Philosophy 136
The Philosophy of Perception
Handout 4
Tuesday 13 September 2005

1. The Basis of Location

> (A*) …*x* is a *mediately* located at *t* in region *R1* iff *x* is located in region *R1* at *t*, and there is a region *R2* such that (*R1* ≠ *R2* and)*x* is located in *R1*in virtue of being located in *R2*. An *immediate location of an object* is one that is not mediate; and we can define the relation of *being immediately located in* thus: *x* is immediately located in *R* at *t* iff *x* is immediately located in *R* at *t*…

Suppose one grants:
i.)   Scott is located in London;
ii.)   Scott is located in Britain;
iii.)   London is in Britain, but *denies*
iv.)   (ii) holds in virtue of (i).
Can we show that this 'immediate location' sceptic has gone wrong,? Can we show where they have gone wrong?

(A1) *x* completely occupies a region *R* iff *x* excludes all other material objects entirely distinct from *x* from all parts of *R*
(A2) *x* is located in a region *R** if *x* completely occupies some region *R* which is partly/wholly enclosed within *R** [and *R* and *R** are *C*-related]

(A1) and (A2) help explain our commitment to (A*). Someone who does not deny any of the basic facts about Scott's location in London and the location of London in Britain would seem to be disputing one of these principles. (Note that we have a grasp of what being immediately located is independent of accepting the recursive definition of mediate location.)
Can we appeal to similar principles in the case of immediate and mediate perception?

2. Immediate Perception & How Things Look
Jackson takes the definitional claim to be obvious:

> the application of "I see—" to an opaque, three-dimensional object is definable in terms of its application to a reasonably substantial part, for I am properly said to see an opaque object if I see a reasonably substantial part of it. (p. 19)

What has someone missed who denies this? That is they may agree, i.) you see the table; ii.) you see the table-top; but *deny* that (i) holds in virtue of (ii).
Jackson takes '*x* sees *y*' as primitive in his account of perception, he does not explain in general what it is to see something in virtue of some other facts about either object, or both together. Indeed, in Ch. 4, Jackson explains facts about how things look in terms of facts about what one immediately sees:

> (23) There looks to *S* to be something blue
> …is equivalent to
> (25) *S* immediately sees a blue sense-datum (p.104)

(Jackson assumes that sense-data are non-physical or mental entities which are never misperceived, they do not look to one to be other than they are.) In Ch.7 Jackson explains '*S* sees that *A* is *F*' in terms of '*S* sees *A*'.
So on Jackson's approach there is nothing more to be said than is given in the quotation from p.19 above—*he* cannot explain where the sceptic about immediate perception goes wrong.

Could one construe the connection between seeing and looking differently?
When *S* sees an object *o*, *o* looks some way to *S*
Is there any particular way that *o* must look to *S* in order for *o* to be seen?
Can one read off from how things look to *S* at a time, what objects *S* perceives?

Whether an element of the physical environment is seen by S at a time depends in part on whether the object is visually differentiated from the rest of the environment for S at a time, but the latter condition is both vague and context sensitive. (Cf. Fred Dretske, *Seeing & Knowing*, Ch. II sec. 2.)

3. The Look of Things & the Immediate Objects of Sight
(Immediate) When a group of objects P look some way to S at t, then there is some group of objects I which look some way to S at t such that the way the group of objects P looks to S at t is so in virtue of the group of objects I looking the way that they do to S at t
The immediate objects of perception would then be those which fix the way things look to S.
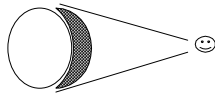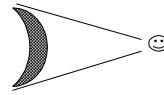
Case 1   Case 2

(A) In Case 1 and Case 2 how things look to the subject are the same.
(B) In Case 1 and Case 2 there are objects seen by the subject in both cases which look the same way
(C) In Case 2, how things look can only depend on how the objects seen in Case 2 look
(D) So the objects seen in Case 2 are immediately seen in both Case 1 and Case 2

NB: it is important to note that there are some objects seen which are the very same particular objects in both Case 1 and Case 2.

> But if we are prepared to admit that there may be, even that there are, *some* cases in which 'delusive and veridical perceptions' really are indistinguishable, does this admission require us to drag in, or even let in sense-data? No. For even if we were to make the prior admission (which we have so far found no reason to make) that in the 'abnormal' cases we perceive sense-data, we should not be obliged to extend this admission to the 'normal' cases too. For why on earth should it *not* be the case that, in some few instances, perceiving one sort of thing is exactly like perceiving another? (J.L. Austin, *Sense & Sensibilia*, p.52.)

If one sees a real duck in one case, case 1', and a decoy duck which is indistinguishable from it in another case, case 2', it does not follow that there is some third thing distinct from the real duck and the decoy duck which one sees on both occasions.

Compare this approach with Snowdon:

> x d-perceives y iff x stands, in virtue of x's perceptual experience, in such a relation to y that, if x could make demonstrative judgements, then it would be possible for x to make the *true* demonstrative judgement 'That is y'. (P.F. Snowdon, 'How to Interpret "Direct Perception"', p.56 in Tim Crane, ed., *The Contents of Experience* (Cambridge: 1992).)

4. Resisting the Distinction
Clarke's challenge:

> The 'HM fact' [the fact that normally we can see no more of a physical object than part of its surface] is not a fact. 'Noting' this 'fact' alters the original situation…producing one in which it is true that all that can be seen of the physical object is a portion of its surface. (Thompson Clarke, 'Seeing Surfaces and Physical Objects', p. 112.)
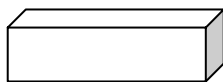
How much of the cheese was nibbled?

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