

DISJUNCTIVISM, CAUSALITY, AND THE OBJECTS
OF PERCEPTUAL EXPERIENCE

A Thesis Submitted to the College of
Graduate Studies and Research
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts
In the Department of Philosophy
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

By

Brandon Murray

Permission to Use

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Postgraduate degree from the University of Saskatchewan, I agree that the Libraries of this University may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor or professors who supervised my thesis work or, in their absence, by the Head of the Department or the Dean of the College in which my thesis work was done. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of Saskatchewan in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my thesis.

Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of material in this thesis in whole or part should be addressed to:

Head of the Department of Philosophy

9 Campus Drive

University of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, SK

Canada S7N 5A5

ABSTRACT

One of the most immediately compelling arguments against the disjunctivist position within the philosophy of perception points to the well-accepted fact that hallucinations can have the same neural cause as veridical perceptions; this is known as the causal argument. Since the main motivation for disjunctivism is to preserve naive realism, critics claim that naive realism is then incompatible with certain, well-accepted claims of neuropsychology, and, thus, disjunctivism is false. After surveying the general arguments for disjunctivism offered by Hinton, Snowden, and Martin, the causal argument is split into a stronger version and a weaker version. The strong argument relies on a narrow conception of the ‘same cause, same effect’ principle and this narrow conception is extremely controversial, ultimately entailing that mental events supervene only on the total brain state of an individual. The weak argument, which embraces a wider conception of the ‘same cause, same effect’ principle finds the disjunctivist position explanatorily redundant. The two major camps within disjunctivism, positive disjunctivism and negative disjunctivism, offer different approaches to the weak argument, and what emerges from the discussion of these two theories is that negative disjunctivism has a major dialectical advantage against positive disjunctivism, and that negative disjunctivism offers a satisfying response to the weak causal argument. M. G. F. Martin offers an insightful analysis of ‘indistinguishability’ and in doing so clarifies the disjunctivist thesis, sets limits to our understanding of our own mental states, and places the burden with the common-kind theorist.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I wish to thank the students and faculty of the University of Saskatchewan's Philosophy Department for providing endless insights and challenging discussions over the past two years. The philosophical musings within this document began as a curiosity borne out of these classroom dialogues, and they never ceased to provide material on which to build. Thank you for providing an environment where discussions of this type are capable of flourishing. Furthermore, I am extremely grateful for the financial assistance received in part with my Graduate Teaching Fellowship within the University of Saskatchewan, the support of which made this project plausible.

I would like to express my utmost appreciation to those members of my committee, Prof. Eric Dayton, Prof. Emer O'Hagan, and external Prof. Ulrich Teucher, in offering their time, support, and recommendations. To my supervisor Prof. Phil Dwyer, who provided inspiration, patience, and philosophical scholarship of the highest degree, I thank you for your dedication and hard work.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank my family and friends for their tremendous support and sustained interest in this long, demanding process. I am especially thankful for the love and support provided by my partner Emily Dueck, whose strength and determination is more than partially responsible for the completion of this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

page

<u>PERMISSION TO USE</u>	<u>i</u>
<u>ABSTRACT</u>	<u>ii</u>
<u>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</u>	<u>iii</u>
<u>CHAPTER I</u>	<u>1</u>
1.1 The Argument from Illusion and the Common-Kind	6
1.2 Why Disjunctivism?.....	10
1.3 Hinton and the Disjunctive Position	16
1.4 Snowden's Translucence and Martin's Naïve Realism	21
1.5 Disagreements in Disjunctivism	27
<u>CHAPTER II</u>	<u>30</u>
2.1 The Cartesian Position, the Moderate, and the Disjunctivist.....	30
2.2 The Strong Causal Argument and <i>SCP</i>	31
2.3 Replies and Supervenience	37
2.4 The 'Weak' Causal Argument and the Highest Common Factor	41
<u>CHAPTER III</u>	<u>47</u>
3.1 Snowden and the Positive Disjunctivist Response	47
2.4 Martin, Negative Disjunctivism, and Indiscriminability	54
3.2 Objections to Martin	67
<u>CONCLUSION</u>	<u>73</u>
<u>LIST OF REFERENCES</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	<u>78</u>

CHAPTER I

The fact that there are numerous theories offered within the philosophy of perception is, in its own way, truly remarkable. When I sit back and reflect on my awareness of the world, it seems obvious, at least initially, that what I am aware of is conspicuously simple: the world itself. The answer to such a question is unmistakable even for a child. What they are aware of could be their family members, a particular building or specific cloud, or a particularly intriguing creepy-crawly. That is, what they are aware of in their experience is simply those everyday objects that we encounter; perhaps leaving space for something a little more exotic should we ever encounter unfamiliar objects. This view is referred to as naive realism. Naive realism is the philosophical theory that states that the properties that objects possess, as perceived by a subject, are actual properties of the objects;¹ the finish is smooth, the water is cool, the penny is round, etc. Furthermore, the objects of perception appear to have the properties they do in virtue of possessing those properties. That is, one is directly aware of external objects, as such.

It may then be surprising to someone stumbling upon philosophy for the first time that a great many philosophers find this account unconvincing. These philosophers state that what we are aware of in experience is, strictly speaking, not the world. Rather, ‘experience’ is an intermediary between us and the world; what we are acquainted with in perception consists of a type of ‘mental’ object. Imagine looking at a stick partially submerged in water. To the perceiver the stick will appear bent, despite the fact that our perceiver knows perfectly well that sticks generally maintain their spatial dimensions when submerged. How then does the stick appear bent without actually being so? The traditional answer to such a question is that one is not aware

¹ Alex Byrne & Heather Logue, “Introduction” in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue (London, The MIT Press, 2009), xix. This anthology served as the main source of research.

of ‘the stick’ in the first place, rather the direct objects of our experience are intra-mental objects; a *common-kind* that is ‘observed’ both when one is veridically perceiving *and* when one encounters an illusion or hallucination. The reason the stick appears bent is because we do not directly perceive the stick, but instead perceive a mental object; we are only ever *indirectly* aware of the external objects of the world. It is for these reasons that David Hume states that “this universal and primary opinion of all men [naive realism] is soon destroyed by the slightest philosophy,”² and, hence, naive realism is incorrect.

However, in the post-Wittgenstein environment of the late 1960’s, philosophers more forcibly argued that subjects are, more or less, directly aware of their environment. One such philosopher, J.M. Hinton, offered a novel, alternative account within the philosophy of perception.³ Finding inspiration within Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* and the ordinary-language tradition,⁴ Hinton denied that there is a common-kind shared in veridical perception and hallucination. Since there is no common-kind, there is no need to posit that what I am aware of in experience is anything but the objects of experience themselves. Having introduced the use of *disjunctive reports* (reports of the form AvB) to describe our experiences, this view came to be known as *disjunctivism*. Disjunctivism is the philosophical theory that holds that veridical perception and hallucinations are experiences of fundamentally different kinds.⁵ A *disjunctive report* is a disjunctive statement that replaces non-disjunctive ‘seems’ statements.⁶ After Hinton’s original formulation, the view was championed both by Paul Snowden and John

² David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 152.

³ Byrne & Logue, ii.

⁴ J.L. Austin’s *Sense and Sensibilia* bears many similarities to disjunctivism, and for this reason Austin is often given the honorary title of being ‘the forerunner to disjunctivism’.

⁵ William Fish, “Disjunctivism and Non-Disjunctivism: Making Sense of the Debate” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 105 (2005): 124.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

McDowell, who brought disjunctivism to the fore.⁷ Since this emergence, the strategy implemented by the disjunctivist has spread far beyond the philosophy of perception, and has been utilized in epistemology and metaethics. Within the philosophy of perception, disjunctivism has been primarily motivated by the desire to save naive realism. If we have no reason to assert that there truly is a common-kind, then a great host of arguments against naive realism lose their clout.

Some philosophers argue that naive realism is entirely compatible with certain conceptions of the common-kind, and so the crusade waged by disjunctivism is ultimately mistaken.⁸ Putting this criticism aside for the moment, there are two main intersecting lines of argument that are levelled against the disjunctive position. First, it seems patently true that a subject would not be able to distinguish between an instance of veridical perception and a *perfect hallucination*. Since the veridical perception and the perfect hallucination are *indistinguishable*, they must have a common-kind, this thought perhaps being justified by Leibniz's Law. I do not believe that this objection is particularly convincing for reasons that will be apparent by the end of this thesis. However, it is important to keep this argument—the argument from indistinguishability—in mind.

The second objection to disjunctivism manifests itself as the *causal argument*. The general idea is simply that veridical perception and a perfect hallucination share the same *proximate cause*. Since veridical perception and a perfect hallucination share the same proximate cause, veridical perception and a perfect hallucination must be the same type of *thing*. This *thing*

⁷ However, as many scholars have noted, it is perhaps better to talk of disjunctive theories of perception, as the different philosophical accounts found in the literature have substantial differences. McDowell helped start the dialogue with "Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge" *Proceedings of the British Academy* 68; 1982 and Snowden with "Perception, Vision, and Causation" *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 81; 1981.

⁸ The explicit argument for the incompatibility between naive realism and the common-kind assumption will be outlined in the first chapter.

is rightfully identified as the common-kind between veridical perception and a perfect illusion, the existence of which disjunctivism explicitly denies.

It is this argument which I take to be the most compelling argument against the disjunctivist, and I imagine that the majority of contemporary philosophers would agree with this evaluation. Philosophers generally wish to take the demands of scientific inquiry seriously, and if neuropsychological research suggests that hallucinations have the same proximate causes as veridical perceptions, it is wise to inquire if this scientific fact entails any commitments to a common-kind. If we are committed to the existence of a common-kind, it seems we lose any possibility for the truth of naive realism. As a philosopher interested in the possibility of naive realism, it would be a near fatal blow to concede that one's philosophical theory contradicts purported neuropsychological facts.

In this thesis, it is my intention to evaluate the strength of the causal argument and the numerous disjunctivist responses to this criticism. My second chapter will describe and enlarge the causal argument, dividing the main argument into two sub-arguments: the strong-causal argument and the weak-causal argument. After having dismissed the strong-causal argument in chapter two, this will be followed in the third chapter with a thorough evaluation of the responses offered by disjunctivists. By describing a novel conception of 'indistinguishability', the negative disjunctivist is in the best position to refute the weak-causal argument, effectively removing the threat of the causal argument. However, before we begin our evaluation of the general disjunctivist position, our foremost goal is to present a faithful account of the position, and this will be the goal of the first chapter.

After giving a brief sketch of the common-kind tradition, I will start with J.M. Hinton's original formulation of the doctrine and the three main arguments for disjunctivism will be

offered. Of these arguments, the first is that disjunctivism is the default position within the philosophy of perception, followed with Hinton's list of requirements for philosophers who wish to justify a non-disjunctivist account. Since, so Hinton states, such requirements are unlikely to be satisfied, the disjunctivist account is correct. Secondly, Paul Snowden's stance on the causal theory of perception will be discussed. The third argument for disjunctivism, formulated by M.G.F. Martin, concludes that if naive realism is true then disjunctivism is necessarily true. By synthesizing these three positions, we will hopefully be able to develop a challenge to the opponent of disjunctivism.

With these main arguments laid out, it will then be possible to foray into the intra-disjunctivist disputes. These disagreements revolve around two central questions, the first being a question of how we are to characterize the disjuncts of disjunctivism. Are illusions more akin to veridical perception or to hallucinations? If they belong with the former, illusions are placed on the left-side of the disjunct (an experience is either a veridical perception/illusion or a hallucination),⁹ and if they are better characterized as belonging with the latter, illusions are placed on the right-side of the disjunct (VvI/H). The second major disagreement amongst disjunctivists consists in how one ought to characterize non-veridical perception,¹⁰ or, more precisely, whether it is possible to *positively* characterize cases of non-veridical perception. A negative disjunctivist characterizes the bad cases solely by what they are not; they lack those features possessed by veridical perception. The positive disjunctivist, being more ambitious, attempts to offer some type of characterization that extends beyond mere negative descriptions,

⁹ Henceforth disjunctions will be represented as (V/lvH) and (VvI/H), where the former includes illusions with veridical perception and the latter includes illusions with hallucinations.

¹⁰ I may refer to non-veridical perception as a) the bad case or b) the right disjunct, as it is placed to the right of veridical perception within the disjunction.

such as by appealing to the so-called Theory of Appearing, according to which hallucinations are a type of relation¹¹.

1.1 The Argument from Illusion and the Common-Kind

Reports of our experience occupy a special role in the history of philosophical thought, and at times, have played vital roles within certain epistemological doctrines. The significance they held was due, in large part, to their claim of being infallible: we cannot doubt that we are having an experience of the type which we are experiencing. While still surrounded by uncertainty near the beginning of the *Meditations*, Descartes states that our experiences possess this characteristic of ‘certainty’ despite being scrutinized through methodological scepticism.¹² Although I may doubt that the world corresponds with my experiences, I cannot doubt that I am undergoing these experiences. In order to set out the motivation for non-disjunctive accounts, consider the following example. After my physician prescribes a new type of medication for me, I find that upon taking it I begin to ‘see’ bright lights cropping up in my field of vision, where my field of vision is simply what is visible to me on any given occasion. Given that my prescription states that ‘seeing’ bright lights may be a side-effect of my medication, I may be sceptical about whether there really are these bright lights that I am prone to seeing. However, I am sure of something, namely that I am undergoing the experience of ‘seeing’ bright-lights. I see, in a secondary sense,¹³ the bright lights, but they may not be real. Beliefs such as, “I am undergoing the experience of ‘seeing bright-lights’,” are special instances of self-reports, which help foundational epistemologies get started.

¹¹ Harold Langsam, “The Theory of Appearing Defended” in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue, (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 191.

¹² René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), 20.

¹³ It is helpful to remember that ‘seeing bright-lights’ can be characterized as seeing headlights or as experiencing a phosphene. The point at the outset is that, to the subject at a particular time, one is unable to distinguish whether what one is experiencing is veridical or not.

The question then is asked, “What are these self-reports reports of? What am I aware of in these situations that provide the grounds to such a claim?” Historically, the preferred answer has been *sense-data*; the private, intra-mental, immediate objects of awareness.¹⁴ It is sense-data which ground these self-reports, as their immediacy and transparency allow us to be certain of their properties and attributes. Whether or not sense-data correspond to non-psychological realities, how bright they appear, and for what duration they appear, and this is because sense-data are immediate and transparent. I cannot be fooled through misremembering or otherwise mistake the appearance.

Although we may be prepared to accept that we are aware of something along the lines of sense-data when we are experiencing the bad case (cases where we are dealing with hallucinations or Cartesian evil-demons), the sense-data theorist also maintains that we are aware of sense-data in veridical perception. Although this may seem strange, it has been a popular position in the history of philosophy, and has largely been motivated by the Argument from Illusion. The Argument from Illusion, perhaps most famously explicated by A.J. Ayer, comes in two stages. First, the argument asks us to look at the bad case: a stick in water, an object at a distance, a mirage, the hallucination of pink elephants, etc. Since the objects cannot have the properties that are present in our immediate awareness of them, either because we know the external object does not have those properties or because there is no external object to begin with, there must be something else that has those properties of which we are aware.¹⁵ These objects of which we are aware are sense-data.

The second part of the Argument from Illusion states that what we are aware of in veridical perception are also sense-data, not the objects of perception themselves. Ayer gives

¹⁴ Robert Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 656.

¹⁵ A. J. Ayer, *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd, 1964), 4-5.

three different arguments to justify this claim. First, the experience of veridical perception and the experience of illusion/hallucination are qualitatively indistinguishable for the subject undergoing them. If they are indistinguishable for the subject, then it stands to reason that they are the same type of experience. We often times mistakenly claim that illusions or hallucinations are the genuine article, and this is a possibility because of this indistinguishability. Second, when an object of perception transitions from possessing illusory qualities into a veridical perception, no major change seems to take place. Although an object at a great distance may seem small, nothing with respect to the experience changes in quality as I slowly begin to approach the object and appreciate its true magnitude. But if there is no difference between the two types of experience as they “shade into one another”,¹⁶ then how could the two types of events be drastically different? The last argument begins by pointing out that altering the conditions under which a certain object is observed affects the properties the object of perception possesses. However, since external-objects have fixed properties, altering the conditions under which they are viewed should not alter their properties. And since these properties do change, then the objects of perception cannot be the material objects themselves; they must be sense-data.¹⁷

Putting aside the third argument,¹⁸ the other arguments share a common theme. The idea that sense-data are the objects of awareness in both the good and bad cases is based on two significant claims. First, that we are aware of sense-data in the delusory case and, second, the fact that the good and bad cases are indistinguishable. Due to a subject’s inability to distinguish between veridical perception and the perfect hallucination, this suggests that the two types of

¹⁶ Ibid. 9

¹⁷ Ibid. 10-11

¹⁸ I do not find this argument very persuasive, as it relies on a gratuitous assumption that takes it that objects cannot look certain ways under different conditions if we are directly aware of those objects. What would ever lead us to consider this to be true? Why can’t a penny, which is round, look elliptical when viewed from a specific angle? To insist that perception must be subjective on these grounds is rather puzzling, as Austin notes when discussing the use of the word ‘real’, 82.

experience are the same type of experience. Both the good case and the bad case have a common-element that is present in both. In the context of Ayer, this common-element is a sense-datum.

Sense-data are no longer in vogue, but the Argument from Illusion still plays a substantial role in the philosophy of perception, specifically the argument of indistinguishability. If indistinguishability shows us anything, so the argument continues, it is that there is a common-kind that occurs in both the good case and the bad case. Furthermore, this common-kind must be a private, intramental object that explains the compatibility between being certain that you are having an experience of a certain type, while being ignorant as to whether or not anything corresponds to that experience. Whatever the status of sense-data, it seems the idea of an ‘experience’ as the common-element in both cases is here to stay.

Hinton claims that if there are such things as ‘experiences’, then one ought to give reports that seemingly refer to a common-kind; an *E*-report (an ‘*experience*’-report).¹⁹

E-report: a report on a common-kind, a report made by a subject on an ‘experience’ in the most minimal sense.

In offering an *E*-report, the subject limits their ontological commitments solely to a common-kind: “I am having the ‘experience’ of seeing bright-lights, an ‘experience’ which is present in both veridical perception and hallucination.” That is, in making an *E*-report, one only commits oneself to a common-kind of which they are aware, leaving the question open as to what an *E*-report is, in a more substantive sense, a report on. In contrast, to fulfill this role, we could offer *R*-statements (a *representation*-statement).

R-statement: a statement or proposition which identifies the common-kind and in doing so clarifies the notion of the ‘common-kind’.

¹⁹ J. M. Hinton, *Experiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 60.

An *R*-statement would then make a claim about the intramental object of which the subject is aware, “The sense-datum has the characteristic of being bright and circular.”²⁰ What characterizes an *E*-report is that it is a report of the ‘pure’ experience; a report that is indubitable and true irrespective of whether or not the experience in question is veridical or hallucinatory. This intuition is one of many which influenced Descartes’ great works, an intuition that still speaks to us today. *R*-statements, in contrast to *E*-reports, require detailed analysis by the philosopher in order for us to say anything about them whatsoever. *R*-statements, which are fraught with theoretical difficulties, can refer to sense-data or representational objects, depending on the specific philosophical theory one endorses. Although philosophers have and do disagree on how to characterize *R*-statements, *E*-reports reach back to philosophy’s early conception.²¹

However, might we think that this conception of ‘experience’ is misguided? In one sense, this seems unlikely. *E*-reports, putting aside some problematic concerns, appear to be entirely uncontroversial. If something appears to us, and we are unsure if the object in question is real or not, as when Descartes countenances the idea of the evil-demon, then nevertheless *E*-reports are still entirely credible. If I am unsure of the veridicality of my experience, I am at least certain that I am having the ‘experience’ in question. But is this thought justifiable?

1.2 Why Disjunctivism?

Imagine being the witness to a late-night mugging. After witnessing the perturbing event, the detective running the case asks you the following question, “How many muggers were there?” Now, due to this night being particularly foggy, you have difficulty in answering this question. At times there may have seemed to be only three figures: the two criminals and the

²⁰ Although I use the dated concept of a ‘sense-datum’ in this specific *R*-statement, *R*-statements can also refer to so-called intentional objects as well or any putative intramental object for that matter, including representational objects.

²¹ See Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1969), 124.

victim. But at other times it seemed that there may have been four figures: three criminals and the victim. How would you then, given this difficulty, respond to the question the detective posed? Possible answers would include, “Well, it was difficult to see, and at times it looked as if there were two muggers, but at other times it looked as if there were three,” or, “There were definitely at least two, but there was one shadowy figure that could have been another person.” In response, the detective might follow up by asking, “So there were either two or three muggers?” and you would respond with, “Yes.” You would most surely not respond with, “No, that I am not sure of. I am only sure of there being two muggers and one shadowy figure.”

So what is the point of all of this? The first point is that in our everyday, ordinary conversations, the use of *E*-reports seems rather absurd. Although we may speak of seeing a ‘shadowy figure’, we are not referring to an object that is identified as a ‘shadowy figure’. Instead, either the ‘shadowy figure’ is a mugger cloaked amongst the mist, or the mysterious figure is the result of lights and shadows reflecting off clouds of vapor. It would seem strange to insist that one had *actually* seen a ‘shadowy figure’; ‘shadowy figures’ do not generally have a place in our ontology. But this is precisely what the sense-data theorist claims.²² One experiences a ‘shadowy figure’, and features of this specific type of sense-datum are present for either a fog-drenched mugger, or a unique spectacle of cloud and light. One could remain completely ambivalent as to the nature of the object, yet still maintain that they saw something which is neither a mugger nor an illusion. The ‘shadowy figure’ would be a mental object, such as a sense datum, and that is what the subject experienced. But, to answer the question of what one has seen, as in the case of responding to the detective, by affirming that one has *literally* seen a

²² Some might object to the claim that sense-data theorists actually maintain that their ontology allows for the existence of ‘shadowy figures’. But if the sense-datum one is experiencing is neither a mugger nor an illusion, then it is something else. This reported mental object would have the properties characteristic of what we would call a ‘shadowy figure’. It would look different shades of grey, and have a figure resembling that of a human. What other characteristics might we attribute to the sense datum?

‘shadowy figure’, while remaining completely aloof as to the nature of the ‘shadowy figure’, misses the intent of the question. In our everyday life, *E*-reports are not very useful.

The second, more important point is that the use of *E*-reports seems to be unnecessary. In answering the question posed by the detective, we are being asked what we saw at the scene of the crime. The answer to this question is simple: we are unsure. What we saw might have been a third person, or it might have been an illusion. I can go into further detail and describe what I saw, but at the same time I am unsure as to what it is that I saw. But to respond to this uncertainty (two or three muggers) with the claim that I am certain of one thing, specifically with what the experience was like, is rather unhelpful. True, I may be certain of the characteristics of that experience, but how does this give support to the idea of *E*-reports?

The most immediate response to this question would be that we are certain of the belief, “I saw a shadowy figure,” and this belief must be true in virtue of something. Since I do not know if what I saw was a mugger, but somehow managed to indubitably know how the scene ‘looked’, then I am able to offer an *E*-report; a report of how the scene ‘looked’. Since we are uncertain whether we truly saw a person, and it might very well be the case that we saw someone, our belief that we saw a shadowy figure must be true in virtue of some type of sense-datum. Just as Descartes identified the ‘mental’ as that which we are certain of in our state of doubt, so does the witness point to this private, mental event as the source of their certainty.

Is this response satisfying? I strongly believe that it is not. As Hinton puts it, it confuses what makes a thing true with what makes a thing known.²³ We can be certain of what the experience was like, yet remain completely ambivalent as to what type of event one has experienced. Just as we can be certain that what we saw looked like a ‘shadowy figure’, but remain undecided as to what it is that one saw. “But”, says the opponent, “What makes the claim

²³ Hinton, *Experience*, 95.

true are sense-data!” How they found themselves proposing such an answer is somewhat perplexing, as what makes the claim true is far simpler: we are observing either a mugger or something that seems to be a mugger. What makes the claim ‘I saw a shadowy figure’ true is either the presence of a third mugger, or is made true by light reflecting off mist or a hallucination; we are simply unsure of which of the two disjuncts is true. One of the disjuncts will be true, and this is what makes claims about ‘shadowy figures’ to be true; not the experience of a sense-datum. Furthermore, claims about how a scene 'looks' need not provide evidence for *E*-reports either, as deceptive experiences necessarily 'look' identical to their veridical counterparts; otherwise they would not be deceptive. Whether or not what I saw was a mugger, it will 'look' as if there were one. So why think that 'look' claims provide evidence for *E*-reports, rather than thinking that muggers and mugger-illusions just simply 'look' the same?

This question is the starting point for disjunctivism. Rather than arguing that *E*-reports are types of reports that refer to a private type of experience, disjunctivism takes the position that *E*-reports really are, all things considered, disjunctive reports. Describing ‘one’s experience’ just consists of describing the world or describing what *seems* to be the world (hallucinations, illusions, etc.). When I say, “I am seeing a shadowy figure,” one is actually saying, “I am seeing a mugger or light is reflecting off the fog in a deceptive manner.” Although this equivalence may seem unlikely at first, the claim is rather benign. All the disjunctivist claims is that sentences of the type ‘I am experiencing X’ are indicators of uncertainty. The subject knows that they are aware of something, they are just unaware of what it is they are experiencing. When Descartes states that he is certain that his hand *seems* to be before him, he is correct. But this does not provide evidence for *E*-reports. Rather, this is evidence for limited, epistemic access; not a

unique, ontological category. What Descartes knows is that his experience is either veridical or hallucinatory. After all, what else could it be?

The idea of the common-kind is closely linked with Cartesian scepticism.²⁴ If we doubt everything, including the existence of the external world, it is no surprise that we arrive at the idea of an ‘experience’. An ‘experience’ is what we are aware of when confronted with the Cartesian demon. Since, according to Descartes, my ‘experience’ is (at first) logically consistent with the existence of an evil demon, most of my current beliefs would be about the unknowable i.e. beliefs about supposedly unknowable external objects. However, I could not doubt that it *seems* that these are my hands, and so that which I am aware of cannot be the real world. For if I perceived the external world (my actual hands) then doubting my perception of the external world would be equally as absurd as doubting the existence of oneself or doubting that I am undergoing experiences of some type. What certainty Descartes is left with is a certainty that I am undergoing a certain type of ‘experience’. ‘Experience’ then takes on a foundational role, as one cannot distinguish between veridical perception and deceptions *at all*. One cannot rely on veridical perception itself to play any substantial, epistemological role because once in the sceptical dilemma we are unable to differentiate between veridical and non-veridical perception. Descartes’ replacement is ‘experience’, a basic, ontological category that is present in both veridical and non-veridical perception i.e. a common-kind.

It is this thought, if any, which motivates the intuition that there must be a common-kind.²⁵ If I were ever a brain-in-a-vat, it seems that I should be able to give more than just disjunctive reports. The intuition is that I ought to be able to make true, non-disjunctive

²⁴ M. G. F. Martin, “The Reality of Appearances” in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue, (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 110.

²⁵ Both Martin in “The Reality of Appearances” and McDowell in “Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge” identify this intuition as the most forceful.

statements about my experience as a brain-in-a-vat. If one, let us call him Dan, *knew* that he was a BIV, then he would be in a position to make 'look-statements' which are both true and justified: "It looks as if there are bright-lights above me." Dan would be in a position to affirm that what he is experiencing is illusory; there are no bright-lights, it only looks or seems like there is. Contrast this with the person, say Smith, who does not know if he is a BIV or not, but whose experience is indistinguishable from Dan's experience. Smith, who happens to be a philosopher, may begin to doubt that he perceives reality, instead of a mere facsimile. To affirm that his perception is veridical is to assume the point at issue, and so Smith may resort to the use of disjunctive reports: "I am seeing bright-lights or it seems like I am seeing bright lights". For this person who is in the position of doubt, all they can give are disjunctive reports; otherwise they would not be in doubt. But many real-world philosophers find this troubling. Many insist that we possess at least some knowledge when faced with the sceptical challenge, but this knowledge must be non-disjunctive in nature. Why insist upon this? Just as Dan is able to make the non-disjunctive claim with confidence, we are pushed to accept that Smith can make the non-disjunctive claim as well, since their experiences are indistinguishable from one another. More importantly, if Dan is made unaware that he is a BIV, his experience will still remain indistinguishable from Smith's experience. If the person who is a BIV, Dan, has the same *evidence* as he whose experience is veridical, Smith, then how do we arrive at a *difference* between veridical perception and hallucination?

However, both the naive realist and the disjunctivist reject this type of reasoning. Both positions hold that the common-sense view of perception is the correct account. Perception gives us direct access to the world, and we have very little trouble actually discerning the good case from the bad case. But the sceptic challenges us to defend this claim. If we abandon the idea that

perception gives us direct access to the world, which is a step towards the sceptical argument, then we will be lead to accept a common-kind for experience, whether it is veridical or not. The non-disjunctivist states that this conclusion is justified because, regardless of whether or not one is a BIV, it is logically possible that the experience will be the same. The good case and the bad case are indistinguishable. But if they are indistinguishable then perception cannot give evidence of our direct access to the world. This is the primary intuition against disjunctivism, the claim that we cannot truly know if our perceptions provide us with direct access to the world; all we are aware of (à la Hume) is an 'inner stage'.

However, the sceptic assumes that the epistemological similarity between the good case and the bad case reflects a metaphysical similarity. What reason do we have to accept this assumption? I might not be able to distinguish a painting and an exceptional forgery, but this does not entail that the two paintings share a special metaphysical status, let alone the status of being the same work of art. Furthermore, why play the sceptic's game in this instance? If we do, why concede the valuable distinction between veridical perception and hallucinations? Why even take the sceptic's recommendations seriously? Why not say there is only an epistemological difference between the good case and the bad case? If scepticism is strong-arming us into discarding naive realism, perhaps we need to reconsider the value of methodological scepticism.²⁶ I do not expect this account to convince the opponent; rather in identifying our intuitions we are in a better position to evaluate them.

1.3 Hinton and the Disjunctive Position

Explicitly stated, disjunctivism, as a philosophical position, states that there is no common-kind between veridical perception and hallucinations. What is the 'common-kind' that

²⁶ Although I acknowledge that this reply to the sceptic is unsatisfying, the intuition put forward by the sceptic is equally so.

the disjunctivist denies? John McDowell's expression is more apt in referring to the common-kind as the "*highest* common factor [italics added]"²⁷. This expresses the true position of the disjunctivist, which denies that veridical perception and hallucinations are instantiations of the same type of event; the notion that the common factor must be the essential feature of the good case and the bad case. Hinton identifies this common-kind as an "experience". An 'experience' is that which occurs in both veridical perception and hallucination, an event we can *report* on in both the good and bad case (an *E-report*). The common-kind is not simply a shared characteristic between the good and bad case but a fundamental essence that constitutes the two events.²⁸

The very notion of an *E-report*, says the disjunctivist, is mistaken, as it assumes that what one is 'neutrally' describing could be either veridical or hallucinatory. The traditional argument from illusion, which relies on indistinguishability, is explicitly denied; one type of experience simply *seems* to be like another. One is describing the world or what seems to be the world; not some other object which can be either a veridical experience or a hallucination. Since the two types of experience are different, there is no need to introduce the common-element. This disjunctive account of experience is recent to the philosophical scene, but are there good arguments for the position?

As has already been noted, disjunctivism is rooted in how human beings typically live their lives. We note the similarities between hallucinations and real-objects, but we do not treat the two vastly different experiences the same; unsurprisingly, one is of objective reality and the other is not. We have relatively little difficulty discerning between hallucinations and veridical perception. In our experiences, we do not encounter anything which partially resembles sense-data; sense-data are the result of philosophical theorizing.

²⁷ McDowell, 81.

²⁸ The sense-data theorist thinks that this fundamental object is a sense-datum, while the intentional theorist holds that the fundamental item is an intentional representation.

If disjunctivism is an accurate account of how we ordinarily talk about our experiences, this adds to its claim of being the default position. But before we can endorse such a position, there are two obvious questions which we must ask: 1) On what grounds can we claim disjunctivism to be the default position and 2) Are there convincing reasons to discard the default position?

There have been two traditional arguments that have been issued in favor of discarding the disjunctivist position, the argument from indistinguishability and the causal argument, and the purpose of this thesis is first, to assess the strength of one of these arguments, and, as I previously stated, I take it that the causal argument is the truly serious objection to the disjunctivist. Second, in answering the causal argument, we will find that indistinguishability does not give evidence for the common-kind. Given that we have the ability to address this argument (2), the strength then of the disjunctivist position lies with its ability to claim to be the default position (1). And as I hope to show, the disjunctivist eventually addresses (1) and (2) in quite similar ways.

To begin establishing this default position, Hinton asks us to answer the question, “What is happening?” when we consult our experience.²⁹ We could claim that there was a mugger, or, if we are uncertain, we could say that we are inclined to believe that there was a mugger. Likewise, we could do the same in claiming that what one saw was an illusion. Note that it is highly implausible that I doubt the claim, "I saw a shadowy figure." How could a subject, who is attentive to their experience, be uncertain in making this basic claim? Although I could doubt that I saw a mugger, I am at least certain that it 'looked' a certain way. However, if we are unsure of what is happening, another sure fire way of being correct is by giving a disjunctive

²⁹ J.M. Hinton, “Visual Experiences” in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue, (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 2.

answer: (AvB). Offering a disjunctive report exhausts the possible options; there were three muggers or there only *seemed* to be three muggers. To say that one was only inclined to believe, rather than certain, that 'there was a mugger *or* that there only seemed to be a mugger', would come off as disingenuous. It is either one or the other.

If this is the case, what then of *E*-reports? Can disjunctive reports serve the same function of providing certainty? One of the arguments for the case of *E*-reports lies in their special epistemic status; we are nearly certain when giving them. But disjunctive reports also have the characteristic of being certain; doubting them is especially suspect. If this is the case, being certain of your experience is not to be certain that you had this unique type of 'experience' that can be either a veridical perception or a hallucination, rather you are certain the experience you had was either veridical or hallucinatory. And this is the way that we generally treat our experiences.

One might object that one cannot simply replace *E*-reports with disjunctive reports, as *E*-reports capture a non-disjunctive aspect of experience. Furthermore, when one uses *E*-reports, its meaning varies drastically from the meaning of a disjunctive report, and hence disjunctive reports cannot serve the same function as an *E*-report. However, both of these objections beg the question. In response to the first objection, it is unknown as to what this special, non-disjunctive feature of our experience is supposed to be. The response to my question, historically, has been offered by claiming that some feature of our experience is incompatible with certain metaphysical theses, as our experience is found to conflict with certain features of an 'objective world'. But these arguments lose their force when applied to the disjunctivist, as the disjunctivist specifically denies the common-kind thesis. For the Argument from Illusion, and the Argument from Hallucination, try to convince us that a common-kind is necessary to explain illusions and

hallucinations. Disjunctivism, however, undermines these arguments by pointing out that 'the possibility of deception' shows very little. If the disjunctive position is incorrect, then *perhaps* the argument from illusion works. But this assumes what is at point. Even if the meaning of *E*-reports is different from disjunctive reports, whether or not one is justified in using *E*-reports needs to be shown. The most obvious way to justify the use of *E*-reports would be to appeal to the special features of experience which *E*-reports seek to express. But, as was just stated, this assumes a special feature of our experience which disjunctivism explicitly denies.

Lastly, another way to prove that there are *E*-reports is by appealing to the existence of *R*-statements, statements about sense-data or representational objects.³⁰ Hinton argues for at least ten requirements one must meet in order to justify using *R*-statements, including the ability to clearly answer the question of what is happening when we have experiences.³¹ But since these requirements are not met, specifically the requirement of clarity,³² we cannot justify the use of *R*-statements, let alone the use of *E*-reports. Furthermore, if such things as *E*-reports are justified, it follows that we should be able to make *R*-statements. If I can report on an 'experience', I should be able to make statements regarding the ontology of that experience. Since an *R*-statement cannot meet the demands of the requirement of clarity, 'experiences' must remain ontologically mysterious.³³

This is the general strategy that disjunctivism utilizes. They first ask us as to how we tend to describe our experiences, and point out that a disjunctive account largely conforms to both our experiences and our ordinary ways of talking. If we then try to describe an experience using an

³⁰ Hinton, *Experiences*, 74.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 63.

³² 'Requirements of clarity' will be further explicated in the third chapter.

³³ We might be utterly convinced of the existence of *E*-reports, and so may be comfortable with *R*-statements remaining mysterious. Whether or not there we require a minimal conception of a common-kind then becomes the main issue.

E-report, the disjunctivist responds by asking us to justify the introduction of a type of report which introduces new, metaphysical baggage. This then leads to a dilemma: either disjunctive reports, upon closer examination, turn out to perform the same work *E*-reports do (in the relevant sense), or *E*-reports assume the existence of the very event they are intended to be reporting on.³⁴ If *E*-reports cannot be justified on different grounds, then how could we further justify that there is a common-kind, which we just so happen cannot speak of? For Hinton, the common-kind thesis was one of the final remnants of sense-data, waiting to be discarded.³⁵

1.4 Snowden's Translucence and Martin's Naive Realism

Are there any arguments against the notion of *E*-reports? At least two arguments can be given which attempt to do so. The first argument is laid out by Paul Snowden in the context of the causal theory of perception. In his seminal article "The Causal Theory of Perception", H. P. Grice argues that the concept of 'perception' entails that the subject is causally connected to the object of perception;³⁶ if *P* sees *O*, then *O* causes an experience undergone by *P*.³⁷ Although we know this claim is true as a matter of fact, Grice states that this is a *conceptual truth*, such that any person who can successfully use the particular concept (in this case, 'perception') will agree to a specific claim about the concept in question.³⁸ Grice legitimates this conceptual truth on the grounds that introducing 'causality' is the only way to differentiate between veridical perception and hallucinations; the good case is causally connected to the object of perception and the bad case is not. Since veridical perception and hallucinations can be indistinguishable from one

³⁴ The main arguments tend to address the latter horn of the dilemma. Either indistinguishability or the causal argument are intended to provide evidence for the common-kind thesis, which then in turn is that which *E*-reports report on.

³⁵ Hinton, "Visual Experience", 11.

³⁶ H. P. Grice, "The Causal Theory of Perception" in *Perceptual Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 66.

³⁷ Paul Snowden, "Objects of Perceptual Experience" in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue, (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 50.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

another, we differentiate the good from the bad case by stating that it is a conceptual truth that if P sees O , then O causes an experience undergone by P .³⁹

Snowden's objection to the causal theory does not deny that causality is necessary for perception as a matter of fact, but rather Snowden argues that the causal theory of perception is not a conceptual truth. Snowden defends this by claiming that the causal theory of perception relies on a non-disjunctive conception of experience, and Grice exploits this to provide a simple argument in favor of the causal theory. Grice, Snowden claims, employs the notion of 'an experience' within the conceptual analysis, where 'an experience' is a type of common-kind. Since the subject is aware of 'an experience' in both the good and bad case, 'experience' is not sufficient for 'an experience' to be veridical. Hence, Grice introduces causality as a necessary condition for veridical perception to occur. Snowden agrees with Grice that the causal theory of perception would be a conceptual truth, but *only* if disjunctivism was not a live-option. Since disjunctivism denies that there is a common-kind (an 'experience') in the good and bad case, the motivation to introduce causality as a necessary condition to differentiate between veridical perception and hallucination vanishes. Since disjunctivism is a competing account of perception, Snowden can argue that the conception of 'experience' utilized by the causal theory is unfairly assumed, as this conception of 'experience' assumes the common-kind thesis. But, says Snowden, this assumption undermines the status of the causal theory of perception as a conceptual truth, as it is conceptually possible that we offer a disjunctive account of perception

³⁹ As to what specific causal conditions are necessary for veridical perception to occur, has been surprisingly difficult to identify.

that need not rely on giving a causal story to distinguish between veridical perception and hallucination.⁴⁰

Although we may not necessarily agree with Snowden's approach to the causal theory of vision, we might agree with Grice that perception by definition requires that we are causally related to the objects of perception. But this is to miss the point. Snowden is identifying a problematic conception of Grice's argument, where to *differentiate* between the good case and the bad case requires that we have knowledge of the object of perception's causal antecedents. But if we are able to distinguish between the good case and the bad case by utilizing the disjunctivist denial of the common-kind, other avenues open up as to how we are able to demonstrate that a certain experience is veridical.⁴¹ In his discussion Snowden rightfully points out that experience is *translucent* and considers this to count against the causal theory.⁴² Experience is characterized as 'translucent'⁴³ due to the fact that when we look to our experience, it is as if we were directly aware of the objects themselves, or, as Snowden puts it, "there is nothing to the experience from our point of view, other than the aspects of the object it acquaints us with."⁴⁴ If experience is translucent, then this provides evidence for the idea that in veridical perception we directly perceive the objects of perception. But this counts against an 'inner' conception of experience, which the common-kind conception of experience endorses.⁴⁵

Is this an argument for disjunctivism? Yes, specifically because our pretheoretical conception of 'experience' consists of the experience being translucent for the subject. But if the

⁴⁰ It might be asked how the disjunctivist distinguishes between veridical perception and hallucinations, but this is not terribly problematic. It might be difficult for the subject to distinguish between them, but we certainly do not need to give a causal story to distinguish between the two.

⁴¹ Snowden's argument for "demonstrative thought", will be discussed in Chapter III.

⁴² Snowden, "Objects of Perceptual Experience", 62.

⁴³ The words 'diaphanous' and 'transparent' have also been used to appeal to this character of our experience.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 64.

common-kind thesis is correct, then experience would only *appear* translucent, for we are not actually being presented with the external world, but a sense datum or representation. To distinguish between veridical perceptions and hallucinations, if translucence was itself an illusion, might require the causal theory of vision to make sense of how we differentiate between the good and bad case. So not only does the common-kind thesis run against our pretheoretical conceptions, but there is the added danger of running into ‘the veil of perception’, where we are never directly aware of the external world.⁴⁶

However, a possible objection to Snowden's translucence may claim that there is more to experience than just the objects of experience; there is also the phenomenology of the experience. One may be able to classify all the objects a bat may encounter in its environment, but any conception of the subjective experience of a bat—the ‘what it is like to be a bat’—will also include this phenomenological character.⁴⁷ Since, states the objection, this phenomenal description is absent in the ‘translucent conception of experience’, experience is not, as Snowden states, translucent; we do not perceive these phenomenal qualities as objects. Therefore, the argument from the translucent nature of experience cannot provide evidence for the disjunctive thesis. In fact, the phenomenological qualities of experience may be used to reinforce the common-kind thesis, as these phenomenological qualities may be characterized as *qualia*: “the properties of mental states or events [...] which determine “what it is like” to have them.”⁴⁸ If *qualia* are a type of intramental object, then experience is ‘inner’ and naive realism is false.

To properly address the problem introduced by the phenomenology of our experience is far beyond the scope of this paper. That being said, it is entirely within the means of the naive

⁴⁶ John McDowell, “Criterion, Defeasibility, and Knowledge” in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 76.

⁴⁷ Thomas Nagel, “What Is it Like to Be a Bat?” *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (Oct., 1974), pp. 435-450.

⁴⁸ Audi, 762.

realist to attempt to address these issues.⁴⁹ Whether or not the opponent finds this response satisfactory, the non-disjunctivist must also accommodate the phenomenology of our experience as well. So, although Snowden's characterization of 'translucence' may be inadequate, this does not undermine our pretheoretical conception of experience as translucent, nor threaten our direct consciousness of external objects, nor does the phenomenology of our experience necessarily serve as evidence for the common-kind thesis.

Continuing along, we might be suspicious of Snowden's claim that our pretheoretical conception of 'experience' is not compatible with the common-kind thesis, but M.G.F. Martin offers an argument in support of Snowden's claim. This rather indirect argument holds that the common-kind thesis is incompatible with naive realism.⁵⁰ Martin asks us to accept a triad of positions. The first is naive realism, the view that in veridical perception, the properties that objects have to someone who perceives the objects are actual properties of the objects i.e. one could not have the experience they are having unless the object did not have the property they are perceived to have.⁵¹ The second position is experiential naturalism, the view that our experiences are the result of natural, causal processes that may be either purely physiological or partly psychological in nature.⁵² The last position is the common-kind thesis. The problem then is if we attempt to adopt all three positions, this will result in incoherence. If we acknowledge (as we obviously should) that the causal process of perception can be manipulated (as with hallucinatory drugs), and if we accept that hallucinations share a common mental feature with veridical perception, then that same mental event can occur regardless of whether or not the object being perceived is present. But if this is the case, naive realism could not possibly be true,

⁴⁹ Merleau-Ponty offers such an account.

⁵⁰ M. G. F. Martin, "The Limits of Self-Awareness" in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 274.

⁵¹ Martin, "The Reality of Appearances", 93.

⁵² Martin, "The Limits of Self-Awareness", 272.

as there is no external object which has the properties of the hallucinated object. Instead, the common-kind explains how the object is presented. It is not because we are directly aware of the properties of an object that they appear the way they do, but because the common-kind possesses those properties which the object appears to have.⁵³ Since these three views are incompatible, the least plausible thesis should be abandoned. Martin nominates the common-element thesis to take this role. It is unlikely that Martin's argument would be convincing for his opponents, and the argument ultimately hinges on Martin's case for naive realism.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, for those who are sympathetic to naive realism, Martin's argument for disjunctivism has force.

It might still be said that naive realism cannot account for hallucinations *simpliciter*, but this misses the point of Martin's argument. Naive realism is a view about veridical perception, and says little about hallucinations (at least initially). The problem generated with introducing the common-kind thesis is that it brings hallucinations under the umbrella of naive realism, as what then constitutes veridical perception also constitutes hallucinations, and vice-versa. The naive realist would be forced to give a single story that includes both veridical perception and hallucination, rather than two separate explanations for each phenomenon, resulting in the absurdity just noted.

Connecting this back to Snowden, note that Martin's argument is further supported by experience. First, naive realism is supported due to experience being translucent, as naive realism states that objects have the properties which the subject perceives them to have. Since experience is translucent, properties latch onto the object themselves; a position the naive realist endorses. Second, the fact that experience is translucent is troubling for he who posits that

⁵³ How this claim is spelt out is different for the sense-data theorist, representational accounts, and adverbial accounts of perception.

⁵⁴ Martin's case for naive realism, and the relationship between the causal argument and naive realism, will be discussed in Chapter III.

experience is an intermediary between the subject and the external world; there is nothing ‘in experience’ which suggests that what we are aware of is anything other than the objects of perception themselves. One cannot locate a ‘sense-datum’ or a ‘representation’ in one’s experience in the same way one is aware of an object. If we are to endorse ‘inner’ objects, we must be adequately convinced that such things exist, and the arguments for ‘inner’ objects, such as the argument from illusion, rely on the common-kind thesis.⁵⁵

In conclusion, if we are to ask how disjunctivism is to convince us, we get a seemingly unconvincing answer, as there is little argument offered to convince an opponent.⁵⁶ The exception to this is the arguments from Snowden and Martin, which admittedly will not sway many opinions. But the aim of the disjunctivist is not to demolish long-held positions, but rather to challenge the opponent to justify her beliefs in light of the remarks made by the likes of Hinton, Snowden, and Martin.

Our ordinary discourse and experience do not seem to indicate that *E*-reports are justified, and we do not need grand systems to arrive at the disjunctive position. Having arrived at this position, the disjunctivist offers a challenge: What reason do we have to believe in the common-kind? What is needed is to see if there are any effective arguments against the disjunctivist position, focusing on arguments for the common-kind. The goal of this thesis is to evaluate one of these arguments, the causal argument, and in discussing the answer to this question the disjunctivist’s challenge to their opponent will become more apparent.

⁵⁵ Although Hinton is more concerned with looking at ordinary-language, I get the impression that he takes experience to be translucent as well. This ‘translucence’ is a position which the disjunctivist must address, although not unqualifiedly so; phenomenology must be incorporated into the account.

⁵⁶ Snowden does give another argument in “Perception, Vision, and Causation” against the common-kind thesis, offering a *reductio* by stating that we would be able to offer two nearly identical sets of true propositions regarding our experiences. One set would be referring to the external objects one is describing, and the other set would refer to the common-kind that constitutes the experience. However, in a footnote, Snowden admits that the argument is more of a challenge than a serious objection.

1.5 Disagreements in Disjunctivism

Before introducing the causal argument, it is both important and worthwhile to briefly discuss the two main differences amongst disjunctivists. This is not merely just lip-service, but important when responding to the causal argument.

The first difference is how to categorize illusions. Up to this point in the paper I have been discussing both hallucinations (e.g. bright-lights) and illusions (e.g. a shadowy-figure) as experiences that only appear to be like veridical perception. However, it is unclear as to whether illusions should be grouped with veridical perceptions. With illusions there is still an object of perception in the world, while the objects we hallucinate are not 'in the world'. What determines if illusion is put on the right-side (VvI/H) or the left-side (V/IvH) depends on how the right-side of the disjunct is characterized.⁵⁷

This is the second difference amongst disjunctivists. When formulating the disjunctivist account, we characterize the right disjunct by describing it as indistinguishable from veridical perception, and continue by claiming that the right disjunct only *seems* to be like the left disjunct.⁵⁸ Some philosophers think that this way of negatively describing the right-disjunct, describing it as 'what-it-is-not', is just the first-step in constructing the theory and that "there may be available a more direct characterization of the second disjunct, [...] [t]he current characterization is just a sort of place-holder"⁵⁹. In a complete version of the theory, there should be a comprehensive account of the right-disjunct. This position is known as positive disjunctivism. In contrast, some disjunctivists claim that only a negative description of the right-disjunct is possible; we cannot give a positive description of the hallucination. Since the positive

⁵⁷ Since the causal argument deals exclusively with hallucinations, discussions of illusions will be pushed aside to better address the issues.

⁵⁸ Byrne & Logue, xiii.

⁵⁹ Jonathan Dancy, "Arguments from Illusion" in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 132.

disjunctivist gives a positive account of hallucinations, illusions are grouped with veridical perception. Hence, positive disjunctivists tend to group together illusions and veridical perception (V/IvH). Negative disjunctivists, on the other hand, only characterize hallucinations as what they are not. Since illusions also share this quality of appearing as something they are not, they are grouped together with hallucinations (VvI/H).

CHAPTER II

My goal for the following chapter is to outline the principle strategies contained in the causal argument for the common-kind, and to dismiss one of these strategies. The causal argument takes two forms. The first is the strong argument, which intends to establish that what we are aware of in veridical perception is ontologically identical to what we are aware of in hallucination. The weak argument makes the lesser claim that what we are aware of in veridical perception, although different in important respects, still shares a common element with hallucinations. After finding that the strong causal argument requires that we make questionable assumptions regarding the nature of our experiences, I will set the stage for the next chapter, which will consist of the different disjunctive responses to the weak causal argument.

2.1 The Cartesian Position, the Moderate, and the Disjunctivist

The players in this philosophical field, of which there are three, are divided in virtue of their commitment to the common-kind. The Cartesian position states that experience is logically private, and is often associated with the concept of a *sense-datum*.⁶⁰ The common-kind, which disjunctivism vehemently denies, is not just common between the good and bad case for the Cartesian. Instead, he abolishes the distinction between the good and the bad case; both are the experience of the same sense-datum. Veridical perception and hallucinations may be different in virtue of how they correspond with the world, but they possess the same *intrinsic* characteristics.

The *moderate* view is best conceived as a middle-ground between the Cartesian position and the disjunctivist position. The Cartesian position and the moderate position both agree that

⁶⁰ Howard Robinson, *Perception* (New York: Routledge, 1994) 1-2.

there is a common-kind, but the Cartesian believes that the common-kind is sufficient for both veridical perception and hallucination; veridical perception has no intrinsic difference from hallucination. The same sense-datum is being observed. The moderate view and the disjunctivist both disagree with this claim, as both have discarded the idea of sense-data and agree that there is a significant difference between veridical perception and hallucination. However, the moderate position endorses the common-kind.⁶¹ Although, states the moderate, we can differentiate between veridical perception and hallucination, perhaps by invoking the notion of *intentionality*,⁶² we must retain the concept of the ‘common-kind’ and ‘an experience’ either for reasons to do with indistinguishability or because our understanding of causality demands it.

The third position is disjunctivism, which eliminates the common-kind altogether. Although the moderate and the disjunctivist find common ground in claiming that veridical perception differs from hallucination, the disjunctivist also overlaps with the Cartesian position in positing that at least some of our experience is non-representational.⁶³ This is evident in the disjunctivist’s commitment to naïve realism, for the naïve realist states that the objects of perception are “constituents of the experience.”⁶⁴ For our present purposes, we can think of these three positions as part of a spectrum that starts with the Cartesian position, finds a median with the moderate, and ends in the denial of the common-kind with disjunctivism.

With these distinctions in mind we can evaluate the strong-causal argument, which seeks to establish the Cartesian position.

2.2 The Strong Causal Argument

⁶¹ The reader may recall, from Chapter I, that the disjunctivist is motivated to save naïve realism. Since, argues the disjunctivist, naïve realism is incompatible with the common-kind, we can only accept the moderate view by abandoning naïve realism.

⁶² Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 273.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Howard Robinson, a prominent advocate of sense-data, offers these two statements as sufficient for establishing the strong causal argument:

1. It is theoretically possible by activating some brain process which is involved in a particular type of perception to cause an hallucination which exactly resembles that perception in its subjective character.
2. It is necessary to give the same account of both hallucinating and perceptual experience when they have the same neural cause. Thus, it is not, for example, plausible to say that the hallucinatory experience involves a mental image or sense-datum, but that the perception does not, if the two have the same proximate—that is, neural—cause.⁶⁵

It is not difficult to arrive at support for the first statement. The fact that hallucinations are indistinguishable from veridical perception is offered as evidence. But, more importantly, one can easily see how the use of hallucinatory drugs results in the subject undergoing hallucinations; the chemicals that compose the drug alter the states of my brain, producing an experience that is not causally connected to the objects that I am perceiving. The hallucination is not preceded by a brain state that is any different from veridical perception; the same nerve-fibres fire in both cases. Even if we are to deny that it is presently practical to empirically confirm that veridical perception and hallucination share the same proximate cause, Robinson claims that it is *theoretically* possible. Not only is it logically possible, but it is empirically possible as well.⁶⁶ One can easily imagine, as Hinton does, a neurosurgeon activating or stabilizing a brain-state that is the proximate cause in a specific case of veridical perception, such as seeing a lemon. Since there is good empirical evidence that we can bring about the perfect hallucination by activating a specific brain state, we can confidently claim that the first statement is true. Since it is necessary to give the same account of veridical perception and hallucination, then we are forced to accept that veridical perceptions and hallucinations do not only possess a common-

⁶⁵ Robinson, 153.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 154.

kind, but they are in fact the same type of thing.⁶⁷ But why does Robinson expect us to accept (2)? The premise, that we necessarily treat the good case and the bad case the same, is the result of the metaphysical principle that the same causes have the same effects, henceforth known as *SCP*—the same cause, same effect principle.⁶⁸ Since veridical perceptions and hallucinations share the same neural cause, the effect—the indistinguishable experience—is also the same.

This is known as the strong version of the causal argument, and Robinson uses it to establish the Cartesian position. An oft-quoted example is that of a counterfeit coin being used in a vending machine. Despite the fact that the counterfeit may lack some feature the genuine coin possesses, both coins will produce the same effect; the ejection of an item from the vending machine. Likewise, it does not matter if my experience is the result of light hitting my retina, activating my optic nerve, resulting in a synapse, or if a neuroscientist is able to bypass the tedious causal pathway by directly causing the synapse to fire, the firing of the synapse will produce the same causal upshot; the same experience.

The disjunctivist, who claimed that there is no reason to believe in the common-kind or the concept of an ‘experience’, according to the Cartesian, simply fails to acknowledge some basic scientific truths, specifically those surrounding the correlations between brain states and mental states. Having arrived at this empirical conclusion, we would be forced to claim that veridical perception and hallucinations are intrinsically the same thing. The only difference between the two is that veridical perception corresponds to an object in the world, but this difference is relational, and not intrinsic to the mental objects themselves. So not only do veridical perception and hallucinations possess the same intrinsic characteristics, but this also provides grounds for referring to an ‘experience’. In the strong case, an ‘experience’ is that of

⁶⁷ This is the main argument Robinson gives for the existence of sense-data.

⁶⁸ Robinson, 154.

which we are aware in perception, and we are only aware of the intrinsic characteristics of that experience.⁶⁹ What one is aware of in perception is not the objects of perception themselves, but an ‘experience’ that can be either veridical or illusory depending on whether it corresponds or is causally-related to the proper object in the external world.

It can then be demonstrated then that the strong causal argument also applies to the moderate position. The strong argument establishes that a visual ‘experience’ of an object, whether it is veridical or hallucinatory, is one type of experience; the good case and the bad case are intrinsically identical. The moderate view denies this claim, as the good and the bad case will be different, in so far as the one is *of* an object and the other’s object is non-existent.⁷⁰ But the strong argument strictly prevents the two cases from being different, despite the fact that the good case may be causally related or correspond correctly to the object of perception. However, to claim, says the Cartesian, that there is an intrinsic difference between the good and bad case is then an exercise in bad-faith; there simply can be no such difference. The moderate view, as well as the disjunctivist, falls under attack from the strong argument.

To recount the argument, Robinson argues that if we accept that a given hallucination has the same neural cause as its corresponding veridical perception (1) and if we have to give the same account of two experiences when they have the same neural cause (2), then there is a common-kind. Since the argument appears to be perfectly valid and a denial of (1), states Robinson, is likely impossible, it is not terribly surprising that all disjunctivists, as well as all moderates, ultimately reject (2). The disjunctivist can embrace (1), which has strong empirical support of a certain type, but deny *SCP* (2), maintaining that two drastically different types of experience can have the same proximate cause. But is such a denial plausible?

⁶⁹ This is also explains why the good and bad case are indistinguishable; they are literally experiences of the same thing.

⁷⁰ Other accounts of intentionality may differ on what exactly hallucinations *are of*.

Robinson claims that this is not possible, as to deny *SCP* is to embrace two radical positions.⁷¹ Although, concedes the Cartesian, *SCP* is firmly established as a principle in the physical sciences, perhaps it is incorrect to use in certain psycho-physical processes.⁷² However, since the good case and the bad case share the same proximate cause (1), the disjunctivist and the moderate take on the burden of giving an account of causality that allows for the same psycho-physical process to cause the veridical perception in one case and hallucination in the other. It seems, as Robinson points out, that such an account would require the brain to be aware of its own causal antecedents and produce the correct type of experience; either the good case or the bad case, not a common-kind.⁷³

Compare veridically perceiving a bright-light to hallucinating an indistinguishable bright-light that is caused by a neuroscientist. In the former case, what causes the 'sighting' is a long causal chain leading from the object of perception to the activation of a specific brain-state. In the latter case, the total brain state is identical to the brain state in the former, but without any causal connection to the object of perception. But if the brain-states of the two individuals are identical, how could they be aware of different objects (a bright light and a hallucination of a bright light)? It seems that the brain would have to be in a position to 'know' what the causal antecedent was before the conscious subject is aware of the object of perception; the brain, depending on the causal antecedent, chooses to produce the effect appropriate for the good case or the bad case. But since the brain is a 'classical' mechanistic organ, we cannot understand how this can be true. This is the first radical position, according to Robinson, that the disjunctivist and the moderate must take.

⁷¹ Robinson, 154.

⁷² Specifically, those psycho-physical events that could be identified as the proximate causes of veridical perception need not subscribe to *SCP*.

⁷³ Robinson, 157.

Second, one of the reasons for accepting (1) is to provide an explanation for why the good case and the bad case are indistinguishable from one another; they share the same proximate cause. But the reasons for endorsing (1) are supposedly lost if we abandon *SCP*. For how could the fact that they share a proximate cause, if the good case and bad case are intrinsically different, be relevant to two experiences being indistinguishable from one another if *SCP* is false?⁷⁴ If *SCP* was true, then we could appeal to it as an explanatory principle to explain why a perfect hallucination is indistinguishable from veridical perception. But without that principle, why a perfect hallucination is indistinguishable from veridical perception remains a mystery. Hence, according to Robinson, the disjunctivist must construct an alternative account of causality that includes bizarre conditions, and indistinguishability between veridical perception and hallucinations simply remains mysterious.

Another intuitive way to understand Robinson's complaint is to look at how events supervene on each other. Let us assume, against the Cartesian position, that neural event *C* causes perceptual event *P* only when the object of perception plays a causal role in the activation of *C*. Likewise, neural event *C* causes the hallucinatory event *P** when the object of perception plays no causal role. Imagine then, that we have two *doppelgangers* that have identical total-brain states; on a neurological level there is no difference in properties between our two persons. Dan, our first *doppelganger*, is experiencing veridical event *P*, while Smith, our second *doppelganger*, is experiencing hallucinatory event *P**. Although they have identical brain states, states the disjunctivist along with the moderate, the experiences are different.

This claim, that Dan and Smith are experiencing different events while sharing identical brain states, is inconsistent with a specific intuition about mental events: mental events supervene on the total-brain state of an individual. That is, if and only if there is a difference

⁷⁴ Ibid.

between the total-brain state of an individual will you find a difference in the mental events one experiences. If and only if there is a difference in the total brain states between Dan and Smith will there be a difference between the two mental events. However, (1) of the causal argument denies this biconditional; it is the same proximate cause in both cases. If mental events supervene on the total-brain state of an individual, then there can be no difference between Dan and Smith's experience, as they share identical brain states. If C causes P^* in the case of the hallucination—in virtue of supervenience— C causes P^* in the good case as well.

Notice that Robinson's formulation of *SCP* entails that experience supervenes *only* on the total-brain state of an individual.⁷⁵ It does not matter what causal antecedents are leading up to neural event C . Instead, neural event C will produce P^* in virtue of *SCP* regardless of the environment where neural event C happens. In this way, the strong-causal argument is sufficient to establish the Cartesian position, which is equivalent to claiming that all mental events supervene only on the total brain state of an individual; regardless of whether the apple in front of me is truly there, I will have the same experience in both the good case and bad case. Hinton's response to this, as Robinson points out, "does what is required and simply denies [*SCP*]"⁷⁶

2.3 Replies and Supervenience

Robinson is correct that the strong causal argument is convincing, but only in so far as we accept his narrow notion of the *SCP*, but, like Hinton, we have very good reason for rejecting this conception of *SCP*. Before offering the most convincing reasons, which consist of the denial

⁷⁵ Even though Robinson endorses sense-data, sense-data will then supervene on the total-brain state of an individual. It would be difficult, if not contradictory, for Robinson to hold that sense-data did not supervene while invoking *SCP* in the strong-causal argument.

⁷⁶ Robinson, 156.

of mental events supervening only on the total brain state of an individual, I wish to first discuss Robinson's defense against George Pitcher.

Might there be a rebuttal to the *SCP*, in that the same cause can simply produce different effects? For instance, I can flip the light-switch and this generally results in improved luminosity. But this is not necessary; the light might burn-out. Although in each situation I am flipping a light-switch (the cause), different effects follow in each case. It is for these reasons that George Pitcher argues that although *SCP* may be true for every cause-and-effect pair, *SCP* is not true under every description.⁷⁷ Pitcher, a moderate, wants to claim that a neural event causes K^* , but we can describe K^* as K (I see a bright light) or we can describe K^* as K^* (I am hallucinating a bright light). Although the same neural event causes K^* , K^* can be described as an instance of veridical perception or an instance of hallucination.⁷⁸ It is in this way that Pitcher avoids the charge that the moderate violates *SCP*. Pitcher agrees that *SCP* is true, but not under every description.

This line of thought is not sufficient. Pitcher is in a dilemma, as Robinson notes, where *SCP* is vacuous or *SCP* must be characterized in the most specific, immediate context possible.⁷⁹ For instance, *SCP* could be fulfilled where the cause 'seeing a bright light' has the effect 'something happens to a person'.⁸⁰ In the one case, seeing a bright light might cause the person to squint, while, in a different case, seeing a bright light might cause the person to dive out of the way of an oncoming train. Even though both people 'see a bright light' (the cause) and 'do something' (the effect), we are hesitant to classify this as an instance of *SCP*. According to

⁷⁷ Robinson, 154.

⁷⁸ Robinson, 156.

⁷⁹ Robinson, 155.

⁸⁰ Robinson uses a similar example, where 'hitting a nail' could satisfy *SCP* even if in the one case the nail penetrated the wall two inches or in the second case where the nail bursts into flames; we would simply describe the event as 'a hammer hitting a nail', causes 'the nail to do something'.

Robinson, proper characterization of *SCP* needs to have the exactness of a natural law in order to avoid vacuity.⁸¹ Although Pitcher tries to maintain the moderate position and *SCP*, the proposal that *SCP* is only true under certain descriptions fails to capture the intuitive force of the principle Robinson has offered; with regard to neural events, *SCP* fully justifies premise (2).

Note that there is a conceptual relationship between veridical perception and the object of perception, while with hallucination there is no such relationship. So if we find Robinson's construal of *SCP* too narrow, then it is quite possible that the moderate and the disjunctivist meet the demands within the wider parameters of a revised *SCP*. For instance, veridical perception requires the object of perception to be causally related to the subject, and this is known *a priori*.⁸² This may be the grounds for a relation between objects of perception and veridical perception which can be formulated as a general law. Since perception is causally related to the object of perception, and if this relationship can be expressed as a general law, then stating that veridical perception is different from hallucination does not violate a narrow *SCP*, and would be a case of a wider notion of *SCP*.

As we will see, the argument against the strong-causal argument is quite simple: there are very good reasons to think that mental events do not supervene solely on the total brain state of an individual, and so Robinson's conception of *SCP* is too narrow. Hinton's rejection of this strong version of *SCP* is not a denial of *SCP* as a general principle, but is instead denying a problematic and highly controversial conception of causality and psycho-physical processes.

It is likely that the moderate will also accept a similar argument against Robinson's conception of *SCP*; we have good reasons to think that mental events, such as beliefs and

⁸¹ Robinson, 156.

⁸² Snowden, as we have seen denies this, although this is not universal amongst disjunctivists.

perception, do not supervene solely on the total brain state of an individual. So the question is, “What are these reasons?”

Perhaps the most notable example in the philosophical literature is Hilary Putnam’s “Meaning and Reference” and the extended discussion in “The Meaning of ‘Meaning’”. In these papers, Putnam argues that what determines the content of a belief partially involves the objects of one’s belief.⁸³ In other words, a full account of belief will go beyond the psychological states of an individual; beliefs do not supervene solely on the total brain state of an individual.⁸⁴ There is a relation between the individual and her environment which cannot be reduced to psychological states. Other examples include Wittgenstein’s private language argument⁸⁵ and Timothy Williamson’s argument for non-reductive perceptual relations.⁸⁶ All of these arguments are arguments *against* the thesis that mental events narrowly supervene on the neuropsychological states of an individual and, thus, arguments against Robinson’s narrow conception of *SCP*.

It is unlikely that this response will be satisfying for Robinson, for he explicitly states that he finds these arguments unconvincing and, ultimately, defective.⁸⁷ Not only this, but my appeals to authority will most certainly lack any argumentative force for my opponent. Nonetheless, I take it that my comments are justified. First, and most importantly, to properly address Robinson’s concerns would require a significant critique of some of the most heavily debated topics of the past fifty years within Western Philosophy; an extension of topics beyond the scope of the present examination of disjunctive theories of perception. Second, this brief sketch of the

⁸³ Hilary Putnam, “Meaning and Reference”, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 70, no. 19 (1973), 701, and “The Meaning of ‘Meaning’”, *Language, Mind and Knowledge. Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Keith Gunderson (ed.), (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975), 192.

⁸⁴ Putnam, “Meaning and Reference”, 704.

⁸⁵ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958).

⁸⁶ Timothy Williamson, *Knowledge and Its Limits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁸⁷ Robinson, 91-118.

philosophical state of affairs demonstrates that Robinson's strong causal argument is not dialectically robust enough to answer the objections (although, in the spirit of fairness, Robinson does attempt to address these issues). Since the strength of the strong causal argument relies on a narrow conception of *SCP*, the argument is convincing in-so-far that as can be convinced of the truth of *SCP*.

The moderate and the disjunctivist can offer a simple response to Robinson's argument: we have good reasons to deny the narrow conception of *SCP*. We then do not have good reason to endorse (2), and possibly even (1), in rejecting *SCP*. Robinson's criticisms that a rejection of his narrow conception of *SCP* gives us action-at-a-distance⁸⁸ *may* be true. However, this will be determined by detailed, concise philosophical discussions about local causation, singular thought, internalism, externalism,⁸⁹ and other fundamental philosophical discussions. Furthermore, by accepting a wider version of *SCP* we are still able to explain why the good case and the bad case are indistinguishable. In the meantime, the moderate and the disjunctivist can competently deny the narrow version of *SCP*, and provide a rebuttal to the strong-causal argument.

2.4 The 'Weak'-Argument and the Highest Common Factor

The much more difficult case for the disjunctivist can be called the *weak argument*. The weak argument acknowledges that there is a significant difference between the good case and the bad case, but, whatever their differences, they still have the same proximate cause and so must share a common-kind. This common-kind can then explain why the good case and the bad case are indistinguishable from one another, despite the differences between the two. This is the causal argument offered by the moderate.

⁸⁸ Action-at-a-distance occurs when one object *A* produces an effect in another object *B* without object *A* coming into contact with object *B*.

⁸⁹ Martin, "The Limits of Self-Awareness", 287.

How is the weak argument different from the strong argument? The weak argument denies (2) in Robinson's argument. Instead of claiming that veridical perception and hallucination must necessarily be treated the same, the moderate takes a type of middle ground. *SCP* still has force, as a firing neuron will produce a representational object, but this is not the complete story. A sufficient account will include the relationship between an intentional object and the object represented. Thus the moderate accepts a common-kind (a representation), but demands that perception goes over and beyond this description.⁹⁰

It might be objected that the disjunctivist has no need to respond to the weak argument, as the disjunctivist position is completely compatible with the conclusion given. The disjunctivist can claim that although the good and bad cases share a common-kind, they do not share a highest common factor. So instead of thinking of veridical perception as hallucinations *plus* a relation, it is perhaps more helpful to think of hallucination as *parasitic* on veridical perception. Conceiving of the bad case this way conveys the sense that veridical perception is an established way of interacting with the world, and hallucinations, although indistinguishable from veridical perceptions, simply fall short of this standard. The disjunctivist concedes a type of common-kind, but still finds essential differences between veridical perception and hallucination, and manages to claim coherency between disjunctivism and naive realism. The disjunctivist can agree with the premises of their opponent but deny that this offers any evidence against the disjunctivist; a common-kind is not necessarily a highest common factor, let alone grounds to claim that there is such thing as 'an experience' or *E*-reports.⁹¹

Note how this addresses the initial worry of the weak-causal argument. Veridical perception and hallucination *may* share some properties, but this does not necessarily entail that

⁹⁰ This is just one formulation of the moderate position.

⁹¹ As we shall see in the Chapter III, this is how Martin characterizes the disjunctivist project. Positive disjunctivists make a stronger claim about the relationship between the good case and the bad case.

there is a 'highest common factor'. For instance, if my dog and my bookcase are both brown then they share a common-property: the property of being brown. But this would not suggest that the two objects share a common-kind, where dogs and bookcases are instantiations of a more basic object of brownness. Likewise, the non-disjunctivist must establish that we are justified in positing a common-kind that is the 'highest common factor', where the 'highest common factor' provides grounds to talk of 'an experience'.

However, as it stands, this is an untenable response to the weak-causal argument. Let us say K is the essential feature of veridical perception, and K^* is the essential feature of hallucination. For the moderate, veridical perception then encapsulates both K and K^* , while hallucination is simply mental kind K^* . It is stated by the disjunctivist that the highest common factor between the two is K^* , which, although seeming to be a concession of a common-kind, still preserves the intuition of naive realism.

Offering such an account is extremely difficult. First, this provides problems for Hinton's arguments. Hinton thought we could not offer up E -reports, and suggested that we replace these with disjunctive reports. But any proposal of a common-kind, where K^* is *sufficient* for the bad case, will provide grounds for E -reports. For when I am uncertain about whether or not what I see before my eyes is truly there, I can offer K^* -reports. Since K^* is sufficient for a type of experience (the experience of a hallucination), and because K^* also is shared by the good case, one can offer K^* -reports, as one knows that the experience either a) is partially constituted by K^* or b) the experience is of the mental type K^* . So although we may not think of K^* as the highest common factor, since K^* is sufficient for the bad case we can make non-disjunctive reports about K^* . For example, suppose that through my deep, philosophical contemplations I begin to doubt that my cat is on the mat. While it is true that I could offer a disjunctive report on the matter,

“Either there is a cat on the mat or it seems there is a cat on the mat,” I could also offer a non-disjunctive report, “I am K^* -ing a cat on the mat.”⁹² This later report will be true, and appropriate, as K^* -ing a cat on the mat is both sufficient and necessary for the bad case, and necessary for the good case. Regardless of whether my experience is veridical or hallucinatory, I will be justified in making reports on K^* ; disjunctive reports are no longer necessary. But if this is the case, what does disjunctivism amount to?

The second issue, perhaps more important than the first, is that if we concede that K^* is sufficient for hallucination, then naive realism is sunk. If we return to the argument, if K^* is sufficient for hallucinations, and because the good case and the bad case share the same proximate cause, K^* will be present in the good case as well. Although it may seem that the naive realist could accept that K^* is present in both the good case and bad case, while maintaining that K is only present in the good case, this does not go through. This is for two reasons. First, although we may claim that veridical perception is of K^* and K , it is hard to see what role K has to play in the experience. If we admit that K^* is sufficient for a type of experience, then why include K at all, especially considering that the difference between an experience of type K^* is indistinguishable from an experience of type K ? Perhaps we will still demand that K have some explanatory value that is absent in K^* , but this position is then incompatible with naive realism.

Recall that naive realism seeks to understand perception as somehow involving the objects of experience themselves, where my having the experience of a spherical ball is essentially tied to the ball being spherical. The problem for the naive realist is that in the bad case one can experience a spherical ball without there being a ball at all. The disjunctivist responds to this problem by claiming that there is no highest common factor, no ‘experience’,

⁹² Hinton refers to this as “psi-ing” in “Visual Experiences”, 4.

which is present in instances of veridical perception and hallucination. But if K^* is sufficient for a hallucination, then the motivation for naive realism is lost. Naive realism states that if something is perceived to be curved, it is perceived that way precisely because it is curved. But in instances of K^* , something can appear to be curved, yet nothing is truly curved, or even existent! If we do veridically perceive an object to be curved, I will see it curved in virtue of K^* , as K^* is sufficient to allow an object to appear curved in the bad case. Surely K does not then add something to the mix which then allows one to perceive a *truly* curved object; the curve of the object is supplied through K^* . But this states exactly what the naive realist denies, specifically that if I perceive an object to have a certain characteristic, I perceive the object to possess that characteristic in virtue of the object possessing that characteristic. However, this is not true. You perceive many characteristics in virtue of K^* , which does not need the proper object in order to be instantiated.

I hope it is clear then that the strategy of invoking the highest common factor, *prima facie*, does not solve the weak argument. Stated simply, the weak causal argument claims:

- 1) If K^* is sufficient for a hallucination, then K^* is present in veridical perception because the good case and the bad case share the same proximate cause. Thus there is a common-kind and the disjunctivist is wrong.
- 2) But, replies the disjunctivist, what is of concern is a highest common factor, not merely a common-kind. Disjunctivism is not necessarily demonstrated to be false by showing that there is a common-kind.
- 3) However, by admitting that K^* is sufficient for a specific hallucination, then there is such a thing as ‘an experience’ (K^*), disjunctive reports are theoretically impotent, naive realism is incorrect, and the weak-causal argument demonstrates that disjunctivism is false.

The driving force of this argument is that a certain neural state is sufficient for producing a hallucination (K^*), and since K^* is necessarily produced in veridical perception, the features of K^* are also prevalent in veridical perception. If the disjunctivist is to provide an answer to the

weak argument, they must either assert that something other than K^* is present in the good case (*positive disjunctivism*) or that hallucinations cannot be identified with K^* (*negative disjunctivism*). Whether or not either of these responses is satisfying will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

It seems that both the moderate and the disjunctivist are able to respond to the strong causal argument; both deny that mental events supervene on the total brain state of an individual. However, the weak causal argument is put forward by the moderate to defeat the disjunctivist position. How have disjunctivists responded? Thirty years ago, when Snowden brought disjunctivism to the fore of philosophical discussion, the disjunctivist position was understood as what we now characterize as *positive* disjunctivism. However, at the turn of the millennium, disjunctivists returned to the original source material in Hinton, and a new generation of negative disjunctivists have followed in Hinton's footsteps. Both positions provide different responses to the weak causal argument rooted in how they describe the bad case.

As I have suggested, I will argue that the negative disjunctivist takes the weak causal argument seriously, and seeks to establish the position without rejecting Experiential Naturalism, the view that our experiences are the results of natural, causal processes. After describing M. G. F. Martin's account of negative disjunctivism, I will address some objections to his account. Before this, however, I will first look to, and ultimately dismiss, the positive disjunctivist.

3.1 Snowden and the Positive Disjunctivist Response

In the first chapter, the reader may recall that Snowden presented two separate ideas. The first is the denial that 'causality', contra Grice, is part of our ordinary conception of vision. The second is the endorsement of positive disjunctivism: the thesis that one can give a thorough account of hallucination without positing a common-kind.⁹³ After demonstrating how these ideas

⁹³ Hence, since illusions are of objects in one's environment, they are included on the left side of the disjunct (V/Iv//H).

jointly attempt a defense against the causal argument, I hope to demonstrate that this defense offered by the positive account is insufficient in answering the causal argument.

The main intent of Snowden's two papers "Perception, Vision, and Causation" and "The Object of Perceptual Experience" is to undermine the causal theory of vision⁹⁴ by attacking a standard Gricean argument, and Snowden argues that this standard argument requires that the disjunctive account of perception is a *dead option*. But since this is not the case, says Snowden, we lose our motivation to endorse the causal theory of vision.

To replace the causal theory of vision, Snowden offers a relational account of perception that is rooted in Hinton's disposal of the common-kind. The difference between the good case and the bad case is not that the former has its causal antecedents generated by the object of perception, but that the subject is related in a special way to the object of perception. This perceptual relation requires that the experience is visual and that the object of perception can be "an object of demonstrative thought" for the subject in question, paradigmatically by referential use of the pronouns 'this' and 'that'.⁹⁵ In order for an instance of seeing to be veridical, one must be able to say something demonstrative about the object in question. If, for example, a subject was veridically presented with a lemon, they ought to be able to entertain demonstrative thoughts about 'this' lemon. They can identify the lemon, imagine picking the lemon up, cutting it into quarters, or converting lemons into capital. However, the disjunctivist's denial of the common-kind prevents this type of relation from pertaining to hallucinations. One could mistakenly make demonstrative judgements about hallucinations, and so it might seem that hallucinations meet Snowden's two requirements for veridical perception to occur. However, if one knew that they were being presented with a hallucination, one would have different thoughts: "If I take my

⁹⁴ To remind the reader, the causal theory of vision states that it is conceptually required that a person be causally related to the object in order for perception to occur. If *P* sees *O*, then *O* causes an experience undergone by *P*.

⁹⁵ Snowden, "The Objects of Perceptual Experience", 67.

medication, then the bright lights will go away.” “As I walk towards the oasis, it will disappear.” “If I ask other people if they see the lemon, they will respond in the negative”. One would not be able to speak of 'this' lemon. In this way, hallucinations are like imaginings; although one can ‘entertain’ the idea of having a refreshing beverage, one would not make the demonstrative thought that consuming an imaginary, refreshing beverage results in the real-satisfaction of my thirst. The ‘demonstrative’ thought appropriate for hallucinations is of a different kind than that which is appropriate for veridical perception. Since ‘perception’ requires no reference to the subject being causally related to the object of perception, Snowden is offering a non-causal account of ‘perception’.

Within this account, Snowden’s disjunctivism plays two roles, one metaphysical and the other epistemological. First, Snowden’s disjunctivism is used to dismiss the causal theory of vision; the causal theory of vision is true if and only if the common-kind assumption is true. Since there is no common-kind (the metaphysical claim), it is mistaken to think the causal theory of vision is correct. It is not in virtue of a special, strictly conceptual, causal relationship to the object of perception that allows for us to have demonstrative thoughts about lemons. Instead, veridical perception allows for this by definition without needing to incorporate the causal theory of vision to differentiate between the good case and the bad case. Second, his disjunctivism allows for veridical perception and hallucination to provide different *evidence* (the epistemological claim); there is no common-kind which provides evidence for either a veridical perception or a hallucination. Although it is true, in cases where we are agnostic about the nature of the situation before our eyes, that it *seems* like we have the same evidence (the experience of a common-kind), this is mistaken. If we are to entertain demonstrative thought about the situation before our eyes, this could be demonstrative thought about an external object or demonstrative

thought about a hallucination. If we were to mistakenly apply demonstrative thought about an external object to what is in fact a hallucination, this is not because we were presented with the same evidence in the good case and the bad case (the evidence of having an experience of a common-kind). Rather simply, we made a mistake; we took what was in fact a hallucination to be an external object. By making this epistemological claim, Snowden is able to defend the claim that veridical perception includes demonstrative thought about an external object, in contrast to hallucinations, because veridical perception provides a different type of evidence than hallucinations.⁹⁶

Following this line of thought, we can see why Snowden is classified as a positive disjunctivist. Demonstrative thought about veridical perceptions is of another kind than demonstrative thought of hallucinations. How exactly we characterize the right-disjunct will be offered by the disjunctivist once the theory has been completed. Harold Langsam gives us a picture of what such an account might look like. Langsam argues: (i) for every phenomenal feature of an object, there exists an indistinguishable facsimile that takes place in hallucination, and (ii) hallucinations are relations between physical space and minds.⁹⁷ To elucidate (i), Langsam states that in order for positive disjunctivism to be the correct account of perception, we must acknowledge that the phenomenal property of redness must have two instantiations; the phenomenal property of redness₁, which occurs in the good case, is indistinguishable, but ontologically distinct, from the phenomenal property of redness₂, which occurs in the bad case.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ It is a natural question to ask, "How could the good case and the bad case offer different evidence, as they are indistinguishable?" McDowell takes up the epistemological project of disjunctivism and attempts to make sense of this claim. Note that if the disjunctivist is correct in eliminating the common-kind, then it follows that the evidence in the good case could be different from the evidence in the bad case because the good case is of a different kind than the bad case. The evidence may be indistinguishable, but the good case, as McDowell characterizes it, is the fact made manifest, while the other is a mere appearance. The good case and the bad case supply different evidence, although that evidence can be indistinguishable for the subject.

⁹⁷ Langsam, 193-194.

⁹⁸ Langsam, 187.

We require pairs of phenomenal properties as it follows from the disjunctivist' thesis: there is no common-kind, including any type of common-kind between phenomenal properties that is shared by the good case and the bad case. As for (ii), since Langsam, like Snowden, is offering a relational account of perception, hallucinations are to be understood as relations between a subject and physical space. Since the objects of hallucinations are not external objects, subjects must be related to something else in their environment. With this brief sketch of positive disjunctivism, we can now evaluate the resources with which it can respond to the causal argument.

The positive disjunctivist has an answer to the strong-causal argument: veridical perception essentially involves an object and hallucination does not. However, the weak causal argument issues a far more difficult challenge. How could the same proximate cause, in the good case, result in the phenomenal property of redness₁, while that same proximate cause, in the bad case, results in the phenomenal property of redness₂? If there is a difference between the two phenomenal properties, then that might require that there exists such a thing as action at a distance, as neural event *C* causes the phenomenal property of redness₁ in the good case and phenomenal property of redness₂ in the bad case.⁹⁹

Snowden gives a rather disappointing response. Despite being fully aware that the only arguments for the common-kind that are “persuasive or worth taking seriously [...] are those which appeal to scientifically established facts about perceptual and hallucinatory processes”¹⁰⁰, Snowden's response is to say that his project is a conceptual one.¹⁰¹ Just as we can claim that the causal theory of vision is false while claiming that causation is necessary for perception as a matter of fact, so can we claim that the disjunctive thesis is merely a conceptual truth, and not

⁹⁹ Langsam, 194.

¹⁰⁰ Snowden, “The Objects of Perceptual Experience”, 57.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

true as a matter of fact. But Snowden is comparing apples to oranges. Disjunctivism, as Martin points out,¹⁰² is a type of error theory, where the disjunctivist is arguing that the concept of the ‘common-kind’ is a philosophical fiction; the ‘common-kind’ has no value as a philosophical concept *in general*. I doubt Snowden wants to make a similar claim about causality. Although Snowden may be able to say that matters of fact about causality do not figure in our conceptual analysis of ‘causality’, he cannot say the same about the relationship between the disjunctive analysis and the ‘common-kind’. If the causal mechanisms necessary for perception give credence to the common-kind, as the weak-argument claims it does, claiming that your account is merely conceptual is insufficient as a response. If matters of fact contradict your conceptual scheme, perhaps a replacement is in order.

Langsam realizes the seriousness of the causal argument, and attempts to argue that the disjunctivist does not violate a wider version of *SCP*. Since perception is essentially relational, the same cause can have different effects without violating *SCP*. If I veridically perceive an apple, I am related to the actual object on Langsam’s account. If I hallucinate an apple, I am not related to any actual apple. Even though the good case and the bad case have the same proximate cause, they differ in their effects, as the good case has a relation to the object of perception.

However, if this response is sufficient to dispel the strong causal argument, it is conspicuously insufficient to dispel the weak causal argument. Even though relations between a subject and their environment are irreducible to the total-brain state of an individual, and even though this does not violate *SCP*, this is not the disjunctivist thesis; Langsam himself acknowledges that a relational account does not eliminate the common-kind.¹⁰³ To respond to the weak argument, Langsam simply states that a positive account of hallucination will neither

¹⁰² Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 283.

¹⁰³ Langsam, 192.

violate *SCP* nor entail a common-kind.¹⁰⁴ However, Langsam is begging the question against his opponent. All that is offered as a defense of his position is his assurance that the Theory of Appearing,¹⁰⁵ the disjunctive thesis, and *SCP must* be correct, and so there *must* be a positive account of the ontology of hallucinations which satisfies these three positions. Unfortunately, insistence is not the most convincing form of argument.

The problem with the positive response to the weak causal argument is essentially the same problem faced by Langsam. If we want to offer a positive account of the bad case, then we ought to be able to offer some basic features that a hallucination must possess in order to answer the causal argument. This will involve postulating pairs of phenomenal properties. What follows are immediate questions posed to the positive disjunctivist: (i) How would we develop a positive notion of hallucinations if they do not share a common-kind? (ii) If positive disjunctivism is to deny *SCP*, can they? The answer to the first question is likely some form of conceptual analysis, though perhaps psychology or neuroscience will help provide an answer. However, even if further analysis were to reveal that there are pairs of phenomenal properties, why think that the two phenomenal pairs do not share a common-kind? This is not to suggest that positive disjunctivism can be demonstrated to be false at this current time, but rather that the positive disjunctivist offers no reason to expect one outcome rather than the other. What we ask of the positive disjunctivist is to provide reasons for their position, and to provide a satisfactory response to the causal argument. Perhaps the positive disjunctivist can claim that the arguments for disjunctivism are sufficient to demonstrate its completeness, and problems of causality are anomalies which will be solved by future physicists and metaphysicians, but this is unlikely to

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁰⁵ This is Langsam's relational account of perception.

satisfy the opponent's worries. What we need is an immediate reply to the causal argument; not procrastination on the matter.

3.2 Martin, Negative Disjunctivism, and Indistinguishability

"Properly understood, the disjunctive approach to perception is the appropriate starting point for any discussion of the nature of perceptual experience."¹⁰⁶

Negative disjunctivists, the most notable being Martin and Hinton, believe that we cannot give a positive characterization of hallucinations. Instead, hallucinations are characterized in negative epistemological terms. After outlining Martin's account of negative disjunctivism, a new strategy for answering the causal argument comes to the fore.

Imagine Langsam giving us an account of 'indistinguishability' between the veridical perception of an apple and its corresponding 'perfect hallucination' (one that has the same proximate cause). We can imagine him stating that veridical perception of the apple instantiates the phenomenal property of redness₁, while the hallucination instantiates the phenomenal property of redness₂. We could then continue this process for every property of the scene in question, and we would eventually end up with two indistinguishable, but entirely different, scenes: one that instantiates phenomenal properties₁, present in the good case, and another that instantiates phenomenal properties₂ in the bad case. We then might give the following definition of 'indistinguishability': two experiences are indistinguishable from one another if and only if they share identical properties₁, identical properties₂, or a combination of both identical properties₁ and identical properties₂. A talented painter may be able to paint two portraits that have the same properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n , and one might not be able to distinguish between the two portraits. However, if the painter used one type of paint for the first picture, and another type for

¹⁰⁶ Martin, "The Limits of Self-Awareness", 272.

the second, we might be justified in claiming that even though the two paintings are indistinguishable, they nonetheless are quite different in kind.¹⁰⁷

The common-kind theorist endorses a similar conception of the ‘perfect hallucination’. A perfect hallucination is simply a mental event with properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n , where properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n are the properties found in the corresponding veridical perception of the same scene.¹⁰⁸ This is because properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n are those properties which constitute the common-kind, and it is because the good case and the bad case have identical properties in virtue of being a veridical perception of a scene and a perfect hallucination of the scene; the perfect hallucination suitably brought about by the same neural processes that generate the veridical perception.

It is this way of defining ‘indistinguishability’ and ‘perfect hallucination’ that separates positive disjunctivists and common-kind theorists from negative disjunctivism. Rather, negative disjunctivism states that something is indistinguishable from event p if, upon reflection, we cannot tell event p from the veridical perception of p .¹⁰⁹ This minimal conception of ‘indistinguishability’ is compatible with the denial of the common-kind theorist’s conception of ‘indistinguishability’, as it is possible that two events are indistinguishable for a subject, even if one event lacks some property the other possesses.¹¹⁰ Given this conception of ‘indistinguishability’, a sensory experience of p simply is any experience of p that is indistinguishable from the veridical perception of p . This, according to Martin, is the proper

¹⁰⁷ I acknowledge that it would likely be very difficult for an artist to create indistinguishable paintings using two separate types of paint. However, I doubt it is actually impossible that one could create two paintings with identical visual phenomenal properties using two different types of paint used. Nonetheless, whether or not this example is completely analogous is unimportant; I choose this analogy for its intuitive appeal.

¹⁰⁸ Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 280.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 281.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 282.

formulation of disjunctivism: a sense experience of *p* is either the veridical perception of *p* or the *seemingly* veridical perception of *p*.¹¹¹ Nothing else need be said about the bad case.

If I have the sense experience as of seeing a bright light, whether or not my sense experience is veridical, it will be indistinguishable from the sense experience as of veridical perceiving of a bright light. Now, veridical perception consists of a relation between a person and their external environment, where the experience the person enjoys is constituted by an awareness of a mind-independent object. This thought is supported by the transparency or translucency of experience, where what we are aware of is the objects themselves; there is no introspectable aspect of our experience that suggests the awareness of an intermediary object of experience. The heart of the disjunctivist account is to take this relation between a subject and their world to be explanatorily basic.¹¹² If we want to understand the notion of ‘sense experience’ or ‘hallucination’, we must begin with ‘veridical perception’. A ‘sense experience’ is simply anything which is indistinguishable from the veridical perception of an object.¹¹³

There are three basic sorts of ‘indistinguishables’, that is, indistinguishable from veridical perception--including of course veridical perception itself-- such that these indistinguishable experiences can all be characterized as sense experience: veridical perception, illusions, and hallucinations.¹¹⁴ Only veridical perception is an actual instance of veridical perception, while the latter two only seem like they are. Veridically perceiving a bright light requires that a bright light be present, and so is of a different kind than only seeming to veridically perceive a bright

¹¹¹ Martin talks of types of events, rather than token events. Why Martin does this will become clear when discussing the objections to Martin’s account.

¹¹² Scott Sturgeon, “Disjunctivism about Visual Experience” in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, ed. Adrian Haddock and Fiona Macpherson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 116.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 113.

light. To claim otherwise, that the good case and bad case share a common-kind, is to deny that veridical perception is explanatorily basic.

Of course, the common-kind theorist will reject this conception of ‘indistinguishability’ because a perfect hallucination must have properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n , and so endorses a more substantive conception of ‘indistinguishability’. Furthermore, she will claim this indistinguishability is due to two mental events sharing the same proximate cause. ‘Indistinguishability’ does not play a role *simpliciter*, but rather it is the properties of an event that determine whether two experiences are identical; specifically, two events are identical if they share the properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n . More importantly, the common-kind theorist will find that the disjunctivist conception of ‘veridical perception’ is explanatorily redundant.¹¹⁵ How will declaring veridical perception as explanatorily basic add any explanatory value to an account of perception? Surely the common-kind will be able to perform a similar role, and if there is anything captured in the notion of ‘veridical perception’ which is absent in the notion of ‘an experience’, this will not be sufficient to show that veridical perception is different in kind from the bad case. As we saw in the last chapter, the moderate states that veridical perception consists of K and K^* .

Negative disjunctivism answers these worries in two steps. First, it holds that the common-kind theorist carries more theoretical burdens, and therefore the burden of proof shifts to the common-kind theorist in their conception of ‘indistinguishability’. Second, the negative disjunctivist holds that since the bad case can only be characterized in negative epistemological terms, as seeming to be veridical, it is redundant to claim that the occurrence of the good case includes the occurrence of the bad case. Since we know veridical perception to be of the external world, and since we know that hallucinations can only be characterized as what it seems to be,

¹¹⁵ Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 290, 293.

the bad case does not add anything to the experience. It is this line of thought which allows the disjunctivist to dispel the concerns brought about by the weak causal argument.

Let us consider Martin's argument that the burden of proof rests with the common-kind theorist. Martin states that the common-kind theorist believes that the perfect hallucination, which is indistinguishable from the corresponding veridical perception, is indistinguishable in virtue of the two experiences sharing properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n . However, Martin asks, "How could we ever show this to be true?" The one answer is that this follows from the two events having the same proximate cause, but this merely begs-the-question. Why think that two events which share the same proximate cause have identical properties? By accepting the moderate position, we already are willing to admit that relational properties play a non-causal role in perception. Furthermore, if the veridical perception is different in some respect from the perfect hallucination, why must it be exactly similar in its properties? To insist that it is exactly similar in its properties is to merely assert louder the common-kind assumption: they must be identical because the perfect hallucination will have the same properties (E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n) as the corresponding veridical perception. The moderate must either i) show that the weak causal argument defeats the disjunctivist, demonstrating that the negative disjunctivist analysis of 'indistinguishability' is insufficient or ii) they must find some other justification for their conception of 'indistinguishability'.

As we shall see, Martin believes that (i) is unavailable to the common-kind theorist. Instead, the common-kind theorist must show that one can justify her conception of 'indistinguishability'.¹¹⁶ But to do so would require the common-kind theorist to take on a

¹¹⁶ One way the common-kind theorist might fight for her conception of 'indistinguishability' is to appeal to an argumentative form similar to Descartes' ontological argument. Descartes' argument, put crudely, states that if God does not exist, then God is not a perfect being. But God is a perfect being by definition, therefore God exists. The common-kind theorist might likewise say that a perfect hallucination must possess all of the same properties

significant theoretical burden: potential infallibility about our mental states.¹¹⁷ This is so because the only way we could demonstrate that the perfect hallucination shares all the identical properties present in the corresponding veridical perception is by having an individual reflect on her experience. In order for this to be shown it would require a subject to correctly identify every property of a veridical perception, E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n , and correctly identify every property of the corresponding hallucination, E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n . But this is just to say that subjects can be infallible about the course of her experiences, and such an assumption is not only substantive, but likely false as well. For if the subject made any mistake about what occurred in her experience then she would not be describing the perfect hallucination, as to describe the perfect hallucination would require zero inaccuracies in the descriptions offered by the subject.¹¹⁸

Let us go back to our painter example. We can make perfect sense of two paintings being indistinguishable from each other in the way the common-kind theorist defines ‘indistinguishability’. We could have a team of art historians, perhaps with the most advanced instruments available, approach two paintings and, over a significant period of time, come to the conclusion that the two paintings are indistinguishable; that both paintings share properties E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n . They would identify every relevant property, and make sure that each painting has that property and no other relevant property. But how could we hope to carry out such a comparison between a scene and the perfect hallucination of that scene?

as its corresponding veridical perception; otherwise it is not a perfect hallucination. But this only serves to illuminate Martin’s criticism. All we need to generate a conception of ‘indistinguishability’ is that a sensory experience be indiscriminable from veridical perception for the subject. To non-trivially claim that perfect hallucinations must have identical properties *in fact* is to require that a subject has the potential to actually report that they experienced a perfect hallucination. This would require that they be infallible, for if they made any mistake in their reporting of the identical scenes, then they would no longer be describing the perfect hallucination.

¹¹⁷ Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 283.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Let us make this difficulty more apparent. A more fitting analogy would be a comparison between Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and the perfect hallucination of the *Mona Lisa*. How could we determine if the hallucination has all the relevant properties possessed by the veridical perception of the *Mona Lisa*? I can imagine two ways of doing this. First, we would require that a neuroscientist be able to look at a person's neural states and determine exactly what properties they are experiencing of the *Mona Lisa*. We could then expect that the neuroscientist be able to compare their empirical data with the *Mona Lisa* to verify if the person was truly having a perfect hallucination in the way the common-kind theorist expects them to. However, the possibility of a neuroscientist doing this requires significant philosophical assumptions, and it is incompatible with many forms of non-reductive physicalism. Simply put, for a neuroscientist to achieve this, hallucinations would need to be publically observable events and we would need to be able to identify those publically observable events with each and every property of the hallucination; E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n . This empirical information could then be compared to the actual *Mona Lisa*.

If this option is not open to us, then we are forced to concede that any verification of the common-kind theorist's account of 'indistinguishability' will require a comparison between two different perspectives: the *Mona Lisa*, which is observable by anybody who can see the *Mona Lisa*, and the perfect hallucination of the *Mona Lisa*, which is only observable for the person hallucinating it. Let us then suppose, for the sake of the argument, that we could induce a perfect hallucination of the *Mona Lisa* in the world's most renowned expert on the *Mona Lisa*, as an expert would be in the best position to distinguish the genuine masterpiece from a forgery. If the expert was to arrive at the conclusion that her perfect hallucination had the identical phenomenal properties as the true painting, it would require that she be infallible in discerning every relevant

phenomenal property of her hallucination. But, as previously stated, this is extremely dubious. Not only are experts fooled all the time by forgeries that are in fact different from the original, but people are notoriously fallible when it comes to their own mental states. Rather, the best case we have for a perfect hallucination of the *Mona Lisa* being ‘indistinguishable’ from the true *Mona Lisa* is whether an expert on the *Mona Lisa* finds the hallucination indiscriminable from the genuine article.¹¹⁹

Although the perfect forgery of the *Mona Lisa* requires that a team of experts be able to identify and compare every relevant property between the forgery and the genuine masterpiece, only to find that it is the perfect match, this does not hold for hallucinations and their corresponding scene. All we could hope for in the latter case is that a capable individual reflect on her hallucination and find it indiscernible. A hallucination possessing E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n is sufficient for a hallucination to be indistinguishable from its corresponding scene, but it is not necessary. Instead, it is both sufficient and necessary that a subject not be able to discern a difference between the two. If we know that the common-kind theorist’s conception of the ‘perfect

¹¹⁹ I am tempted to suggest that we can make more sense of Martin’s claim that the common-kind theorist is committed to the possibility of infallibility by taking note of Fred Dretske’s distinction between sensory experience and perceptual experience (I merely suggest this, as I am uncertain whether I can appropriate Dretske’s ideas without losing disjunctivism). According to Dretske, we can distinguish between sensation and perception by appealing to the claim that sensation exists in analog form, while perception is in digital form. Our sensory experience can be conceived ‘like a picture’ while perceptual experience involves classification, and pattern-recognition. While our sense organs provide us with a vast amount of information in ‘pictorial form’, cognition involves disseminating that information. Furthermore, using Dretske’s language, information is always lost in the transition from the sensory experience/analog to the perception/digital. This then has the possibility to illuminate Martin’s previous claim. For a subject to be infallible in discriminating between a scene and its perfect hallucination requires that the subject be able to ‘convert all of one’s sensory experience into perceptual statements’. We know that this is not possible. Instead, for a subject to be unable to discriminate between a scene and its perfect hallucination all that is required is that the perceptual content is indistinguishable, as a subject would not be able to discriminate between two events in ‘analog form’; a subject can only compare perceptual experiences, not sensory experiences. Doesn’t our ordinary use of the word ‘indistinguishable’ reflect both Martin’s and Dretske’s theories? Something is indistinguishable if a person is unable to distinguish the two objects. If the common-kind theorist wants to claim that the common-kind is of the analog form, not the perceptual content, such that it is not possible for a subject to discern the common-kind, this does not solve the problem. How could we show that the perfect hallucination’s analog form matches the corresponding scene’s analog information?

hallucination' can only ever be an assumption, unless they adopt the claim that it is possible that a subject be infallible about her own mental states, what reason could we have for adopting her conception of 'indistinguishability'?

If the negative disjunctivist can show that the common-kind theorist is unjustified in her conceptual analysis of the 'perfect hallucination', the common-kind theorist can point to the type of hallucination that has the same proximate cause as its corresponding veridical perception to illuminate the common-kind conception of a 'perfect hallucination' i.e. she can invoke the weak causal argument. If K^* has the same neural cause as K and K^* is sufficient for an experience, then K and K^* must share a common-kind. If the common-kind theorist were to admit that we could never have observational evidence that confirms her stronger conception of 'indistinguishability', the weak-causal argument at least justifies an inference to the best explanation. Furthermore, although both the moderate and the disjunctivist may be charged with relying on action-at-a-distance, the moderate at least accepts some wider notion of *SCP*. The disjunctivist, if she cannot respond to the weak causal argument, seems to dismiss the principle altogether.

Martin's response to the causal argument is that the perfect hallucination, at least for the negative disjunctivist, can only be described in negative epistemological terms. The perfect hallucination of a bright light is indiscriminable from the veridical perception of that bright light, try as the subject might. But this means we could only ever characterize the perfect hallucination of a bright light as being indistinguishable from the veridical perception of a bright light. All we can say of the perfect hallucination of a scene is that it *seems* like the veridical perception of that scene, and that the good case (veridical perception) and the bad case (hallucination) share the common property of being indistinguishable from the veridical perception of that scene. But is

the disjunctivist thereby committed to a common-kind, the common property of ‘being indistinguishable’ from the veridical perception of that scene?

This is referred to as the problem of screening-off. Martin does not want to deny experiential naturalism, and so must give some answer as to why K^* does not occur in the good case. Note that Martin has good reasons to deny that a description of K is not made true in virtue of K^* . For one, veridical perception acquaints us with the external world; hallucinations, infamously, do not. Veridical perception gives us direct access to the external world. If this is the case, as the transparency of experience suggests, then not only are cases of veridical perception indistinguishable from veridical perception, cases of veridical perception directly provide us access to the external world, preventing us from including K^* in the good case. There might be some cases, such as a mugging on a foggy night, where I am unsure of whether or not my sensory experience was veridical or not. If I was not in doubt, it would not be the case that anything *seemed* veridical; for I would be in doubt only if my experience suggested that my experience might not be veridical.¹²⁰ So either there was a mugger, and my experience was veridical, or there was no mugger, and my experience was delusive. Regardless of what truly did happen, in both cases it seems as if there is a mugger. But this does not happen in the vast majority of cases, because we have no reason to doubt that what we perceive is the external world. The vast majority of cases where the sensory experience of an event is characterized as *seeming* is when we are in doubt, and forced to give a disjunctive report; either I veridically perceive x or I seem to veridically perceive x .¹²¹

¹²⁰ Doubt of one’s perception can arise for a number of reasons, and not just reasons that arise from our reflection on our experience. One could perhaps be suspicious of there being pink ice cubes in one’s drink, not because one reflects on the sensory experience of ice cubes, but because one’s background information does not cohere with the presence of pink ice cubes.

¹²¹ I do not include all cases of hallucination because there may be cases where one is aware that one is experiencing the perfect hallucination, and so no doubt would be present. For instance, I might be involved in an

If K^* can only be described as if it were a K , the weak-causal argument would then suggest that K^* is also present in K . The weak-causal argument, states the moderate, suggests that what is more basic than veridical perception is the property of ‘seeming to be a case of veridical perception’. The disjunctivist then is required to say one of two things: i) K has no explanatory role ii) K^* does not play an explanatory role in the good case.¹²² To embrace (i) is to admit that transparency in experience is mere illusion. Most importantly, (i) loses the grounds which justified K^* in the first place; K . We defined K^* as ‘what is indistinguishable from K based on reflection’. But (i) suggests that K (a veridical perception of a scene) is indistinguishable from K^* (indiscriminable from the veridical perception of a scene) because K^* is present in both the good case and the bad case. But K is the grounds by which we arrive at our definition of K^* , and so K^* would just be saying that K^* is K^* because it is K^* .

Instead, the far more reasonable claim is (ii): that K^* has no explanatory role in K . K is indistinguishable from K^* , not because K^* is a common-kind, but because K involves a relation with the world. We do not characterize veridically perceiving a bright light the way we do because it is indiscriminable from veridically perceiving a bright light, but because veridically perceiving a bright light allows us to make demonstrative judgements about them as well as allowing us to interact with the world. As Martin states:

The notion common to perception and hallucination, that of sensory experience, lacks explanatory autonomy from that of veridical perception. And isn't that just what we express by saying that either this is a case of veridical perception, in which case certain consequences follow, or it is merely one of being indiscriminable from such a perception, in virtue of which certain other consequences follow?¹²³

experiment where neuroscientists are interested in the experience of phosphenes. However, the hallucination would still be indistinguishable from the veridical perception based on reflection alone, and so does not provide a counter-example to the disjunctivist account.

¹²² Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 299.

¹²³ Ibid., 302.

By making veridical perception explanatorily basic, and by characterizing the perfect hallucination in negative epistemological terms (as it *seeming* to be something else), the weak-causal argument does not pose any serious threat to the disjunctivist.

We now have a coherent response to the causal challenge and Martin can hold on to both experiential naturalism and naive realism while discarding the common-kind assumption. The following is a more concise version of Martin's argument:

- 1) The most that can be said of the perfect hallucination is that it is 'indistinguishable' from the veridical perception of the corresponding scene, where 'indistinguishable' simply means that a subject would be unable to discriminate, based on reflection alone, between the perfect hallucination and its corresponding scene.
- 2) In instances where the hallucination has the same proximate cause as a veridical perception, what occurs is the perfect hallucination of the corresponding scene of veridical perception.
- 3) If there was a common-kind in perception, it can be represented as K^* , where K^* is sufficient for a hallucination. In the perfect hallucination, K^* can only be characterized in negative epistemological terms.
- 4) Since all that can be said of the perfect hallucination is that it is indistinguishable from veridical perception, and since we have good reasons to claim that the veridical perception of a scene is indistinguishable from the veridical perception of that scene because it is an instance of veridical perception, instead of K^* (a common-kind), there is no reason to think that veridical perception seems to be veridical perception in virtue of K^* . Therefore (5) the weak-causal argument does not demonstrate the conceptual necessity of a common-kind.

We seem to have a potential solution to our problem. The next step in the process is to evaluate *prima facie* objections to Martin's account.

However, I wish to make two last remarks on this analysis of the weak-causal argument. The opponent may simply insist, even if Martin is correct in his analysis of 'indistinguishability', that it is utterly obvious that the same proximate cause produces the same *phenomenal properties* in the case of the perfect hallucination.¹²⁴ But why should we be inclined to believe this? Martin

¹²⁴ Mark Johnston, in "The Obscure Object of Hallucination", makes a similar move. After stating that perception does not supervene on the total-brain state of an individual, he assumes that because the perfect hallucination is indistinguishable from the corresponding veridical perception, the good case and the bad case have identical properties. Doesn't admitting that perception does not supervene on the total-brain state of an individual entail

can just claim that the same proximate cause produces indistinguishable sensory experiences, and we have no reason to endorse, not to mention reasons to reject, the claim that the perfect hallucination has identical phenomenal properties.¹²⁵ Essentially, Martin is able to do this for two reasons. First, he defines ‘indistinguishability’ in negative epistemological terms. Second, in virtue of the first reason, Martin is not required to endorse the claim that the same proximate cause generates the same phenomenal features, for all that is required by ‘indistinguishability’ is that a subject be unable to distinguish between two events. To demand that the same proximate cause produces the same phenomenal effects is simply to endorse the common-kind thesis, as the common-kind is just those phenomenal features identical in the perfect hallucination. If the disjunctivist can answer the causal argument, what reason do they have to endorse the common-kind thesis? If there are reasons to endorse the common-kind thesis, they are not supplied by the causal argument. All that follows from veridical perceptions and the perfect hallucination is that the same neural event can produce events that are indistinguishable, but indistinguishability especially understood through Martin’s account, does not entail nor demand the existence of a common-kind.

The second objection to Martin’s analysis is equally as simple. Can we make phenomenal properties *themselves* the common-kind?¹²⁶ This is a complicated question, and requires significant attention. However, since naive realists are likely to identify the phenomenal properties with the external objects themselves, this objection is not terribly pressing. It is not

that the perception and hallucination will be different in some regard? For if they were identical, how could we claim that perception does not supervene on the total-brain state of an individual? This does not show the disjunctivist thesis to be true, but it leaves room open for us to claim that there is no *prima facie* reason to think that indistinguishability necessarily requires a common-kind. Johnston recognizes this difficulty, and attempts to give an account where the *awareness* of a hallucination is identical to the *awareness* of a perception.

¹²⁵ Nor will neuroscience ever require that the perfect hallucination have a common-kind. Instead, neuroscience will manage just as well with Martin’s ‘indistinguishability’. William Fish argues for this point in his article “Disjunctivism, Indistinguishability, and the Nature of Hallucination” in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, ed. Adrian Haddock and Fiona Macpherson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹²⁶ Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 310.

surprising that hallucinations have phenomenal properties, especially those phenomenal properties present with vision, and if phenomenal properties cannot be separated from the objects that possess them, the good and the bad case do not share a common-kind. The bad case is indistinguishable from the good case, and this will include phenomenal properties.

Looking back at the strong version of the causal argument, we found good reason to think that Robinson was wrong in his analysis of *SCP*. In our appeal to externalism, we found that the object of belief affects the content of the belief. Martin is making a similar move in appealing to naive realism and the transparency of experience. Why think that ‘phenomenal properties’ are identical even when the object of our experience, in the case of hallucinations, is entirely absent from our surroundings? With Martin, the fact that the good case and bad case are ‘indistinguishable’ explains the similarity between the two, and to think otherwise is to go beyond the limits of our self-awareness.

3.3 Objections to Martin’s Account

By stating that perfect hallucinations can only be characterized as being indistinguishable from the veridical perception of the same scene, two immediate questions arise: i) what about people or animals that are incapable of discerning between two events and ii) how can we characterize imperfect hallucinations?

The two main concerns of (i) are the following: the inattentive observer, and infants and animals.¹²⁷ In the first case, we could imagine that a person experiences an imperfect hallucination, where perhaps there is a fairly obvious distinction between it and its corresponding veridical perception. According to our inattentive observer, there is no discernible difference between the good case and the bad case, despite their being obvious differences between the two. It appears that Martin would be committed to the view that perfect hallucinations are relative to

¹²⁷ Martin, “The Limits of Self-Awareness”, 303.

an observer; if the person takes it to be indiscriminable, then the experience is indiscriminable. This relative character is even more apparent in infants and animals. If infants and non-human animals are incapable of distinguishing between any two events, as they lack the cognitive ability to distinguish between two events in general, then we get the bizarre conclusion that every individual experience an animal enjoys is indiscriminable from the rest, implying that all of their experiences are of the same kind.¹²⁸ Since a puppy lacks the cognitive mechanisms which allow for it to distinguish between the sensory experience of a bone and the sensory experience of a squirrel, the two events would meet Martin's criteria for an indistinguishable event. Either more needs to be said about 'indistinguishability' or the negative disjunctivist finds herself occupying an untenable position.

To account for these cases, the negative disjunctivist must give some account of 'indistinguishability' that includes a particular idealized ability. In requiring the subject to exercise a certain ability in a certain way, we avoid the problems of inattentive observers, who are not sufficiently aware, and puppies, who lack the ability to distinguish whatsoever. Martin acknowledges the need for such an account¹²⁹, and this project is taken up by Scott Sturgeon. However, whatever the 'idealized ability' amounts to, it cannot allow for a subject to be infallible when reporting their abilities. The 'ability to discriminate' cannot allow for a subject to identify E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n in both the good and bad case, as this would undermine Martin's overall account, for we would be conceding the common-kind theorist definition of 'indistinguishability'. If we are to define 'indistinguishability' in such a way that it avoids these problems, then we must describe how we ought to think of 'indistinguishability' and also supply substantial reasons for why the disjunctivist can make this impersonal move in the first place. Lastly, this

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 304.

definition cannot be so impersonal and idealized that we arrive at the common-kind theorist's definition of 'indistinguishability'.

One such route is by appealing to a more general definition of 'indistinguishability' that reflects the disjunctivist conception. Fortunately, Timothy Williamson offers a general account of being 'indiscriminable', and thus is amenable to a disjunctivist analysis, as Scott Sturgeon and William Fish acknowledge.¹³⁰ On Williamson's account, according to Fish,¹³¹ something is indiscriminable for a subject if and only if at time *t* a subject is unable to discriminate between *a* and *b*.¹³² This is not to suggest that a criterion of indistinguishability is to apply to all objects at any time, but instead that this is the best we can hope for when dealing with private events (hallucinations).¹³³ Martin suggests that the application of Williamson's account of indiscriminability is not simply *ad hoc*, but fundamental in understanding the nature of hallucinations and perception in general.

However, a question can be asked as to why we might think this idealization is possible in the first place? Since we are talking of *subjects* who are to discriminate, we may worry that the heart of Martin's account is lost by transforming particular subjects into a single, ideal subject. But since the perfect hallucination can only be described with negative epistemological statements, idealization is a perfectly acceptable move. Just as animals lack the ability to rationalize, this does not entail that 'rationality' is a chimera; that animals lack the ability to distinguish between their visual experiences does not entail that every experience they have is

¹³⁰ Sturgeon, 126. Sturgeon has arrived at this adapted form from Williamson's *Identity and Discrimination*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.

¹³¹ To be clear, we have a William and a Mr. Williamson, and a Fish and a Sturgeon.

¹³² Fish, "Disjunctivism, Indistinguishability, and the Nature of Hallucination", 146.

¹³³ Although objects of veridical perception are public, objects of hallucination are not because they do not exist as external objects, and this is my intended meaning in using the word 'private'.

indistinguishable. For, as with many epistemological terms, ‘indistinguishability’ is idealized and impersonal.¹³⁴

The more challenging project is to give a precise description of the idealized, impersonal subject. We may take our paradigm case to be a normally functioning, adult person, but it is unsure if this is the ideal we are looking for. Moreover, since normally functioning, adult persons possess slight variations in their abilities to discern between the good and the bad case, declaring that the paradigm case *is* the idealized, impersonal subject complicates matters further. Perhaps we are just not in a position to determine what the ideal case is, but all the disjunctivist needs is an ideal case that does not equate to being infallible about one’s experience. As philosophers, why would we even offer an ideal that we know cannot be achieved? When philosophy realized that defining ‘knowledge’ as ‘infallible belief’ was an unfeasible project, our response was not to admit that knowledge is impossible, but rather that knowledge is something other than ‘an infallible belief’. If philosophers demand that the ‘perfect hallucination’ requires that we be infallible about own experience, perhaps, as do Hinton and Martin, we ought to reconsider our demands.

If we can reasonably assert that infants and animals pose no problem for Martin’s account, what can we say of hallucinations which are imperfect? What does an imperfect hallucination amount to? Strictly speaking, Martin’s account allows for three types of hallucinations, each posing its own problem.¹³⁵ The first is the focus of his analysis; the perfect

¹³⁴ Sturgeon, 127-128.

¹³⁵ There may be a fourth type of hallucination: the imperfect hallucination of an impossible event. This is unlikely however, due to Martin’s conception of ‘indistinguishability’. Since there is no such thing as the veridical perception of an impossible event, ‘indistinguishability’ has no grounding that comes from veridically perceiving the impossible event. Thus, there is no veridical reference to determine if a subject can discriminate between it and a perfect hallucination. There is no such thing as a perfect or imperfect impossible hallucination. There is a difference between hallucinating a M.C. Escher type drawing and hallucinating a M.C. Escher type situation, as the former is ‘possible’, the later, ‘impossible’.

hallucination. The second is the imperfect hallucination: a hallucination that is not indiscriminable from the veridical perception of that event. The third is a hallucination of an impossible event. This includes impossible scenarios, such as those found in M.C. Esher drawings,¹³⁶ and special hallucinatory experiences, such as Mark Johnston's supersaturated 'red'; a colour of 'red' that is only perceptible to hallucinating subjects in special conditions.¹³⁷ Since, according to Martin, an event is a sensory experience if it is indiscriminable from its corresponding veridical perception, these imperfect instances of hallucination do not meet the definition of a sensory experience.

Martin momentarily dodges this criticism by stating that he is concerned with 'perfect hallucinations' and so is not discussing imperfect hallucinations. All we can say of a 'perfect hallucination' is that it is indiscriminable from the veridical perception of that scene, and this is sufficient to answer the causal argument. This may be true, but Martin is leaving his view open to attack, for if we remain mute on imperfect and impossible hallucinations, there is a worry that the opponent shall find a common-kind between veridical perception and imperfect hallucinations or impossible hallucinations. The reason for describing perfect hallucinations in negative epistemological terms is because they are indistinguishable from the corresponding veridical perception. This suggests that imperfect and impossible hallucinations can be given a positive description. This conclusion is not immediately worrying, as the causal argument does not involve imperfect and impossible hallucinations. However, this then requires a response to the indistinguishability argument *against* disjunctivism, as Martin has to offer an account of 'indistinguishability' in general; an account which includes imperfect and impossible situations, or at least an account which says something about them. This is not to say that Martin cannot

¹³⁶ Martin, "The Limits of Self-Awareness", 308.

¹³⁷ Mark Johnston, "The Obscure Object of Hallucination" in *Disjunctivism*, ed. Alex Byrne & Heather Logue (London, The MIT Press, 2009), 222.

offer such a theory, but rather that a more detailed story is required before our worries can be put to rest.

There are others aspects of Martin's account which requires clarification or revision, most notably some key terms in the theory; background assumptions, reflection, and indiscriminability.¹³⁸ However, Martin still offers a promising account of 'indistinguishability' which provides a response to the weak-causal argument.

¹³⁸ William Child, *Causality, Interpretation, and the Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 146.

CONCLUSION

Being citizens of the 21st century we will likely witness huge leaps in the field of neuropsychology, and our understanding of the relationship between persons and their grey-matter will provide numerous insights about our species; the study of the brain will be important for our ideas of how perception works. The broadest aim of this project then was to inspect the possibility of reconciling this historical trend with the philosophical thesis of naive realism. By characterizing the right side of disjunctive reports solely in epistemologically negative terms, this reconciliation is made possible. Although there is still much to be desired in terms of details, Martin's conception of 'indistinguishability' provides an adequate defense of the disjunctivist, and therefore naive realist, account of perception. However, the truth of disjunctivism does not necessarily entail the truth of naive realism. Naive realism must also make a case for itself on its own terms, albeit with the disjunctive conception of experience in order to address some of the problems of perception.

In answering the strong version of the causal argument, I claimed that the argument is persuasive in-so-far as we accept Robinson's description of *SCP*. However, such a narrow construal entails that our psychological lives would supervene only on the total-brain state of an individual, a position many would consider to have been refuted (including the disjunctivist and the moderate). Therefore, by *modus tollens*, the narrow version of *SCP* is false. However, the consequence of denying the narrow version of *SCP* and whether this entails action-at-a-distance is, at the moment, unclear. This leads us to another question: Where does disjunctivism 'fit' with regards to other theories within the philosophy of mind? For instance, in affirming that veridical perceptions and hallucinations are ontologically distinct, is disjunctivism incompatible with certain versions of the psychophysical identity theory? Thus, the metaphysical issues at play,

with regards to causality and the mind, have not been sufficiently answered. Nonetheless, the primary metaphysical principle for our concerns, the *SCP*, can be dismissed.

The weak-causal argument, on the other hand, is sufficient for dismissing positive disjunctivism. Simply put, positive disjunctivism cannot offer us assurance that descriptions of hallucinations will not uncover a common-kind between the good case and the bad case. Negative disjunctivism greatly improves on this by both clarifying the disjunctivist position and through limiting what it is we can know about our hallucinations. What is needed then is to apply Martin's conception of 'indistinguishability' to other cases, such as instances of 'imperfect hallucinations' and illusions, in order to better evaluate how applicable the conception is.

I take it that the primary feature of disjunctivism ultimately provides an answer to the causal argument; veridical perception is explanatorily basic. If this is the case, the philosopher cannot offer something *lower* in order to formulate a common-kind without, at the same time, undermining the primacy of veridical perception.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Works Cited

Audi, R. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Austin, J.L. *Sense and Sensibilia*. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Ayer, A.J. *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*. London: MacMillan & Co., 1964.

Byrne, A., and Logue, H. *Disjunctivism*. London: The MIT Press, 2009.

-----“Introduction” in *Disjunctivism*. London: The MIT Press, 2009.

Child, W. *Causality, Interpretation, and the Mind*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.

Dancy, J. *Perceptual Knowledge*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

-----“Arguments from Illusion,” *Philosophical Quarterly* 45 (1995): 421-438.

Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, D. Cress (trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993.

Fish, W. “Disjunctivism and Non-Disjunctivism: Making Sense of the Debate.” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 105 (2005): 119-127.

-----“Disjunctivism, Indistinguishability, and the Nature of Hallucinations.” in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, ed. A. Haddock and F. Macpherson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

-----*Perception, Hallucination, and Illusion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Grice, H. P. “The Causal Theory of Perception,” in *Perceptual Knowledge*, Dancy, J. (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Hinton, J.M. "Visual Experiences," *Mind* 76 (1967): 217-227.

-----*Experiences: An Inquiry into Some Ambiguities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Hume, D. *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.

Johnston, M. "The Obscure Object of Hallucination." *Philosophical Studies* 120 (2004): 112-183.

Langsam, H. "The Theory of Appearing Defended." *Philosophical Studies* 120 (1997): 33-59.

Martin, M.G.F. "The Reality of Appearances." in *Thought and Ontology*, M. Sainsbury (ed.). Milan: FrancoAngeli, 1997.

-----"The Limits of Self Awareness." *Philosophical Studies* 120 (2004): 37-89.

McDowell, J. (1982) "Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 68 (1982): 455-479.

Nagel, T. "What is it Like to Be a Bat?" *Philosophical Review* 83 (1974), 435-450.

Putnam, H. "Meaning and Reference." *Journal of Philosophy* 70 (1973): 699-711.

-----"The Meaning of 'Meaning'." *Language, Mind and Knowledge. Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, 7, Keith Gunderson (ed.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 131-193, 1975.

Reid, T. *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1969.

Robinson, H. *Perception*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Smith, A.D. "Disjunctivism and Discriminability" in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, A. Haddock and F. Macpherson (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Snowden, P. "Perception, Vision, and Causation." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*
81(1981):175-192.

-----"The Objects of Perceptual Experience." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supp.*
Vol. 64 (1990):121-150.

Sturgeon, S. "Disjunctivism about Visual Experience," in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, ed. A. Haddock and F. Macpherson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Williamson, T. *Knowledge and Its Limits*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical Investigations*, G.E.M. Anscombe and R. Rhees (eds.), G.E.M. Anscombe (trans.). Oxford: Blackwell, 1953.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Braddon-Mitchell, D. and Jackson, F. *Philosophy of Mind and Cognition*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

Byrne, A. "Either/Or" in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, ed. A. Haddock and F. Macpherson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Child, W. "Vision and Experience: The Causal Theory and the Disjunctive Conception," *Philosophical Quarterly* 42 (1992): 297-316.

Collins, A. *The Nature of Mental Things*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987.

Jaworski, W. *Philosophy of Mind*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Keil, G. "Naturalism" in *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century Philosophy*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Martin M. G. F. "The Transparency of Experience." *Mind and Language* 17 (2002): 376-425.

Millar, A. "The Idea of Experience." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 97 (1996): 75-90.

Ryle, G. *The Concept of Mind*. London: Hutchinson, 1949.

Smith, A.D. *The Problem of Perception*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002.

Snowden, P. "The Formulation of Disjunctivism: A Response to Fish." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 105(2005): 129-141.

-----"Hinton and the Origins of Disjunctivism," in *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*, ed. A. Haddock and F. Macpherson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.