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Why Naïve Realism?

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#### ABSTRACT

Much of the discussion of Naïve Realism about veridical experience has focused on a consequence of adopting it—namely, disjunctivism about perceptual experience. However, the motivations for being a Naïve Realist in the first place have received relatively little attention in the literature. In the first part of the paper, I will criticise arguments for Naïve Realism offered by M.G.F. Martin, John Campbell, and (some exegetes of) John McDowell. In the second part, I will elaborate and defend the claim that Naïve Realism provides the best account of the phenomenal character of veridical experience.

#### BIOGRAPHY

Heather Logue is a Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Leeds. Her research focuses on issues in metaphysics and epistemology, and particularly on issues concerning perceptual experience. She has published and forthcoming papers on Naïve Realism, disjunctivism, perceptual content, and skepticism about the external world, and she co-edited (with Alex Byrne) *Disjunctivism: Contemporary Readings* (MIT Press, 2009). She is currently working on a manuscript defending a Naïve Realist theory of perceptual experience that incorporates aspects of Intentionalism. Before coming to Leeds, Heather completed her PhD at MIT in 2009 and her bachelor's degree at the University of Pittsburgh in 2003.

WHY NAÏVE REALISM?  
HEATHER LOGUE

I. Introduction

The theory of experience known as ‘Naïve Realism’ has generated a lot of discussion in recent years. It’s a theory of *veridical* experience, that is, an experience in which a subject perceives things, and they appear to the subject to have certain properties because the subject *perceives* those properties. For example, I’m currently having a veridical visual experience of the banana on my desk: I see it, and it looks to me to be yellow and crescent-shaped because I perceive the banana’s yellowness and crescent-shapedness. Contrast an illusory experience in which I see a banana which looks yellow to me even though it’s really green: in this case, the reason why the banana looks yellow to me isn’t that I see its yellowness (it doesn’t have any yellowness for me to see).

Naïve Realism is the view that veridical experience fundamentally consists in the subject perceiving things in her environment and some of their properties. For example, according to the Naïve Realist, my veridical experience of the banana fundamentally consists in my perceiving it, and certain of its properties (yellowness, crescent-shapedness). Of course, practically everyone agrees that the subject of a veridical experience perceives things in her environment and some of their properties. But not everyone agrees that veridical experience *fundamentally* consists in such a state of affairs.

This talk of fundamentality is simply a handy way of gesturing at the things philosophers are trying to explain when they’re giving theories of perceptual experience. The explananda that have loomed the largest are the phenomenal character of experience, its epistemological role, and the role it plays in facilitating action. For example, my current perceptual experience contributes something to what it’s like for me right now, and in virtue of having it, I’m disposed to believe that there’s a banana before me, and to move my arm in a certain direction if I fancy eating a banana. What my experience fundamentally consists in are the features of it that provide the ultimate personal-level psychological explanations of these phenomenal, epistemological, and behavioral facts. Of course, there are further *subpersonal* psychological facts (e.g., the perceptual processing that takes place between stimulation of the sensory organs and experience), and further *non-psychological* facts (e.g., the biological and chemical facts that underlie such processing) that are explanatorily relevant, but identifying these isn’t within the philosopher’s remit.

According to Naïve Realism, the ultimate personal-level psychological explanation of the phenomenological, epistemological and behavioural features of a veridical experience is the fact that the subject perceives things in her environment (e.g., a banana) and some of their properties (e.g., yellowness, crescent-shapedness). Contrast the account given by Naïve Realism’s main rival, *Intentionalism*. Intentionalism comes in many varieties, but the common thread running through all of them is the claim that all experiences (including veridical ones) fundamentally consist in the subject *representing* her environment as being a certain way. For example, according to the Intentionalist, the veridical experience I’m having right now fundamentally consists in my visually representing that (say) there’s a yellow, crescent shaped thing before me.<sup>1</sup> It’s not that Intentionalists *deny* that the subject of a veridical perception perceives things in her environment—all they deny is that her experience *fundamentally* consists in this fact. That is, they deny that this fact is the ultimate, personal-level psychological explanation of the phenomena under investigation.

Most of the discussion about Naïve Realism has focused on a consequence of the view: *disjunctivism* about perceptual experience. Disjunctivism is roughly the view that veridical experiences and at least (total) hallucinations are fundamentally

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<sup>1</sup> Intentionalists differ on what the precise content of my perceptual representation is, but since our main focus is Naïve Realism, we can set issue this aside.

different.<sup>2</sup> (Total) hallucinations are experiences in which the subject doesn't perceive anything in her environment at all (e.g., an experience had by a brain in a vat). Naïve Realism arguably entails disjunctivism: since hallucinations don't involve the subject perceiving anything in her environment, they can't fundamentally consist in perceiving things in her environment. Hence, they have a radically different metaphysical structure than veridical experiences.<sup>3</sup>

There has been a lot of resistance to disjunctivism about perceptual experience.<sup>4</sup> But strangely, there hasn't been all that much discussion of *why we should adopt the view that entails it*. Of course, proponents of Naïve Realism have offered arguments for their view, but they haven't generated nearly as much discussion as disjunctivism has. This paper won't follow suit. As indicated by the title, our focus will be the question: *why* should we be Naïve Realists? In the next section, I will briefly discuss four of the main (and in my view, unsatisfactory) arguments for Naïve Realism in the literature. In the following section, I will develop and defend an argument that is more promising.

## 2. Unsatisfactory arguments for Naïve Realism

Naïve Realism's proponents have offered a variety of motivations for their view. The one that presumably gave the view its name is based on the idea that Naïve Realism is the common sense theory of veridical experience. But there are other, more sophisticated arguments: M.G.F Martin claims that only Naïve Realism can account for sensory imagination, John McDowell (on some interpretations) claims that Naïve Realism affords a way out of scepticism about the external world, and John Campbell claims that only Naïve Realism can explain certain representational capacities we have. In my view, *all* of these arguments are problematic. Unfortunately, for the sake of a bird's-eye view of the dialectic, I will present these arguments much more briefly than their authors do. However, I hope to have captured the crucial moves well enough that the evaluations of these arguments can stand, despite the relatively compressed presentations of the latter.

### a. The appeal to common sense

As I've just mentioned, it is sometimes suggested that Naïve Realism is the view of *common sense* (hence the label 'Naïve'). As far as I know, no Naïve Realist rests their case on this claim—and they're right not to. The appeal to common sense is far from decisive in this context.

First, recall that the aim of giving a theory of perceptual experience is to explain various features of perceptual experiences (their epistemological role, their phenomenal character, and the role they play in facilitating action). Even if Naïve Realism is the view of common sense, it's far from obvious that common sense is going to deliver a view that can explain *all* these features equally well. Another way of putting the point is this: if common sense *did* deliver such a view, why is there so much disagreement about the metaphysical structure of perceptual experience? Why did philosophy have to get involved? It seems more plausible that common sense about perceptual experience is *conflicted*: even if it *did* tell us that veridical experience is just a matter of perceiving things in one's environment, it also tells us that *hallucinations* and veridical experiences can be *exactly* alike. (Presumably, this is why many find disjunctivism so counterintuitive.)

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<sup>2</sup> For extensive discussions of disjunctivism about perceptual experience (including how to formulate the view), see (e.g.) the some of the papers collected in Haddock and Macpherson 2008, the papers collected in Byrne and Logue 2009, and Logue forthcoming-a.

<sup>3</sup> Although for a theory of hallucination that allows a Naïve Realist to eschew disjunctivism, see Johnston 2004.

<sup>4</sup> See (e.g.) Johnston 2004, Siegel 2004 and 2008, Burge 2005, Hawthorne and Kovakovich 2006, Byrne and Logue 2008, Lowe 2008, Smith 2008, and Sturgeon 2008.

That said, there is a sense in which Naïve Realism is naïve, or at least more naïve than its rivals. For example, unlike Intentionalism, Naïve Realism doesn't wheel in the semi-technical notions of a *propositional attitude* and *perceptual representation* (which are employed in the claim that a subject bears the attitude of visually representing to the proposition that, say, there's a yellow, crescent-shaped thing before her). All the Naïve Realist needs to state her claim about what veridical experience fundamentally consists in is the familiar notion of *perceiving things in one's environment*. However, there's also a sense in which Naïve Realism is sophisticated—the notion of *fundamentality* that figures in the statement of the view is a technical notion straight out of the metaphysician's conceptual toolkit.<sup>5</sup> If you ask a person off the street what experiences are, *perhaps* she would say that they involve perceiving things in one's environment (although she might retract or at least qualify this claim if hallucinations are brought up). But if you ask this person what experience *fundamentally* consists in, you'd have to teach her some philosophy before she could even understand your question. And once she's learned it, it's far from obvious that she would provide the same response to the fundamentality question as she did to the original, entirely non-technical one.

Nevertheless, one might think that Naïve Realism being *more* naïve than its main rival counts as an important consideration in its favor—even if not a decisive one. However, all the Intentionalist has to do to undermine this alleged advantage is show that the notion of a distinctively perceptual propositional attitude can do some explanatory work. And on the face of it, there's some important explanatory work for it to do: if perceptual experience involves a propositional attitude one could be in whether one is perceiving or hallucinating, we can *explain why* a hallucination is subjectively indistinguishable from a veridical experience of a certain kind. In particular, we can explain this by saying that the experiences involve the same or similar propositional attitudes. By contrast, it's not obvious how the Naïve Realist can explain the subjective indistinguishability of veridical and hallucinatory experiences.<sup>6</sup> Since there's at least a prima facie reason to complicate our account of perceptual experience, the relative simplicity of Naïve Realism counts for nothing until the Naïve Realist either offers an explanation without the aid of the complications, or offers an argument to the effect that no such explanation is needed.

#### b. The appeal to sensory imagination

In his paper, 'The Transparency of Experience', Martin argues that only Naïve Realism can explain sensory *imagination* (2002).<sup>7</sup> As the label suggests, sensory imagination is a species of imagination with a distinctively sensory component—often, when one imagines, one's imaginative state has a phenomenal character similar to that of a perceptual experience. Although I can imagine that *p* in a way that doesn't involve such phenomenology (which would be merely 'propositional' imagining), there are imaginative states that are phenomenologically richer. Just as I can see a banana, I can *visualize* one; just as I can hear a song, I can '*hear it in my head*' (and so on for the other modalities).

Martin's argument from sensory imagination for Naïve Realism goes roughly as follows:

- (1) When I sensorily imagine a banana, the situation I imagine contains a banana.
- (2) To sensorily imagine a banana is to imagine having an experience of a banana.

<sup>5</sup> Thanks to Ephraim Glick for suggesting this point to me.

<sup>6</sup> Indeed, some Naïve Realists go so far as to suggest that such facts about subjective indistinguishability are inexplicable in further psychological terms (see in particular Martin 2004, 2006, and Fish 2009). But as far as I'm aware, Martin and Fish don't offer any arguments for this claim that don't presuppose the truth of a Naïve Realist disjunctivism.

<sup>7</sup> In his later paper, 'The Limits of Self Awareness' (2004, p. 42), Martin appears to suggest that his 2002 argument is based on introspection of *perceptual experience*, rather than on considerations having to do with sensory imagination. However, in 'The Transparency of Experience' he is quite clear that we cannot decide between Naïve Realism and Intentionalism by reflection on experience alone (2002, p. 402).

- (3) If an experience of a banana doesn't have a banana as a constituent, then the situation I imagine doesn't contain a banana.
- (4) Naïve Realism is the only view on which an experience of a banana has a banana as a constituent.
- (5) Hence, Naïve Realism is required to explain how bananas get into sensory imaginings of them.<sup>8</sup>

Premise 1 is pretty straightforward: this is just what it is to imagine a banana. If the situation you've imagined doesn't contain a banana, then whatever you've imagined, you haven't imagined a banana.<sup>9</sup> Premise 2 is the most controversial move in the argument—Martin calls it the 'Dependency Thesis'. The idea is that all there is to sensorily imagining a banana is imagining experiencing one. Note that the experience imagined is imagined 'from the inside'; it's not the case that imagining a banana involves imagining oneself from a third-person point of view looking at a banana. Rather, one imagines *having* the experience. I'll grant premise 2 (or something near enough, as I'll explain below) for the sake of argument, so I won't reiterate Martin's case for it here. Like the first premise, premise 3 is also pretty straightforward: if all you do in sensorily imagining a banana is imagine having an experience that you could have in the total absence of bananas, imagining having that experience isn't sufficient to get the banana into the imagined situation.

Premise 4 is also unobjectionable on the face of it. According to Naïve Realism, a veridical experience of a banana fundamentally consists in the following state of affairs: the subject perceiving a banana (and some of its properties). The banana is a constituent of this state of affairs; hence, it is a constituent of the experience. By contrast, Naïve Realism's rivals (e.g., Intentionalism) characterize experiences of bananas as states one could be in regardless of whether there are any bananas around. One can visually represent that there is a banana before one in the total absence of bananas. So on this view, bananas are not constituents of experiences of them.

Despite being composed almost entirely of apparently unobjectionable premises, ultimately this argument isn't persuasive—even if we grant Martin's case for the controversial Dependency Thesis. For premise 4 isn't quite right as it stands: Naïve Realism doesn't entail that an *experience* of a banana has a banana as a constituent, because it doesn't give that sort of account of *hallucinatory* experience. As noted earlier, a total hallucination by definition doesn't involve the subject perceiving things in her environment. Hence, on any plausible theory of perceptual experience, a total hallucination as of a banana doesn't have a banana as a constituent.

The crucial claim for this argument is that imagining having an experience *as the Naïve Realist construes it* gets a banana into the imagined situation, because an experience as the Naïve Realist construes it *has a banana as a constituent*. But of course, this is true only if the experience is *veridical*. Hence, premise 2 has to be strengthened for the crucial claim to come out true—we need to specify that sensorily imagining a banana involves having a *veridical* experience of a banana.

But then premise 3 is *false*: you don't need the banana to be a *constituent* of an experience to get it into the imagined situation. On any theory of perceptual

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<sup>8</sup> Martin lays out this argument in somewhat different terms, and in much more detail (2002, pp. 402-419). For example, Martin uses a somewhat different first premise than the one I used above. He claims that an imagining subject is 'non-neutral' about whether the imagined situation contains a banana; that is, that an imagining subject believes of the imagined situation that it contains a banana (Martin 2002, p. 414). That is, his premise isn't about the imagined situation, but rather about what the imagining subject *believes* about the imagined situation. This premise also strikes me as uncontroversial; but his argument seems more straightforward if we use the claim in the main text (presumably, the subject wouldn't *believe* that the imagined situation contains a banana if it *didn't*).

<sup>9</sup> It's not entirely straightforward, though. There has been much debate about whether 'high-level' properties (e.g., natural kind properties, such as the property of being a banana) figure in experience (see Siegel 2011 for a comprehensive presentation of this debate, and a case in favour of perception of high-level properties). One might suggest that they don't figure in sensory imaginings, either. If they don't, then presumably the closest one can get to sensorily imagining a banana is sensorily imagining a yellow, crescent-shaped thing in a way that doesn't take a stand on whether it's a banana. (Thanks to Fiona Macpherson for pointing this out to me.) However, I'll set this issue aside for the sake of argument.

experience, an experience of a banana isn't veridical unless *there is a banana there* being perceived. Imagining having a *veridical experience* of a banana is sufficient to get a banana into the imagined situation, regardless of our theory of its metaphysical structure (see Logue 2009, Dorsch 2010). Hence, Martin's argument fails to motivate Naïve Realism over its rivals.

### c. Naïve Realism as an anti-sceptical strategy

Some of John McDowell's exegetes (e.g., Fish 2009) interpret him as offering Naïve Realism as a way out of scepticism about the external world (e.g., in his 2008).<sup>10</sup> The sceptic assumes that a hallucinating subject has exactly the same perceptual evidence for claims about her environment as the subject of an indistinguishable veridical experience—e.g., that someone enjoying a subjectively indistinguishable hallucination as of a banana could have exactly the same perceptual evidence for claims about her environment as I do. It follows that our perceptual evidence *underdetermines* claims about the external world. That is, the evidence I get from having my perceptual experience provides just as much support for the claim *that I'm a brain-in-a-vat enjoying a hallucination as of a banana* as it does for the claim *that there is a yellow, crescent-shaped banana before me*. And if my perceptual evidence doesn't support the latter over the former, scepticism follows.

According to McDowell's anti-sceptical strategy, we should deny the assumption that launched the sceptical argument. That is, we should insist that the subject of a veridical experience has *more* perceptual evidence than her hallucinating counterpart—evidence that's sufficient to put her in a position to know things about her environment. We get from here to Naïve Realism by adding the following claim: Naïve Realism is the only way to make sense of the idea that the subject of a veridical experience has more perceptual evidence. Roughly, the thought is that since the Naïve Realist holds that veridical experience fundamentally consists in perceiving things and some of their properties, she can say that the subject's perceptual evidence *includes* the fact that she perceives things and some of their properties. The fact that one perceives a thing and some of its properties *entails* that that the thing is before one and has those properties. So a veridically perceiving subject has perceptual evidence that entails that her environment is a certain way, which is enough to put her in a position to know that her environment is that way. For example, my present veridical experience fundamentally consists in my seeing the banana on my desk, as well as its yellowness and crescent-shapedness. So my perceptual evidence includes the claim that I see this banana, as well as its yellowness and crescent-shapedness. This claim entails that this banana is yellow, crescent-shaped, and before me. Hence, I'm in a position to know this claim about my environment.

In another paper (Logue 2011), I've argued that this motivation for Naïve Realism is not persuasive as it stands. One point I didn't press in that paper is that the McDowellian anti-sceptical strategy is not obviously viable: how can the claim that I *see* the banana on my desk be part of my perceptual evidence when I could have a subjectively indistinguishable experience that *doesn't* involve seeing it? Just because my experience fundamentally consists in my seeing the banana, it doesn't obviously follow that the fact that I see it is perceptual evidence *that I have*. I'd need to have some sort of the access to that fact, which seems to be precluded by the subjective indistinguishability of seeing and hallucinating.

But even setting this worry aside, the fact remains that Naïve Realism isn't a necessary component of this anti-sceptical strategy. First, it's not entirely obvious what prevents the Naïve Realist's opponent from holding that my perceptual evidence

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<sup>10</sup> There isn't much textual evidence that McDowell endorses Naïve Realism, however. It's true that he endorses a view called 'disjunctivism', and endorsing disjunctivism about perceptual experience usually goes along with endorsing Naïve Realism. But it's far from clear that he endorses a disjunctive account of the *metaphysical structure* of perceptual experience—he might just endorse disjunctivism about perceptual evidence, which is compatible with the rejection of both Naïve Realism and disjunctivism about perceptual experience. (See Logue forthcoming-a for a full discussion of the various views that go by the name 'disjunctivism'.)

includes the claim that I see the banana on my desk (etc.). The Intentionalist doesn't hold that my veridical experience fundamentally consists in my seeing this banana, but why exactly is that required for the corresponding claim to be part of my perceptual evidence?<sup>11</sup> Second, there are other candidates for the additional perceptual evidence possessed by the subject of a veridical experience that *don't* require Naïve Realism. For example, suppose one's perceptual evidence consists of the propositions one perceptually represents *and knows* (a combination of Intentionalism and Williamson's (2000) identification of one's evidence with one's knowledge). In having my current veridical experience, I visually represent and know a proposition about my environment: namely, that there is a yellow, crescent-shaped banana before me. Although the subject of an indistinguishable hallucination could visually represent the same proposition, she doesn't *know* it—hence, it doesn't count as part of her perceptual evidence. As far as any Naïve Realist has said, this way of characterizing the evidential difference between a veridical experience and a subjectively indistinguishable hallucination is just as effective against the sceptic's initial assumption as the Naïve Realist's way.<sup>12</sup> So at best, this anti-sceptical motivation for Naïve Realism requires a lot more elaboration before it can be deemed decisive.

#### d. Naïve Realism as an explanation of representational capacities

In his book *Reference and Consciousness*, John Campbell argues for Naïve Realism (which he calls 'the Relational View') on the grounds that Naïve Realism is the only view that can explain our capacity to consciously represent objects (2002). He puts the key idea as follows:

...experience of objects has to be what *explains our ability to think about objects*. That means that we cannot view experience of objects as a way of grasping thoughts about objects. *Experience of objects has to be something more primitive than the ability to think about objects, in terms of which the ability to think about objects can be explained...* On the Relational View, experience of objects is a more primitive state than thought about objects, which nonetheless reaches all the way to the objects themselves. (Campbell 2002, pp. 122-3, emphasis mine)

Campbell's idea seems to be that unless veridical experience fundamentally consists in perceiving objects in one's environment, we cannot explain how we can think about such objects in the first place. Of course, Campbell's opponents don't hold that a perceptual experience consists in *thinking* that *p*, where 'thinking' refers to something like mere entertaining—a specific propositional attitude distinct from believing, desiring, and so on. By 'our ability to think about objects', Campbell presumably means something more general than is usually meant by 'thinking': he likely means the ability to consciously represent a proposition having to do with an object, whether this takes the form of believing, desiring, imagining, or some other propositional attitude.<sup>13</sup>

So it seems that Campbell is making a claim about what would follow if some version of Intentionalism is true, that is, if perceptual experience (including veridical experience) consists in consciously representing propositions about objects in one's environment. His contention is essentially that such a view would not be able to explain our capacity for conscious representations of objects, because perceptual experiences would *be* conscious representations of objects. Plausibly, if a state

<sup>11</sup> In my 2011, I answer this question on the Naïve Realist's behalf by suggesting that one's perceptual evidence is grounded in what one's experience fundamentally consists in. *If* that's right (and I'm not sure that it is), the Intentionalist cannot claim that my evidence includes the claim that I see the banana, because she holds that seeing the banana isn't what my experience fundamentally consists in.

<sup>12</sup> In my 2011, I consider the possibility that the Naïve Realist's way is better because, unlike the Williamsonian Intentionalist option, it *explains* rather than *presupposes* knowledge of the external world. I argue that the Naïve Realist's way presupposes knowledge of the external world as well—it just takes more work to see that it does.

<sup>13</sup> I add the qualifier 'conscious' because experience is the upshot of subpersonal—i.e., unconscious—representational states.

fundamentally consists in exercising a given capacity, then it cannot explain how we acquired that capacity in the first place. So Campbell thinks we should embrace Naïve Realism instead, because it can explain our capacity to consciously represent particular objects in terms of *perception* of those objects—perceiving an object is a more ‘primitive’ state than consciously representing it as being a certain way.

We can summarize the argument as follows:

- (1) Perceptual experience explains our capacity to consciously represent objects (e.g., my capacity to believe that this banana is crescent-shaped).
- (2) If experience is what *explains* our capacity to consciously represent objects, it can’t fundamentally consist in exercising that capacity (i.e., in representing particular objects as being certain ways).
- (3) Hence any form of Intentionalism is false, and Naïve Realism is the only viable alternative.<sup>14</sup>

I think that Campbell’s argument is intriguing, but I don’t think it is persuasive as it stands. For it’s not clear why we should accept its starting point: namely, that *experience* explains our capacity to consciously represent objects. A prima facie equally plausible alternative hypothesis is that this capacity was bestowed upon us by natural selection. It may well be that one must have perceptual experiences to *activate* or *maintain* the capacity—it wouldn’t be surprising if a person deprived of all sensory stimulation from birth couldn’t consciously represent particular objects. But even if experience is necessary to activate or maintain the capacity, for all Campbell says, the capacity itself could be something we have before having any perceptual experiences at all—and so not the sort of thing that we get from having perceptual experiences. In short, it seems that the first premise of Campbell’s argument for Naïve Realism assumes a pretty heavy-duty form of empiricism, and he offers no defense of this starting point. Hence, this argument is not compelling as it stands.

### 3. A more promising argument for Naïve Realism

Enough about arguments for Naïve Realism that don’t work—let’s turn to a more promising case for the view. The general strategy is to argue that Naïve Realism provides the best account of the phenomenal character of veridical experience. I should emphasise that the focus will be on the phenomenal character of *veridical* experience only, as most Naïve Realists give a different account of non-veridical experiences (for the reason explained above).<sup>15</sup> The argument I will present is inspired by ones given by Mark Johnston (2006) and William Fish (2009), although it differs in a number of details. It is more similar to Johnston’s than Fish’s—while Fish aims to use Naïve Realism to solve the ‘hard problem’ of consciousness, Johnston argues that only Naïve Realism can accord phenomenal character the epistemological significance it’s due. While I’m not sure that Johnston would agree with all the details of the case I’ll present, I take it to be an argument in broadly the same spirit. I’ll begin by describing a spectrum of views about phenomenal character, and then I’ll outline and criticise its two extremes. Finally, I’ll argue that Naïve Realism offers us the most plausible middle path between them.

We can situate views about the relationship between *phenomenal character of veridical experience* and the *properties of mind-independent objects one perceives* on a spectrum. I’ll call one extreme *Kantianism*. Kant is often interpreted as holding that we

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<sup>14</sup> Careful readers of *Reference and Consciousness* may recall that Campbell usually doesn’t express his case for Naïve Realism in quite these terms. He more often insists that perceptual experience is what explains our *knowledge of the reference of demonstrative terms*. But I don’t think these are independent arguments: experience explains our knowledge of the reference of demonstrative terms *by explaining a necessary condition on such knowledge*, that is, the capacity to consciously represent particular objects. (One cannot know that ‘that’ refers to a particular object if one cannot consciously represent that object.) So the argument summarized in the main text appears to be the more fundamental one.

<sup>15</sup> I will (briefly!) return to this issue in the conclusion.

can't have knowledge of things as they are 'in themselves'—the only knowledge we can have of things is knowledge of how they affect us (see, e.g., Langton 1998). There is a view of phenomenal character in a broadly similar spirit, namely: what it's like to experience a property is no guide to what things that have that property are like in themselves, independently of our experiences of them. More precisely, the idea is that the phenomenal character of a veridical experience can in principle vary independently of the properties of the mind-independent objects one perceives in the course of having it, because the former is *entirely* determined by features of the subject which *aren't* determined by the latter.<sup>16</sup>

To clarify this rather abstract statement of Kantianism, let's consider a couple of concrete versions of the view. One example is a version of the sense-datum theory, on which perceptual experience fundamentally consists in awareness of non-physical, mind-dependent objects. For instance, this view holds that when I have a veridical experience of a yellow, crescent-shaped banana, I am aware of a non-physical, mind-dependent thing that is caused by a banana (a sense-datum). This sense-datum has properties that correspond to yellowness and crescent-shapedness. Plausibly, sense-data cannot instantiate the sorts of properties that physical, mind-independent ones do—this idea can be expressed by saying that the sense-datum is *yellow'* and *crescent-shaped'*. On this view, the properties of the sense-datum entirely determine the phenomenal character of my experience (e.g., any experience in which I perceive something yellow' has a certain colour phenomenology). But the properties of the sense-datum aren't determined by the properties of the banana I perceive—in principle, perceiving yellow, crescent-shaped things could have consisted in awareness of *green'* and *spherical'* sense-data. This is a version of Kantianism: the phenomenal character of veridical experience is entirely determined by something (the properties of sense-data) that isn't itself determined by the properties of mind-independent objects one perceives.

Another (currently more popular) example of Kantianism is the 'mental paint' view (see, e.g., Block 1996). Mental paint is a metaphor for *intrinsically non-representational qualia*: features of experience that determine what it's like to have the experience, and represent certain properties, but could have represented properties other than the ones they actually do (or none at all). For example, when I have an experience of a yellow thing, my experience instantiates a quale that partially determines the phenomenal character of my experience—it's what's responsible for phenomenal yellowness. This quale in fact represents yellowness, but if things had gone differently (e.g., if the course of evolutionary history had diverged so as to result in a different 'wiring' of human brains), this quale could have represented greenness instead. Unlike the sense-datum view, the mental paint view allows that I perceive yellow things 'directly', without the mediation of entities like sense-data. But like the sense-datum view, the phenomenal character of my experience is determined by something that isn't determined by the properties of mind-independent objects I perceive—namely, a quale connected to yellowness only by the contingent fact that it happens to represent yellowness.

So much for the Kantian end of the spectrum. I'll call the other extreme *Berkeleyan realism*. As Bill Brewer notes (2011), Berkeley (along with many other early modern philosophers) held that what it's like to have an experience is entirely determined by the properties one perceives. For Berkeley, the objects that instantiate these properties were mind-dependent 'ideas'. The result is a Kantian theory of phenomenal character, as phenomenal character is determined by the properties of mind-dependent objects.<sup>17</sup> But Brewer suggests that we can construct a structurally analogous rival by replacing these objects with good old mind-*independent* ones. Of

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<sup>16</sup> The label 'Kantianism' is somewhat inappropriate, since the view it refers to allows that you could come to know that something is yellow in itself ('noumenally speaking'). The fact that the phenomenal character of an experience of yellowness is merely contingently correlated with yellowness doesn't obviously entail that one can't know that something is yellow in itself (perhaps the phenomenal character is a contingently reliable indicator of yellowness). However, the view about phenomenal character is broadly similar in spirit to the view about knowledge, in that it posits an unbridgeable gulf between our subjective perspective on things and how they are in themselves.

course, unlike Kantianism, this rival covers only experiences that involve perception of such objects (i.e., not total hallucinations). The Berkeleyian realist will have to give a different account of the phenomenal character of other experiences, which leads her towards disjunctivism. But in the case of veridical experience, the Berkeleyian realist insists that phenomenal character of veridical experience is entirely determined by the properties of *physical, mind-independent objects* one perceives.

One example of Berkeleyian realism is a rather radical interpretation of Naïve Realism. Naïve Realists sometimes suggest that phenomenal character is ‘out in the world’. For example, John Campbell claims that

...the phenomenal character of your experiences, as you look around the room, is constituted by the actual layout of the room itself: which particular objects are there, their intrinsic properties, such as colour and shape, and how they are arranged in relation to one another and to you. (2002, p. 116)<sup>18</sup>

A natural way of interpreting this claim is that phenomenal character is a property of *objects perceived*, rather than a property of experiences. If that were right, what it’s like to have an experience would be entirely determined by the properties of objects one perceives—for it would *just be* the properties one perceives.<sup>19</sup>

Another (more widely endorsed) example of Berkeleyian realism is Strong Intentionalism. This is the view that the phenomenal character of an experience supervenes on its representational content. It entails that any two experiences that consist in representing (say) that there is a yellow, crescent-shaped thing in front of one have exactly the same phenomenal character (provided that this exhausts the content of the experiences, and that the thing is represented being in exactly the same subject-relative location, etc.). In the case of a veridical experience, its representational content is determined by the properties one perceives in the course of having it—for example, if I veridically perceive a yellow, crescent-shaped banana, then the content of my experience attributes yellowness and crescent-shapedness to something. If we add the Strong Intentionalist claim that the representational content of an experience determines its phenomenal character, then the properties one perceives determine phenomenal character by way of determining representational content. Since this is a view on which the phenomenal character of veridical experience is ultimately determined by the properties of mind-independent objects one perceives, it is a version of Berkeleyian Realism.

In summary, we have two extremes on a spectrum of views about the relationship between the phenomenal character of a veridical experience, on the one hand, and the properties of mind-independent objects one perceives in the course of having it, on the other: Kantianism, which holds the former can in principle vary independently of the latter, and Berkeleyian Realism, which holds that the former is entirely determined by the latter. In my view, both extremes on this spectrum are problematic. Let’s begin by surveying some challenges for Berkeleyian realism.

A consequence of Berkeleyian realism is that any two experiences that involve perceiving the same properties of mind-independent objects have the same phenomenal character—for example, if two experiences involve perceiving a banana’s yellowness and crescent-shapedness from exactly the same location, then they have the same phenomenal character. As is well-known from discussions of Strong Intentionalism, there are a number of worries about this claim.

First, it’s plausible that features of the sense organs the subject uses to perceive make a difference to phenomenal character. For example, suppose that there are aliens

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<sup>17</sup> This view is similar to the sense-datum view just described, with the major exception that Berkeley denied that there is any mind-independent reality beyond the ideas.

<sup>18</sup> See also Johnston 2007 for claims in broadly the same spirit.

<sup>19</sup> I can’t see how this *could* be right, though. As I understand it, the very notion of phenomenal character is that of a property of a *mental state*—what it’s like to have it, or its ‘feel’. So any view on which phenomenal character is the property of something other than a mental state (e.g., a banana) is guilty of a category mistake. This isn’t to say that something other than a mental state can’t *constitute* phenomenal character—indeed, this is a crucial part of the view I will defend. My point here is simply that the properties of the object one perceives can’t be the *whole* story.

whose visual systems are sensitive to the same properties that human visual systems are sensitive to (the same colours, shapes, and so forth). Nevertheless, there is a major difference between their visual systems and ours: they have compound eyes, similar to those of many earthbound insects. It seems plausible that

- (1) a human and an alien could have an experience in which they perceive all and only the same properties, and yet
- (2) the phenomenal character of their experiences would be different (due to the fact that they are generated by radically different visual organs).

If that's right, then the properties of mind-independent objects one perceives don't completely determine the phenomenal character of one's experience—features of one's sensory apparatus can play a role too.

The Berkeleyian realist might reply by denying (1)—by insisting that a radical difference in the structure of two kinds of sensory organ must make for a difference in the properties the organs are sensitive to. Then, any phenomenal difference between the human and alien experiences could be attributed to a difference in properties perceived. However, this seems like a shot in the dark that would be difficult to validate. There seems to be no *contradiction* in the idea of a human eye and a compound eye being sensitive to exactly the same properties. The Berkeleyian realist must *explain why* this situation is physically impossible; it is not sufficient to merely assert that it must be.<sup>20</sup>

The other alternative for the Berkeleyian realist is to deny (2), and insist that any two experiences that involve perceiving all and only the same properties have the same phenomenal character—*even if* the sensory organs that generate the experiences are radically different. But this seems implausible. Why should we think that looking at the world through such different eyes would leave *no trace at all* in visual phenomenal character? Perceptual systems give their subjects information about their surroundings, but nothing entitles us to the assumption that the same inputs will result in the same phenomenal outputs, *regardless* of what goes on in between. To put the point metaphorically: our experiences are windows on the world, but we're not entitled to assume that they are *entirely* transparent. What the window is made of could easily affect how the things we see through it look.<sup>21</sup> So again, the Berkeleyian realist's defensive assertion stands in need of argument.

The worry just described presents a case in which experiences of *two different subjects* that involve perceiving the same properties differ phenomenally. But we can construct a less exotic *intrasubjective* version of worry, based on the fact that some properties can be perceived in more than one sense modality. On the face of it, it's plausible that which sense modality a subject is perceiving in makes a difference to phenomenal character. For example, introspection suggests that what it's like to *see* crescent-shapedness is different from what it's like to *feel* it. If that's right, then we have a (more realistic) case in which two experiences involve perception of the same property, but the resultant phenomenology is different. If there are such cases, then the properties of mind-independent objects one perceives don't entirely determine the

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<sup>20</sup> One might suggest that the situation I've described begs the question against Berkeleyian realism, since the view entails that such situations aren't possible. But this worry is based on a misunderstanding of the dialectic. One cannot respond to a putative counterexample simply by asserting that one's view entails that the situation described in the counterexample cannot obtain. A counterexample is an intuitively plausible case that *conflicts* with the view it's targeted at. So *of course* the view will entail that the situation described in the case cannot obtain. But the point one is making in giving a counterexample is that the case is *intuitively plausible*, and so the view must have gone wrong somewhere. Compare: some object to Strong Intentionalism on the grounds that it's incompatible with the possibility of spectrum inversion. It wouldn't do for the Strong Intentionalist to dismiss this objection by saying that it's question begging—a proper response would *explain why* spectrum inversion isn't possible even though it initially seems to be.

<sup>21</sup> This claim is compatible with the thought that people express by saying that experience is *transparent*—which is roughly the thought that, in having experiences, we are perceptually aware only of the objects of experience (and their features), and never of *experiences themselves* (or their features). The claim that phenomenal character is partially determined by features of the subject doesn't entail that one is perceptually aware of those features, or indeed of any features of the experience itself.

phenomenal character of one's experience—which modality one is perceiving them in plays a role too.

Of course, the deliverances of introspection shouldn't be regarded as the final word on this matter. We aren't able to easily tease apart different aspects of phenomenology when we introspect, and perhaps the judgment that there's a phenomenal difference is just an artifact of introspection being too blunt an instrument for the job we're trying to use it to do. For example, we might be misled by the fact that visual shape phenomenology is usually accompanied by colour phenomenology, while tactile shape phenomenology never is (except perhaps in some cases of synesthesia). So it could be that the phenomenal difference between visual and tactile experiences of crescent-shapedness is solely due to the difference in colour phenomenology, rather than a difference in shape phenomenology.

With that said, it still seems that the claim that there is a difference between visual and tactile phenomenology associated with perception of the same property has a default status. For to assume that they are the *same* would be to assume that the means we use to perceive the world leave no phenomenological trace whatsoever. And, as I suggested above in discussion of the more exotic counterexample, that's a claim in need of argument.

Moreover, empirical research on Molyneux's problem provides some support for the claim that the visual and tactile phenomenology associated with perception of the same property differ. Molyneux's question was basically this: would a person blind from birth recognise a shape if his sight were restored, solely on the basis of his previous tactile experience of it?<sup>22</sup> An affirmative answer to this question suggests that the visual and tactile phenomenology associated with perception of a given shape property is the same—presumably, that's how the subject would *visually* recognise a shape without ever having *seen* it before. A negative answer suggests that the phenomenology differs across the two modalities. And there is some support for a negative answer (Held et. al. 2011).

I'm not suggesting that these counterexamples to Berkeleyian realism constitute knock-down objections to it. All I want to insist upon is that these cases of a difference in phenomenal character without a difference in properties perceived are *prima facie* plausible, and that denying their possibility is a bullet to bite. Of course, there are many things that the Berkeleyian realist can do to make this bullet more palatable, which I haven't had the space to discuss in detail. My point is simply that a more palatable bullet is still a bullet, and it would be best to avoid biting it at all.

So much for the challenges faced by Berkeleyian realism. Does Kantianism fare any better? I think it's *more* plausible than Berkeleyian realism, but only with respect to *some* properties. For example, Kantianism is at least *prima facie* plausible with respect to colour properties, but it is rather implausible with respect to shape properties. When it comes to the phenomenology of colour experience, it's hard to resist the conclusion that we're bringing a lot more to the table than the colour is. For example, if yellowness is a messy disjunction of surface spectral reflectance properties, as physicalists about colour have it, it seems plausible that what unifies the category is the fact that *our visual systems* happen to respond to the disparate SSR properties in the same way. On the other hand, when it comes to the phenomenology of *shape* experience, it's hard to resist the conclusion that the shapes *themselves* are doing most of the work in determining phenomenal character.

This is reflected by the fact that while it's rather easy to imagine subjects who are spectrally inverted with respect to each other (e.g., a subject who, upon perceiving *green* things, normally has the phenomenology another subject normally has when perceiving *red* things), it's not so easy to imagine subjects who are 'shape inverted'. That is, it's hard to imagine a subject who, upon perceiving *circular* things, normally has the phenomenology another subject normally has when perceiving *square* things. At least, it's hard to imagine this while also supposing that both subjects' experiences

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<sup>22</sup> Actually, Molyneux's question was slightly more complicated, as it concerned not just the ability to recognise shapes but also the ability to *distinguish* them from each other. For brevity's sake, I'm leaving this related issue aside.

have an equal claim to being *veridical*—although one could argue that both of the spectrally inverted subjects' experiences are veridical with respect to colour, it's hard to see how the shape inverted subjects' experiences could both be veridical with respect to shape. At least one of them would consistently bump into things, fail to grasp them properly, and so on.

This is precisely what we would expect if the shape properties themselves are doing most of the work in determining the phenomenal character of experiences of them. If we're bringing more to the table with respect to the phenomenal character of experiences of a certain property, it should be easy to imagine a scenario in which you hold the property perceived fixed and vary the phenomenology of the subject's experience of it. But if features of the subject are doing very little of the work in determining phenomenal character, it's hard to imagine such a scenario: for there's not much more to the phenomenology of the subject's experience of that property other than her awareness of that property.

The upshot is that, while I suspect that Kantianism could be true with respect to the phenomenology of experiences of *some* sorts of properties (e.g., colour properties), it is unlikely to be true for others (e.g., shape properties). Hence, Kantianism shouldn't be *assumed* by a theory of perceptual experience—it should be argued for on a case-by-case basis. We need to leave room for non-Kantian accounts of what it's like to perceive at least some properties.

So where do we go from here? Both extremes of the spectrum are problematic, so we need to look for a view somewhere in between. Fortunately, Naïve Realism offers us such a view. Although it can be interpreted as a version of Berkeleyian realism, it need not be. The Naïve Realist holds that veridical experience, including its phenomenal character, fundamentally consists in the subject bearing the perceptual relation to things in their environment and some of their properties. The Berkeleyian Naïve Realist holds that the *properties* the subject perceives *entirely* determine the phenomenal character of her experience. But it's also open to the Naïve Realist to claim that the phenomenal character is grounded in the perceptual *relation*. Such a view can appeal to *both* *relata* in accounting for the phenomenal character of veridical experience, as well as to facts about the relation itself. For example, the Naïve Realist can say that the phenomenal character of my veridical experience of the banana on my desk is determined not just by its yellowness and crescent-shapedness, but *also* by the fact that I *see* these properties (as opposed to perceiving them in some other modality), and by certain facts about my visual system (e.g., that I'm seeing these properties through a simple eye rather than a compound one).<sup>23</sup>

Contrast the accounts of phenomenal character offered by the most popular versions of Kantianism and Berkeleyian realism—the mental paint view and Strong Intentionalism, respectively. On the mental paint view, the phenomenal character of a veridical experience is entirely determined by the intrinsically non-representational qualia the subject instantiates. So ultimately, only facts about the *subject* determine phenomenal character. And on Strong Intentionalism, the phenomenal character of a veridical experience is entirely determined by how the subject represents things in her environment as being, which is in turn entirely determined by which of their properties she perceives. So ultimately, only properties of the *objects* of experience determine phenomenal character. But for the reasons given in the discussion of the two extremes, our theory of perceptual experience should leave room for the possibility that *both* features of the subject *and* features of the objects perceived play a role in determining phenomenal character. There may be properties such that the phenomenal character of veridical experiences of them is entirely down to the subject (or, less plausibly, entirely down to the object). But this should be argued for on a property-by-property basis, rather than *entailed* by our theory of perceptual experience.

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<sup>23</sup> One might also want to explicitly include the *conditions of perception* on the list of things that play a role in determining phenomenal character (see Brewer 2008). But given that the conditions of perception affect phenomenal character only insofar as they affect the functioning of the subject's perceptual system, they can be accounted for in terms of *relational* facts about the subject's perceptual system—for example, facts about how the subject's visual system reacts to a given wavelength of light in different sorts of environments. (Thanks to Simon Prosser for flagging this issue.)

Of course, in order for these considerations to count as an argument for Naïve Realism on their own, it would have to be the only view that offers a middle path between Kantianism and Berkeleyian realism. But it's not—in particular, a *weaker* version of Intentionalism could do just as well. An Intentionalist could say that the phenomenal character of an experience is determined not just by its content, but also the *attitude* the subject bears to that content. For example, the phenomenal character of my veridical experience of a yellow, crescent-shaped banana could be determined not just by its content (say, that there is a yellow, crescent-shaped banana before me), but also by the fact that I bear the attitude of *visually representing* to that content. And the difference between the phenomenal character of human and alien visual experiences with the same content can be attributed to species-specific visual attitudes ('humanly' visually representing vs. 'alienly' visually representing). In short, a weaker version of Intentionalism that allows that phenomenal character is determined by more than just the content of experience isn't a version of Berkeleyian realism, and so can accommodate the kinds of cases that pose a problem for such views.

However, at this point, another worry rears its head, one that afflicts *any* version of Intentionalism—strong or weak. In a nutshell, the worry is this: if Kantianism is false, we wouldn't be able to *know* that it is. The basic idea is nicely summed up by Mark Johnston as follows:

If sensory awareness [and thus phenomenal character] were representational, we would inevitably face the sceptical question of how we could know that the human style of representation is not entirely idiosyncratic relative to the intrinsic natures of things. (Johnston 2006, pp. 284-5, footnote omitted)

In other words, as long as phenomenal character consists in *representations* of things, we can't rule out that what it's like to perceive something is radically different from what that thing is like in itself. Johnston is articulating a sceptical scenario of sorts: it could be that our experiences enable us to get around the world just fine, but that's only because the world as it appears to us is isomorphic to things as they are independently of our experiences of them. The ways things appear to us constitute a phenomenal world, grounded in a noumenal world that is completely inaccessible to us. Let us call this *scepticism about phenomenal character as a guide to how things are in themselves*, or scepticism about phenomenal character for short.

To make this worry less abstract, suppose (plausibly) that seeing crescent-shapedness more-or-less reveals what crescent-shaped things are really like, in themselves, independently of our seeing them. The problem for Intentionalism is that seeing crescent-shaped things *couldn't* reveal this if the phenomenal character of our experiences of them is merely a matter of *representing* crescent-shapedness. For representations can of course be *totally different* from what they represent. So we couldn't be sure that the phenomenal character determined by a representation of crescent-shapedness provides any guide to what crescent-shaped things are like in themselves. As Johnston would put it, there would be no way of ruling out the possibility that the human way of representing crescent-shapedness, and the phenomenal character it plays a role in determining, is 'entirely idiosyncratic relative to the intrinsic natures of things'.

Of course, on a Weak Intentionalist account of veridical experience, the properties one perceives determine the representational content of one's experience, which in turn partially determines its phenomenal character. But this doesn't get the Weak Intentionalist off the hook. As long as there is a 'metaphysical gap' between the phenomenal character of experiences of crescent-shapedness and crescent-shapedness itself—that is, as long as the phenomenal character is *entirely distinct* from (albeit partially determined by) crescent-shapedness, scepticism about phenomenal character is inevitable. The mere fact that there is a tight *causal* link between crescent-shapedness and what it's like to see it doesn't mean that the latter is any guide whatsoever to what the former is like. If it *happens* to be such a guide, that would be a huge stroke of luck,

and there is no way to prove that we are in fact that lucky. Hence, even a tight causal link isn't sufficient to rule out Kantianism.<sup>24</sup>

We need something stronger—we can avoid scepticism about phenomenal character only if crescent-shapedness at least partially *constitutes* what it's like to see it. That's the only way to guarantee that the phenomenal character of our veridical experiences gives us any insight at all into what things in our surroundings are like in themselves (when it does—as noted earlier, there may be properties for which this isn't the case). And that's just what Naïve Realism gives us: on the account of phenomenal character I'm proposing, the phenomenal character of a veridical experience of a crescent-shaped thing consists in a state of affairs that has a crescent-shaped thing as a constituent. On this account, we can give a straightforward response to the question, 'how do we know that the phenomenal character of our veridical experiences of crescent-shapedness isn't entirely idiosyncratic relative to what crescent-shaped things are like in themselves?'. The answer is this: absent an argument for Kantianism about experiences of crescent-shapedness, it follows that the phenomenal character of veridical experiences of it is constituted in part by crescent-shapedness itself. Hence, such experiences give at least some insight into what crescent-shaped things are like.

One might wonder whether we're entitled to *reject* scepticism about phenomenal character. What makes me so sure that experience *ever* gives us *any* sense of what things are like in themselves? The first part of the story is this: we don't ordinarily take ourselves to be in the predicament described in Johnston's sceptical scenario. Rather, we take ourselves to be getting at least some information through experience about how things are in our surroundings independently of our experiences of them (although we may admit upon reflection that this information might be distorted in various ways). Now, if one had an *argument* against this commonplace assumption, the mere fact that we ordinarily make it wouldn't count for much. But—at least as far as I can tell—*there is no such argument*.

Compare this dialectic with the one concerning scepticism about the external world. A common complaint against G.E. Moore's response to scepticism is that he assumes that he knows that he has hands, in spite of the sceptic's argument to the contrary. The sceptic about the external world argues that I don't know that a certain possibility doesn't obtain (e.g., that I'm a brain in a vat), because my experiences are subjectively indistinguishable from ones I could have if it did obtain. From here, the sceptic argues that if I don't know that the possibility doesn't obtain, then I don't know that I have hands. We can't reject scepticism about the external world without specifying where this argument went wrong; we can't simply assume the negation of the sceptic's conclusion and modus tollens our way to a denial of the sceptic's initial premise (as Moore is often portrayed as doing).

But what is the analogous argument for the analogous premise in the case of scepticism about phenomenal character (i.e., the claim that I don't know that the phenomenal character of my veridical experiences isn't merely isomorphic to some bit of the noumenal realm)? Granted, my experiences would seem the same either way. But the subjective indistinguishability of my experiences isn't relevant in this case—for although experience is my putative source of knowledge about whether I have hands, it is not my putative source of knowledge about whether the phenomenal character of my veridical experiences can be a guide to the intrinsic natures of things, or the metaphysics of phenomenal character in general. Presumably, the putative source of knowledge about *that* sort of thing is some complicated mix of philosophical reflection and empirical investigation. Hence, there is no sceptical argument we have to reply to before we're entitled to reject scepticism about phenomenal character. And if either scepticism or its denial counts as the default view in the absence of arguments either way, surely its denial wins.

In summary, the best account of phenomenal character is one that allows for the possibility that features of both the subject and the object of experience play a role

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<sup>24</sup> Note that appealing to *externalism* about experiential content won't help. Regardless of what makes it the case that my experience has the content it does (e.g., being of a sort normally caused by crescent-shaped things), as long as its phenomenal character is distinct from crescent-shapedness, it's possible that it is a *mere sign* of crescent-shapedness.

in determining phenomenal character, *and* doesn't leave us saddled with scepticism about whether what it's like to experience a property is a guide to what things with that property are like in themselves. In my view, only Naïve Realism can give us such an account.

#### 4. Conclusion

I've argued that most of the motivations offered for Naïve Realism to date—in particular, arguments from common sense, Martin's argument from sensory imagination, the anti-sceptical strategy, and Campbell's argument from our capacity to consciously represent particular objects—either fail, or have large gaps that it's not clear how to fill in at present. However, a powerful motivation for Naïve Realism is that it affords the best account of the phenomenal character of veridical experience: one that carves a moderate path between the extremes of Kantianism and Berkeleyian realism, in a way that can accommodate the plausible idea that what it's like to perceive something can be at least some guide to what that thing is like in itself.

Of course, the Naïve Realist isn't home free. Although Naïve Realism offers the most promising account of the phenomenal character of *veridical* experience, it remains to be seen whether it can offer a plausible account of the phenomenal character of *non-veridical* experiences (i.e., illusions and hallucinations). While I'm optimistic that it can (see Logue forthcoming-b), elaborating and defending my grounds for optimism will have to be left to another time.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Previous versions of this paper were presented at the Centre for Metaphysics and Mind at the University of Leeds, the University of St. Andrews, the University of Stirling, a meeting of the Mind Network at the University of Birmingham, and a conference on Perception, Experience, and Reasons at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. Many thanks to those in attendance for their helpful questions and comments. Thanks also to Mahrad Almotahari and Adam Pautz for illuminating discussions.

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