

Phenomenal Concepts

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Introduction

Phenomenal concepts are the concepts that we deploy when – but arguably not only when – we introspectively examine, focus on, or take notice of the phenomenal character of our experiences. They refer to phenomenal properties (or qualities) and they do so in a subjective (first-personal) and direct (non-relational) manner. It is through the use of such concepts that the phenomenal character of our experiences is made salient to us. Discourse about the nature of phenomenal concepts plays an important role in the philosophy of mind. For one, phenomenal concepts have been used to explain the epistemological relation that holds between a subject and her conscious mental states. Most prominently, however, discussions of phenomenal concepts figure in the on-going and multifaceted debate concerning the metaphysical status of consciousness. Even though some theorists have utilized phenomenal concepts in arguments purporting to show that consciousness is ontologically distinct from physical entities and processes, most accounts of phenomenal concepts are advanced having the opposite objective in mind: a proper articulation of the nature of phenomenal concepts, it is held, can defend the view that consciousness is physical against epistemic arguments to the contrary. The present entry focuses on the nature of phenomenal concepts as this is articulated and developed in attempts to defend the contention that conscious states are identical to (realized by, metaphysically necessitated by, or supervenient upon) physical states.

Overviews and anthologies

Works on phenomenal concepts and their role in defending physicalism abound in the literature. However, most of these works are not meant as introductions to the relevant issues since they presuppose a good deal of background knowledge, both about the current status of the physicalist-antiphysicalist debate and about the nature of phenomenal concepts. Sundström 2011 and Balog 2009 are two notable exceptions: they provide clear, accessible, and comprehensive introductions to the topic of phenomenal concepts. Chalmers 2007 offers a concise presentation of the different accounts of phenomenal concepts and the ways in which such accounts have been used to respond to epistemic arguments against physicalism. The only anthology that is partly dedicated to phenomenal concepts is Alter and Walter 2007.

Alter, Torin, and Sven Walter. *Phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

A collection of essays on the nature of consciousness. The eight essays that comprise the second half of this volume all focus on the nature of phenomenal concepts and on what phenomenal concepts can tell us about the ontological status of consciousness.

Balog, Katalin. "Phenomenal concepts." In *The Oxford handbook of philosophy of mind*. Edited by Michael Laughtlin, Brian P., Ansgar Beckermann, and Sven Walter, 292 - 312. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009.

An introductory essay on phenomenal concepts. Among other things, it discusses the nature of phenomenal concepts and distinguishes them from related concepts; it draws a distinction between basic and non-basic applications of phenomenal concepts; and it discusses how phenomenal concepts can be used in responses to anti-physicalist arguments.

Chalmers, David J. "Phenomenal concepts and the explanatory gap." In *Phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by Torin Alter and Sven Walter, 167-194. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007.

A critique of the use of phenomenal concepts in defending physicalism from epistemic arguments. The essay also includes a helpful summary of the different articulations of the nature of phenomenal concepts.

Sundström, Pär. "Phenomenal concepts." *Philosophy Compass* 6.4 (2011): 267-281. [doi: 10.1111/j.1747-9991.2011.00384.x]

A clear and comprehensive discussion of the nature of phenomenal concepts and their use in attempts to defend physicalism from anti-physicalist objections. The essay also considers whether we do in fact possess phenomenal concepts.

The utility and nature of phenomenal concepts

Even though Levin 1986's discussion of Nagel 1974 and Jackson 1982 highlighted the significance of phenomenal concepts in the physicalist-antiphysicalist debate, the role and importance of phenomenal concepts in defending physicalism was first developed in depth in Loar 1990. Additional early works on the importance of phenomenal concepts in defending physicalism can be found in Sturgeon 1994, Tye 1995, Loar 1997, and Hill 1997. For further discussion and bibliographical references on how phenomenal concepts have been used to defend physicalism, see section *"The phenomenal concept strategy"* below. Gertler 2001 develops an account of phenomenal introspection and discusses the character of phenomenal concepts and their involvement in introspective knowledge. Chalmers 2003 also discusses the nature of phenomenal concepts and

helpfully contrasts them to other related concepts. For more on the various accounts of phenomenal concepts that can be found in the literature, see section *the varieties of phenomenal concepts* below.

Chalmers, david. “the content and epistemology of phenomenal belief.” In *consciousness: new philosophical perspectives*. Edited by quentin smith and aleksandar jokić, 220–272. Oxford, uk: clarendon press, 2003.

A detailed discussion of the epistemology of phenomenal beliefs through an examination of the nature of phenomenal concepts. The essay distinguishes between the different types of concepts that we can use to refer to the character of our phenomenal experiences. It also argues that phenomenal concepts are not demonstrative concepts.

Gertler, brie. “introspecting phenomenal states.” *Philosophy and phenomenological research* 63.2 (2001): 305-28. [doi: 10.1111/j.1933-1592.2001.tb00105.x]

The essay develops and defends an account of how subjects introspect their phenomenal states, and discusses, among other things, the concepts involved in introspective knowledge.

Hill, christopher. “imaginability, conceivability, possibility and the mind-body problem.” *Philosophical studies* 87 (1997): 61-85. [doi: 10.1023/a:1017911200883]

A defense of type-materialism about phenomenal states from kripke’s 1980 argument. By drawing upon and developing nagel’s 1974 insight regarding the distinction between two types of imagination, hill offers an explanation of why psychophysical identity states persist to appear contingent even though they are not. (thomas nagel. “what is it like to be a bat?” *The philosophical review* 83 (1974): 435–450)

Levin, janet. “could love be like a heatwave?: physicalism and the subjective character of experience.” *Philosophical studies* 49 (1986): 245-261. [doi: 10.1007/BF00354338]

The essay draws a distinction between having a concept and having the ability to apply a concept and utilizes this distinction in order to critically evaluate the arguments found in nagel 1974 and jackson 1982.

Loar, brian. “phenomenal states.” *Philosophical perspectives* 4 (1990): 81-108.

The first articulation of how phenomenal concepts can be used to respond to epistemic arguments against physicalism. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2214188>]*

Loar, brian. “phenomenal states.” In *the nature of consciousness: philosophical debates*. Edited by ned j. Block, owen j. Flanagan, and güven güzeldere, 597–616. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 1997.

This is a revised version of loar 1990. Among many other things, it offers a response to jackson’s knowledge argument (jackson 1982) and kripke’s argument against physicalism (kripke 1980) by uncovering and rejecting a premise on which both of arguments rely.

Sturgeon, scott. “the epistemic view of subjectivity.” *The journal of philosophy* 91.5 (1994): 221-235.

Sturgeon advances and defends what he calls “the epistemic view of subjectivity.” According to this view, there is no reductive solution to the problem of consciousness, and yet dualism does not ensue. Instead, the problem of consciousness is a byproduct of the epistemic features of our phenomenal concepts. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2940751>]*

Tye, michael. *Ten problems of consciousness: a representational theory of the phenomenal mind*. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 1995.

It argues that all experiences and feelings represent and that their phenomenal character can be understood in terms of their representational contents. Chapter 6, pp. 161 – 182, contains an account of phenomenal concepts, discusses the knowledge argument, and addresses the existence of an explanatory gap between phenomenal consciousnesses and brain states.

Epistemic arguments against physicalism

The label “epistemic arguments against physicalism” refers to a specific family of arguments against the contention that consciousness is physical and consequently, against physicalism (where, informally stated, physicalism is the thesis according to which everything that exists in our world is physical). These arguments are *epistemic* because they purport to establish an ontological gap between phenomenal facts and physical facts on the basis of an epistemic gap between phenomenal truths and physical truths. According to such arguments, our inability to offer a reductive explanation of phenomenal consciousness (levine 1983), our inability to deduce all phenomenal truths from physical truths (jackson 1982 and 1986), and the fact that we can conceive of certain scenarios or certain possible states of affairs (kripke 1980; chalmers 1996, 2002, and 2009), all license us to conclude that physicalism is false.

Chalmers, david j. *The conscious mind: in search of a fundamental theory*. Oxford: oxford university press, 1996.

One of the most important works in philosophy of mind. Inter alia, chalmers develops and defends the conceivability argument physicalism, discusses the nature of reductive explanation, and advances his own positive proposal regarding the ontological status of consciousness.

Chalmers, david j. “does conceivability entail possibility?” In *conceivability and possibility*. Edited by tamar szabo gendler and john hawthorne, 145 – 200. New york: oxford university press, 2002.

A thorough examination of the nature of conceivability and its relationship to possibility. It distinguishes between different varieties of conceivability and defends the view that (ideal primary positive) conceivability entails (primary) possibility.

Chalmers, david j. “the two-dimensional argument against materialism.” In *the oxford handbook of philosophy of mind*. Edited by mclaughlin, brian p., ansgar beckermann, and sven walter, 313 - 3. Oxford, uk: oxford university press, 2009.

A reformulation of the conceivability argument against physicalism that chalmers initially advanced in his 1996 book. In this work, he formulates his argument using the two-dimensional semantic framework. He also considers numerous objections to the argument and offers replies.

Jackson, frank. “epiphenomenal qualia.” *Philosophical quarterly* (1982): 127–136.

It contains jackson’s first formulation of the knowledge argument against physicalism. It also discusses epiphenomenalism – i.e., the view that holds that qualia are causally impotent. Jackson no longer accepts the anti-physicalist conclusion of the knowledge argument. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2960077>]*

Jackson, frank. “what mary didn’t know.” *Journal of philosophy* 83.5 (1986): 291-5.

Jackson revisits and defends the knowledge argument.

Kripke, saul. *Naming and necessity*. Oxford: blackwell, 1980.

A classic work in the history of 20th century analytic philosophy that has made seminal contributions to the philosophy of language, epistemology, and metaphysics. In lecture iii, kripke puts forth a challenge to mind-brain identity theory.

Levine, joseph. "materialism and qualia: the explanatory gap." *Pacific philosophical quarterly* 64 (1983): 354-361.

Levine advocates for the existence of an "explanatory gap" between physical processes and phenomenal experience - that is, the idea that we cannot offer a satisfactory explanation of the nature of phenomenal experience in terms of its physical realization.

The Phenomenal Concept Strategy

The phenomenal concept strategy is a theoretical attempt to demonstrate that the existence of epistemic gaps between phenomenal truths and physical truths is consistent with the truth of physicalism. The phenomenal concept strategy does not offer reasons in support of the contention that consciousness is physical. Rather, it purports to show that conscious (or phenomenal) states can be identical to (realized by, metaphysically necessitated by, or supervenient upon) physical states, even if the fact that the two types of states are related in such a way cannot be known *a priori*. The strategy aims to offer a physicalistically acceptable account of how those epistemic gaps arise by invoking certain features of phenomenal concepts. Authors who defend physicalism from epistemic arguments by citing the nature of phenomenal concepts include: loar 1997, hill 1997, hill and mclaughlin 1999, tye 1999, perry 2001, papineau 2002, levin 2007, and balog 2012.

balog, katalin. "acquaintance and the mind-body problem." In *new perspectives on type identity: the mental and the physical*. Edited by simone gozzano and christopher s. Hill, 16-42. Cambridge, uk: cambridge university press, 2012. [doi:10.1017/cbo9780511687068.002]

An articulation of the nature of phenomenal concepts with the two-fold aim of (a) providing a satisfactory physicalist account of acquaintance and (b) responding to arguments against physicalism. The essay also contains a discussion of the constitutional (or quotational) account of phenomenal concepts.

Hill, christopher. "imaginability, conceivability, possibility and the mind-body problem." *Philosophical studies* 87 (1997): 61-85. [doi: 10.1023/a:1017911200883]

A defense of type-materialism about phenomenal states from kripke's 1980 argument. It argues that the modal intuitions that give rise to kripke's conceivability argument against materialism are unreliable and should be rejected for they are the products of a psychological mechanism that conjoins (or brings together) two conceptually isolated concepts.

Hill, christopher and mclaughlin, brian. "there are fewer things in reality than are dreamt of in chalmers's philosophy." *Philosophy and phenomenological research* 59.2 (1999): 445-454.

Hill and mclaughlin contend that chalmers' conceivability argument against physicalism should be rejected because it is premised on the false assumption that the conceivability of zombies leads to their possibility. They argue that the conceivability of zombies is explained

by the joint exercise of physical concepts and sensory (phenomenal) concepts. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2653682>]*

Levin, Janet. "What is a phenomenal concept?" In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by Torin Alter and Sven Walter, 87-110. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

A detailed presentation and defense of the demonstrative account of phenomenal concepts. Levin also uses her account in order to show how phenomenal concepts meet many of the challenges that physicalism faces.

Loar, Brian. "Phenomenal states." In *The nature of consciousness: philosophical debates*. Edited by Ned Block, Owen J. Flanagan, and Güven Güzeldere, 597-616. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997

A classic work in the philosophy of mind and the place in which the phenomenal concept strategy is first clearly articulated. Loar argues that an appeal to features of phenomenal concepts can disarm anti-physicalist arguments.

Papineau, David. *Thinking about consciousness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

A book-length defense of the phenomenal concept strategy. It argues that the nature of phenomenal concepts is capable of providing a response to epistemic arguments against physicalism. Among other things, it also develops the constitutional (or quotational account) of phenomenal concepts.

Perry, John. *Knowledge, possibility, and consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

A detailed response to three antiphysicalist arguments (the modal argument, the knowledge argument, and the zombie argument).

Tye, Michael. "Phenomenal consciousness: the explanatory gap as a cognitive illusion." *Mind* 108.432 (1999): 705-725. [doi: 10.1093/mind/108.432.705]

Tye argues that the explanatory gap between phenomenal experience and its physical realization is an illusion: it derives from our failure to recognize the special features of our phenomenal concepts.

Phenomenal vs. Physical truths

The phenomenal concept strategy distinguishes between two types of concepts: phenomenal and physical concepts. It maintains that although both types of concepts ultimately pick out physical entities and in some cases they may even co-refer, the two types of concepts are *conceptually independent*. See the works by Loar 1997 and 2003, Hill and McLaughlin 1999, and Levin 2008. Phenomenal concepts are conceptually independent from physical concepts not only insofar as one cannot provide an analytic definition of one concept in terms of the other, but also insofar as one cannot deduce on the basis of *a priori* reasoning alone whether the two concepts co-refer. If phenomenal concepts' conceptual independence is asserted, then *a priori* reasoning alone is insufficient to permit a subject to deduce whether a phenomenal description co-refers with a physical description – even if physicalism requires that the two descriptions do so necessarily. Consequently, the fact that phenomenal truths are not *a priori* entailed by physical truths is not symptomatic of the falsity of physicalism; it is a consequence of the nature of our phenomenal concepts.

Levin, Janet. "taking type-b materialism seriously." *mind & language* 23.4 (2008): 402-425. [doi: 10.1111/j.1468-0017.2008.00349.x]

The essay offers a defense of type-b materialism – the view that phenomenal states are identical to (realized by, metaphysically necessitated by, or supervenient upon) physical states even though phenomenal concepts are conceptually isolated from physical or functional concepts.

Loar, Brian. "phenomenal states." In *the nature of consciousness: philosophical debates*. Edited by Ned Block, Owen J. Flanagan, and Güven Güzeldere, 597–616. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997

A classic work in the philosophy of mind and the place in which the phenomenal concept strategy is first clearly articulated. Loar argues that an appeal to features of phenomenal concepts – especially, the presumed conceptual independence of phenomenal concepts from physical concepts – can disarm anti-physicalist arguments.

Loar, Brian. "qualia, properties, modality." *Philosophical issues* 13 (2003): 113-29 [doi: 10.1111/1533-6077.00008]

In this essay, Loar revisits many of the issues that he addressed in his 1997. He offers a defense of *a posteriori* physicalism by showing (i) how phenomenal concepts can be conceptually isolated from physical concepts and (ii) how the former can refer directly to physical properties.

Hill, Christopher and McLaughlin, Brian. "there are fewer things in reality than are dreamt of in Chalmers's philosophy." *Philosophy and phenomenological research* 59.2 (1999): 445-454.

An attempt to disarm conceivability arguments against materialism by showing that the intuitions upon which such arguments are based are unreliable. Available online [http://www.jstor.org/stable/2653682]*

Macrophysical vs. Microphysical truths

Are phenomenal truths the only set of truths that are not *a priori* entailed by the totality of physical (or microphysical) truths? Some argue that ordinary macrophysical truths are also not *a priori* entailed by microphysical truths. See Block and Stalnaker 1999, Byrne 1999, Levine 2001, Diaz-Leon 2011, and Elpidorou 2013. If such a case can be convincingly made, then there are additional reasons to be skeptical of arguments that reach ontological conclusions from epistemic premises: even though there is an epistemic gap between macrophysical and microphysical truths there is arguably no corresponding ontological gap. Assuming that such a gap exists, one cannot hold that phenomenal concepts are unique simply because they are conceptually isolated from physical concepts – certain macrophysical concepts would also be conceptually isolated from physical (or microphysical) concepts. Furthermore, claiming that phenomenal concepts are conceptually independent from physical concepts might not by itself suffice to offer an adequate response to epistemic arguments against physicalism. Psychophysical identity statements involving both phenomenal and physical concepts (e.g., "pain is neuronal activity Φ ") persist to appear to be contingent, whereas identity statements involving both microphysical and macrophysical concepts (e.g., "water is H₂O") do not. Conceptual isolation thus fails to offer an explanation for the appearance of contingency that plagues psychophysical statements. Arguments in support of the contention that ordinary macrophysical truths are *a priori* entailed by the totality of microphysical truths are found in Jackson 1998, Chalmers and Jackson 2001, and Chalmers 2012.

Block, ned, and robert stalnaker. "conceptual analysis, dualism, and the explanatory gap." *philosophical review* (1999): 1-46.

A detailed discussion of the role and importance of conceptual analysis in the physicalist-antiphysicalist debate. The authors argue, inter alia, that ordinary macroscopic truths are not *a priori* entailed by microphysical truths.

Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2998259>]*

Byrne, alex. "cosmic hermeneutics." *noûs* 33.s13 (1999): 347-383. [doi: 10.1111/0029-4624.33.s13.16]

An examination of whether the truth of physicalism entails that cosmic hermeneutics is possible. Cosmic hermeneutics is possible if and only if for every true sentence p^* , there is a true physical sentence p such that the conditional $p \rightarrow p^*$ can be known *a priori*.

Chalmers, david j. *Constructing the world*. Oxford, uk: oxford university press, 2012.

The book is based on david chalmers' 2010 john locke lectures. It argues for the thesis that ideal reasoning from a very limited class of basic truths yields all truths about the world.

Chalmers, david j., and frank jackson. "conceptual analysis and reductive explanation." *philosophical review* (2001): 315-360.

A lengthy response to block and stalnaker 1999 that includes a positive argument in support of the claim that all macrophysical truths are *a priori* entailed by microphysical truths. Chalmers and jackson also discuss the relationship between reductive explanation and *a priori* entailment. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2693648>]*

Diaz-leon, esa. "reductive explanation, concepts, and a priori entailment." *philosophical studies* 155.1 (2011): 99-116. [doi: 10.1007/s11098-010-9560-x]

A response to chalmers and jackson's 2001 claim that all (ordinary) macrophysical truths are *a priori* entailed by microphysical truths. Diaz-leon argues that chalmers and jackson's argument relies on a problematic view of concept-possession.

Elpidorou, andreas. "blocking the a priori passage." *acta analytica* (2013): 1-23. [doi: 10.1007/s12136-013-0206-4]

The essay argues that chalmers and jackson's 2001 position either depends on an unsubstantiated premise regarding the conceptual capacities of subjects or illegitimately presupposes that certain conditionals that link the microphysical level to the macroscopic level are given to subjects competent with the relevant concepts.

Jackson, frank. *From metaphysics to ethics*. Oxford, uk: oxford university press, 1998.

A defense of the centrality of conceptual analysis in philosophy. Chapters 1 – 3, pp. 1 – 86, offer a discussion of physicalism and an argument in support of the claim that, if physicalism is true, then all truths must be *a priori* entailed by physical truths.

Phenomenal concepts as perspectival

Some proponents of the phenomenal concept strategy maintain that phenomenal concepts, in addition to being conceptually isolated from physical concepts, are also *perspectival*. That is, one can possess or acquire a phenomenal concept only if one has experienced that to which the concept refers. Proponents of the phenomenal concept strategy who grant this feature of phenomenal concepts include tye 1995, papineau 2007, block 2007. This feature of phenomenal concepts has

been crucial in articulating a response to frank jackson's knowledge argument; see, e.g., loar 1997 and tye 2003. It explains both why an experience-deprived subject would lack certain phenomenal concepts and how the lack of such concepts would be responsible for the subject's presumed inability to deduce all phenomenal truths from the totality of physical facts. What is more, this feature of phenomenal concepts is also thought to account for what the experience-deprived subject would learn were the subject to acquire the missing phenomenal concepts. Chalmers 2004 and stoljar 2005 criticize this type of response to the knowledge argument.

Block, ned. "max black's objection to mind-body identity." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 249-306. Oxford: oxford university press, 2007.

The essay offers a detailed critique of the property dualism argument by using and developing a version of the phenomenal concept strategy.

Chalmers, david j. "phenomenal concepts and the knowledge argument." In *there's something about mary: essays on phenomenal consciousness and frank jackson's knoweldge argument*. Edited by p. Ludlow, y. Nagasawa, and d. Stoljar, 269-298. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 2004.

A defense of the knowledge argument from a variety of physicalist responses.

Loar, brian. "phenomenal states." In *the nature of consciousness: philosophical debates*. Edited by ned j. Block, owen j. Flanagan, and güven güzeldere, 597–616. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 1997

A revised version of loar 1990 and a classic work in the philosophy of mind. In this essay, loar discusses the nature of phenomenal concepts and argues that an appeal to certain features of phenomenal concepts can be used to respond to epistemic arguments against physicalism.

Papineau, david. "phenomenal and perceptual concepts." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 111-144. Oxford: oxford university press, 2007.

A development of the quotational (or constitutional) account of phenomenal concepts that was originally advanced in papineau 2002. The essay also discusses the relationship between phenomenal concepts and perceptual concepts and offers a response to chalmers' 2007 objection against the phenomenal concept strategy. (chalmers, david j. "phenomenal concepts and the explanatory gap." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 167-194. Oxford, uk: oxford university press, 2007.)

Stoljar, daniel. "physicalism and phenomenal concepts." *mind & language* 20.5 (2005): 469-494. [doi: 10.1111/j.0268-1064.2005.00296.x]

Stoljar argues that the phenomenal concept strategy is incapable of offering adequate responses to both the conceivability argument and the knowledge argument.

Tye, michael. *Ten problems of consciousness: a representational theory of the phenomenal mind*. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 1995.

A book-length attempt to show that all experiences and feelings represent and that their phenomenal character can be understood in terms of their representational contents.

Chapter 6 contains an account of phenomenal concepts (pp. 161-182). In this chapter, Tye holds that phenomenal concepts are perspectival.

Tye, Michael. "A theory of phenomenal concepts." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 53 (2003): 91-105. [doi: 10.1017/s1358246100008286]

A concise and clear presentation of how an appeal to phenomenal concepts can help proponents of physicalism to respond to anti-physicalist arguments. It also develops a causal-recognitional account of phenomenal concepts.

Varieties of phenomenal concepts

There are a number of different proposals regarding the specific nature of phenomenal concepts in the literature. This section offers a summary of them.

Recognitional

Phenomenal concepts are recognitional concepts that pick out their referents directly, that is, without the need of any mediating factors – be it a descriptive content or a mediating experience that is not identical to the referent of the concept. The reference of a phenomenal concept is fixed by the fact that subjects are disposed to deploy the phenomenal concept to internal states that are introspectively and directly experienced and are recognized as having a particular phenomenal character. According to this account, a subject possesses a phenomenal concept only if the subject can directly recognize (or identify) that to which the phenomenal concept refers. Proponents of this account include: Loar 1997 and 2003, Tye 2003, and Carruthers 2004. Levin 2007 offers a concise and clear description of the recognitional account.

Carruthers, Peter. "Phenomenal concepts and higher-order experiences." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 68.2 (2004): 316-336. [doi: 10.1111/j.1933-1592.2004.tb00343.x]

It presents the view that phenomenal concepts are *purely* recognitional concepts – that is, they are recognitional concepts the possession of which does not presuppose the possession of any other concepts.

Levin, Janet. "What is a phenomenal concept?" In *Phenomenal Concepts and Phenomenal Knowledge: New Essays on Consciousness and Physicalism*. Edited by Torin Alter and Sven Walter, 87-110. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Although the essay focuses on the demonstrative account of phenomenal concepts, the recognitional account is also briefly discussed.

Loar, Brian. "Phenomenal states." In *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates*. Edited by Ned Block, Owen J. Flanagan, and Güven Güzeldere, 597–616. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997

the place in which the recognitional account of phenomenal concepts was first developed.

Loar, Brian. "Qualia, properties, modality." *Philosophical Issues* 13 (2003): 113-29 [doi: 10.1111/1533-6077.00008]

Revisits many of the issues addressed in Loar 1997. It develops the recognitional account of phenomenal concepts in more detail and articulates how phenomenal concepts refer directly.

Tye, Michael. "A theory of phenomenal concepts." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 53 (2003): 91-105. [doi: 10.1017/s1358246100008286]

It develops a causal-recognitional account of phenomenal concepts and uses this account to respond to anti-physicalist arguments.

Constitutional or quotational account

Phenomenal concepts are concepts that are (at least partly) constituted by the very phenomenal experience to which they refer. For instance, tokens of the phenomenal concept pain -- which refers to a *type* of experience -- are constituted by *tokens* of that *type* of experience. As such, phenomenal concepts refer to the experiences that they exemplify – although not every proponent of this account accepts that the fact that phenomenal concepts are constituted by exemplars of their referents explains *why* they refer to them (see, e.g., papineau 2007). Advocates of this account include, in addition to papineau 2007, papineau 2002, balog 2012, and block 2007. Chalmers 2003 has also advanced a version of this account without, however, enlisting it in the service of physicalism.

Balog, katalin. “acquaintance and the mind-body problem.” In *new perspectives on type identity: the mental and the physical*. Edited by simone gozzano and christopher s. Hill, 16-42. Cambridge, uk: cambridge university press, 2012. [doi:10.1017/cbo9780511687068.002]

A development of the constitutional account of phenomenal concepts in which the issue of how phenomenal concepts refer is considered. Balog also uses the constitutional account of phenomenal concepts to respond to anti-physicalist objections and to provide a physicalist account of acquaintance.

Block, ned. “max black's objection to mind-body identity.” In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 249-306. Oxford: oxford university press, 2007.

The property dualism argument is critically evaluated and an account of the phenomenal concept strategy is developed.

Chalmers, david. “the content and epistemology of phenomenal belief.” In *consciousness: new philosophical perspectives*. Edited by quentin smith and aleksandar jokić, 220–272. Oxford, uk: clarendon press, 2003.

A discussion of the epistemology of phenomenal beliefs with an emphasis on the nature of phenomenal concepts. The essay distinguishes between the different types of concepts that we can use to refer to the character of our phenomenal experiences. It also argues that phenomenal concepts are not demonstrative concepts

Papineau, david. *Thinking about consciousness*. Oxford: oxford university press, 2002.

A book-length articulation and defense of the phenomenal concept strategy. The constitutional (quotational) account of phenomenal concepts is discussed in chapter 4.

Papineau, david. “phenomenal and perceptual concepts.” In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 111-144. Oxford: oxford university press, 2007.

Papineau revisits the constitutional (or quotational) account of phenomenal concepts that he originally advanced in papineau 2002.

Indexical or demonstrative

Phenomenal concepts are indexical concepts analogous to concepts such as *i*, *here*, or *now*. The deployment of a phenomenal concept is akin to an introspective “pointing” (“this [kind of experience]”) that permits us to single out and take notice of features of experiences. Phenomenal concepts ultimately pick out the brain states that are responsible for the deployment of such concepts. Tye 1995, ismael 1999, perry 2001, o’dea 2002, and levin 2007 all contain articulations of this view regarding phenomenal concepts. Stalnaker 2008 offers a detailed discussion of perry’s 2001 position and develops his own response to jackson’s knowledge argument.

Ismael, jenann. "science and the phenomenal." *philosophy of science* (1999): 351-369.

Phenomenal concepts are understood as indexical concepts and this claim about the nature of phenomenal concepts is used to respond to anti-physicalist objections. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/188591>]*.

Levin, janet. “what is a phenomenal concept?” In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 87-110. New york: oxford university press, 2007.

A detailed presentation and defense of the demonstrative account of phenomenal concepts. The demonstrative account is also employed in responses to anti-physicalist objections.

O’dea, john. "the indexical nature of sensory concepts." *philosophical papers* 31.2 (2002): 169-181. [doi: 10.1080/05568640209485100]

The essay offers an account of phenomenal concepts (sensory concepts) as indexical concepts and discusses some of the consequences of the proposed account.

Perry, john. *Knowledge, possibility, and consciousness*. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 2001.

A book-length response to three anti-physicalist arguments (the modal argument, the knowledge argument, and the zombie argument) in which a version of the indexical account is developed.

Robert schroer. “where’s the beef? Phenomenal concepts as both demonstrative and substantial.” *Australasian journal of philosophy* 88.3 (2010):505-522. [doi: 10.1080/00048400903143861] a defense of a type-demonstrative account of phenomenal concepts.

Stalnaker, robert c. *Our knowledge of the internal world*. Oxford: oxford university press, 2008.

The book develops a response to the knowledge argument by drawing an analogy between phenomenal knowledge and self-locating knowledge. It also critically examines the view of phenomenal concepts advanced in perry 2001.

Tye, michael. *Ten problems of consciousness: a representational theory of the phenomenal mind*. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 1995.

Chapter 6, pp. 161-182, contains a brief discussion of phenomenal concepts as indexical concepts. The view that phenomenal concepts should be understood as indexical concepts is renounced in tye 1999.

Other accounts

The three aforementioned accounts of phenomenal concepts do not exhaust the ways in which phenomenal concepts have been developed in the relevant literature. Sturgeon 1994 holds that

phenomenal concepts are concepts that are individuated partly by the epistemic relationship that holds between them and their referents. In a similar vein, hill 1997 and hill and mclaughlin 1997 hold that phenomenal concepts are distinguished from other concepts on the basis of the conditions under which we are justified to deploy them. Hawthorne 2002 and braddon-mitchell 2003 maintain that phenomenal concepts are *conditional* concepts: they refer to non-physical states, if such states exist; otherwise, they refer to physical states. Finally, aydede and güzeldere 2005 have developed an account of phenomenal concepts that draws on an informational-theoretic framework and on their relationship to sensory concepts.

Aydede, murat, and güven güzeldere. "cognitive architecture, concepts, and introspection: an information-theoretic solution to the problem of phenomenal consciousness." *noûs* 39.2 (2005): 197-255. [doi: 10.1111/j.0029-4624.2005.00500.x]

The authors offer an information-theoretic account of sensory concepts. Such an account is used to explicate the nature of phenomenal concepts and to respond to anti-physicalist arguments.

Braddon-mitchell, david. "qualia and analytical conditionals." *the journal of philosophy* (2003): 111-135.

The essay develops a conditional analysis of qualia that purports to account for the intuitions that give rise to conceivability arguments against physicalism. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3655591>]*

Hawthorne, john. "advice for physicalists." *philosophical studies* 109.1 (2002): 17-52. [doi: 10.1023/a:1015731311853]

Proposes a conditional analysis of phenomenal concepts according to which phenomenal concepts rigidly refer either to non-physical states (if such states exists) or to physical states (if physicalism is true). The conditional analysis of phenomenal concepts is then used to respond to two challenges to physicalism.

Hill, christopher. "imaginability, conceivability, possibility and the mind-body problem." *Philosophical studies* 87 (1997): 61-85. [doi: 10.1023/a:1017911200883]

Sensory concepts (phenomenal concepts) are distinguished from other concepts on the basis of the conditions under which we are justified to deploy them. Phenomenal concepts also serve different classificatory purposes than theoretical concepts.

Hill, christopher and mclaughlin, brian. "there are fewer things in reality than are dreamt of in chalmers's philosophy." *Philosophy and phenomenological research* 59.2 (1999): 445-454.

It advances the suggestion that phenomenal concepts are governed by different epistemic constraints than theoretical (or physical) concepts.

Sturgeon, scott. "the epistemic view of subjectivity." *The journal of philosophy* 91.5 (1994): 221-235.

Phenomenal concepts are taken to be concepts that are canonically linked to the mental states that they conceptualize: that is, the epistemic connection between a phenomenal concept and the conceptualized mental state is partially individuating of the concept. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2940751>]*

Objections and responses to the phenomenal concept strategy

The phenomenal concept strategy has been criticized both by opponents and proponents of physicalism. The most important objections to the strategy are discussed below. Responses to these objections are also mentioned.

What phenomenal concepts reveal

Opponents of the phenomenal concept strategy have argued that the nature of phenomenal concepts undermines the strategy. Bealer 1996 and chalmers 1999 and 2004 hold that the semantic nature of phenomenal concepts is inconsistent with the strategy's claim that psychophysical statements (e.g., "pain is neuronal activity Φ ") can only be known *a posteriori*. Horgan and tienson 2001 argue that insofar as (i) phenomenal concepts reveal the essence of their referents (i.e., they reveal their referents as they really are) and (ii) that which phenomenal concepts reveal are not physical or functional properties, then physicalism must be false. Mclaughlin 2001 offers an answer to this challenge. Goff 2011 advances a related (but in some respects subtler) criticism against the phenomenal concept strategy. Diaz-leon 2014 responds to goff. Nida-rümelin 2007 develops an argument for property dualism on the basis of what we can grasp via phenomenal concepts.

Bealer, george. "a priori knowledge and the scope of philosophy," *philosophical studies*, 81.2-3 (1996): 121-142. [doi: 10.1007/bf00372777]

A rich discussion of the role and importance of intuitions in philosophy. Section 4 discusses the notion of "semantic stability" and uses this notion to argue that scientific essentialism (the doctrine according to which there are *a posteriori* necessities) fails to undermine the use of modal intuitions in philosophy.

Chalmers, david j. "materialism and the metaphysics of modality." *philosophy and phenomenological research* 59.2 (1999): 473-496.

This essay is part of a book symposium dedicated to his 1996 book and contains chalmers' response to his critics. In section 3, chalmers argues that there are no "strong metaphysical necessities" – i.e., statements that have necessary primary and secondary intensions but which are not *a priori* (477). Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2653685>]*

Chalmers, david j. "phenomenal concepts and the knowledge argument." In *there's something about mary: essays on phenomenal consciousness and frank jackson's knoweldge argument*. Edited by p. Ludlow, y. Nagasawa, and d. Stoljar, 269-298. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 2004.

A reformulation of the knowledge argument using the two-dimensional semantic framework and a subsequent defense of the argument from a variety of objections. In section 6, chalmers argues that the nature of phenomenal concepts undermines the claim that psychophysical identity states are *a posteriori*.

Diaz-leon, e. "do a posteriori physicalists get our phenomenal concepts wrong?" *ratio* 27.1 (2014): 1-16. [doi: 10.1111/rati.12018]

Critically evaluates goff's 2011 objection to the phenomenal concept strategy and offers a response on behalf of the proponent of the strategy.

Goff, philip. "a posteriori physicalists get our phenomenal concepts wrong." *australasian journal of philosophy* 89.2 (2011): 191-209. [doi: 10.1080/00048401003649617]

The essay argues that proponents of the phenomenal concept strategy are either committed to a counterintuitive view regarding the nature of phenomenal concepts or they are incapable of articulating their position in a consistent and intelligible manner.

Horgan, terence and john tienson. "deconstructing new wave materialism." In *physicalism and its discontents*. Edited by carl gillett and barry loewer, 307-318. Cambridge, uk: cambridge university press, 2001. [doi: 0.1017/cbo9780511570797.016]

The authors purport to show that "new wave materialism" (i.e., the variety of *a posteriori* physicalism which holds that what explains the *a posteriori* status of psychophysical identity statements and conditionals are features of the concepts that are involved in such statements and conditionals) undermines itself.

Mclaughlin, brian. "in defence of new wave materialism: a response to horgan and tienson." In *physicalism and its discontents*. Edited by carl gillett and barry loewer, 319-330. Cambridge, uk: cambridge university press. [doi: 10.1017/cbo9780511570797.017]
a response to horgan and tienson 2001.

Nida-ru melin, martine. "grasping phenomenal properties." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 307-338. Oxford, uk: oxford university press.

The essay develops an account of what it is to grasp a phenomenal property and uses the account to argue for property dualism.

Phenomenal concepts are not perspectival

Drawing upon burge's 1979 influential work on semantic externalism, tye 2009 and ball 2009 argue that a subject can possess phenomenal concepts even if the subject only partially understands them. That is to say, a subject can possess a phenomenal concept even if the subject has not had the experience to which the concept refers. The possibility that phenomenal concepts may be deferential (and non-perspectival) is also noted in stoljar 2000 (p.41 n.15). A similar view to that of tye 2009 and ball 2009 can also be found in mcdonald 2004. If phenomenal concepts turn out to be non-perspectival, then the strategy's response to the knowledge argument is threatened, for the response is typically thought to be premised on the claim that phenomenal concepts are perspectival. Alter (2013) and veillet (2012) critically examine tye 2009 and ball 2009's arguments.

Alter, torin. "social externalism and the knowledge argument." *mind* 122.486 (2013): 481-496. [doi: 10.1093/mind/fzt072]

Alter argues that even if tye 2009 and ball 2009 are correct in holding that social externalism is true for phenomenal concepts, this claim about phenomenal concepts fails to undermine the phenomenal concept strategy.

Ball, derek. "there are no phenomenal concepts." *Mind* 118.472 (2009): 935-962. [doi: 0.1093/mind/fzp134]

An attempt to undermine the phenomenal concept strategy by showing that social externalism extends to phenomenal concepts and consequently that such concepts are not perspectival.

Burge, tyler. "individualism and the mental." In *midwest studies in philosophy 4*. Edited by peter french, theodore uehling, and howard wettstein, 73-121. Minneapolis: university of minnesota press, 1979.

A classic work in the philosophy of mind in which social externalism (the view according which what we think depends on our social community) is advanced and defended.

Mcdonald, cynthia. "mary meets molyneux: the explanatory gap and the individuation of phenomenal concepts." *Noûs* 39.3 (2004): 503-524.

It criticizes the phenomenal concept strategy's response to the knowledge argument by arguing that the strategy is committed to an untenable view regarding the possession conditions of phenomenal concepts.

Stoljar, daniel. "physicalism and the necessary a posteriori." *the journal of philosophy* 97.1 (2000): 33-54.
The essay offers a two-fold critique of *a posteriori* physicalism. It argues (a) that *a posteriori* physicalism fails to provide a satisfactory response to the knowledge argument and (b) that there are good reasons to reject the view that psychophysical identity states are *a posteriori*. Available *online[<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2678473>]*

Tye, michael. *Consciousness revisited: materialism without phenomenal concepts*. Cambridge, ma: mit press, 2009.

Chapter 3, pp. 39-76, contains a number of criticisms against the different version of the phenomenal concept strategy. The same chapter also offers arguments in support of the view that phenomenal concepts are not perspectival.

Veillet, b nedicte. "in defense of phenomenal concepts." *philosophical papers* 41.1 (2012): 97-127. [doi: 10.1080/05568641.2012.662808]

A response to tye 2009 and ball 2009. It argues against the claim that social externalism applies to phenomenal concepts.

Phenomenal concepts are not physically explicable

Chalmers 2007 argues that either the features of phenomenal concepts that the strategy posits in order to explain our epistemic situation with regard to consciousness can be explicable in physical terms or not. If not, then the phenomenal concept strategy, although perhaps useful in elucidating aspects of consciousness, is of no use to theorists who maintain that there is no ontological distinction between consciousness and matter. But if those features of phenomenal concepts can be explicable in physical terms, then they fall short of explaining our epistemic situation with regard to consciousness. A related challenge to the phenomenal concept strategy has been articulated in levine 2007. The literature includes a number of responses to this type of objection against the phenomenal concept strategy. See papineau 2007, carruthers and veillet 2007, diaz-leon 2010, balog 2012, and elpidorou 2013.

Balog, katalin. "in defense of the phenomenal concept strategy." *philosophy and phenomenological research* 84.1 (2012): 1-23. [doi: 10.1111/j.1933-1592.2011.00541.x]

It responds to chalmers' 2007 objection to the phenomenal concept strategy. It argues that although the psychological features that the strategy posits in order to explain our epistemic situation with regards to consciousness are not physically explicable, this fact does nothing to undermine the strategy.

Carruthers, peter, and b nedicte veillet. "the phenomenal concept strategy." *journal of consciousness studies* 14.9-10 (2007): 212-236.

The essay responds to chalmers 2007 by rejecting his contention that if the psychological features of phenomenal concepts that the phenomenal concept strategy posits are explicable in physical terms, then phenomenal concepts cannot explain our epistemic situation.

Chalmers, david j. "phenomenal concepts and the explanatory gap." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 167-194. Oxford, uk: oxford university press, 2007.

A systematic attempt to show that no version of the phenomenal concept strategy is such that it can both explain our epistemic situation with regards to consciousness and posit psychological features that can be explicable in physical terms.

Diaz-leon, esa. "can phenomenal concepts explain the epistemic gap?" *mind* 119.476 (2010): 933-951. [doi:10.1093/mind/fzq073]

The essay argues that chalmers' 2007 objection fails to undermine the phenomenal concept strategy. According to diaz-leon, proponents of the strategy do not have to explain our *entire* epistemic situation with regards to consciousness but only the inferential or conceptual isolation that holds between physical and phenomenal concepts.

Elpidorou, andreas. "having it both ways: consciousness, unique not otherworldly." *philosophia* 41.4 (2013): 1181-1203. [doi: 10.1007/s11406-013-9455-0]

Responds to chalmers 2007 by distinguishing between two readings of chalmers' objection – depending on how our epistemic situation with regards to consciousness is characterized. It argues that on neither reading chalmers' objection succeeds in undermining the phenomenal concept strategy.

Levine, joseph. "phenomenal concepts and the materialist constraint." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 145-166. Oxford, uk: oxford university press, 2007.

Levine argues that phenomenal concepts afford us a way of conceiving of our phenomenal experiences that is thick and substantive and we currently lack an account of phenomenal concepts that can explain how such a way of conceiving can be physically realized.

Papineau, david. "phenomenal and perceptual concepts." In *phenomenal concepts and phenomenal knowledge: new essays on consciousness and physicalism*. Edited by torin alter and sven walter, 111-144. Oxford: oxford university press, 2007.

A rich essay in which papineau offers a response to chalmers' 2007 objection against the phenomenal concept strategy. In the same essay, papineau also develops the quotational (or constitutional) account of phenomenal concepts and discusses the relationship between phenomenal concepts and perceptual concepts.

Phenomenal concepts, a priori connections, and undesirable consequences

Stoljar 2005 offers a two-fold objection to the phenomenal concept strategy. First, he argues that many versions of the phenomenal concept strategy are incapable of offering an explanation for the claim that psychophysical statements cannot be known *a priori*. Second, he maintains that an acceptance of the phenomenal concept strategy yields certain troublesome conclusions. Diaz-leon 2008 responds to stoljar's arguments.

Diaz-leon, esa. "defending the phenomenal concept strategy." *australasian journal of philosophy* 86.4 (2008): 597-610. [doi: 10.1080/00048400802215638]

A defense of the phenomenal concept strategy from stoljar's 2005 objection.

Stoljar, daniel. "physicalism and phenomenal concepts." *mind & language* 20.5 (2005): 469-494. [doi: 10.1111/j.0268-1064.2005.00296.x]

The essay argues that the phenomenal concept strategy is incapable of offering adequate responses to both the conceivability argument and the knowledge argument.