concerns anything other than our own psychological states. And we are familiar more broadly with the need to be able to talk about the psychological states of individuals in a way which seems to relate them to objects even when there are no such appropriate entities for them to be related to.

A perfectly intelligible conversation in English might proceed as follows: 'James wants a yo-yo from his Aunt and a playhouse from Santa Claus.' 'He's more likely to get what he wants from the former than the latter. At least she exists.' It would be a foolhardy enterprise to suppose that we can reveal the ontological commitments of our descriptions of the mind without first paying due attention to the varieties of use which we put such language to, and a preparedness with it apparently to deny the ontological commitments that would otherwise seem to come with such talk. We are used to the idea that psychological states such as wants or desires can be described in relational form without necessarily being genuine relations. Some writers mark this, somewhat confusingly, by talk of intentional objects – Miss Anscombe and Gil Harman most notably. But these writers do not mean that there are a special class of entities, intentional ones, which stand as the relata of these psychological relations when genuine objects are unsporting enough to take the role. Rather, as Prior complained of Anscombe's discussion in the first place, the talk of intentional objects just highlights the problem of intentionality as exhibited by these psychological states. For we have the combination of a commitment to suppose that, say, a request of someone is the same kind of attitude whether there is a genuine person of whom the request is made; that in the case in which there is a genuine person requested, the attitude can be construed as a relation; that where no appropriate entity exists to be requested, the attitude cannot be construed as a relation.

If one focuses very exactly on the problem of language employing empty singular terms, particularly in contexts used to convey information about the psychological states of thinkers, one finds a host of subtly differing theories with opposed attitudes and more barbed words than reasoned grounds for choosing one option over another. According to some theorists, empty terms are strictly speaking meaningless and any sentence employing such a term is meaningless. For others, the fault of emptiness will

render simple sentences false, but still allow of meaningful discourse. For others, with wilder metaphysical fancies, abstract entities from mere possibilia to fictional entities may be posited as the referents of these words. For all such approaches, however, there needs to be a delicate interplay between the pragmatics of discourse and the semantic approach favoured, together with some conception of the underlying psychology.

For our purposes, though, we can for the moment prescind from specifying the exact form an account should take of the use of empty terms in specifying psychological states. All that we need to emphasise is a feature present in our ordinary discourse, even if it is proscribed in some philosophical conversations, namely the conniving use of empty terms. In response to the adverbialist's ontological qualms, we should insist that our phenomenological observations are intended to do justice to the subject's own perspective on his or her sensory states. Since the subject can only properly articulate how the experience is by making ostensible reference to the objects and features seemingly presented in having such experience, the subject, and us in turn, must connive to use terms as we would if supposing the world to be as perceptually presented, even if we are in fact in a situation in which disbelief or agnosticism on this matter are called for.

There are then two morals to draw from this, I suggest. The first relates to our puzzle about intentionalism. What is the connection between ascribing intentional content to perceptual states and putting a forward claims about what sensory experience is or is not like? A starting point here would be to employ the notions that come from the sense-datum tradition we have been discussing – those of awareness of and sensuous attention to objects, events, or qualities which make up the subject matter of experience. An intentionalist avoids the ontological commitments of a sense-datum theorist if the perspective needed to capture the phenomenology of experience is to be understood within the constraints of capturing the intentional states of a subject. That we need to describe the subject as being aware of *x* or of attending to *y* needn't bring with it any commitment on our part (or necessarily the subject's) to the existence of these items. Rather the way that the experience is for the subject can only properly be articulated by the use of such locutions.

For the intentionalist, then, the intentionality of perceptual consciousness will be reflected in the fact that an adequate description of sensory experience will reflect these general features of talk of intentionality. The intentional content of the sensory

experience can either be identified with what is reported by the use of such locutions when used in a non-ontologically committal manner or alternatively as what grounds the appropriateness of such descriptions.

But the second moral to draw here is that the fact that such locutions allow of a construal in terms amenable to the intentionalist does not require that they be so interpreted, at least if we stick with the overtly relational forms indicating the objects of awareness and attention. For, of course, the sense-datum theorist supposes that one has not properly recognised the nature of sensory experience if one does not realise that such psychological states genuinely have a relational structure, with awareness always relating one to something which actually exists. Yet despite that deep difference of opinion with the intentionalist, the sense-datum theorist can still agree that our initial talk trying to capture the subject's perspective on his or her experience can be stated in ways which are neutral about that ontological disagreement between intentionalism and the sense-datum approach.

Hence in rejecting the adverbialist approach as simply incoherent, once we take it seriously as an attempt to characterise what experience is like, we instead uncover a perspective on experience which is a neutral starting point between intentional theories of perceptual experience and sense-datum approaches to perception.

7. The Structure of Appearances

Once the equivocation in talk of qualia is made explicit, the only way in which we can make progress is to address explicitly the question how we are to relate the subject matter of experience to what it is like so to experience, and what we know of experience through introspection of it. As I have already suggested, it is at this point that the traditional problems of perception should become centre stage. In discussing adverbialism, we have seen that some philosophers within the sense-datum tradition do offer an account of the relation between subject matter and experience. For Price, the phenomenal character of experience is a matter of what sense-data are given to the mind. What one knows of one's experience when one introspects it is what is given to one, and sameness or difference among experiences just is a matter of similarity or difference among the sense-data given.

Of course, this story leads us into a commitment to non-physical objects of sense.

But, as already suggested, it is not at all obvious that accepting that experience has a subject matter is what leads to this ontological commitment. From the subject's perspective it is as if there is an array of objects before them open to attention. An intentionalist may respond to this by insisting that this is to characterise things merely as they are for the subject, and not to indicate necessarily how they really are. This is to suggest that an experience can have a subject matter, even where the things that one would mention in describing that subject matter do not really exist. Just as in describing the feelings or emotions of someone deluded, one might have to mention non-existence concerns and objects.

This, I suggest, provides us with the necessary framework within which to place the traditional debate about the problems of perception. Where the sense-datum tradition and an intentional approach can agree is that in having an experience, there is some way that things are for the subject, that is as presented to the subject. Where the two approaches differ is over the status of that subject matter. They disagree both as to what can be the subject matter of experience and what it is for something so to be given. But at least at the first stage it is possible for each to put forward a putative description of what is before the mind, before then going on to disagree about the status of this.

The appropriate neutrality here arises from an aspect of the intentional approach. In relation to other states of mind, an intentionalist will point out that we often do describe them in terms which appear to be ontologically committing but in relation to which we appear to discharge any such commitment. For the moment, then, in order to specify where they disagree, the sense-datum theorist can agree to use descriptions of experience while bracketing any concern with the ontological commitments.

To avoid the equivocation and ambiguity that dog the term 'qualia', we should introduce an explicit terminology which recognises the complexity in the structure of experience. On the adverbialist picture, knowledge of what one's experience is like is knowledge of the qualities it has and so could share with other experiences, to this extent it is inherently general. Once we admit that introspection of experience reflects its subject matter, then it is more plausible to claim that what a subject of experience most immediately knows in knowing what his experience is like is that subject matter.

Our starting point is a given subject's sensory experience and that aspect which is available to introspective reflection, the proper object of knowing what it is like to be so. Let us call this object of knowledge, the *phenomenal nature* of the particular

episode. In knowing what one's experience is like, one knows the phenomenal nature of that experience, but one can also come to recognise similarities or differences among it and other experiences. Where two distinct experiences are entirely alike in their phenomenal natures, let us say that they share the same *phenomenal character*.

For a sense-datum theorist like Price, what experience is like is determined solely by what sense-data one is aware of. Let us call the objects and qualities manifest to a subject in having an experience, and open to introspection, the *presented elements* and *presented aspects* of experience.

Two experiences will be qualitatively identical where their phenomenal characters are identical (that is, where their phenomenal natures are qualitatively identical). In such a situation, at the very least, the same type of state of affairs will be presented to the subject from the same vantage point. However, we can clearly judge experiences to be similar or different in respect of some feature or aspect and not in respect of another. We can talk of two experiences sharing a phenomenal property where they are similar with respect to some aspect of their phenomenal characters. Similarity or difference in phenomenal character here is tied to the presented elements or aspects associated with that aspect of the phenomenal character. That is to say, two experiences may be similar through each being the presentation to the subject of instances of red or round. They may differ in terms of one presenting a quality that the other does not.

Within this framework we can construe Price's claim that sensory experience is diaphanous as the proposition that sameness and difference of phenomenal character reduces just to sameness and difference in presented elements and aspects. Where two experiences are presentations of sense-data with exactly the same manifest qualities, then the phenomenal characters of those two experiences will be qualitatively identical. As we shall see below, there is reason to question this claim: that is, we will see there is reason to admit that two experiences can have different phenomenal characters despite having the very same presented elements and aspects.

Phenomenal properties as we have introduced the notion are the analogues of what we earlier labelled as $qualia_1$: they are the properties of experience, not the properties that objects appear to have. On the other hand, what we have now called the presented aspects of objects, or putative objects, of awareness play the role of what we labelled, $qualia_2$, the properties objects seem to have, and not the properties of experiences themselves. Given this set up, we can then restate the key claim that adverbialism

understood as a claim about the nature of experience is incoherent because the nature of phenomenal properties and our recognition of how they can be individuated are neither independent of the presented aspects and elements of experience.

The debate between adverbialism and the sense-datum tradition assumes that such claims about the role of presented elements in experience is a dispute about the metaphysics of experience. The principal claim of the discussion above is that this is mistaken. Simply to focus on our understanding and knowledge of what our experiences are like, we need to mark the difference between phenomenal properties and presented elements of experience. As with other aspects of the mind, it is a further question what the metaphysical commitments of this are.

Where we insist that perceptual experience is intentional we wish to leave open the possibility that despite the fact that the psychological episode can only adequately be described by reference to an object of awareness – a glimpse of stocking, a flash of red, the smokiness of a sip of whisky – nonetheless there may strictly be speaking be no such entity of which we are aware. For the intentionalist experience will be describable in apparently relational terms but will not strictly speaking be a relation, or at least not all experiences will be relations to an object of awareness, not those which are mere hallucinations.

The intentionalist and sense-datum theorist can agree on the broad form of description of the structure of appearances – only the adverbialist in *strictu dicto* sets him or herself apart at this stage. Where they disagree is over the metaphysical import of this description, and hence of the underlying metaphysics of perceptual experience. In the last chapter, I suggested that we could see the different approaches as motivated by their different attitudes towards the additional substantive theses of Actualism and Transparency. In the next chapter, we will return to these principles and through the interaction of these with the argument from hallucination address our starting puzzle from this chapter: why intentional theories and sense-datum theories ought to see themselves as in competition with each other.