

Perception and Representation

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I oppose the popular view that the phenomenal character of perceptual experience *consists* in the subject's *representing* the (putative) perceived object as being so-and-so. The account of perceptual experience I favor instead is a version of the "Theory of Appearing" that takes it to be a matter of the perceived object's *appearing* to one as so-and-so, where this does not mean that the subject *takes* or *believes* it to be so-and-so. This plays no part in my criticisms of Representationalism. I mention it only to be up front as to where I stand. My criticism of the Representationalist position is in sections. (1) There is no sufficient reason for positing a representative function for perceptual experience. It doesn't seem on the face of it to be that, and nothing serves in place of such seeming. (2) Even if it did have such a function, it doesn't have the conceptual resources to represent a state of affairs. (3) Even if it did, it is not suited to represent, e.g., a *physical* property of color. (4) Finally, even if I am wrong about the first three points, it is still impossible for the phenomenal character of the perceptual experience to consist in its representing what it does. My central argument for this central claim of the paper is that it is metaphysically, *de re* possible that one have a certain perceptual experience without its presenting any state of affairs. And since all identities hold necessarily, this identity claim fails.

Glossary

Acronyms

1. MR—Mental representation.
2. O—A (perhaps putative) perceived object.
3. PA—Propositional attitude.
4. PE—Basic stratum of perceptual consciousness. This consists in how O looks, or otherwise appears, to S.
5. RTPE -Representative theory of PE. *What it is for O to look ϕ to S is for S's PE to represent O as being ϕ .*
6. S—A subject of perception
7. SOA—State of affairs
8. TA—Theory of Appearing

THESES

- I. Basic features of the MR's involved in PA's.
MR1. MR's represent SOA's.

- MR2. MR's are directly accessible to their subjects, though not typically by way of conscious experience.
- MR3. MR's enable their possessors to cognitively grasp SOA's.
- MR4. MR's are made of up of concepts.
- MR5. MR's exhibit the characteristic marks of intentionality.
- MR6. MR's have their representative function by nature, not convention.

II. Components of RTPE.

- A. PR(perceptual representation)1—PE's have a representative function.
- B. PR2—PE's represent SOA's concerning O.
- C. PR3—PE's represent O as having a *physical* property.
- D. PC (phenomenal character)—The phenomenal content of a PE *consists in* its representing O as having a certain property.

i.

In this paper I will oppose the currently prominent view that the distinctive qualitative character of perceptual experience consists in the subject's (or that experience's) *representing* the (putative) perceived object as being so-and-so. My opposition to mental representation is highly selective. I have no tendency to deny that mental representations play a crucial role in belief, inference, motivation, and thought generally. My target in this paper will be the claim that *the phenomenal character of perceptual experience consists in representations, in what it represents the perceived object as being. (Representational Theory of Perceptual Experience)*. Here are some representative (sic!) formulations.

If, in accordance with the Representational Thesis, we think of all mental facts as representational facts, the quality of experience, how things seem to us at the sensory level, is constituted by the properties things are represented as having. My experience of an object is the totality of ways that object appears to me, and the way an object appears to me is the way my senses represent it. (Dretske 1995, 1)

...for a visual state to have or contain or feature a green quale...is for it to represent greenness—real physical greenness—at some location in the visual field. (Lycan 1996a, 74)

In this essay I will use **Representationalism and Representationism**, without further qualification, as a term for the *Representational Theory of Perceptual Experience*. (Later, for purposes of criticism, the theory will be divided into several components.) To get to my objections to the theory I will have further specify the particular form I will be criticizing, and it will help to appreciate this to set it in the wider context of philosophical theories of perception.

Representational theories of perception were very prominent in the 17th and 18th centuries, and contemporary representationists are closer in some respects to these forebears than they care to admit. But if I were to set out to

delineate the ways in which they are and are not similar, I would have to go into historical figures to such an extent as to prevent me from getting to my chosen topic. So I will restrict my sketch of a background to the 20th century.

The mid-twentieth century in Anglo-American philosophy of perception was dominated by a reaction against the sense datum theories that had been so prominent in the first third of the century. We may think of sense datum theory as the view that perceptual experience is basically a direct awareness of non-physical, private, and, in some sense, “mental” objects that, to oversimplify, actually possess characteristics that external perceived objects appear to have. So when one sees, or seems to see, a red ball, what one is directly aware of is a round red sense datum. Any perception of an external physical ball somehow goes “through” the awareness of the sense datum. There was a great proliferation of views on the status of sense data, as well as on how they are related to external objects that they enable us to (indirectly) perceive. The sense datum theory collapsed under the weight of an impressive accumulation of difficulties in working this out, although there are still philosophers who carry on a determined rear guard action.

Up until the last few decades of the 20th century the opposition to sense datum theory was spearheaded by *adverbialism*, the view that perceptual experience, instead of being a direct awareness of objects (public or private), is a way of being conscious and in this respect on a par with feeling anxious, relieved, or excited and other apparently objectless mental states. This has the advantage of doing justice to the role of sensory experience in perception, while avoiding any commitment to non-physical, private objects of awareness. But adverbialism itself faces serious difficulties. For one thing it conflicts with the apparent fact that what is most distinctive to perceptual experience is the **presentation** of *objects* to consciousness. Perceptual experience doesn't seem at all to be an objectless mode of consciousness like feeling anxious or relieved. This defect is reflected in the artificial (at best) way in which adverbial specifications of sensory consciousness are constructed by taking familiar ways of specifying perceived objects and mechanically turning them into adverbs—sensing *flowering-crab-applely*, *blue spherely*, *bottle of winely*, etc. There are in addition a variety of more technical problems. (See Jackson 1977, 58-72, and Lycan 1987, 83-94.) These difficulties emerge only when thinkers take the adverbial idea with full seriousness. More often, people who think of themselves as adverbialists are content to specify a particular perceptual experience in such ways as “It was just as if I were seeing an apple tree”, without making any serious attempt to spell out just what kind of similarity with veridical perception is being attributed.

In this last gambit it is barely below the surface that adverbialism is designed not only to avoid commitment to sense data, but also to accommo-

date something taken as a sacrosanct datum by virtually every account of perception from the 17th century on—viz., the possibility of a perceptual experience's being of exactly the same intrinsic character in veridical perception and in complete hallucination. This supposed possibility has been thought to render impossible any serious **direct realism**, in which the experience involved in veridical perception is a direct awareness of an external physical object, or, to reverse the direction of description, a direct **presentation** of an external object to the subject's consciousness. For, it is supposed, in an hallucination there is no such presentation; and if the experience involved there is intrinsically just like one in a veridical perception of an external object, then in the latter case as well the experience cannot be constituted as direct realism would have it. An adverbial characterization of the experience that mentions no object at all is in at least as strong a position to realize this desideratum as a sense datum theory that builds a relation to a private object into veridical perception and hallucination alike.

Against this background we can understand the current popularity of representationism. It seems to its proponents to provide a way of enjoying all the desiderata mentioned above. By thinking of the experience involved in an object's looking a certain way, e.g., smooth, as a matter of the subject's having a certain kind of representation of the object as smooth, it takes the experience to be purely intra-mental (and hence capable of being intrinsically the same whether or not there is a real smooth object being perceived), while at the same time accommodating the intuitive object directedness of perceptual experience by construing this as a *representation* of an object as bearing certain characteristics, the representation obtaining whether or not this intentional object turns out to be real and, if it is, whether it is as it is represented as being. At the same time it avoids commitment to an *internal* direct object of awareness (sense datum) that mediates the perception of the external object.

Despite these advantages I do not regard Representationalism as acceptable. This essay is devoted to explaining why. But if I am right about that, where does this leave us, if sense datum theory and adverbialism also fail to make the grade. My candidate for an account of perceptual experience is a strong form of direct realism, the *Theory of Appearing* (TA). This essay is a part of a larger project that is designed to develop and defend TA, including arguments for its superiority over its rivals. (See Alston 1999 for a beginning of this.) Here I will not be involved in any of that, not even arguments for the superiority of TA over Representationism, except for a few incidental remarks. My aim here is to reveal difficulties in the latter. But I can indicate the standpoint from which the criticisms are launched if I give a brief sketch of TA.

It is a form of direct realism that is much stronger than any form that deserves that title only by virtue of denying that in veridical sense perception

anything is *perceived* other than the external perceived object. Even this weak form contrasts with the sense datum theory, but it still is compatible with perceptual experiences, even where veridical, being capable of existing without any object being presented to the subject's awareness. This is shown by the fact that this weak form of direct realism is compatible with adverbialism. TA, by contrast, takes perceptual experience to be irreducibly relational, with one relatum being the subject and the other some object of awareness. To have a certain kind of perceptual experience is for an object to *appear* to the subject as such and such, to look large or moving or droopy or like a trillium.¹ The appearing object is part of what makes the experience what it is. One could not have just that experience without just *that* object's appearing to the subject as it does. Hence, looking forward to the contrast with mental representation, this appearing relation lacks the characteristic marks of what is most commonly today called 'intentionality'. If O looks P to S, then O exists. And if O looks P to S and O=M, then M looks P to S.

In veridical perception² the object in question is something in the external environment. Hallucinatory experience, according to TA, has the same basic ontological structure; it also consists of something's appearing in a certain way to the subject. But, of course, the object will be different from what it would have been had the experience been veridical. If S hallucinates a pink rat, there is no physical pink rat, or rat of any sort, that looks like a pink rat to S; something else does so. In Alston 1999 I discuss several alternative ways of specifying the object that plays this role. Since the focus of this paper is elsewhere, I won't try to go into that here. I will only acknowledge that hallucination constitutes a problem for TA, to be weighed against the problems for Representationalism that I will be discussing in this paper.

I want to emphasize that in saying that TA is the standpoint from which I will be criticizing Representationalism, I don't mean to imply that I will be assuming or relying on TA in the criticisms I make. None of these criticisms depend on TA for whatever force they have. My reason for making my own position (minimally) explicit is that I want to be up front about the sort of view I favor instead of Representationalism.

¹ A reader for this essay gave arguments against the idea that all perceptual experience, even all veridical perceptual experience, has the phenomenology of *objects* appearing *s* so-and-so. For example, we see flashes of light and dense fog. And other sensory modalities, like taste and smell, seem to involve awareness of qualities rather than objects. This provides an opportunity for me to make it explicit that as I use 'object' it is not confined to substantial thing-like items, but ranges over anything that looks, sounds, feels, smells or tastes in a certain way. Thus lights, fog, sounds, and tastes count as 'objects' in this wide sense.

² By 'veridical' here is meant that what is perceived is an extra-mental object, not necessarily that this object is what it perceptually appears to be.

ii.

There are several preliminaries to be gone over before getting down to the business at hand.

1. Since my agenda here is to raise difficulties for Representationalism, I will not address myself to arguments that are given in its support. In the above I made explicit one thing that I take to render the view attractive to many, but that is rarely made explicit in the representationist literature. The closest thing to a widespread substantial argument is that it enables one to give a purely physicalist account of perceptual experience, and, in particular, that it shields us from the fate of countenancing non-physical phenomenal qualities. (Of course, even if this is true, it would be a decisive argument for Representationism only if physicalism is true, or at least well supported, and only if no competing account would have the same advantage.) The supposition that the view makes a physicalist construal possible depends on giving a functionalist account of mental representation and a physicalist account of functional states and processes. All that lies outside the purview of this paper. I will only say that if my contentions in this paper are correct, then if Representationism is required to save us from abandoning physicalism, we must despair of attaining such salvation.

2. Philippics against sense datum theory bulk large in representationalist writings. But a successful refutation of sense datum theory would establish Representationism only if it were the sole promising alternative, and it follows from what I said earlier that I am not at all prepared to admit that. A related, somewhat more general, point that is prominent in writings of representationists is that phenomenal qualities ("qualia") like color, pitch, felt smoothness and roughness are not qualities of experience. No experience is red, smooth, or high pitched. To suppose so is to make a category mistake. Representationists typically present their view as a way of saving us from this mistake. By construing qualia as what experience represents its objects as being, they avoid construing them as qualities of the experiences themselves. But TA also provides an alternative to that construal. On TA the status of qualia is that of *ways in which a perceived object appears* to a subject, what it looks, sounds, feels like. That equally avoids taking experiences to be round or hot.

3. The objections I will consider are directed specifically at Representationalism, at features that are distinctive of that position. Hence I will not be considering objections that apply generally to any view that takes perceptual experience to be purely intra-mental, since these objections are directed equally at sense datum theory and various kinds of adverbialism, indeed at every theory of perception except strong versions of direct realism like TA. I have had my say in opposition to all purely intra-mental accounts of percep-

tual experience in Alston 1990 and 1999, and I will not repeat those strictures here.

4. My opponents in this debate typically advocate a much more general view they sometimes dub “the hegemony of representation”—the view that all mental states and processes are intentional in the sense of having the function of representing something. (See, e.g., Lycan 1996a, 11, 69; 1996b, 81; Dretske 1995, 1.) I will not be concerned here with this sweeping view but will restrict myself to the more specific claim about perceptual experience.

iii.

As previously advertised, I will be criticizing the view that the phenomenal character of PE consists in its representing facts about the perceived object(s). In order to do so effectively I will have to make explicit how we are to understand (1) perceptual experience, (2) the phenomenal character thereof, and (3) mental representation (MR). The first two of these can be dispatched relatively quickly; the third requires more detailed consideration. I will frame these explanations in my own way, but keeping in mind that my aim is to do so in such a way as to give an account that represents how my opponents are thinking of all this, even though it is not always framed exactly as they do.

By ‘perceptual experience’ I refer to whatever mode of consciousness is involved in conscious perception. But in that large sense the term includes too much to precisely zero in on what my targets claim to consist in a representation of the perceived object. In the initial quotations Tye speaks of the “phenomenal character” of perceptual experience, Dretske of “the quality of experience”, and Lycan of “qualia”. I take these different terminologies to be ways of pointing to the same pre-theoretical phenomenon to which their theories are intended to apply. And by using the terms just quoted they clearly mean to be identifying this phenomenon with one aspect or component of the consciousness involved in perception rather than perceptual experience *überhaupt*. I will now proceed to specify a common terminology for specifying this component, terminology that is featured by Dretske and also used by Tye and that, I believe, does not misrepresent what Lycan has in mind.

I begin by focusing on what is most basic and distinctive in perceptual experience. As already intimated, normal adult human perceptual consciousness contains a rich variety of components. The main distinction here is between conceptualized and non-conceptualized aspects. When I see a tree in my front yard I typically see it “as a tree” in the sense of conceptualizing it as a tree (using the concept of tree to structure my awareness of it) rather than as a house or a squirrel or a bird. This is the aspect of perception that is stressed by those who maintain that all perceiving is “perceiving as”, that perception is necessarily conceptually, and perhaps also propositionally, structured. I do not accept any such view. (For my reasons see Alston 1998.) And even

though typical adult perception is conceptually organized, there is a more basic stratum that is nonconceptualized. It is more basic in two ways.

(1) It is what is distinctive of *perceptual* cognition of objects in contrast to abstract thought about them in their absence. Conceptualization and propositionalization of a scene can and does occur outside any perception of it. I can think about, wonder about, remember, be anxious about...that tree when I am not perceiving it. What distinguishes perceptual cognition of objects from all that is its nonconceptual experiential aspect.

We have seen my three opponents use three different ways of specifying this. My choice for a lingua franca here is *how the perceptual object appears to the subject, how it looks, sounds, feels, etc. to the subject*. This way of picking out the “phenomenal” aspect of perceptual experience appears in the initial quote from Dretske, and in Dretske 1995 it is clearly his preferred terminology. It is also used frequently by Tye. Though it is not emphasized by Lycan, I believe that, properly understood (see the immediately following discussion), it can be used to represent the way he is thinking of the matter. But in order for it to do the job of picking out the nonconceptual stratum of perceptual experience, ‘O looks red, droopy, or like a trillium’ must not be construed as ‘S takes O to be red, droopy, or a trillium’, or ‘S sees O as red, droopy, or a trillium’, where the latter is understood as ‘S uses the concept of redness, droopiness, or being a trillium to structure S’s experience’. On such construals looking so-and-so obviously belongs to the conceptual stratum of perceptual experience. Instead we must construe it as ‘looks the way something red (droopy, that is a trillium) would look to a normal visual perceiver standing in the kind of relations in which S stands to O’. In this sense it picks out a way of looking that can obtain whatever concepts S does or does not employ in the perception, and, indeed, whatever concepts S does or does not possess. As such it is eminently fitted to pick out a nonconceptualized component of perceptual experience that could be aptly termed ‘phenomenal’.

Although the demarcation of the ‘phenomenal’ aspect of perceptual experience as a nonconceptual aspect is not explicit in the initial quotations, Dretske and Tye make it explicit that this is the way they are thinking of the matter.

...the sensory experiences of shapes (at the most basic level) do not *require* concepts. In this way, they, and other sensory experiences, have *nonconceptual* contents. (Tye, 1996b, 53)

Experience is a special kind of representation—a nonconceptual form of representation. (Dretske, 995, 1)

And Lycan, in correspondence, has indicated that he goes along with this view.

No doubt, my preference for the ‘appears as so-and-so’ way of referring to the “phenomenal” character of perceptual experience reflects my advocacy of

TA, according to which the *appears* relation is an irreducible relation between subject and object in perception, and has the status of being the basic *theoretical* account of what the nonconceptual stratum of perceptual experience consists in, the status accorded to representations by my opponents. But my use of the ‘appears as-so-and-so’ locution to pick out the “phenomenal content” aspect of perceptual consciousness carries no commitment to TA. It is used simply as a pre-theoretical way of picking out a common phenomenon the nature of which we are investigating. TA takes it as fundamental and not further analyzable, while other views, including Representationalism, take it to be further analyzable in one or another fashion. But (almost) all agree that it is something real, and an important topic for investigation. I also note that my way of picking out the phenomenon has the advantage over such other ways as ‘phenomenal character of experience’, ‘quality of experience’, ‘sensation’, and ‘ quale’ in that it, unlike them, does not tend to suggest that the qualitative characters in question are *characters of the experience itself*, something that I noted above is rejected both by my opponents and myself.

More needs to be said about what is necessary to give my objections to Representationalism as wide a scope as possible. First, my preferred way of picking out phenomenal character is not limited to cases in which there is some existent object that is sensorily appearing in a certain way to the subject. Hence a “perhaps putative” qualifier has to be inserted. The phenomenal character is the way a (perhaps putative) object appears to the subject. (Henceforth, for the sake of concision, I will often omit the ‘putative’ qualifier and tacitly understand it when employing a pre-theoretical way of picking out phenomenal character.) This handles cases like hallucinations in which no external object is appearing in any way to the subject. As briefly indicated earlier, on my TA view every case of perceptual experience is a case of something existing that appears to the subject in a certain way. But, as I just pointed out, my preferred theory of perceptual experience cannot serve to pick out the phenomenon for which both I and representationalists seek to give an account, for none of them accept my theory. Hence the more latitudinarian formula is required.

Another important point is that my criticisms of Representationalism do not lose any of their force when directed at proponents who would reject even the “what the (perhaps) putative object appears as” formula for picking out phenomenal character. Both hard nosed adverbialists and sense datum theorists fall in this category. The former think of phenomenal character as an intrinsic feature of perceptual consciousness rather than even some phenomenologically apparent way a putative object looks, sounds, feels, smells, or tastes. And the sense-datum theorists, while thinking in terms of how objects appear, restrict those objects to non-physical, private objects. The reason these differences in the targets do not make my arguments irrelevant is that

the only thing these arguments assume about the phenomenal character assumed by their targets is that they are not conceptually structured. And this could be assumed by adverbialists and sense datum theorists as well as by those who use the formula I have suggested.

But what about theorists who take the phenomenal character of experience to be conceptually structured? If they embrace Representationalism, are they invulnerable to my objections? Here we must recall that my target is not a representational view of perceptual consciousness generally, but only of its “phenomenal character” or “qualitative distinctiveness”. And I don’t see how one could sensibly distinguish this from other aspects of perceptual consciousness as Dretske, Tye, Lycan, and I do and still be thinking of it as conceptually structured. It would lose its distinction from those other aspects. The terms my opponents and I use to pick out this subject matter for theorizing would be violated if that aspect of perceptual consciousness were itself to be construed as conceptually structured. I can understand someone’s holding that any object perception is necessarily conceptualized, though I reject any such view. But if someone were to attempt to hold this of the aspect of perception that is ascribed one constitution by Representationalists and another by TA, they would not be speaking of that aspect at all. They would have mistaken one problem area for another. This is not to say that one could not hold that perceptual consciousness generally involves a kind of mental representation. I favor such a view myself, since I recognize that perceptual consciousness in its full extent includes perceiving an object as such-and-such and various beliefs, which themselves involve mental representations. But my concern in this essay is with the idea that the phenomenal character of perceptual consciousness is constituted by mental representations. And I do not see how just *that* aspect of perceptual consciousness could be sensibly construed as conceptually organized.

A further terminological note about ‘appear’ is called for. It purchases application across sensory modalities at the cost of perspicuity; we are not accustomed to speak in such general terms of what I am thinking of here. (And, of course, this “phenomenal” use of ‘appears’ is to be distinguished from its sense in ‘It appears that X is a bomber’, which means something like ‘The available evidence supports the judgment that X is a bomber’.) Hence it will facilitate communication if I point out that ‘how O appears to S’ is a determinable the determinates of which include ‘how O *looks* to S’, ‘how O *feels* to S’, ‘how O *sounds* to S’, and so on. From now on I will, for the sake of concreteness and ready intelligibility, restrict myself to vision and identify the basic stratum of PE as how O *looks* to S.

Given all the above, I will henceforward use ‘PE’ as an acronym for the basic nonconceptual component of perceptual experience (not for perceptual experience *überhaupt*), that component construed as the perceptual object,

O's, looking a certain way, ϕ , to the subject, S. And the canonical formulation of the Representational Theory of PE (RTPE) will be:

RTPE: What it is for O to look ϕ to S is for S's PE to represent O as being ϕ .

(2) The other respect in which PE is the basic stratum of perceptual consciousness is that any conceptualization involved will be based on it and presuppose it. This can be brought out most strongly in direct realism. It is the object(s) presented non-conceptually that are conceptualized in certain ways in the conceptual stratum of the perception. If there were no objects to be so conceptualized, there would be no point of application for the concepts, at least not any of the sort we actually have in perception. The other theories of perception have to find more tortuous ways of giving the concepts something to conceptualize. I find their attempts to do so ultimately unsuccessful, but I won't pursue that criticism here.

Now for *mental representation*. Here my aim is to be as clear and explicit as possible about the concept of MR my opponents employ in RTPE, and I fear they are not of much help in this endeavor. Dretske does provide a fairly elaborate classification of types of representation—mental and otherwise—and uses it to specify the type he takes to be exemplified by PE. But none of my targets have much to say on what it is, in general, for there to be a mental representation of something, and I am forced to do the best I can by way of constructing an account that will not be too far from their intent. I think the best way to proceed in this is to begin with the much less controversial and much more thoroughly studied phenomenon of MR of facts by propositional attitudes (PA's). On the reasonable assumption that they are thinking of representation by PE's as something like that, with some important differences, I will arrive at my hypothesis as to how they are thinking of PE representation by exploring the similarities to and differences from PA MR by PE MR that it seems reasonable to attribute to my opponents.

PA's—beliefs, desires, aversions, hopes, fears, aspirations, doubts—unsurprisingly have propositional contents. A belief is a belief that so-and-so, e.g., that there is extra-terrestrial life (L). And so for the others. There can also be desire that L, a hope for its being the case that L, a fear that L is the case, a doubt that L, and so on. (As this example shows, the details of the grammar for specifications of PA's vary, but the propositional nature of the content should shine through these variations.) How are we to construe PA's so that they can be psychological states with propositional content? By virtue of what does a particular PA have the particular propositional content it has? Of course, one could just say "That's the way they are" and leave it at that. But if people could go around solving problems that way, we philosophers would be out of business. There is a philosophical task of delineating the

structure of PA's in such a way as to make clear how they can have a propositional content and be whatever else they are.

By far the most popular approach to this task at present is **functionalism**. This is the view that a PA is individuated by its functions in the psychic economy, what it does in interaction with perceptual input and other PA's to engender other PA's and behavioral output. You know how the story goes. Consider functions played by PA's in the motivation of behavior.

If one *wants* some useful comments on a paper one has just finished, and *believes* that one's colleague, Jim, could and would give such comments if asked, and *believes* or *knows* that Jim is currently in his office, and *knows* that Jim's office is 536, and *perceives* various relevant facts about one's current environment, these will all interact to produce a *motivation* to go to Jim's office and ask him to read and comment on the paper. And if this motivation is not opposed by a stronger motivation to do something incompatible with that, it will issue in an *intention* to do so, which in turn will lead to the behavior in question unless inhibited by external obstacles. Beliefs of various sorts, including beliefs as to a good or the best way to achieve a certain goal, combine with goal setting conative states like desires, aversions, scruples, sense of obligation, etc., with knowledge of relevant facts about the current environment, and other relevant bits of belief or knowledge (e.g., under what circumstances Jim is most likely to be receptive to a request for comments), to motivate actions of certain sorts. Motivation of behavior represents just one of the patterns of interaction in which PA's perform distinctive functions. Another prominent one is reasoning, theoretical and practical. But I will not attempt here a comprehensive survey of the functional roles of PA's. I am concerned only to remind you of the familiar functionalist approach to the nature of PA's.

Before going further with my main task I must mention a difference between two understandings of 'function'—**causal** and **teleological**. In the former the distinctive functions of a belief that L consist of its regular causal contribution to psychological and behavioral consequences. In the latter, which is closer to the traditional sense of the term, it is what the state "has the function of doing", what it is "designed" to do—whether by God, evolution, or whatever. The causal construal is more suited to a "naturalistic" or "physicalist" understanding of PA's, but, not unrelatedly, has more trouble accommodating the raw data. It seems to be a fair assumption that there is quite a bit of overlap, for PA's, between causal function and teleological function, though we can't expect it to be perfect, any more than we can expect biological organs always to exert causal influence as they would to maximize health. Of my targets, Dretske and Lycan both put heavy weight on a (carefully sanitized version of) a teleological construal. But my criti-

cisms will not depend on a decision between these understandings of ‘function’.

Now, how does this functionalist account of PA’s provide for their propositional content? The first step in answering this is to realize that the functions in question intimately depend on the PA’s having the propositional content they have rather than some other or none at all. It is crucial to beliefs, desires, aversions, and so on playing the role they do in psychological processes like deliberation, motivation, and reasoning that they have the propositional content they have. If they did not, it would be a complete mystery why *this* belief combines with *this* desire and these other beliefs to motivate *this* action, rather than some other action or none at all. The initial belief in the above example performs the function it does in this interaction only because it has the content it has, *that Jim would be likely to give useful comments*. A similar point is to be made about the conative factors. If what I predominantly wanted at the moment was not to get comments on my paper but to go for a walk, the beliefs involved would not have combined with that want to motivate my going to Jim’s office and asking him to read my paper. This encourages the idea that if we had a complete map of all such interactions in which the initial belief was involved (admittedly not a feasible project), they would all converge on the propositional content specified.

But how is it *possible* for a PA to have a particular propositional content? Granted that PA’s would not perform the functions they do without that content, by virtue of what do they satisfy that condition? Here is where MR’s enter into the story. They have a propositional content by virtue of “containing”, “embodying”, or “using” an MR of the proposition in question. Unless there is a representation of the proposition in the picture, one that is “available” to the PA for use in performing its functions, it is a mystery how it succeeds in making the contribution it does to reasoning, deliberation, and motivation. Even if it were possible for a belief or desire to “scan” the field of propositions and pick one for use as needed, that wouldn’t explain why there is one unique proposition the employment of which is essential to its being the PA it is. There must be some built in feature of the belief that leads it to always zero in on one and the same propositional content to direct its distinctive contribution to psychological processes. And what could this be other than some kind of MR of a particular proposition, one that is either part of the PA or immediately accessible to it, so that it carries that MR around from situation to situation and does its thing in the light of that proposition rather than any other. Locke gave the classic formulation of this point. “For since the Things, the Mind contemplates, are none of them, besides it self, present to the Understanding, ’tis necessary that something else, as a Sign or Representation of the thing it considers should be present to it.” *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, IV, xxi, 4) (In citing this I

do not mean to be endorsing Locke's own views as to the nature, function, and operation of such representations or to attribute any such endorsement to the current consensus on MR in thought. In particular, the current consensus sharply differs from Locke in taking MR's, at least as they figure in abstract thought, to be themselves inaccessible to consciousness.) In the current view, these mental "signs" by having and using which we are able to think various thoughts are typically and paradigmatically in propositional form, a form that matches the forms of the states of affairs they enable us to consider.

It seems that Locke, in the above passage, gives what is not only a sufficient condition but also a necessary condition for the existence and functioning of mental representations. Apart from enabling us to grasp, cognize, deal with what is outside the mind, they have no role to play in the psychic economy. Their postulation would be pointless. Hence we can think of at least the possibility of performing this function as a constraint on the postulation of MR's. Where they do not, at least where they cannot, have this function, there is no warrant for recognizing their existence.

Going back to Locke once more, let's note that the rationale for their existence was that something "present to the mind" must be used as a representation of something not present to the mind if the latter is to come within our cognitive grasp at all. And so another constraint on mental representations is that they be "present to the mind", however that is to be spelled out. A natural way to do so, the one Locke used, is in terms of being an object of direct awareness. 'Direct' here is contrasted with 'by mediation of the awareness of something else'. A mental representation is such that we can grasp it cognitively without having to do so by way of some representation of it. This condition is what saves us from an infinite regress. If I cannot think of Russia without having some mental representation thereof, and likewise can only think of that representation by having some representation of it, and..., we are, indeed, off to the races. But the trouble with going along with Locke on this point is that (a) it seems clear that when we think of external things there is no such conscious awareness of some mental representation thereof. We are aware of what we are thinking of, not of that by which we do so. And (b) if, with a prominent current view, we depart from Locke in denying that MR's are always, or even typically, sensory images but rather (see below) something like items in a "language of thought", they do not seem to be the sorts of things that can be objects of direct awareness. Hence we had better construe 'present to the mind' as 'directly cognitively accessible by the mind', where this access can be, and typically is, unconscious.

It will not have escaped the reader's notice that I have been speaking of the relation of a PA to its companion MR in disjunctive terms. The PA *contains* or *embodies* or *uses* the relevant MR. It is not necessary for present purposes to resolve this indeterminacy. The crucial point is that there is an essential

relation between a PA and its associated MR. This relation is not as basic as that between a PA and its propositional content, for the former relation comes into the picture only by way of explaining the latter. But it is equally essential, on the assumption that the MR involved is a strictly necessary condition for the PA to be in effective possession of its content. But whether we think of the MR as a *part* of the PA or as something to which it has direct and unique access, something it uses consistently in preference to any abstractly conceivable alternatives, is a choice that depends on further constraints into which I cannot go here. However, to avoid tedious circumlocutions, I will henceforth proceed on the assumption that the associated MR is a part of the PA.

One point that bears emphasizing is that the PA and its “associated” MR cannot simply be identified. The reason for that is very simple. Very different PA’s, with different functional profiles, can have the same propositional content. There can be a belief that L, a doubt that L, a hope that L, a fear of L, and so on. If PA’s get related to propositions by associated MR’s, it seems clear that the same MR figures in all the above cases, though the PA’s are quite different functionally. Hence the MR of L cannot be identified with any of the PA’s to which it bears an essential relation. Then how can I include in my disjunction of possible PA-MR relations one in which the MR is a part of the PA? By invoking a type-token distinction. Token of one and the same MR type can function as parts of PA tokens that belongs to quite different PA types.

As I have been presenting the matter, MR’s bear an essential relation to psychological functions (of PA’s) by virtue of furnishing a necessary condition of the PA’s performing those functions. Does this imply that the MR’s are not themselves construed functionally? Well, it does imply that they do not have distinctive functions that they play on their own in psychological processes, as PA’s do. MR’s don’t “float around” on their own, making their influence felt in reasoning, motivation, etc. Their presence there is “piggy back” on the PA’s with which they are associated. But we can think of a mental representation of the fact that L as itself having a distinctive function, albeit a second level one, viz., that of making it possible for PA’s in which it figures to each perform its distinctive psychological function. On this construal, MR’s do each have a distinctive function, that of making a certain contribution to the primary, lower level function of propositional attitudes that contain it.³

Thus far I have been speaking of MR’s only with respect to their function of making it possible for PA’s to perform their constitutive functions in

³ A richly elaborated development of this way of thinking of the functional character of propositional attitudes and mental representations is found in Van Gulick 1982. See also Van Gulick 1980.

terms of their propositional contents. I have said nothing as to what MR's are intrinsically. What sorts of items provide this service to PA's? There are various candidates suggested in the literature, and my purposes here do not require me to make or defend a choice between them. But to make the above somewhat more concrete, I will think of MR's in terms of something like Fodor's idea of a language of thought. On this view the mental representation of a proposition that is used in thought and motivation is propositionally structured in a way analogous to that of a propositional phrase in a natural language, consisting of elements that represent the various components of the proposition, interrelated the way those propositional constituents are. The main difference from a natural language that is used for communication is that the elements of the language of thought have their meaning by nature, not by convention. The language of thought is part of the innate cognitive endowment of human beings, needing only development, not learning, for its use. I am not committing myself to the details of Fodor's specific version of this idea, only suggesting something of this general sort as a useful way of fleshing out the abstract picture I have just presented.

Thinking in terms of some kind of language of thought, we must distinguish between its analogues of whole declarative sentences and its analogues of their components. Call the former "propositional MR's" and the latter "conceptual MR's". In this essay, unless notice is given to the contrary, I will restrict 'MR' to the full-blown propositional kind.

I should also make it explicit that MR's are thought of as bearing the standard marks of intentionality. They can represent something that doesn't exist and/or isn't as it is being represented. My language of thought can represent *your brother's being witty* even if you don't have a brother or, if you do, even if he isn't witty. They also exhibit referential opacity. A sentence in the language of thought can represent its being the case that my next door neighbor is bald without thereby representing its being the case that the president of the bank on the corner is bald, even though my next door neighbor is the president of that bank. In this connection, I must call attention to the relation between speaking of representing *facts* and representing *states of affairs* (SOA's). Since there is no such fact as *your brother's being bald* unless you have a brother and he is bald, the former locution is not strictly appropriate, given the intentional character of representation. Whereas SOA's, as commonly construed, are fact-like entities that may or may not "obtain" (hold in reality). Hence the SOA formulation is more strictly appropriate. But for the sake of avoiding undue monotony, I will sometimes speak of "representing facts". When I do so 'fact' should be understood as "(putative) fact".

Another point to be made about MR's can be brought out by contrasting it with *pictorial* representations—paintings, photographs, diagrams, and the like. For these latter to do their representative job they must be perceived, or

otherwise made an explicit object of attentive awareness. We might call this a “double object” representative situation. By contrast, concepts, thoughts, beliefs, desires, regrets, and the like are that by means of which we think of something else without themselves being an explicit object of attention. We are not aware of the mental machinery involved in our thought; our attention is concentrated on what we are thinking about.⁴ In medieval terminology, the mental representations are that by which (quo) we cognize the object of thought, not that which (quod) we cognize in order to cognize something else, as with pictorial representations.

Here is a list of basic features of MR’s associated with PA’s that I will be using in scrutinizing the claim of RTPE that PE’s are constituted by MR’s of SOA’s about (putative) perceived objects.

MR1. MR’s represent SOA’s.

MR2. MR’s are directly accessible to their subjects, though not necessarily, or even typically, as an object of conscious awareness.

MR3. MR’s enable their possessors to cognitively grasp SOA’s and to engage in psychological processes with respect to them and in the light of them. That is their basic function.

MR4. MR’s are made up of concepts.

MR5. MR’s exhibit the characteristic marks of intentionality.

MR6. MR’s are not identical with the PA’s associated with them.

MR7. MR’s have their representative function by their nature, essentially. It is not bestowed on them, even partly, from without by some cognitive agent.

iv.

As indicated above, advocates of RTPE typically take the representational function of beliefs as a model for their claims about a representational function of sensory experience, though, of course, there are differences. But first the alleged similarities.

SIMILARITIES

⁴ To be sure, later I will note an exception to this when using mental images in thought. Here I have in mind what would be called “abstract thought”.

1. Here too it is SOA's that are represented, ones involving the (putative) object, e.g., its being brown, loud, or rough. Here is a statement to that effect.

Philosophers usually agree [sic!] that the sensations and experiences involved in perception have a representational aspect. Consider, for example, the visual sensations I undergo as I watch a distant plane make its way across a clear sky. These sensations represent to me that there is a silver spot moving in a certain direction and producing a white trail against a bright blue background. (Tye 1995, 93.)

Here is a parallel statement, using other terminology, by Searle.

Visual experience is never simply *of* an object but rather it must always be *that* such and such is the case. Whenever, for example, my visual experience is of a station wagon it must also be an experience, part of whose content is, for example, that there is a station wagon in front of me...all seeing is seeing *that*; whenever it is true to say that *x* sees *y* it must be true that *x* sees that such and such is the case. (Searle 1983, p. 40).

In other words, an experience of an object always has the status of an aspect of an experience that such and such is the case with respect to that object.

There is disagreement as to whether, and if so how far, properties represented by PE's extend beyond basic "sensory qualities" like color, pitch, and roughness and smoothness. A common view is that this is an empirical problem, not to be decided on purely philosophical grounds.

2. Functionalism is fundamental in PE representation as well in as PA representation. Dretske and Tye join in portraying the essential function of sensory representations to be the provision of facts about the perceived object to the conceptual cognitive system (belief-desire system) for use in thought and in the guidance of behavior. But since there are important differences here as well, I will postpone discussing this until I come to the differences section.

3. PE representation is taken by its advocates to bear the marks of intentionality. Here too an experience can represent a (putative) object as being *P* even if there is no such object. And it can represent *X* as being *P* without thereby representing *Y* as being *P*, even if *X*=*Y*.

4. How about the point that in abstract thought the representation need not be an object of conscious awareness itself? Is it the same with experiential representations? Well, yes and no, but mostly no. In perception our *attention* is fixed on the perceived objects, rather than on how they appear to us. But, of course, we can become explicitly aware of the latter if we choose to do so, whereas the language of thought, if such there be, seems to be securely hidden from the subject's awareness. Moreover even if we are not attending to how things look to us, in conscious visual perception the look of the seen objects is conscious: nothing more so. Representationists tend to be leery of admitting direct awareness of PE itself, for fear of committing the

sin of countenancing mental objects of sensory awareness. But they need not be so skittish. One can be more or less aware of one's awareness of perceived objects (a representing them as so and so, if that is what it is, or an irreducible relation of the object's appearing as so and so, as TA has it, if that it what it is), without supposing that anything like a perceived mental object is involved, as in the sense datum theory.

5. Representation by PE is taken to be by nature rather than by any sort of convention. This is especially strongly emphasized by Dretske, and I will go into this when laying out the differences, to which I now turn.

DIFFERENCES

A. Most obviously, the representational vehicle is different. There is nothing in belief like the phenomenal quality of sensory experience or its (at least apparent) presentational character. When I simply believe that there is a spruce tree in my front yard without perceiving it, there is nothing in my mind at all like the experiential presentation of the spruce tree when I see it. To be sure, when I consciously believe it, there may be conscious verbal or other imagery in my mind that could be thought of as the representational vehicle. But (a) this is not always the case, (b) in any event beliefs can exist and even be playing a representational role when they are not conscious, and (c) verbal imagery is a very different kettle of fish from conscious sensory experience.

B. This difference in representational vehicle carries with it a further difference that will be crucial in part of my critique, the fact that PE representation is nonconceptual; it does not involve the deployment of concepts. As we have already seen, my opponents and I agree that PE does not "have" any concepts to deploy. In this respect PE representation differs sharply from PA representation, which, by common consent, makes use of conceptual, even propositional representations.

C. There are differences in content. Propositional attitudes have a much wider range in what SOA's they can represent. I can believe that the Soviet Union is on the verge of falling apart, but I cannot perceive (in the sense relevant to this discussion) that it is falling apart, cannot sensorily represent it as falling apart. But there is also wide overlap in representanda. I can sensorily represent a spruce tree's being in my front yard (T), as well as believe that T, hope that T, want it to be the case that T, wonder whether it is the case that T, and so on.

D. More importantly, whereas we saw that the MR's involved in PA's are not identical with those PA's, my opponents stress the point that PE's *consist* of MR's of SOA's concerning the perceived object.

E. Now I come to the way function enters into representation by PE. Dretske 1995 gives an elaborate presentation of this. I will concentrate on his

account, and then note a similar approach in Tye 1995. This will involve some similarities as well as some differences between representation in experience and in abstract thought.

Dretske makes a distinction between **systemic** and **acquired** representations. (1995, pp. 12 ff.) The former derive its representational content from the system within which it functions; here the content is “built into” the representer. It is essential to it. The latter, as the name implies, is acquired, either by having the content bestowed on it from without, as with language and other conventional representations, or by experience, by learning. Though acquired representations can be either conventional or natural, Dretske is primarily concerned with the latter species, and so is concerned with the difference between systemic and acquired **natural** representations. Dretske suggests that sensory representation is systemic while the representations involved in PA’s are acquired.

These assignments commit Dretske to some controversial theses—that all concepts are acquired by learning (there are no innate concepts), and that sensory representation is “hard wired”, that it is biologically determined what a given sensory state represents. I’m not disposed to contest any of this here, but I do want to point out some implications the classification of sensory representation as systemic has, or seems to have, for Dretske’s treatment.

Dretske treats sensory representation as based on the natural “indicator” function of sensory states, their being natural signs of what they are causally dependent on, what “information” they carry. This he takes to be something that is biologically hard wired. But though he holds that everything such a state represents is something it is a natural sign of, he disavows the converse. What is represented is some selection from the information the state carries. (This parallels the familiar point that even if what one perceives in having a given perceptual experience is something that makes a causal contribution to the experience, not everything that satisfies that condition is perceived; it is some selection from those contributors.) Selected by what? By what it is the (natural) function of the state to represent. Here Dretske joins Lycan and others in taking *function* to be a teleological notion. He thinks we have a considerable capacity to recognize the natural functions of various organs, states, and processes of organisms. He takes these teleological facts about natural functions to hold without any necessity of positing a mind that designed the structures in question to have such functions. Like many others he looks for the explanation of this teleology in the evolutionary mechanisms of natural selection. Be all that as it may, my present point is that by taking sensory representation to be systemic rather than acquired and to depend on hard wired biological causal dependencies, it would seem that Dretske is restricting sensory representanda to basic phenomenal qualities like colors, shapes, felt hot and cold, roughness and smoothness, sound qualities,

and the like. In his discussion he seems to ignore other facts about perceived objects that an advocate of RTPE might want to consider to be perceptually represented, such as kind membership—that the perceived object is a watermelon, a birch tree, a Tudor house, or whatever. And we cannot deny that the practice of recognizing a certain pattern of sensory qualities as an appearance of a watermelon is *acquired*. In section viii I will find a tension between this biological hard-wiredness thesis and his attachment to PR3—that PE represents objects as having physical properties.

Dretske has a view as to just what the natural representative function of sensory experience is, a view that ties it closely to the representative function of beliefs without identifying the two. It is to “supply information to a cognitive [read ‘conceptual’, ‘propositional’] system for calibration and use in the control and regulation of behavior”. (Dretske 1995, p. 19) Citing Evans 1982, Ch. 7, Dretske puts this as follows: “these content-bearing states serve as input to what he calls a ‘concept-exercising and reasoning system’”. (*loc. cit.*) This account makes the representative function of sensory states ride “piggy back” on the representational function of beliefs. The former, so to say, collects information about the environment for the use (motivational and otherwise) of the belief system. Tye makes a similar point about the essential function of perceptual experience by representing its content as, to use his acronym, “PANIC... Poised Abstract Nonconceptual Intentional Content”. (Tye 1995, 137) The coincidence of this with Dretske’s specification of function just cited is in the “Poised” part. Tye explains this as follows. “The claim that the contents relevant to phenomenal character must be poised is to be understood as requiring that these contents attach to the (fundamentally) maplike output representations of the relevant sensory modules and stand ready and in position to make a direct impact on the belief-desire system...they supply the inputs for certain cognitive processes whose job it is to produce beliefs (or desires) directly from the appropriate nonconceptual representations, if attention is properly focused and the appropriate concepts are possessed.” (Tye 1995, 138)

On these accounts of Dretske and Tye there is an important difference between the ways function figures in thought and experiential representation. In the former case, as we have seen, the basic function of a propositional attitude in the psychic economy fixes its content. But that is not so on the Dretske-Tye account of the basic function of PE. The same function is specified for all PE’s, viz., to provide information to the propositional attitude system. The latter takes this information and does various things with it, and these things it does (its basic functions) fix *their* content. But for PE’s there are no such functions that serve to uniquely determine the content. The specific content of a PE, on this account, is determined by the information it carries from causal dependencies. The function merely selects from that

wealth of possibilities, rather than being the determinant of any of them. The specific content fixing for PE's comes before the performance of their function, and the content fixing of PA's comes after that. If the basic function of PE's fixes any content, it is (some of) the content of propositional attitudes, the content it provides for them, not its own content. To be sure, one could think of the function of a PE as fixing the boundaries of its content (what of the "information" the experience carries it does and doesn't contain) and, to that extent determining its content. But the difference with PA's remains.

Thus though PE representation shares with thought representation the point that *function* is somehow fundamental to it, it differs in being "systemic" rather than "acquired", in whether content is created by function, and also, of course, in what the crucial function is.

F. This account of the function of the MR of PE's has consequences for the relation of this MR to the way in which MR's involved in PA's "enable their possessors to cognitively grasp SOA's and to engage in psychological processes with respect to them and in the light of them". (MR3). Here we have both similarity and difference. As we have just seen, the line is that PE's do provide information that enables the subject to cognitive grasp perceived objects, and act and perform psychological processes vis-à-vis them, but the PE itself is not so enabled. Rather it contributes to a higher level system's doing this.

One further point as to how we are to construe RTPE. This concerns the distinction between a representation of X and the act of representing X. A map of Michigan is a representation of the relative position of communities in the state, and it remains such even when no one is using it to represent, e.g., the location of Grand Rapids vis-à-vis Lansing. Of course, there is a connection between representations and representings. The former is used in the latter. Furthermore, it might be argued that nothing is an actual representation unless it sometimes functions to represent something. But something, e.g., a cloud formation, might be called a "potential" representation of a sheep even if it is never used to represent a sheep.

It is interesting that our representationists speak of PE's both as a representations and as representing.

The picture that emerges from my discussion is one of experiences and feelings as *sensory representations* either of the outside world or of certain sorts of internal, bodily changes. (Tye 1995, 94)

Sensory experience represents. (Lycan 1996a)

But there need be no confusion here. At worst this could be a not wholly felicitous way of saying that PE's are representations of X that their subjects use to represent X.

In terms of this distinction, I have no wish to deny that PE's are potential representations, *could* be used to represent some things. Perhaps that is true of anything. I only wish to deny that they actually function to represent anything, and in particular to represent what RTPE takes them to represent—SOA's to the effect that perceived objects have certain properties.

v.

For purposes of criticism I will divide RTPE into several components and discuss them separately. First a twofold distinction.

PR: PE's represent the (putative) perceived object(s) as being such-and-such.

PC: A PE *consists* in the experience's representing that object as being such-and-such.

In other words, (a) there are perceptual experiential representations of SOA's concerning (putative) perceived objects and (b) these representations constitute the phenomenal content of the experience.

It will be useful if I allow PR itself to undergo fission into three components, as follows:

PR1: PE's have a representative function.

PR2: PE's represent SOA's concerning the (putative) perceived object

PR3: PE's represent the (putative) perceived object as having one or more *physical* properties.

These forms of PR are arranged in the order of increasing specificity. Where I am not concerned with these differences I will continue to speak in terms of 'PR' without the qualification.

In the remaining sections of the paper I will criticize these components of RTPE separately, first the three forms of PR and then PC.

vi.

My central argument against PR1 is that we lack a sufficient reason for positing any such representation. The first point to note here is that in the absence of such a sufficient reason there is no basis for attributing a representative function to PE. The only other basis there could be is that PE presents itself, is experienced as, a representation. But that is clearly not the case. When something I see looks a certain way to me (conical, red...) it doesn't appear on the face of it be a *representation* of anything. The mind is not irresistibly

conveyed to something it is representing the way the mind is when one looks at a (realistic) painting or a photograph. The experience is not of that sort. Phenomenologically it has the character of a *presentation* of an object as being such-and-such. The experience terminates in the object presented without, so far as it appears, functioning to put S in mind of something else. Hence we need a reason beyond the phenomenological character of the experience to take it to be a representation. Note that the absence of any representation from the phenomenology is, if anything, even more marked if one thinks of phenomenal character in an adverbial fashion as a certain way of being conscious.

This verdict is reinforced by a consideration of the situation with respect to the view that mental representation is involved in PA's and, more generally, in thought. There too, the view is not read off our "participant" awareness of thought, in so far as there is such a thing. It is rather that, as I pointed out earlier, there seems to be no way of understanding how PA's can have the propositional contents that enable them to perform their psychological functions without taking them to involve or make use of mental representations of the propositions in question. Such representations are not disclosed to our introspective awareness; they are accepted on the strength of an explanatory job they are fitted to perform.

As we have seen, Dretske and Tye take themselves to have a reason of this sort. They suppose that PE must represent facts about perceived objects in order to perform their function of providing the belief-desire system with information concerning those objects. Everyone recognizes that this is (at least a basic part of) what perception is for. And, they claim, PE could not perform this function without constructing such representations. The acceptability of PR1 rests on this claim.

It is conceivable that PE should furnish the belief-desire system with information about perceived objects in the way Dretske and Tye suppose. But this is not the only way it could be done. It could also be done by PE's simply being what it introspectively seems to be, viz., the object's presenting itself as such-and-such (or being conscious in a certain way), provided the belief-desire system has the capacity to read off of that the ways the object presents itself and to encode those ways in the form of one or more propositions, i.e., encode them as representations of SOA's. And why should it not have this capacity? That is what it is fitted to do—construct propositionally shaped representations and make use of them in thought and motivation. On this alternative account all the representing is done on the recipient side of the transaction between experience and thought. There is no need for the donor side to construct any representation. I take this alternative to the RTPE picture to be superior on the grounds of simplicity and economy. Provided the belief-desire system has the capacity it posits, there is no need for any repre-

senting on the PE side; it would be a fifth wheel that is making no contribution to the outcome. Of course, there could be empirical reasons to suppose that the transition from PE to conceptual representation happens in the RTPE way rather than in my alternative way. But I am unaware of any such reasons. The perceptual part of cognitive psychology has not, so far as I am aware, raised this issue and so much as attempted to find empirical data that will enable us to decide between the alternatives. Hence I am left with the conclusion that in the absence of such data the simpler hypothesis is to be preferred.

Perhaps this line of argument would benefit from a somewhat more extended presentation of my preferred account of the experience-belief transaction. The experience carries, on the face of it, information about how the perceived object, O, looks, feels, smells... By virtue of perceptual development and learning, the subject, S, has acquired the capacity to pick up that information from the experience and "encode" it conceptually and propositionally. This pickup normally has the following form. In the absence of sufficient inhibiting factors or reasons, when O looks P to S, S, being conscious of this, will form a propositional representation of O's being P. And ordinarily, and in the absence of countervailing factors, this will further lead to this representation being embedded in a belief that O is P. I submit that this is an intelligible and highly plausible account of perceptual belief formation. It shows how the experience can provide information for the belief system without the experience's *itself* being, bearing or using anything that is properly called a *representation* of the information in question, without the experience's *doing* anything properly called *representing* O as being P. All the *representing* is the work of the belief (or other PA) side of the transaction.

vii.

I now move to PR2. Even, if contrary to what I have just argued, it is legitimate to think of PE as a representation of something, there are serious difficulties in supposing that it could be a representation of an SOA concerning the perceived object (or any other SOA). This difficulty can be approached by asking "How is it possible for a mental state to represent an SOA?". To tackle this question we have to make explicit the nature of an SOA. (Here we restrict ourselves to singular SOA's, since our putative representandum is an SOA concerning a particular (putative) perceived object.) A singular SOA, like the fact it will be if it obtains, is a complex of one or more individuals exemplifying an n-adic property. And what does it take to represent something of that sort? PA's do so by including a MR that is made up of concepts combined propositionally. The belief that the pavement is wet can be that belief—have that content—by virtue of including a MR that has that kind of propositional structure, consisting of an individual concept of the pavement

(or something else that picks out the pavement in question), the concept of wetness, these bound together into a propositional complex by a predicative tie. That is the only fully intelligible model of an MR of an SOA that we have. And the basic phenomenal stratum of perceptual consciousness, a PE, fails to conform to that model. Since, as my opponents and I agree, it is not conceptually structured, it lacks the wherewithal to represent any such complex. Even if, as my opponents are disposed to deny, it has by virtue of the object's being presented to it a means of referring to that object, It lacks any concept of wetness, not to mention any concept of the exemplification relation. Hence there is no way in which a PE, not being conceptually structured, could be a representation of some particular SOA.

It will be useful to compare the alleged representative function of PE with a relatively uncontroversial case of mental representation by a nonconceptualized representative vehicle, viz., mental images. In reminiscing about my early life a mental image of my grandmother's kitchen pops into my mind. This is surely a mental representation of my grandmother's kitchen. It is by virtue of entertaining this mental image that my attention is directed onto that kitchen. But does this image represent some particular SOA(s) concerning that kitchen, e.g., that it contains a gas cooking stove. Let's say for purposes of this illustration that part of the image is an image of such a stove. But does it represent the *fact* that this kitchen had a stove like that in it? If so, it represents an indefinitely numerous set of such facts, assuming that the image is a rather full and complex one, containing a breakfast table, a refrigerator, a sink, canisters, etc., etc. Rather than supposing that a large multiplicity of facts about the kitchen is represented by the image, it would be better to say that the image presents the kitchen as an unanalyzed whole, from which we can then proceed to extract any one(s) of a number of facts concerning the various items pictured by the image. To borrow a locution of Dretske's, the image is an analogue representation that contains a lot of information that can be digitalized by conceptual appropriation in higher level thought. This very plausible way of construing mental image representation is an analogue of my suggested alternative for construing the representative function (if any) of PE's. Even if the PE is, in some sense a representation, it is an analogue, holistic one that does not constitute a representation of any particular facts (SOA's) about what is represented but instead presents a rich matrix from which SOA's can be extracted and conceptually represented by a system with conceptual resources.

Consider what happens if we try to raise an analogous difficulty about representation of SOA's by PA's. Try getting exercised over the problem of how a MR (of the sort involved in PA's) of Sparta's winning the Peloponnesian War can serve to represent Sparta's winning that war? There is no purchase here for a worry. That is because we have no access to the representation in

question that is independent of its representing that SOA. This representation has no claim to reality other than or independent of that representational function. It is solely a creature of theory posited in order to make it possible for some cognitive state to engage that fact. We have no access to an otherwise specifiable entity the representational function of which could be in question. It would be like asking how an electrical circuit can transmit electricity. An electrical circuit is whatever performs that function, and it is logically impossible for it to be an electrical circuit and not be able to conduct electricity. But the problem does arise for a PE and just because it *is* identifiable independently of its (alleged) representative function. There is “something it is like” to have a certain PE, e.g., the pavement’s looking wet. We can recognize a PE’s being of that sort without ever dreaming of its playing a representative function. It is not merely a creature of theory, posited so as to have something to play a certain representative role and being identifiable only as what does so. Hence we have to consider how something identifiable by a certain conscious looking could also perform the function of representing some SOA. And since, *ex hypothesi*, it is not conceptually structured, and hence not propositionally structured, we must conclude that it is radically unfitted to play that role.

I can imagine my opponents contesting the above argument on the grounds that it assumes that the “qualitative distinctiveness” or “phenomenal character” of a PE that enables us to identify it otherwise than in terms of its representative content consists of one or more qualities of the experience itself. So that in identifying a particular PE as something’s looking red or smooth or wet, we are supposing that the experience itself is red or smooth or wet (!), and that it is by being aware of these intrinsic qualities of the experience that the non-representational identification of the PE is accomplished. But that is a red herring. Nonrepresentational identification of PE does not require dependence on intrinsic qualities of the experience. I fully agree with my opponents that a PE of O’s looking red or smooth or wet to S is not a matter of the experiences *being* red or smooth or wet. Where they err, as I pointed out in section ii, is in supposing that the only alternative to this is their representationist account of what the qualitative distinctiveness consists in. But this overlooks the alternative construal provided by TA—that it consists in a irreducible relation of *appearing as*, as well as the alternative (allegedly) provided by adverbialism that does not identify its ways of being conscious with properties of physical objects. In saying this I am not going back on my claim that TA is not appealed to in the argument. TA comes in only to point out that the current imagined rejoinder to the argument rests on a false dichotomy, false because it ignores TA as a *possible* alternative.

Even though I have been arguing that a PE is not capable of *representing* any SOA, that does not imply that it cannot carry the *information* that vari-

ous SOA's obtain, in the sense of information developed by Dretske (1981 and 1995). In that sense, to say that a state carries the information that p is just to say that p 's being the case is a causally necessary condition of the state. And states of PE, like all other states, have causally necessary conditions. But information in that sense brings in much too much for the representationalist's task—to understand PE as representing facts about the perceived object(s). PE's are causally dependent on complex processes in the brain, but it is not information about them that the experience "delivers" to the subject's belief system, according to Dretske and Tye. Dretske handles this by laying it down that a mental state represents only a selection from the information it carries. And that selection is made by its natural *function*. It is, Dretske holds, the natural function of perceptually experiential states to supply information not about all the external conditions on which it is causally dependent, but, to put it roughly for the moment, just about the possession by the perceived object of the properties it appears (looks, sounds, feels...) to have. And, as we have seen, Tye's PANIC account puts a similar functional constraint on what counts as the SOA's delivered by perceptual states to the belief-desire system, through its requirement that this content be "poised". (Tye, 1995, 5.2) Thus I have no problem with the idea that PE's carry various pieces of information, including what my opponents take it to be representing. I only deny that a PE has what it takes to *represent* (to the belief-desire system or otherwise) any part of the information it carries

viii.

My case against PR2 has not been directed at any particular view as to what kinds of properties PE is allegedly representing O as having. Now I will exhibit some additional difficulties that are entailed by how my opponents specify those properties. We turn to PR3.

If a PE were to represent some fact about the perceived object, O , the most obvious choice would be the fact that O looks \emptyset to S . And its representing that SOA would seem to have the best chance of constituting O 's looking \emptyset to S , since we have an identity of content between the representandum and the representation. But none of the Dretske-Lycan-Tye trio take that position. This unanimity is hardly surprising. If the experience were to represent O 's looking \emptyset to S , then it would be representing itself. And that is certainly not what they are after. Moreover, there is the crucial point that, by the PC component of their position, they hold that the perceptual appearance is *constituted* by the representation. And so this choice of the representandum would saddle them with the view that the perceptual appearance creates itself. Instead they maintain that the PE consists in the subject's representing O as having a certain physical property. Again this is the reverse of surprising. Assuming, as they do, that the representation relation can be understood in

physical terms, this keeps everything comfortably physicalistic. Here are a few typical formulations.

For a visual state to have or contain or feature a green quale...is for it to represent greenness—real physical greenness... (Lycan 1996a, 74)

The parallels here between color and shape should be obvious to anyone familiar with Marr's theory of shape recognition (Marr 1982). In each case, the visual system solves a complicated computational problem and delivers a representation of a distal property on the basis of information about proximal stimuli. (Tye 1995, 146)

What property is my experience of red an experience (representation) of? *Red*, yes, but what objective property is this? (Dretske 1995, 88)

...color is whatever property it is the function of color vision to detect. The fact that so many different conditions cause us to experience red does not show that what we experience when we experience red is not an objective property. It only shows that which property it is may no longer be obvious from the variety of conditions that cause us to experience it. (Dretske 1995, 93)

So sticking with color, the most extensively discussed case, the claim is that what it is for O to look, e.g., red to S when in experiential state, E, is for E, or the subject of E, to represent O as being red in the sense of having a physical property of redness.

The matter is complicated by the fact that there is no unique physically important property type tokens of which perceivable physical objects have when and only when an objective property of redness (assuming there is such a thing) can be correctly attributed to them. There is instead a variety of physical conditions of the surfaces of perceived objects, each of which in some not unusual conditions will provide the best answer to the question "What is there about the perceived object itself that makes it true to say that it is red?" So if we insist on identifying objective redness with some unique physical property, that property will be highly disjunctive. This makes the view less neat and tidy than one might wish, but that is not the difficulty with which I am presently concerned. That difficulty is a special case of the more general difficulty set forth in the last section as to how an experience can represent any state of affairs. Here it takes the form of puzzlement as to how an unconceptualized experience can represent a property of *physical* redness. This difficulty would arise even if there were a unique physically important property that is unquestionably the best candidate for objective physical redness.

There is more than one puzzle here, but the most basic one stems from the fact that the details of any choice of a physical property of redness depend on highly theoretical considerations, rather than anything that is on the surface of common experience and common sense. To get into this, we need to take at least a quick glance at the distinction between what we might call

“ocurrent” and “dispositional” candidates. The latter all have the form of a disposition of the physical object in question to produce experiences of an appearance of red (alternatively, experiencing phenomenal redness, or a red quale). Our physicalist minded opponents tend to shy away from this choice for fear it involves countenancing a feature of experience that is not physicalistically respectable.⁵ This prospect doesn’t disturb me, since I have no tendency to embrace physicalism. In any event, the specification of even these dispositional properties involve theoretical considerations concerning the formulation of conditions under which experiences of the relevant sort would be produced, as well as the characterization of the relevant sorts of experiences. But we are more obviously and more thoroughly plunged into high level theory in choosing an occurrent, non-dispositional physical property to identify with physical redness. This involves investigations of the various non-directly observable physical conditions of the surfaces of physical objects that give rise to experiences of the appropriate sorts, investigation that requires techniques and concepts of high level physical theories.

So the point is that the view in question credits nonconceptualized perceptual experience with the capacity to represent a perceived object as bearing a highly complex and/or highly disjunctive property that can be adequately conceived and identified only with the aid of sophisticated physical theory and sophisticated devices of detection. And how in the world is this possible? How does a visual experience of a colored object, with the manifest character it has, fasten onto the right physical property? How can it possibly do so without conceptual resources to make the necessary distinctions and to be guided by theoretical considerations? Again, there is no problem in the idea that a visual experience of a colored object can “carry the information” that the object has a certain physical property, in Dretske’s sense of ‘information’. But that, as Dretske and others realize, is not enough for representing an SOA. This is the basic difficulty of section vii in spades. Even if nonconceptualized perceptual experience were capable of representing some states of affairs, it boggles the mind to think of it as representing states of affairs like this, indeed, having the natural function of doing so. What a natural function to impose on it! And if, as our trio tends to do, they take these natural functions to have been acquired by evolutionary mechanisms of natural selection, how could perceptual experience have gotten selected to do this job?

Here is another way of making the point. PR3 holds that a sensory experience E of a colored object represents the object as having a certain physical property even where the subject, S, of E is totally ignorant of what physical

⁵ In Shoemaker 1994 we have a view that PE’s represent O as having both sorts of properties. It is also worth noting that Lycan in 1996a, Ch. 4, holds that color perception involves a representation of (nonexistent) objects being qualified by phenomenal color, which attaches continuously to their surfaces and exhibits other distinctive features of phenomenal color.

property this is. Totally ignorant? Doesn't S at least have to know that it is the property that constitutes physical redness? But not even that is necessary for having that experience, being appeared to in that way. O may look red to very small children and lower animals without their having the conceptual wherewithal to identify the property even in this minimal way. And even where that minimal identification is at least implicitly present, it amounts to little more than having a name for it. What physical redness is remains completely open. And so the view credits us with representing an SOA without any knowledge whatever as to what SOA this is. What kind of representation is that?

As foreshadowed earlier, I find it difficult, or rather impossible, to reconcile Dretske's attachment to PR3 with his view that PE representation is biologically hard wired rather than acquired. Certainly we are not born with a knowledge of what physical property redness is! Even if that determination were much less abstruse than is brought out in the above, I don't see how representing it perceptually could be a matter of innate hard wiring.

Looking back over the arguments against all three components of PR, I want to underline the point, previewed earlier, that these arguments do not require that PE be identified as a (putatively) perceived object's looking so-and-so. They only require that PE be construed as non-conceptualized. That is what, according to the arguments, makes it impossible that PE should have the representative function alleged by P1, P2, and P3. That has been indicated at various points in this and the previous two sections, but it is worth emphasizing, so as to avoid any suggestion that TA plays an essential role in the arguments. We will see that an analogous point holds for the argument against PC, to which I now turn.

ix.

I will argue that even if, contrary to what I have contended, it is possible for PE's to represent SOA's, including those involving physical properties of perceived objects, we cannot suppose, as PC alleges, that a PE's phenomenal character is *constituted* by those representations (alternatively, that its phenomenal content is identical with its representative content).

My first point is a repeat of my point in section vi that PE certainly does not seem to its subject to be any sort of representation of fact. It seems to be a matter of an object or objects *presenting* themselves as bearing certain properties, either that or an experience with a certain qualitative distinctiveness, as adverbialists would have it. In our awareness of PE itself there is no trace or hint of a conscious awareness of any fact's being represented by the experience or of the experience's playing a representational role. The awareness (in vision) is of how the object *looks*, and that's all. Hence PC is wholly lacking in initial plausibility. I do not take this in itself to be a con-

clusive, or even substantial, refutation of RTPE. “Things are seldom what they seem, skim milk masquerades as cream;”, sings Buttercup in H. M. S. Pinafore. Though this is, undoubtedly, overstated (‘sometimes not’ rather than ‘seldom’ would be more accurate, and the idea of skim milk frequently masquerading as cream strains credibility), the fact remains that seeming is far from an infallible guide to reality. And this is especially true where the reality in question is ontological constitution. Causal relations may not seem to common experience to be anything like what David Lewis or J. L. Mackie says they are, but we can’t refute their theories just by pointing this out. But with all that said, it remains that initial implausibility is a black mark against a theory and one that needs to be overcome by substantial arguments in its favor.

PC, let’s remember, is the view that the *phenomenal* character of perceptual consciousness, construed here, following Dretske and others, as the (putative) perceived object’s looking (or otherwise appearing) to S as such-and-such, is constituted by the PE’s represented content, what it represents the object as being. And as I have explained ‘PE’ it consists of what is *distinctive* of perception within the total conscious experience of normal adult human perception. As such, it does not include any conceptualization that may be present in the total experience, since that is not distinctively perceptual; conceptualization is involved, and involved more crucially, in non-experiential cognition of objects. And the representationists with whom I am arguing—Dretske, Tye, and Lycan—think of the stratum of perceptual consciousness they claim to be constituted by a representation as nonconceptual. So my question concerns the identification of PE in this sense with a representation by the subject of some SOA concerning the (putative) perceived object.

My central argument against any such identification is that it is possible—metaphysically, *de re* possible—that one have a certain PE without that experience’s representing any SOA. That would be incompatible with PC just because all identities hold necessarily. Hence if it is possible to have a PE without its representing anything, the PE can’t *be* a representing. Why should we suppose this is possible? It would suffice to establish that possibility to point out perceivers to whom objects look in certain ways and who are not at a stage of cognitive development that enables them to mentally represent SOA’s as obtaining. I am at something of a disadvantage in fleshing out this suggestion, because, not being able to understand how purely experiential, nonconceptual representation of SOA’s is possible, I cannot make an informed suggestion as to just what stage of cognitive development would be minimally necessary for this. But if we take lower animals of the order of frogs and insects who do have perceptual capacities, it is very plausible both that objects consciously appear to them in certain ways and that they

are incapable of doing anything that could properly be called representing those objects as having certain properties. (Again their states could be carrying information about the physical properties of perceived objects, in Dretske's sense of information, but that, by common consent, is not sufficient for representing the objects as having those properties.) I would hazard the guess that the same is true of very young human infants, but perhaps the frogs-insects case is more compelling. My suggestion is that by reflecting on such cases we can see it to be very plausible that there are actual instances of perceptual appearances without any SOA representation, and hence that such a combination is possible. And that would put the coup de grace to any *identification* of the phenomenal character of perceptual consciousness with its representation of an SOA concerning the perceived object, even if both were present. But I hasten to add that I feel less secure about the argument in this section than I do about the arguments in sections vi through viii. And so I put more weight on my criticism of PR1-PR3 than on my argument that even if that criticism fails, PC is still unacceptable.

In correspondence Dretske, writing from a physicalist perspective, has expressed the view that in some other possible world the physical state that is in fact an experience, since it has the right kind of representative function for that, might not have that function. But in that case, he says, it would thereby not be an experience (he should say, I would think, not a perceptual experience). That is, no doubt, the verdict of his theory. But, theory aside, it still seems clear to me that one could have something that both I and my opponents would, pre-theoretically, recognize as a perceptual experience without having the conceptual wherewithal to represent any facts, physical or otherwise, concerning putatively perceived objects.

Note that the above argument of this section does not require the particular view I have been taking of the phenomenal character of PE's. If this were construed instead as "having a certain sensation" or "being conscious in a certain way" or "being directly aware of some sense datum", it would, if possible, be even more obvious that a subject could have an experience as so characterized without thereby being in a position to cognize some fact to the effect that the (putative) perceived object has a certain property, or, indeed, any fact about the perceived object at all.

Whatever insecurity I feel about the above argument that even if PR is acceptable, PC is not, stems from restricting attention to PR to the PR1 and PR2 components. My degree of assurance in rejecting PC is much greater if we move to PR3, which is required for the full force of the RTPE that is being discussed here. And when we think of the likes of frogs and insects (or even dogs and cats) with PR3 in mind, it does seem eminently possible that an object can look a certain way to a frog without the frog's representing the object as having the kind of physical property that is responsible for its look-

ing that way, or indeed any physical property at all. Even if frogs can do something that could properly be called 'experientially representing some SOA's concerning perceived objects', it strains credibility to the utmost to imagine those representations picking out some particular physical property of the object.

There is another difficulty with the idea that O's looking, e.g., red, or looking to have some other secondary property, is *constituted* by that experience's representing O as having a physical property of redness. And this difficulty applies equally to human perceivers, so that we are not required to make judgments as to what goes on in frogs and insects. The difficulty is that apparent color, the ways objects look colored to us, has properties that are shared by no physical property that could be objective physical color. For example, apparent color is spread continuously across the surface of a colored object; but there is nothing physical that is spread continuously across the surface of the object. Any property that is a serious candidate for being objective physical color (or one of the disjuncts of such a candidate) consists of physical structures of surfaces that are arrays of physical particles with much empty space in between. Another widely noted difference concerns the interrelations of phenomenal colors. Consider the distinction between the pure colors—red, green, yellow, and blue—and the others that are various mixtures of the former—brown, pink, orange, etc. The distinction between pure and mixed phenomenal colors does not even supervene on physical differences in the constitution of colored objects, much less is it identical with any physical differences. Given these discrepancies between apparent color and any physical properties of objects that look colored, how can the look possibly be identical with an experiential representation of some physical property, even if there could be such a representation? (For attempts to solve these problems see Tye 1995, 5.3. And see the material in Lycan 1996a mentioned in the last footnote.)

Another serious difficulty with the PC-PR3 combination stems from the fact that if PE can represent physical properties, the same physical property can be represented by more than one kind of experience. Most obviously, shape and size can be perceived by, and can appear in, both sight and touch. The phenomenal qualities of a sight of a rectangular table and the feel of a rectangular table—the table's looking rectangular to S when seeing it and feeling rectangular to S when feeling it—are quite different. But the physical property represented, on the Dretske-Lycan-Tye approach, is just the same. Hence if the perceptual appearance were constituted by the representation of a physical property of the perceived object, the phenomenal characters of the experiences would be just the same, which clearly they are not.

Finally, a less fundamental difficulty attaches to Dretske's position that the representational content of perceptual experience determines how the per-

ceived object appears to the subject, but not the identity of the object. (1995, 23-27) The latter is determined, says Dretske, by “a certain external causal or contextual relation, C” (24), the exact nature of which is left unspecified. “...the fact that it is *k* (rather than some other object or no object at all) that stands in relation C to the representation is not what the representation represents. Representations do not (indeed, cannot) represent context. They represent *k* as being blue, but they do so without representing it to be *k* that they represent to be blue.” (25). In Tye 1995 5.2 we have a similar thesis. He characterizes “phenomenal content as “abstract” in the sense that “no particular concrete objects enter into these contents...Since different concrete objects can look or feel exactly alike phenomenally, one can be substituted for the other without any phenomenal change.” (138).

Since I don’t agree that nonconceptualized perceptual experiences represent anything, I will not take issue directly with the above claim. My opposition depends, rather, on my opponents’ commitment to PC. By accepting this thesis, together with the denial that a PE represents what it is that appears in a certain way, Dretske and Tye are forced to exclude any identification of the appearing object from the intrinsic character of the experience. But this fails to accommodate what seems obvious from the phenomenology of the situation. I agree, of course, that O’s looking blue to me does not by itself determine the answer to many questions about O’s identity. If O is a book, for example, it doesn’t tell me the title or the author, much less the detailed contents. But, although its looking blue doesn’t even tell me that it is a book, the total contemporary look of the object can contain that information, as well as much else. Dretske might reply that this just shows that a single concrete look can contain many distinct looks, and in one of these ‘blue’ is in the predicate place, while in another ‘book’ occupies that place. That still doesn’t give us the individual identity of the object, e.g., what book (token) it is. But that is not the end of the matter. The experience itself wears on its sleeve at least one way of uniquely identifying the object—that it is the object that currently looks, e.g., blue, to the subject. Admittedly, this leaves many questions about what it is unanswered. But it can’t be denied that it does uniquely identify O. Indeed, it can be argued, though I won’t undertake to do so here, that such perceptual identification is the most fundamental way of identifying particulars and that it underlies all other ways of doing so. Thus it is unfortunate that Dretske’s and Tye’s commitments push them into neglecting this feature of perceptual experience.

It may be thought that this difficulty attaches only to an idiosyncratic part of Dretske’s and Tye’s position, rather than attaching to RTPE generally. But though other advocates of that view do not stress the point the way these theorists do, it is not difficult to see that they are committed to it. Indeed, any view that takes perceptual experience to be purely intra-mental must suppose

that some external relation like causality is what determines what, if anything, appears so-and-so to S in a particular perceptual experience. Only some form of direct realism, including but not restricted to TA, can recognize that the unique identity of the appearing object is itself given in the appearance, as well as what it is appearing as.

x.

To summarize. The form of RTPE I criticize takes it that (PR1) a nonconceptualized perceptual experience (PE) has a representative function, that (PR2) involves representing a certain SOA concerning the (putative) perceived object, O, as obtaining. Moreover (PR3), this SOA involves O's having a certain physical property. And (PC), the phenomenal character of the PE *consists* in its representing the SOA it does concerning O. I argue in turn against PR1, PR2, PR3, and PC. The main objection to PR1 is that it could only be supported by its necessity for an adequate theoretical explanation, and it is not. The main objection to PR2 is that the nonconceptual character of a PE leaves it without the necessary resources to represent an SOA. The main objection to PR3 is that the insufficiency of these resources is even more obvious where the SOA allegedly represented involves the possession by O of a physical secondary property. And the main objection to PC, even if the arguments against PR1, PR2, and/or PR3 fail, is that it is metaphysically, *de re* possible that O could look \emptyset to some S's without those S's being able to represent any SOA, or at least represent any O as having a physical secondary property. It is the argument against PR1 on which I rest the greatest weight. If there is no basis for supposing a PE to perform any representative function, then the questions of what it represents and whether its doing so is constitutive of the phenomenal character of the PE do not even arise.

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