Münster Lectures in Philosophy 5

Johannes Müller-Salo *Editor*

Robert Audi: Critical Engagements

Springer

Münster Lectures in Philosophy

Volume 5

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20 Years of *Münster Lectures in Philosophy*

The lecturers

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2000 Martha Nussbaum
2001 Axel Honneth
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2010 Peter Rohs
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2012 Philip Pettit
2013 Susan Haack
2014 Ernest Sosa
2015 Peter van Inwagen
2016 Robert Audi

Preface

The present volume marks the 20th *Münster Lectures in Philosophy*. In November 2016, Robert Audi served as the Münster Department of Philosophy's guest to give an evening lecture and to reply to papers presented by the department's members and graduate students in a 2-day colloquium. This volume collects an opening essay by Audi that is based on his evening lecture, the colloquium's papers, and Audi's detailed answers to the questions and criticisms raised within the papers.

The main philosophical project Robert Audi's work is dedicated to can be described as the development of a global theory of rationality and reasonableness that seeks to identify common structures, features, and elements of different forms and modes of rationality. In his articles and books on epistemology, philosophy of action, ethics, philosophy of religion, and political philosophy, he specified and defended this project and its various components.

Within recent decades, Audi has made important contributions to discussions central to contemporary philosophy. To mention just a few of them, in epistemology, Audi has defended a fallibilist foundationalist conception, rejecting skepticism and emphasizing ordinary persons' ability to gain justified beliefs in their daily life and usual activities. Within ethics, his work has been central for the revival of intuitionism as an important type of current ethical theory. In the field of philosophy of religion, Audi has explained how and under which conditions different forms of religious belief can, notwithstanding all modern and postmodern criticism, still be rational. As well, he has visibly intervened in the debate on religious convictions and their bearing on political decision-making, a discussion as important for political philosophy as for the future shaping of liberal democracy.

When Susan Haack gave the *Münster Lectures in Philosophy* in 2013, she analyzed the problem of philosophy's fragmentation in times of specialization and called for reintegration, for new connecting lines between different fields, subdisciplines, and discussions. One answer can be found in Audi's philosophy: If one is prepared to ask the question of what might unify theoretical and practical reason – an attempt that, especially within analytic philosophy, rarely is pursued – one is able

to find shared elements, common structures, and comparable difficulties to overcome. After all, theoretical philosophy and practical philosophy have many things in common. Robert Audi's work demonstrates clearly and forcefully that both sides might benefit from crossing the divide.

Münster, Germany
November 2018

Johannes Müller-Salo

Editor's Acknowledgments

The *Münster Lectures in Philosophy* is a project involving many people and different institutions that join forces to create a successful event. The most important ones should be mentioned here.

My first and special thanks go to Jan-Ole Reichardt who organized the lecture and the colloquium together with me. His inexhaustible energy and preparedness to do philosophy have been an enormous help in preparing and conducting the event. Furthermore, I wish to thank all colleagues and graduate students from the Philosophy Department who decided to partake in the colloquium: The *Münster Lectures* would not be alive without them – and I am happy that still and after 20 years, each year in early summer, when the preparation with regard to contents starts, people gather together to scrutinize the invited guest's philosophy.

Since 2014, Springer International Publishing generously supports the *Lectures* and the publication of the book series that documents the colloquia. My thanks go to Lucy Fleet and her colleagues who have always been prepared to help if questions arose during the preparation of the event and the book.

Besides the Department of Philosophy, the *Münster Lectures in Philosophy* has been supported by the university's Centre for Advanced Studies in Bioethics and the Collaborative Research Centre "Cultures of Decision-Making." My thanks go to Thomas Gutmann, Michael Quante, and Reinold Schmücker for making this support possible.

Stefan Klatt designed the event's leaflets and posters. Ruth Langer and Tanja Uekötter have been very helpful with all administrative issues, as well as the department's manager, Sibille Mischer. Claudia Güstrau and Andreas Bruns ensured with great care that everything functioned smoothly during the days of the *Münster Lectures*. Rebecca Walsh, Judith Rensing, and Anna Blundell provided excellent support during the process of the manuscript's preparation, revision, and language correction. My warm thanks go to all of them.

Of course, my special thanks go to Robert Audi for his preparedness to accept the department's invitation and to serve as the 20th *Münster Lecturer*. His willingness

to help at any stage of the project, his patience, his philosophical energy, and his open-mindedness in the discussions with all the event's participants invaluably contributed to the success of the whole event and the publishing of this book.

Acknowledgements by Robert Audi

It is altogether fitting that I should acknowledge with gratitude the immense amount of constructive and detailed work done by Johannes Müller-Salo, who served as editor-in-chief doing a great deal of painstaking intellectual and editorial work, and the other authors in this volume. The papers themselves are careful and interesting studies of various segments of my work (though not all of its major aspects—it would have been impossible to address all of the main ideas I have proposed and defended over the past five decades).

In responding to those papers, I have tried both to be fair and constructive and to extend my own thinking on the topic the critical studies address. Those studies required the authors to come together for discussion and drafting the papers, and I am happy to have provided an occasion for those interchanges. I realize that much work went into the papers, and I appreciate the often insightful thinking they display. My opening essay benefited from discussion on the occasion of my presenting a much shorter early draft and has its own acknowledgments. In addition to heartily thanking the other authors in the volume for their work, I would like to thank Jan-Ole Reichardt and Katja Stoppenbrink for their presentations and related conversations during the colloquium. I am especially grateful to Professor Michael Quante and a number of his colleagues for valuable conversations on many of the topics in this book. On the occasion of the lectureship and many others, he has been an illuminating conversation partner.

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Part I
Lecture

Chapter 1
Perception and Cognition. Structural and Epistemic Elements

Robert Audi

Abstract Perception is a central topic in both epistemology and philosophy of mind. This essay addresses perception from both perspectives, exploring its structure, phenomenology, and relation to belief and knowledge. Perception embodies sensory experience and in that way is phenomenologically representational; it is a response to its object(s) and in that way a source of information about what is perceived; and it is a basis of belief and knowledge and in that way enables us to navigate the world. These points are examined in relation to five dimensions of the theory of perception: the "contents" of perceptual experience; the levels of its responsiveness to its objects; the extent to which, in various forms, it may depend on conceptualizing what is perceived; its liability to influence by the perceiver's beliefs or theoretical commitments; and its role in grounding justification and knowledge.

Keywords Belief · Content · Inference · Knowledge · Perceptual reliability

1.1 Introduction

Perception is our basic way of knowing the world around us and the people in it. Seeing, touching, hearing, tasting, and smelling are crucial for the normal development of concepts and the formation of beliefs in which they figure. This is not to imply that there can be no other perceptual modes, but these five are ample material for theory and essential elements in any comprehensive philosophical treatment of perception. Even seeing—perhaps the most richly informative of the five—is sufficiently representative and important to serve as subject-matter for a quite broad understanding of perception, and it will be the main perceptual mode discussed in this essay. The other modes, however, must be considered in appraising any comprehensive account of perception and the knowledge it provides, and we must bear them in mind. No single paper can provide a detailed comprehensive account of

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perception, and here I aim at comprehensiveness only to the extent necessary for an understanding of perception that captures some of the elements central for seeing its overall structure, its experiential character, and its relation to belief and knowledge. I begin with a general characterization of perception.

1.2 Perception as Experiencing the World

Our perceptions are responses to the world. We see, hear, touch, taste, and smell. We also have an awareness of states of our own body, such as the position and movement of our limbs, and that awareness is at once similar in character to "outer" perception, yet not dependent on the five senses. Here I set aside such inner perception, though its parallels to "outer" perception are well worth exploring.[1]

1.2.1 Perception as Experiential

One element common to perceptions of any kind, including inner ones, is their status as kinds of experience. Perception—as understood in terms of the ordinary notions of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling—is experiential. Nothing experienced, nothing seen. One might think that such phenomena as "blindsight," in which visual stimulation yields some belief (or conjecture or impression) about the relevant observables, require qualifying this claim; but the data making 'blindsight' seem applicable to special cases of cognition can be best accommodated in relation to stimulation of the visual system (which receives light rays) and resulting cognitions of the patient. These two kinds of variable are uncontroversially important in understanding perception, but their joint presence in blindsight does not undermine the also important truth that there is "something it is like" to see. Consider standing before a landscape painting and closing, then opening, your eyes. The change from darkness to the sense of color and shape is experiential. Viewing the painting is a visual experience in the sense relevant here. It may be momentary, but that does not prevent its having a qualitative character and representational content. A glimpse can be like a snapshot; it may be almost instantaneous yet may record a great deal of information. Some of the information may be recoverable by memory considerably after the fact, and some may be utterly forgotten.

Among the first things to be said in understanding how blindsight may work is that knowledge of the visible need not be visual knowledge. This is obvious given that testimony can yield knowledge of the unobserved, but the point may be

[1] The analogy between perception and introspection is developed in some detail in chapter 5 of my 2010. But (as noted there) introspection is not the only possible case of inner perception. For an extensive survey of inner perception see Ritchie and Caruthers 2015.

illustrated by blindsight (if it is fully blind, as opposed to a case in which subjects misreport their own experience).

To be sure, if one thinks of blindsight as perception, then the very fact that perception has a representational character may lead one to posit unconscious representation, even if not seeing, without visual consciousness of any kind. Positing unconscious representation (a notion that is at best puzzling) is not, however, the only possible response to the case.[2] Another is that in some way the object of blindsight causes belief-formation (or some cognition) by a visual process that bypasses visual phenomenology. I leave these options open and take them to call for experimental investigation.

A more important point for this paper is that although every visual perception is a visual experience, the converse does not hold. The vocabulary common among epistemologists can obscure this point. Hallucinations can (in principle) be robustly visual, yet are still not perceptions of anything. I use 'sensory experience' for the wider sensory category that includes hallucinations as well as perceptions, but some writers on perception have included hallucinations (often only implicitly) in the category of perceptual experience. In some philosophical writing on perception, hallucination is contrasted with "veridical perception." I find this misleading, though it does suggest that hallucinations are not perceptions as opposed to broadly perceptual phenomena. Nonetheless, by invoking the thought that veridical perception is simply non-hallucinatory perception, the term 'veridical perception' easily invites assimilation of sensory experience to perception. Is a perfect visual hallucination of, say, an approaching bear a kind of seeing or a kind of perception that would be veridical if there were a bear producing the experience? Genuinely seeing, I take it, is intrinsically veridical in some sense—factive in entailing the existence of an object seen—and so cannot be hallucinatory.

A further liability of the terminology is that illusions, such as seeing a partially submerged stick as bent, must be considered veridical with respect to existence, but not with respect to shape. Admittedly, we can properly speak of someone struck on the head as "seeing stars," and drugs can induce "seeing" snakes. But such uses seem metaphorical or, at best, to indicate a weaker sense of 'see'. If there are no snakes, then I do not actually see snakes. In any case, even if we take seeing to have some literal use in the hallucination case, we can acknowledge that not every visual experience is perceptual in the usual sense entailing actual perception, and that positing seeing something whose existence one would deny is not a case central for the theory of perception.

If having a sensory experience entails being conscious of something—at least representationally conscious of something phenomenally represented—then

[2] In Prinz 2015, we find a case for countenancing unconscious perception, which he characterizes as "unconscious transduction of information that is in someone [some way?] useable by the organism that transduces it" (373), and later as "perception without the benefit of a frontal cortex" (386). I do not see that the case he offers is inconsistent with describing the phenomena he cites from the literature in terms not entailing what I am suggesting is not possible: that genuine perception occurs without the instantiation (in consciousness) of any of the kinds of phenomenal properties I view as essential to it.

contrary to the views of some students of the subject, perception, given its experiential character, cannot be unconscious. This holds at least if 'unconscious' has the common strong sense in which it allows that, for instance, the subject sees or hears something without *anything's* occurring in consciousness that indicates a sight or sound. Countenancing blindsight is one possible source of the idea that seeing is possible without visual consciousness of anything; another possible source is the behavioral effect of subliminal advertising, as with 'Have a Coke' flashed quickly on a screen. There is no question that behavior may be affected in both cases in a way it would not be if the eyes were closed, and perhaps there is a fleeting visual experience in such cases that is simply not remembered. Suppose, however, that subliminal advertising can show that visual stimuli unaccompanied by *any* visual experience can provide information that influences behavior. This causal relation might hold in any case for someone who *never* has visual experiences of the kind characteristic of seeing as normally understood. In terms of the mental life of the agent, simply receiving visual stimuli via light affecting the retina and brain need not differ from the relevant information's reaching the brain directly through suitable wiring and affecting behavior in the same way.

People may also misreport or forget a visual experience or, conceivably, suffer from a disconnection between the visual experience and the normal mechanism enabling us to report it. An intermediate case would be that of the constant noise of traffic on a distant roadway. There is some inclination to say that one is not conscious of it at all until, as where an accident blocks the road, it stops. But this comment is best understood as meaning that (for instance) one does not notice it, is not attending to it, or is not focally as opposed to peripherally aware of it. Those possibilities are compatible with one's having (as seems normal) an overall auditory experience that has a mixed humming and tire-rubbing character which is an element in one's experience.[3]

Some of what I am implying regarding vision can be illustrated with respect to hearing. As with seeing, if you are hearing something, you are having an experience, and one that is of a distinctive kind as compared with experiences in the other perceptual modes. Granted, a piano can have *both* a look and a sound, but the two are very different, even if both lead us to some of the same beliefs about the instrument. It should be evident that I take experiences to have phenomenal qualities. These may be variously described: when I look at a maple tree in full foliage, I have

[3] Jesse Prinz cites Ned Block as using a similar example, air conditioner noise, and holding (in Prinz's words) that "we can be phenomenally conscious of a stimulus while lacking access consciousness to it." See Prinz 2015, 375. As I see such cases, in them we do not in fact "access" our consciousness, but normally can. I grant, however, that consciousness of something does not *entail* the ability to describe or even report it. I do not accept Prinz's view that "to notice something we have to classify it" (374); but perhaps there is a very think sense of 'classify' for which it is plausible. As to his using of 'unconscious perception' to refer to "unconscious transduction of information that is . . . useable by the organism that transduces it" (373), this neurological view of perception makes it easy to see how perception can be considered sometimes unconscious once we grant that (as seems uncontroversial) the brain, quite apart from our experiences (and certainly without our noticing), can receive information that can guide purposive action.

the property of experiencing greenly (to put it adverbially). We might also say that I have the property of its (visually) seeming to me as if there is something green there, though not necessarily of its seeming to me *that* there is something green there (the latter locution, construed as conceptual, will be considered shortly). The relation of such properties to their external counterparts is controversial, but here the point is simply that positing such phenomenal properties does not require denying that there *is* an external property I see, one that contrasts both with other color properties and with properties accessible to non-visual perceptual modes, say the coolness of the metal arms of my lawn chair.

1.2.2 The Sensory Aspect of Perceptual Experience

In speaking about experience, we quickly encounter a duality of reference: there is the coolness actually possessed by the arms of the chair and (at least on a realist view of color) the green belonging to tree leaves. Experiencing these is relational. But there also is the experiential coolness—felt coolness, we might say—and the visualized green. Could the same experience not occur by virtue of a qualitatively identical hallucination, where the experience is non-relational?[4] Again there is a duality of reference: in what we might call the strict everyday sense of 'experience', you cannot experience the brilliant sound of a particular Steinway piano unless you actually hear that sound coming from the instrument; but you could have an auditory experience just like that under conditions of (say) artificial stimulation in the absence of any perceived object. Suppose machines that produce such experiential replicas of perceptions became common. One can imagine marketers saying that with their recreative devices you can experience in your own home any musical piece you choose from their repertoire.

A natural way to deal with this duality has been foreshadowed: we may speak of *perceptual experiences* where one is really seeing, hearing, and so forth for the other perceptual modes, and of *merely sensory experiences*, say visual experiences, where one is not actually seeing or otherwise perceiving but, phenomenologically, one's experience is either qualitatively identical with or sufficiently like what one experiences in the corresponding perception. Not all sensory experiences, to be sure, are qualitatively identical with any actual instance or kind of perceptual experience. One might, in a nightmarish daydream, have a sensory experience as of an approaching bear. The experience could be much less vivid than a counterpart perception, but the possibility of such identity seems undeniable and is significant for understanding perceptual experience and its role in providing knowledge and justification.[5]

[4] Some disjunctivists appear to deny this, but their views are highly variable. See, e.g., Fish 2010, and Pritchard 2012.

[5] For Susanna Schellenberg 2017, who does not distinguish perceptual and sensory experience as I do, the same "perceptual capacity" is instantiated by seeing and by a mere sensory experience with the same visual phenomenological elements. I can see a rationale for speaking of a perceptual

Why should we speak of *merely* sensory experiences when, although one is not really perceiving, one is having a familiar-seeming experience of an apparently external reality? The answer seems to be that perception, though it embodies sensory experience, is not constituted by it and implies much more. Perception implies all that goes with its having an external object. Seeing a maple in full (green) foliage, for instance, includes the sensory experience of its distinctive shade of green but also entails the existence of the tree itself. Some philosophers might describe this experience (misleadingly, in my view) as one of awareness of "phenomenal green." A better way to put this phenomenological point is to say that there is something it is *like* to see a maple in full foliage, and one could have a merely sensory experience that, visually, is qualitatively just like that but is not a case of seeing one. That experience might be a hallucination, but this possibility does not entail that between genuine perceptual experiences and just *any* corresponding hallucinatory ones—those with the same ostensibly perceived external object—there is always a "common factor" that is precisely the same in both cases. Such precise commonality would occur only in cases of exact qualitative similarity, which might be idealizations that never occur. Shall we say, then, that perceptual experiences *have* phenomenal properties (or qualities, in some uses)? One might say this, but it is misleading. Perceptual experiences are a relation between a perceived object and a perceiver, and to ascribe phenomenal properties to such relations is at best a way of indicating that they entail a sensory experience in which the perceiver has those properties. If I hallucinate a birch tree, *I* have the property of "experiencing birchly."

There is also some question whether we should conceive having sensory experiences as *identical* with the subject's *having* certain phenomenal properties or, more cautiously, as *equivalent to* the instantiation of those properties by the experiencing subject (such instantiations may be events, processes, or states, and I leave open how these are to be analyzed). It is true that we must be able to attribute experiences to persons, hence to treat experiences as a kind of property—a relational property for many uses of 'experience'. But in the uses of 'experience' central here, experiences are non-relational phenomenal properties (if indeed there are any experiential properties that are not phenomenal). My concern here is sensory experience, which can occur apart from perceptual experience and so, on that count, at least, is not relational (or at least not a relation to any physical object). I conceive having sensory experiences simpliciter as instantiating the property of having a set of phenomenal properties of a certain kind: both sensory experiences and phenomenal properties are properties of persons, but to instantiate the former properties is to instantiate each property in a set of the latter.

To be sure, not all phenomenal properties are sensory: silently reciting Donne's "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" is both experiential and phenomenal, as is

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capacity here. But consider a Cartesian demon scenario, in which, for a non-embodied mind, there is sensory experience intrinsically like perceptual experience. Would genuine perceptual experience be possible for the kinds of objects hallucinated? Perhaps so, and perhaps she would grant this. I would not foreclose that possibility, but do not call mere sensory experience perceptual and use 'perceptual experience' for experiences that are relational as well as sensory.

simply imaging a giant redwood. Moreover, there are questions about whether hearing a Bach Invention while seeing green trees is one experience or two, but there is no need to settle this, since either view leaves untouched the idea that (sensory) experiences are properties consisting in the subject's instantiating certain phenomenal properties.

1.2.3 The Discriminative Responsiveness of Perception

Perception is not just any information-bearing relation between an experiencing subject and a perceptible object. It is not even just a relation in which the object causes an appropriate sensory experience. In a special way that is difficult to capture, perception represents the object and does so through a non-deviant causal relation (about which more will be said below).

How accurately representational must perception be? There may be no simple answer, and, for different senses, there may be differences in the degree of inaccuracy allowable by perception through the sense in question. But one general point can be seen if we consider vision. Suppose I see a plane in the distance. It may appear to me as a slow-moving speck that disappears into a distant cloud. Suppose it is moving and to my right, but it is not black, as it appears to be, nor simply an oblong object, as it also appears to be. Still, I can discern its path and approximate location; and, in addition, my responsiveness to it is such that if it changed course, or speeded up significantly, or exploded, or became a bright color, I would see this. In short, I have a *discriminative responsiveness* to it, such that I am causally connected with it in a way that assures that my visual phenomenal properties representing it to me will vary depending on at least certain of its visible properties.[6] This notion of responsiveness is vague, but so is the notion of seeing, and in much the same way. I can see it, as I can see a friend walking across the room, even if I would not visually register *every* change in speed; but I cannot actually see it or the friend if I would not (other things equal) register *any* change.

To say that perceiving something entails a discriminative responsiveness to it does not entail actual discrimination regarding it. Encased in a seamless green sphere, one could see nothing but, e.g., green surrounding one, with no borders or variations to be represented in an "exercise" of discrimination. Yet one would still tend to notice a change in the green if it darkened. The point is not just that one need not *do* anything describable as discriminating; it is that one's experience may not

[6] I take causal connections to imply certain counterfactuals but do not consider those connections analyzable simply in terms of counterfactuals (I leave open here whether actual causal connections are fully analyzable or conceptually primitive). A related qualification is this. Where there is a time gap, as with seeing distant stars, the best option seems to be to suppose that we see them as they *were* at a certain time, and that this requires that we have whatever discriminative responsiveness is appropriate to seeing them by the properties they had by which we see them.

represent any differences: seeing the uniform field of green is a perception regardless of whether any variations in it are seen at the time.

Perhaps it would be fair to say this: for a sensory experience to be genuinely perceptual, the experience must in some way represent *something* true of it at least approximately right, though it need not represent the whole object perceived, and it must be in some way discriminatively sensitive to changes in at least some of the perceptible properties of the object perceived. But there is room both for limited accurate information and for a good deal of misinformation. Compare picking up (or touching) a skillet. You must grasp (or touch) some part of it, even if just the tip of the handle. Some parts, to be sure, give more leverage than others, but this depends on both you and the skillet.

1.2.4 Perceptual Reliability

There is a related variable we must take into account in understanding perception: the reliability of the process by which the perceived object's instantiating a set of perceptible properties produces a set of representational phenomenal properties in the perceiver sufficient to qualify the perceiver as seeing it. This is roughly a matter of whether there is a high (perhaps better than even) probability of a certain kind of discriminative response to the object under the relevant conditions. Suppose that the plane's speeding up by even 100% would not affect my visual experience of it. This does not prevent my seeing it—as opposed to bearing on how *well* I see it—if I would respond to a change in direction and to its hovering in midair. But suppose that (other things remaining equal) I would not discern any such changes in its movement. This makes it doubtful that I am seeing it. Still, what if I would respond to a change in its color? Do I not then see it, even if still less well?

It turns out that to determine whether I see the plane, we need a good deal of information; and even given that information, there will be borderline cases. It may be that there is a certain kind of reliability built into the causal condition on seeing: we presumably cannot see at all something that in no way causes us to have a visual experience that is, in an appropriate sense, *of* it. I do not see the plane at all if there is an opaque object between me and it but my visual impressions are caused by a machine that, unlike reliable prosthetic devices, accidentally enters a state which, by a further accident, produces the appropriate visual experience in me by using a photographic representation of the plane to stimulate my brain so as to give me the right aeronautic "vision." (This would be a "deviant" causal chain.) Granted, causal determinists would take it that the connection is in principle capturable by a universal law. I am assuming only that positing causal connections of the kind required for perception implies at most a lawlike connection of a weaker kind. The relevant connecting generalization might be probabilistic or might be a tendency statement.

As the aeronautic example shows, we may not say that mere causation of a sensory state by an object, even one that yields a detailed and accurate representation of it, guarantees actually perceiving it. Suppose a ball is dropped in a closed room

next to the one I am in but it accidentally triggers a machine which then causes me to hallucinate a ball just like this moving exactly as this does. I may then have true quasi-visual beliefs about the ball, though it does not causally affect me (at least not in the right way) and I do not see it.

It could be, however, that I am caused to see a distant object by light rays reaching me accidentally and producing a visual impression of the kind I would have if I saw it in the normal way: imagine that a machine with revolving mirrors produces the impression in me at a time it was supposed to be turned off, but my visual impression is just what it would have been had the light rays not been bent toward me through the machine but instead reached me in the normal way. The object causes my impression, which would vary with changes in its color or motion, so that I can identify it, though it is not where I take it to be. We might call this *lucky seeing*: I am lucky that I see the object, but although the *way* I see it is highly improbable, the causal connection between it and me is close enough to normal to permit our saying (for instance) that I got a lucky (though indirect) glimpse. The process by which the object produces my experience is one that only luckily occurs; but *given* all the variables in place when it occurs, it is not by luck that I see it.

The kind of reliability we have been considering might be called *identificational reliability*. It is a matter of whether the process by which the object (appropriately) produces the relevant sensory experience conveys the object's properties with sufficient accuracy for that experience to count as seeing, hearing, etc., where we can (in principle) refer to the object under *some* property of it. One reason to speak of identificational reliability here is that we can rely on the experience to give us the information that there is something there, even if we can know little about it. This is, to be sure, *minimal* identification, as opposed to the usual cases with familiar kinds of objects in which we identify them as something in particular.

One might think we can be in a position in which we can know nothing about it—being mistaken in *any* property-ascription we can make regarding it (at least any we are disposed to make). We need not, for example, see it by seeing any particular property of it. One reason to think this is that we can refer to a thing when all our beliefs (at least all our *de dicto* beliefs) about it are false, as on direct reference theories of proper names. Recall the aeronautic example. I can be wrong about the size, speed, color, and shape of the plane and still see it. Still, if I see it, I must at least be discriminatively sensitive to some property of it, even if only a relational property such as that it is changing location relative to surrounding clouds. Granted, I need not *believe* any such thing and can be mistaken in all my beliefs that are "directly" about it; but without a visual thread connecting me to it which can yield knowledge or at least belief about it, I do not see it. This is parallel to the point that, even if all my beliefs "directly" about, say, Homer, are false, I *could* know that Homer is the person spoken about by (for instance) T. S. Eliot in a certain place. If perception is factive and connects us with reality in the way it appears to, there will be a possibility of perceptual knowledge, even if it is never realized.

There is, however, another dimension of perceptual reliability. Here the question is not the reliability with which, for a perceiver to see or otherwise perceive it, an object must produce a phenomenal representation in the perceiver, but rather the

reliability of sensory representations in correctly identifying properties of the object. This dimension of perceptual reliability is roughly the probability that an object has a property, F, given the process by which, in the circumstances, the object produces a sensory experience representing it as being F. Suppose there is a fog and I easily make out the plane through it, but in most cases of a plane of that kind under these conditions I would not make it out. This might be lucky seeing: I am lucky to see it, but, given my seeing it, would not be lucky to have the true belief that it is before me, and I can visually know something about it. Now suppose that I see the plane as blue and thereby believe that it is blue (which it is), but that it is rare for the color of a plane like this to show through a fog of this kind. Lucky seeing is now combined with lucky believing: the probability of my having believed it to be a different color is very high. Here my belief that the plane is blue does not seem to be a case of knowledge. The plane would much more likely have appeared merely dark. We might say here that the perception lacks *representational reliability* relative to the property in question, being blue. I might, however, know it to be moving westward. Relative to movement, the perception is representationally reliable. This is also a kind of *epistemic reliability,* the kind needed for the basis of a true belief to be such as to render knowledge. The difference is roughly this: one kind of reliable process is needed for us to see the object at all; another kind is needed to see it *well enough* to go significantly beyond mere identification. (This difference is related to that between conditions for reliable reference and those for reliable predication.)

1.3 Four Structurally Distinct Cases of Visual Perception

I have said that one reason for the convenience of vision as a focus is how much information it typically provides under good conditions. This, in turn, may be owing to its being unique among the five senses in the way it registers, in a kind of constitutive way, both primary and secondary qualities. By this I mean that both kinds, say shape and color, are characteristically presented in seeing. The object seen appears as, e.g., shaped and colored, with determinates of these represented, say being square and blue. Touch might indicate heat as well as, e.g., hardness and shape, but it need not normally yield a shape perception or an apparent temperature. Compare tasting and smelling; these do not by their nature present any primary property, nor are tastes or smells presented to perceivers by their merely being perceptually presented with a primary property.[7] Touching a rose might cause one to have a sense of its distinctive odor, as smelling it may cause one to have a sense of its shape; but this is by way of some association or inference and contrasts markedly with the way in which the flowery shape qualities of the rose are presented to touch. Similarly, hearing a bell presents the primary qualities, such as being metallic, indirectly: by the character of the sound as an indication of metal, whereas, in seeing, colors and

[7] This is compatible with holding that if there *is* nothing tasted or smelled, then one is having a merely sensory experience.

shapes are presented in a direct way. Granted, seeing a colored object need not to provide any sense of a *particular* shape. Imagine awakening in a global chamber with its entire interior surface seamlessly painted green. There need be no sense of a particular shape, since no borders or discontinuities would be present. But extension is still represented and shape would be too if a patch with determinate borders were blackened.

There are apparently four (structurally) basic cases of seeing, three of which are factive (in ways explained shortly). In calling these basic, I am not implying that they are in no sense analyzable; my point is that none of the four is reducible to some other one of them or some combination of them, and (as will be explained) I take this to be compatible with some of them being required for others, and in that sense *more* basic in the order of perceptual kinds, than others.

Consider first the three factive cases. One is seeing an object; the second is seeing an object to have a property, say seeing a rose to be yellow; and the third is seeing that some observable fact holds (equivalently, that some "observation" proposition holds), for instance that a rose is swaying in the wind. I call these *simple perception, attributive* (or *predicative*) *perception*, and *propositional perception*.[8] These are all factive. First, our seeing an object, x, entails the existence of x: there *is* in fact an x that we see; this is *referential* factivity, often called veridicality. Secondly, if we see x to be silver-grey, there is an x that we see *and it is sliver-grey*; this also illustrates *attributive* factivity (we could also call this kind of factivity *objectual* to avoid the unwarranted suggestion that there need be any mental act of attribution). Thirdly, if we *see that* x is sliver-grey, that proposition is true (equivalently, it is a fact that x is silver-grey); this is *propositional* factivity. Normally, we also *know that* the proposition holds. This last point may be plausibly taken to illustrate that propositional perception exhibits another important kind of reliability in perception, a kind that simple perception, as we have seen, need not have: a kind of *attributive representational reliability*.

These points about the factivity of perception are apparently conceptual, though their status is obscured if we do not set aside such phenomena as "seeing stars" when the head is struck or "seeing snakes" in cases where they inhabit the hallucinatory visual field of an alcoholic with *delirium tremens*. It also seems to be a truth of a similar status that seeing is *hierarchical* in this sense: seeing that x is F (where F is a perceptible property) entails seeing x to be F, and that in turn entails seeing x simpliciter. The converse entailments apparently do not hold. Even if one can see a thing only *by* seeing some property of it, say F, one need not see it to be F (at least where this requires a concept of being F), and one can see a thing, say a surface, to be F without seeing that (hence believing that) the surface is F: this propositional perception requires conceptualization of the object, which is not needed for simply seeing it to have a property.[9]

[8] Here and in discussing perception in some other parts of the essay, I draw on (but also refine) ch. 1 of my 2010 and later work, including my 2013.

[9] It is not self-evident that seeing x by seeing its F-ness does not entail seeing it to be F, but if we grant that it *positions* one to see it to be F, we may then plausibly claim that whereas seeing x by