

THE BROAD PERCEPTION MODEL AND THE TRANSPARENCY OF QUALIA

Renée Smith
Coastal Carolina University

ABSTRACT: The transparency of qualia to introspection has been given as reason for favoring a representationalist view of phenomenal character. Qualia realists, notably Block (1996, 2000), A.D. Smith (2008), and Kind (2003, 2008), have denied that qualia are transparent. What is clear is that the phenomenology of introspection alone cannot decide the case, but a theory of introspection could. If the qualia realist could show that our introspective access to mental properties is akin to the perceptual access we have to perceived properties, then she has grounds for denying the transparency claim. On the other hand, if introspection does not provide access to intrinsic mental properties, then the representationalist has a basis for defending the transparency claim. Armstrong's theory of introspection has been taken to be typical of perceptual theories; however, this paper will give reasons for thinking not only that his theory does not in fact constitute a perceptual theory but that such theories of introspection do not afford qualia realists with the means of denying the transparency of qualia to introspection.

Key words: introspection, Sydney Shoemaker, David Armstrong, perception, qualia, phenomenal character, broad perception model

When I have a throbbing headache, feel inexplicably elated, or savor a bowl of chocolate ice cream, my mental states have a certain quality that is uniquely phenomenal; there is *something that it is like* to be in these states. What has been dubbed as the “hard problem” in philosophy of mind is the problem of giving an account of the nature of this characteristic of mental states, their phenomenal character. There certainly seems to be a special quality of hearing nails scratch a chalkboard, tasting espresso, or smelling bread baking, but what exactly is this property? Although a number of distinct questions have been raised about the phenomenal character of experience—is it a physical property? a functional property? a representational property?—the present paper is concerned with shedding light on a problem with one account of phenomenal character, specifically qualia realism, in something of a roundabout way.

According to qualia realism, the phenomenal characters of experience, or what are called *qualia*, are intrinsic, non-representational properties of mental

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Please address correspondence to Renée Smith, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Coastal Carolina University, Conway, SC 29566; Email: rsmith@coastal.edu

states. A classic sort of argument for qualia realism is the inverted spectrum argument. The general strategy in this sort of argument is to use a thought experiment to show that two subjects' experiences could be representationally the same but phenomenally different, thereby demonstrating that the phenomenal does not supervene upon (or reduce to) the representational. For instance, we might imagine Fred and Mary. In the presence of red things, Fred has experiences that are phenomenally like those of a normal perceiver in such circumstances: red things seem red to him. However, Mary has inverted experiences. Mary's experience of the red tomato is phenomenally like the experiences normal perceivers have when looking at green things. If both Fred and Mary are having an experience of a red tomato, then their experiences are representationally the same. If their experiences are phenomenally different, then the phenomenal quality of their experiences is distinct from the representational properties of the experience. If this is indeed a possibility, then there are potentially devastating implications not only for representationalism but for functionalism and possibly even physicalism.

The denial of qualia realism is the view that the phenomenal character of mental states just is a representational feature of those states. Representationalists do not deny that there is something that it is like to feel a pain or an itch, to taste chocolate or anchovies, to feel scared or anxious; they just deny that these qualities of experience are intrinsic to these states. If you were to take away the representational content of these experiences, then you would take away what it is like to have them, says the representationalist.

One strategy that representationalists, most notably Harman (1990) and Tye (1995, 2000), have used to argue against qualia realism is to point to the apparent transparency of qualia to introspection. When we try to attend to any intrinsic properties of experience via introspection, we end up focusing on what the experience is of or about or its felt location; that is, introspection reveals only the representational features of experience and not any qualia.

The transparency of qualia to introspection provides *prima facie* reason for rejecting qualia realism in favor of a representational theory of phenomenal character. Nevertheless, a qualia realist might try to respond to the problem of transparency either by reconciling qualia with phenomenological transparency or by denying the transparency of qualia altogether (for example, see Block, 1996, 2000 and Kind 2003, 2008). The latter strategy would seem to rest on showing that via introspection we become directly aware of qualia in way that is analogous to the direct awareness we have of the properties of perceptual objects. The qualia realist would have to show that we can become introspectively aware of the phenomenal quality of one's experience of seeing green asparagus in much the same way as one is perceptually aware of the greenness of the asparagus. This suggests that introspection is analogous to perception in some important respect. For this reason, understanding the nature of introspection is closely bound to understanding the nature of phenomenal experience. Whereas the phenomenology of introspection alone cannot determine the nature of these mental properties, a

BROAD PERCEPTION MODEL

better understanding of the nature of introspection could. Whether or not qualia are available to introspection depends on what introspection is and what it reveals.

This paper will not address the merits of perceptual theories of introspection as such, but it will focus on just one theory of introspection—that of David Armstrong (1981), which is most often cited as be representative of perceptual theories.¹ In particular, Shoemaker (1996) describes “the broad perception model” and attributes this view of introspection to Armstrong. One concern of this paper is to show that Armstrong’s account of introspection should not be described as a perceptual model at all; instead, it is representative of belief models of introspection. At the same time, it aims to show that this way of understanding introspection cannot provide the qualia realist a means of denying the transparency of qualia to introspection. After briefly characterizing what it might mean to give a *perceptual* account of introspection and describing Shoemaker’s (1996) broad perception model of introspection, it will be shown that Armstrong’s view of introspection is decidedly *non*-perceptual. Still, taking a look at this *belief* model of introspection is instructive because it provides grounds for blocking the qualia realist’s attempts to deny the transparency of qualia.

Reductive Models of Introspection

There are several options for a reductive model of introspection. A perceptual theory of introspection will be one that treats perception as a basic mental state, irreducible to some other state, and then likens introspection to perception on the basis of their sharing certain essential characteristics. Because *perception* can be construed as either *awareness that* or *awareness of*, two models present themselves. A perceptual theory of *introspection* may liken the access we have to our own mental states and their properties as an *awareness of* those states, or it may liken it to *awareness that* we are in a particular mental state. Non-perceptual models of introspection, on the other hand, could reduce introspection to some cognitive state, most plausibly belief,² or reduce it to a sensory state. Table 1 presents these possibilities.

¹ For example, Armstrong (1981), Shoemaker (1996), Lycan (1997, 2008), and Güzeldere (1997) have characterized Armstrong as holding a perceptual theory of introspection; however, Güzeldere (1997, p. 804) suggests that Armstrong’s account more closely resembles a higher-order thought theory. It is worth noting that that perceptual theories of introspection, or higher-order perception theories, in this context are introduced to explain state consciousness. According to higher-order theories, what makes a mental state a consciousness state is that it is the content of some higher-order state. This is not the issue of the present paper. Instead, I am here concerned with the nature of our introspective access to mental properties, particularly qualia, if there are such properties.

² This seems to be the most promising option for reducing introspection to a cognitive state, though I suppose one could try to reduce it to some other cognitive state, for example memory. On the other hand, Ryle (1984/1949) and Lyons (1986) endorse eliminative models of introspection.

Table 1. Reductive Options

	Awareness-that	Awareness-of
Perceptual Theories of Introspection	Perception-that (e.g., Intentional Models)	Simple Perception (e.g., Non-Intentional Models)
Non-Perceptual Theories of Introspection	Cognitive Models (e.g., Belief Models)	Sensory Models (e.g., Projectivism and Higher-Order Experience Models)

The two perceptual models of self-knowledge³ Shoemaker (1996) describes—the object perception model and the broad perception model—accord with these distinctions. The former likens introspection to simple perception or *awareness of*, and the latter likens introspection to *perception that* by emphasizing the intentionality of both perception and introspection.

The essential components of the broad perception model are those that introspection shares with perception, namely that (a) the object of introspection reliably produces a belief about it, and (b) the object and the resulting belief are “distinct existences” (Shoemaker, 1996, p. 399). According to this way of understanding introspection, one becomes introspectively aware of certain mental *facts* (for instance, the fact that one is seeing a black cat) directly and not in virtue of being aware of some *object* the fact is about (a black cat). He attributes this sort of theory to Armstrong, who analyzes “perceiving x” in terms of “believing x” or “being disposed to believe x.” Because Armstrong treats introspection quasi-perceptually, holding that it too should be analyzed in terms of belief, Shoemaker takes Armstrong’s account of introspection to be paradigmatic of this model.

However, whereas an intentional theory of perception looks promising in that it emphasizes certain similarities between introspection and perception, it does not provide a basis for distinguishing perception from other intentional states (e.g., belief). Therefore, it does not clearly satisfy the requirement that a perceptual theory of introspection be one for which perception is a basic mental state. Nonetheless, it is worth looking at Armstrong’s theory of introspection as a token of an *awareness-that* model of introspection in order to shed light on the qualia realist’s claim that qualia are not transparent to introspection. Is this way of

³ Shoemaker (1996) does not distinguish between introspection and self-knowledge most likely because he thinks certain mental states are self-intimating (that is, he thinks that, for certain mental states, if we are in them then we know we are). Because I want to allow for the possibility that introspection is fallible, I distinguish between introspection and self-knowledge (or introspective knowledge).

BROAD PERCEPTION MODEL

understanding introspection consistent with the phenomenology of introspection as well as with the qualia realist's claim that the state's phenomenal character is an intrinsic property of that state?

Armstrong on Introspection

There are a number of distinct elements in Armstrong's accounts of perception and introspection that are relevant to understanding the implications of the transparency argument against qualia realism. First, although his account of introspection does take introspection to be a type of *awareness that* rather than an *awareness of*, this is not sufficient for describing it as a perceptual theory. Second, although neither perception nor introspection involves *awareness of* or an *acquaintance with* objects or properties, there is a role for sense experience on this account. And finally, the nature of sense experience in Armstrong's accounts is consistent with the transparency argument against qualia realism.

Introspection as Awareness That

Introspection makes us aware of our mental states—our thoughts, feelings, sensations; and on the face of it, it is analogous to perception, which makes us aware of our immediate surroundings. Armstrong takes introspection to share an important feature of perception, namely, that they both can be analyzed in terms of belief. According to Armstrong (1968),

Perception is nothing but the acquiring of true or false beliefs concerning the current state of the organism's body and environment. . . . Veridical perception is the acquiring of true beliefs, sensory illusion the acquiring of false beliefs. (p. 209)

This account of perception clearly takes it to be reducible to belief or adopts what has been called a cognitivist theory of perception.⁴ "The intentionality of perception," he says, "reduces to the intentionality of the beliefs acquired" (1968, pp. 210-211). On this account, introspection, which has also been described as an *inner sense view*, differs from perception only insofar as it provides information about the current state of one's mind rather than about one's perceptual environment, but both states are analyzed in terms of belief. Armstrong (1968) goes on to say that

Eccentric cases apart, perception, considered as a mental event, is the acquiring of information or misinformation about our environment. It is not 'acquaintance' with objects, or a 'search-light' that makes contact with them, but it is simply the getting of beliefs. Exactly the same must be said of introspection. It is the *getting of* information or misinformation about the current state of our mind. (p. 326)

⁴ Dretske (2000). See also Gluer (2009) and A. D. Smith (2001).

Moreover, mental states *qua* belief-producing states are further characterized in terms of their ability to bring about behavior. He says,

It is the burden of this book that a mental state is a state of the person apt for the bringing about of certain bodily behavior. So when I acquire by introspection the information that, for example, I am sad now or that I have a certain sort of perception now, this information is information about certain of my behavior-producing or potentially behavior-producing states. Now if introspection is conceived of as ‘acquaintance’ with mental states, or a searchlight that makes contact with them, it is difficult to see how all it can yield is information of such highly abstract nature about inner causes or potential inner causes. But if introspection as well as perception is conceived of as mere flow of information or beliefs, then there is no difficulty. (Armstrong, 1968, p. 326)

Clearly, this amounts to a rejection of what Shoemaker (1996) calls the object perception model, which would require that introspection be characterized as an acquaintance with mental states or as an *awareness of* these states. Instead, at least on the face of it, Armstrong’s account does seem to fit what Shoemaker calls the broad perception model. Because both perception and introspection are just the acquiring of beliefs or information⁵ and not an acquaintance with objects, these states fit the *awareness-that* model described above; however, this is not sufficient for characterizing it as a perception that model because it remains to be seen that perception on this account is sufficiently distinct from belief.

One way of distinguishing perception from belief that is consistent with the way of delineating reductive models of introspection laid out in the previous section comes from Dretske (2000). Dretske distinguishes *perception that* or *fact awareness*⁶ from *property* and *object awareness* (or what was described above as *awareness of* or *simple perception*).⁷ When I become *aware that* the cat is black in virtue of being *aware of* a black cat, then my *awareness that* the cat is black is

⁵ Armstrong uses these terms interchangeably: “But when perception is spoken of in this work as the acquiring of information, it must be clearly understood that no distinction at all is intended between the information and the beliefs to which it gives rise. Information and beliefs are identical” (Armstrong, 1968, p. 210).

⁶ This is not to suggest that “fact-awareness” is factive. For example, reading it this way, to say someone is fact-aware that the cat is black entails that it is true that the cat is black. The implication is that all fact-awareness is veridical. Instead, following Dretske (2000), fact-awareness (including perception-that) will be treated as a species of belief. Fact-awareness will be distinguished from awareness-of on the basis that the former, but not the latter, is concept dependent, and that the “fact” that one is aware of could be false.

⁷ The former, he says, requires the possession of certain concepts and perhaps background beliefs pertaining to the objects and properties these are facts about. It is reasonable to say that the concepts employed in perception-that, or fact-awareness, need only be minimally sophisticated. In (simply) seeing a cat on a mat, I may still (if I lack the concept of a cat) see that *something* is on the mat (where “something” is the result of, say, my concept of a physical object, a furry animal, or the like).

BROAD PERCEPTION MODEL

perceptual. Dretske calls this direct fact awareness. On the other hand, if I become aware that the cat is black in virtue of being aware of something else, which would happen if, for example, I read a description of a black cat, then my awareness that the cat is black is not perceptual. This latter sort of awareness Dretske describes as indirect fact awareness or displaced perception. *Awareness that* counts as perceptual only if it is direct fact awareness—specifically, if it is an awareness originating from object and property awareness of that which the fact is about.

Because Armstrong denies introspection involves an awareness of mental states or their properties, it cannot be described as perceptual awareness in this sense. When we introspect that we are hungry or that we are hearing the hum of a nearby fan, we are not directly aware of these facts because we are not aware of mental states and their properties. The introspective awareness I have of these states, Dretske would say, is indirect fact awareness. I am aware that I am hearing a fan in virtue of being perceptually aware of the fan and its properties.

What is remarkable about Armstrong's (1968, pp. 224-225) view is that all species of perception are analyzed in terms of the acquiring of beliefs. This is unusual because we would normally think that simple perception need not issue in any beliefs whatsoever. But Armstrong maintains that perception without belief, for example seeing a black cat but not believing that the cat is black, is the acquisition of a *potential* belief. That is, it is one for which a certain counterfactual is true. In this case, one *would* acquire the belief that the cat is black *if* other conflicting beliefs were absent (e.g., the belief that there are only white cats in the vicinity).

On the other hand, although it seems as if it is possible to see something and not form any beliefs at all, not even potential beliefs, this species of perception is also analyzed in terms of belief; specifically, it is an "idle belief." Here, Armstrong says, the counterfactual does not hold true; it is conceivable that I could see a black cat and *not* be inclined to believe there is a black cat in my presence even if the circumstances were different in some way. Instead, "idle" perception, Armstrong says, "may be conceived of as information that is completely disregarded, but, incredibly, not because of any other information that we already possess [unlike the case of potential beliefs]" (1968, p. 225).

The Role of Sense Impressions

Although Armstrong denies we are *acquainted* with the objects of perception or those of introspection, this is not to say that he denies there are sense impressions or simple perceptions. Not only does Armstrong distinguish sense impressions from perceptions (they are a narrower species of perception) without appealing to acquaintance (awareness-of), he holds that sense-impressions still form the foundation "of all our further perceptual beliefs about the environment" (1968, p. 237). So, although in perception there is an awareness of facts unmediated by an awareness of objects as Shoemaker's broad perception model

requires, it is not the case that our awareness of facts is unmediated by sense-impressions.

Again, what is notable here is that the analysis of introspection and perception terms of belief “goes all the way down” to sense impressions. Our awareness of objects and properties is still just the acquiring of (immediate) beliefs (or potential or idle beliefs) and not an acquaintance with these objects and properties. On this basis Armstrong (1968) might be distinguished from those who endorse a non-intentional theory of perception, for the sense impressions themselves are not *objects* of awareness (like sense data) but the acquisition of particular beliefs (i.e., those “involving the sensory properties of the sense in question” [p. 236]). In a sense, then, Armstrong can be seen as reducing simple perception to perception-that. And because there is nothing analogous to simple perception in introspection, the *awareness that* which constitutes introspection should not be described as analogous to perception. Instead, because all perception is analyzed in terms of belief and does not reduce to simple perception, or *awareness of*, it seems more fitting to describe Armstrong as endorsing a *belief* model of both perception and introspection.⁸

Intentionality of Sensation and Introspection

Because sensations (e.g., pains, itches, and tickles) are paradigmatic of states having phenomenal character and they are states that are usually described as being purely phenomenal, it is important to note that Armstrong maintains that they have intentional properties. The *having of* such sensations is also analyzed as the acquiring of beliefs, and “we can go on to give an account of acquiring such beliefs as the acquiring of capacities for behavior of a ‘discriminating’ sort” (Armstrong, 1968, p. 309).

Moreover, what we are aware of when we are introspectively aware of sensations is their *intentional* location. That is, we represent them as having a particular location, but they may not in fact “be there.” Because what we are aware of is a sensation’s (intentional) location, what we are aware of is something non-mental. Again, our awareness “slips outside the head” as it does in transparency cases. We try to introspect the intrinsic properties of our experiences and all we discover is what our experience represents, namely, that it represents the world in a particular way. Moreover, in being aware of a mild pain or itch, we come to believe that this is the same type of disturbance that typically evokes the pain or itch reaction, “but in neither case are we directly aware of the intrinsic nature of

⁸Güzeldere (1997) makes a similar suggestion. He says “. . . although David Armstrong explicitly talks about (introspective) consciousness as a ‘perception-like awareness of current states and activities of one’s own mind’ and Lycan locates Armstrong in the same lineage with Locke and himself, Armstrong’s position may ultimately be closer to those of [higher-order thought] theorists, such as David Rosenthal.” In addition, “Armstrong kindly acknowledged. . . that he thought his position ‘fell in between’ the [higher-order perception] and the [higher-order thought] characterizations” (pp. 804-805, fn. 24).

the two sorts of disturbance” (Armstrong, 1968, p. 316). Because this is just what we would have to be aware of if we are aware of qualia, it does not seem to be the case that this account of introspection is a viable option for the qualia realist, which will be taken up presently.

Introspection, Qualia, and Transparency

There is an unproblematic sense in which it is obvious that introspection makes us aware of our own mental states, events, and processes including the phenomenal character of these states, if there is any. Yet on phenomenological grounds the representationalist claims that qualia are transparent to introspection. Try to introspect intrinsic properties of mental states and all you will find are the representational properties of that state. Armstrong, of course, does not think that there are intrinsic properties of experience that constitute its phenomenal character. But could the qualia realist who wants to deny that qualia are transparent to introspection invoke an awareness-that model of introspection to account for our introspective awareness of qualia? That is, is Armstrong’s view of introspection consistent with qualia realism and with the denial of the transparency claim?

If we conceive of qualia as non-intentional properties of experiences, those whose possibility is suggested by inverted spectrum thought experiments, we are now in a position to see just why it is that Armstrong’s theory of introspection does not allow for the introspection of qualia. First, direct introspection of qualia (properties) seems to require awareness of (or acquaintance with) those properties, and for Armstrong neither perception nor introspection affords this awareness. Second, for Armstrong, introspection, like perception, is the acquiring of information or misinformation that serves as a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for purposeful behavior.⁹ The environment is the cause of our perception of it as perception is what makes possible purposeful behavior with regard to the environment. Analogously, our mental states are causally responsible for our introspective awareness of them (our acquiring of information or misinformation about them), which serves as a necessary condition for purposeful behavior with respect to those mental states. What we are aware of when we are aware of our mental states is that in virtue of which they “reach out into the world,” that is, their relational (intentional) properties. Because qualia, if construed as non-intentional properties, do not govern purposeful behavior, do not “reach out into the world,” they are not properties of which we would be introspectively aware.

To demonstrate this, Armstrong (1968) considers the possibility of spectrum inversion (cases of what he calls “colour-reversal”) in which the resulting behavior in two subjects is the same while their perceptions are inverted:

⁹ The details of this go far beyond my present concern so they will not be addressed here. Armstrong’s account can be found in Armstrong, 1968, pp. 245-269.

It seems logically possible that some or all of my perceptions should be different from those of other people, yet all of my behavior (including speech) be exactly the same as theirs. To take the traditional example, it seems to be logically possible that when I look at pillar-boxes, and say they look red to me, in fact my perceptions are what other people would call pillar-boxes looking green to me. Similarly, I say cooking-apples look green to me, but if others had the perceptions I had they would say that they looked red to me. At the same time, it seems logically possible that there might be no evidence to show that my perceptions were reversed in this way.

But if we allow this as a logical possibility, it seems that there must be something wrong with the analysis of perception [as the acquiring of beliefs]. For if the content of perceptual beliefs is given by the capacity acquired to behave towards objects in certain ways; and if I and others behave, or have the capacity to behave, towards pillar-boxes and cooking-apples in exactly the same way; then it follows that all of us have acquired the same beliefs about the color of pillar-boxes and cooking-apples. And if, as we have argued, perception involves nothing but the acquiring of beliefs or the occurrence of mental events that resemble the acquiring of beliefs, it follows that my perceptions and the perceptions of other are identical, which contradicts the supposition in the previous paragraph [the possibility of “colour reversal”]. (p. 256)

Such a case might seem to be a counter-example to his belief model of perception because if both subjects acquire the same capacity to behave towards red things (e.g., call them “red”) then there can be no inversion (Armstrong, 1968, p. 256).

However, Armstrong (1968) concedes the possibility of color reversal without differences between the behavior of two subjects and shows that this does not undermine his characterization of perception. Therefore, it would seem that if perception is just the acquisition beliefs that manifest themselves in behavior, then even if two subjects are spectrally inverted, if they behave in the same way, then they have the same beliefs. It looks as if there is a feature of perception other than belief—some feature that differs between these two subjects despite their having the same beliefs. According to Armstrong (1968),

... in the case where two sections of the population are equally divided, but their colour-perceptions are reverse relatively to each other, their perceptual *experiences*, as opposed to their perceptions, do not differ. For, when citizens from a different group have a perception of the sort they both call ‘something looking red’, then, by hypothesis, they both act, speak, think and feel about the object and the perception in exactly the same way. And if their reactions to the perceptions are identical, then, *ipso facto*, their experience of it is identical. There is certainly a difference in the mental state, but not in the awareness of it. (p. 260)

Though it is interesting that Armstrong seems to leave open the possibility that qualia exist (which might explain the “difference in the mental state”), because

BROAD PERCEPTION MODEL

our present concern is whether his theory allows for the introspection of qualia, it is safe to say it does not.¹⁰

Perception is of something in the world. The two subjects behave on the basis of their (perceptual) beliefs, but in one (the inverted subject) the behavior is the product of a false belief.¹¹ Perceptions of which we are introspectively aware Armstrong calls experiences. What one is introspectively aware of (viz., acquires beliefs about) is the occurrence of states of oneself apt for bringing about behavior. But the inverted subjects are not introspectively aware of any difference in their experiences because what one is introspectively aware of is the occurrence of a state apt for bringing about certain behavior; because they have the same behavior, they are introspectively aware of the same thing. So this “difference of belief [that one of them has a false belief or that their mental state’s qualities (qualia) differ] will not be a difference of belief that anybody is in fact aware of” (Armstrong 1968, p. 260).

The subjects’ mental states may, in fact, be different because they are inverted, but their experiences do not differ, for the perceptions of which they are introspectively aware are the same, namely those apt for producing the same behavior. It may be that each associates a different quality with one and the same thing, and thus one may be said to have a false belief (or perception) of that thing or that they each have a different quale when they look at red things. However, if their behavior is indistinguishable, then the perceptions of which they are aware, their experiences, are indistinguishable as well. What differs between them (be it either beliefs or qualia) is not something of which either can be introspectively aware.

These differences (phenomenal differences) are what Dretske (2000) might call “differences that make no difference” (pp. 138-157). They make no difference because we are not aware of them; we are not aware of them because they make no difference. If these differences are the result of different qualia, then we are not (introspectively) aware of qualia.

So what are we to make of the claim that qualia are not transparent to introspection? For example, Block (2000) claims that “the diaphanousness [transparency] of perception is much less pronounced in a number of visual phenomena, notably phosphene-experiences” (p. 14). In pressing the heels of one’s hands against one’s closed eyes, he says, one has color sensations. And, not only can one attend to the sensations themselves (save what, if anything, they represent),

¹⁰ Kind (2001) discusses the idea that qualia must be available to introspection. So, even if Armstrong’s view seems consistent with the existence of qualia, if it does not allow for the introspection of qualia, his view actually does not allow for the possibility that qualia exist.

¹¹ It looks to be that, where I have suggested that Armstrong (1968) is leaving room for qualia, he might just appeal to one’s having a false belief. The idea is this: the inverted subjects associate a difference quality with, say, cooking apples, and “if we accept that the same physical object cannot have both qualities, at least [one] is making false colour-attributions” (p. 260). Armstrong grants that the subjects may, in fact, have different beliefs (one’s belief is false) but that this difference is not one of which anyone is aware.

one can be aware of them as well. Kind (2003) seems to endorse what she calls weak transparency: although it may be difficult to attend to intrinsic properties of experience, it is not impossible. She argues that what the more unusual cases, such as the phosphene case and the case of introspecting moods or orgasms, show us is that in normal cases of introspection it may seem as if we are only aware of intentional contents, yet we may be aware of non-intentional content as well (2008). Normally, experience seems transparent, Kind (2003) says, because “the world gets in the way” (p. 296). She goes on to claim that the representationalist has failed to prove that, in the more mundane cases of introspecting visual experience, we are not aware of something over and above the representational content. The representationalist responds by insisting that what we are aware of in each case is some sort of intentional content. It all seems to end in a stalemate when appeals are made to the phenomenology of introspection. The transparency case cannot be decided by appealing to phenomenology alone. On the other hand, making headway on understanding introspection—what it is and what it reveals—could decide the case.

Conclusion

The primary reason for denying that Armstrong’s theory of introspection fits a perceptual model is that the theory of perception to which he assimilated introspection is a cognitive one. That is, he does away with the non-cognitive aspect of perception, namely simple perception, by characterizing all perception (and introspection) as the acquiring of beliefs (or potential beliefs). Beliefs are further analyzed as the acquiring of information or misinformation about the world (or mental states) such that they will be likely to produce certain behavior. There is no direct acquaintance with objects or properties; there is only the acquisition of information (or beliefs) about these objects and properties. Moreover, in taking introspection to be a cognitive state, this model of introspection does not allow for the direct acquaintance with mental properties, or qualia. This is instructive because the transparency claim is contentious. Representationalists cite the transparency of qualia as reason for thinking the phenomenal character of experience is not an intrinsic property of experience whereas (at least some) qualia realists deny qualia are transparent to introspection. My conclusion here is a modest one: If introspection is anything like Armstrong’s theory suggests, that is, if it does not allow for an awareness of intrinsic mental properties yet we are aware of the phenomenal character of experience, then the transparency claim provides more than merely a phenomenological basis for denying qualia realism. We do not merely look through qualia when we introspect as we might look through a pane of glass; unlike the glass, there simply are no qualia to look through. Moreover, given that we can become introspectively aware that our experience has a particular phenomenal character, there is good reason to think that this feature of our mental states is a representational property.

BROAD PERCEPTION MODEL

References

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