Observer Memory and Immunity to Error through Misidentification

Are those judgments that we make on the basis of our memories immune to error through misidentification (IEM)? In this paper, I discuss a phenomenon which seems to suggest that they are not; the phenomenon of observer memory. I argue that observer memories fail to show that memory judgments are not IEM. However, the discussion of observer memories will reveal an interesting fact about the perspectivity of memory; a fact that puts us on the right path towards explaining why memory judgments are indeed IEM. The main tenet in the account of IEM to be proposed is that this aspect of memory is grounded, on the one hand, on the intentionality of perception and, on the other hand, on the relation between the intentionality of perception and that of memory.

1. **Introduction**

The judgments that we make on the basis of our memories (hereafter ‘memory judgments’) seem to enjoy a special kind of epistemic justification.[[1]](#footnote-1) In this paper, I will explore a specific way in which the epistemic justification afforded by memories seems to be special. As a first approximation, we can try to characterise it by using the notion of liability to error. Normally, when we make a judgment on the basis of one of our mental states, and our judgment is justified, there is still room for our judgment to be wrong. After all, epistemic justification does not require truth. The issue that will concern us in this paper is whether memory judgments are, nonetheless, not vulnerable to a particular kind of error. This feature of the special kind of epistemic justification afforded by memories has come to be known in the philosophical literature as ‘immunity to error through misidentification’.[[2]](#footnote-2) The aim of this paper is to determine whether memory judgments are IEM or not.

The paper has three parts. Section 2 constitutes the first part, which is devoted to framing the project of the paper. I will identify the variety of IEM that will occupy us in this discussion, and I will motivate its significance. Section 3 constitutes what we may think of as the negative part of the paper; a part which is devoted to discussing a potential objection to the view that memory judgments are IEM (for short, the ‘IEM view’). I will discuss a challenge to the IEM view raised by the possibility of so-called ‘observer memories’, and I will argue that such a possibility does not show that the IEM view is false. However, the discussion of the challenge to the IEM view posed by the phenomenon of observer memory will bring to light some ideas about memory and perception which will prove quite useful in the positive part of the chapter.[[3]](#footnote-3) The positive part of the paper is comprised of sections 4 and 5. An account of the truth of the IEM view will be offered in those two sections. The account at issue will rest on two main ideas. One of them, to be put forward in section 4, is a view about the intentionality of perception which will be inspired by our discussion of observer memory. The other main idea, to be put forward in section 5, concerns the relation between the intentionality of perception and that of memory. Finally, in section 6, a lesson regarding self-consciousness will be briefly drawn from the fact that memory judgments are IEM.

**2. Memory and IEM**

The notion of immunity to error through misidentification was introduced by Sydney Shoemaker, and it has been formulated in various ways in discussions of introspection, proprioception and memory. The type of IEM with which Shoemaker is concerned when it comes to memory is illustrated by passages such as the following:

Consider a case in which I say, on the basis of my memory of a past incident, ‘I shouted that Johnson should be impeached,’ and compare this with a case in which I say, again on the basis of my memory of a past incident, ‘John shouted that Johnson should be impeached.’ In the latter case it could turn out that I do remember someone who looked and sounded just like John shouting that Johnson should be impeached, but that the man who shouted this was nevertheless not John – it may be that I misidentified the person as John at the time I observed the incident […] But this sort of misidentification is not possible in the former case. My memory report could of course be mistaken, for one can misremember such incidents, but it could not be the case that I have a full and accurate memory of the past incident but am mistaken in thinking that the person I remember shouting was myself. I shall speak of such memory judgments as being immune to error through misidentification with respect to the first person pronouns, or other ‘self-referring’ expressions, contained in them.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Thus if I claim on the strength of memory that I saw John yesterday, and have a full and accurate memory of the incident, it cannot be the case that I remember someone seeing John but have misidentified that person as myself; my memory claim ‘I saw John’ is subject to error through misidentification with respect to the term ‘John’ (for it could have been John’s twin or double that I saw), but not with respect to ‘I’.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The type of IEM to which Shoemaker alludes here is a feature of memories which involves their truth conditions.[[6]](#footnote-6) The main contention in the two passages above is that the extent to which a full and accurate memory leaves room for error when a subject judges, on the basis of that memory, that they had a certain experience or performed a certain action in the past is limited.[[7]](#footnote-7) Specifically, it cannot happen that the subject’s judgment is false due to the fact that the person who they correctly remember to have had the relevant property is someone else, and they have misidentified that person as themselves. In this sense, the subject’s judgment that they once had the relevant property is IEM relative to their memory. More generally, we can characterise this ‘truth variety’ of IEM (or ‘IEMτ’, for short) thus:

IEMτ For any property P and mental state M:

If I judge that I had P on the basis of M, then that judgment is IEMτ relative to M just in case it is impossible that there is a subject S such that:

1. M represents S as having had P.
2. M is fully accurate.
3. I mistakenly think that I am identical with S.
4. My judgment that I had P is false as a result of (iii).

We may, furthermore, distinguish two kinds of IEMτ depending on how strongly we read ‘impossible’ above. If the conditions in the actual world rule out the possibility that the mistake specified in (i-iv) will ever happen when I judge that I had property P on the basis of mental state M, then my judgment that I had P is ‘de facto IEMτ’relative to M. If, however, the conditions in every logically possible world rule out the mistake specified in (i-iv) when I judge that I had property P on the basis of mental state M, then my judgment that I had P is ‘logically IEMτ’ relative to M.[[8]](#footnote-8) In this paper, I will focus on the issue of whether judgments made on the basis of our memories are logically IEMτ relative to them. In what follows, therefore, talk of IEM in memory, and talk of whether memory judgments are IEM, should be understood as referring, respectively, to logical IEMτ in memory, and to whether memory judgments are logically IEMτ relative to the memories on the basis of which they are made.

Why should we focus on logical IEMτ, among the various types of immunity to error, when it comes to memory? The reason why the issue of whether memory judgments are IEM in this sense is significant concerns the topic of self-consciousness.Suppose that memory judgments are indeed IEM. Then, it seems natural to think that there must be some sense in which, in memory, one is conscious of the fact that the person who is remembered to have instantiated such-and-such properties is oneself.[[9]](#footnote-9) In that case, it seems worth investigating what that kind of self-consciousness amounts to.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Notice, incidentally, that condition (ii) is the condition which is responsible for the kind of IEM that we are considering having this type of significance: Suppose that I judge, on the basis of memory, that I shouted that Johnson should be impeached, for example. What does it mean for my memory judgment to be IEM? It means that I cannot be mistaken in thinking that the person I remember shouting was myself, provided that my relevant memory is full and accurate. Now, if this is what my memory judgment being IEM comes down to, then it does seem reasonable to think that IEM is significant for the topic of self-consciousness. For suppose that my memory judgment is IEM and, assuming that my memory is full and accurate, I cannot be mistaken in thinking that the person I remember shouting was myself. Then, it seems reasonable to think that, when I remember the shouting, part of what I remember is that the person who shouted was myself. In the scenario in which my memory judgment is IEM, then, it seems plausible that my memory is making me aware of a past subject as being myself. To that extent, my memory is providing me with a form of self-consciousness.

What about the scenario in which memory judgments turn out not to be IEM? What would be the significance of this outcome? If it turns out that memory judgments are not IEM, then it seems reasonable to think that, in memory, one uses some criteria to infer that one is the subject who is remembered to have instantiated such-and-such properties. And, in that case, it seems worth investigating what type of ‘identification criteria’ one is using to arrive at such a conclusion, since criteria of that type could arguably make up a concept of oneself.[[11]](#footnote-11)

There is, however, a phenomenon discussed in the philosophical and psychological literatures on memory which, at first glance, seems to pose a challenge for the view that memory judgments are IEM. This is the phenomenon of observer memory. In the next section, I will argue that, contrary to first impressions, observer memory does not provide us with a counter-example to the IEM view. However, considering the reasons why our capacity for having observer memories does not conflict with the IEM view will point us in the right direction towards explaining why memory judgments are IEM. Let us turn, therefore, to the phenomenon of observer memory.

1. **Observer memory and IEM**

There is a feature of the perspectival character of memory which seems relevant to the issue of whether memory judgments are IEM or not. A memory may present a past scene to its subject from two types of visual perspectives.[[12]](#footnote-12) One of them is the type of perspective from which the subject would have perceptually experienced the scene if the subject had been a part of it, or had gone through it, in the past. By having a memory which presents a past scene from a perspective of this type, the subject visualises the past scene, but they do not visualise themselves as a part of it. Let us call memories which present past scenes from this type of perspective, ‘first-person’ or ‘field’ memories. A memory may also present a past scene from the type of perspective that a different observer would have had to occupy in the past in order to witness the remembered scene with the subject as a participant of it. By having a memory which presents the past scene from a perspective of this type, the subject visualises not only the past scene but they also visualise themselves, as it were, from the outside. Let us call memories which present past scenes from this type of perspective, ‘third-person’ or ‘observer’ memories.[[13]](#footnote-13)

To illustrate the distinction between field and observer memories, consider the following example. Suppose that, years ago, I suffered a traffic accident while sitting directly behind the driver of the car involved in the accident. I may now be unsure as to whether I have ever been in a traffic accident or not. And yet, I may be able to remember what is in fact the position of each of the occupants of the car during the actual accident. I may be able to remember it by visualising the scene from either of two perspectives. I may visualise the scene from the perspective of the person who was sitting directly behind the driver. In virtue of having this mental image, I visualise the back of the driver’s head, for example, as well as the back of their seat. In this case, I am having a field memory of the scene. Alternatively, I may remember the position of each of the occupants of the car by visualising the scene from a different perspective, let us say, the perspective of the person sitting directly behind the front passenger’s seat. In virtue of having this mental image, I still visualise the driver in the car, as well as their seat. But I also visualise, among other things, the person sitting directly behind the driver (a person who, by assumption, is myself). In this case, I am having an observer memory of the scene.

What is the relevance of observer memories for our discussion of IEM? At first glance, the possibility of having observer memories may seem to suggest that memory judgments are not IEM. The train of thought which may lead one, reasonably enough, to such a conclusion proceeds in two steps.

Firstly, one may think that if some of the memories that one has are observer memories, then, in order to judge that one had some property in the past on the basis of a memory, it may sometimes be necessary for one to identify oneself in the remembered scene.[[14]](#footnote-14) How would such a process of identification work exactly? Suppose, for example, that I judge that I was sitting behind the driver during the traffic accident on the basis of an observer memory wherein I picture the position of the occupants of the car from the point of view of the person sitting behind the front passenger’s seat. Then, it seems that I must have arrived at the judgment that the person behind the driver was me through a process of inference. I must have thought that the person behind the driver had certain features (for example, that he was short and unshaven, and that his hair was brown and dishevelled). I must have thought that, among the occupants of the car, I was the only person with the features in question. And, finally, I must have concluded from those premises that I am the person who was sitting behind the driver.

Secondly, one may also think that, when one needs to identify oneself in the scene that one is remembering in this way, one is liable to make a mistake in the identification process through no fault of one’s memory. How would such a mistake arise then? It seems possible for one to be correct in remembering, on the one hand, that someone in the remembered scene had such-and-such features, and to be wrong in thinking, on the other hand, that one had the relevant features at the time. Thus, I could be wrong in believing that I was unshaven on the day of the accident. (Perhaps I shaved that morning, and later I forgot about it.) Alternatively, I could be wrong in thinking that I was the only person in the car who was short and unshaven, and whose hair was brown and dishevelled. (Perhaps someone who bears an uncanny resemblance to me, in those and many other respects, was travelling in the car with me that day.) It seems to follow, then, that if some of the memories that one has are observer memories, then memory judgments are not IEM. For it seems possible, in cases of observer memory, for one to judge that one had some property in the past on the basis of an accurate memory, and for one to be wrong because the person who one correctly remembers to have had the property is someone else, and one has misidentified that person as oneself.

In what remains of this section, I will argue that this train of thought is misguided. Some of the reasons why it is misguided, though, will reveal an interesting lesson regarding the presence of the self in memory. Thus, even though it will eventually turn out that the possibility of having observer memories does not threaten the IEM view, it will nonetheless be productive to examine why the phenomenon of observer memory does not provide us with a counter-example to that view. Let us consider, then, the idea that observer memory makes memory judgments vulnerable to error through misidentification in more detail.

It will be convenient to organise the discussion of observer memory around a particular case. Take, for example, the case in which I have a mental image wherein a visualise the position of the passengers in a car during a traffic accident in the past. Let us suppose that there is a person sitting directly behind the driver’s seat, but I do not visualise the scene from that passenger’s perspective. Instead, I visualise the scene from the perspective of the passenger sitting directly behind the front passenger’s seat. (Let us stipulate that we are in a country where cars are driven on the left side of road and, thus, the front passenger’s seat is placed on the left side of the car.) Furthermore, let us drop an assumption that we made above while this example was introduced for the purposes of illustrating the distinction between field and observer memories. This is the assumption that I was, in fact, sitting behind the driver’s seat at the time of the accident. Instead of making such an assumption, let us distinguish three possible scenarios; the scenario in which, at the time of the accident, I was sitting behind the driver’s seat, the scenario in which I was sitting neither behind the driver’s seat nor behind the front passenger’s seat, and the scenario in which I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat. After all, the details of the case sketched above could be filled in according to each of those three scenarios.

At first glance, the mental image that I have when I visualise this scene in those scenarios appears to be an observer memory. Suppose, then, that I judge, on the basis of it, that it was me who was sitting directly behind the driver’s seat at the time of the accident. Could I be making a misidentification error? Let us remind ourselves of the conditions which need to be met for an error of misidentification to take place. For such an error to take place, there needs to be a subject S such that (i) my observer memory represents S as having been sitting behind the driver’s seat, (ii) my observer memory is fully accurate, (iii) I mistakenly think that I am identical with S, and (iv) my judgment that I was sitting behind the driver’s seat is false as a result of (iii).

It is easy to appreciate that, in the first scenario, the case is a non-starter as a counter-example to the IEM view. The reason is simply that condition (iv) is not met. If I was, by assumption, sitting behind the driver’s seat, then my memory judgment is in fact true. Let us therefore set this possibility aside, and consider the scenario in which I was sitting neither behind the front passenger’s seat nor behind the driver’s seat, and the scenario in which I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat.

Consider the scenario in which I was sitting neither behind the driver’s seat nor behind the front passenger’s seat. My suggestion is that, in this scenario, it is condition (ii) which fails to be met; my observer memory is not fully accurate. My observer memory represents someone sitting behind the driver’s seat and, as we stipulated above, there is indeed someone sitting behind the driver’s seat. My observer memory is, to that extent, accurate. But the presence of a passenger behind the driver’s seat is not all that my observer memory represents. My observer memory seems to represent my own position within the remembered scene as well. Why is that? Notice that my observer memory represents the passenger sitting behind the driver’s seat from a certain perspective. After all, it is only a certain side of their face, and more generally of their body, that I visualise in virtue of having my observer memory. Since we stipulated that the driver’s seat is on the right side of the car, it is the left side of their body that I am visualising. But why is that side of the remembered passenger’s body the side that I visualise in virtue of having my observer memory? The answer to this question seems to be that the left side of their body is the side that I would have been able to see, had I been sitting behind the front passenger’s seat, given their position in the car relative to mine. It seems, therefore, that my observer memory represents not only the position of the remembered passenger in the car (namely, as sitting behind the driver's seat), but also my own position in the car.

Notice that the line of reasoning offered above involves an important inference; an inference from one kind of feature of my memory of the accident to a different kind of feature of it. Memories have some phenomenal features. There is, in other words, such a thing as what it is like for a subject to have a memory. The perspectival character of memories, for example, is one of their phenomenal features. Intuitively enough, what it is like for me to remember the scene in the car during the traffic accident is different depending on whether I am having a field memory of the accident or an obsever memory of it. There is, to put it differently, a difference in how the memory of the accident feels to me. Memories also have intentional features. There is, in other words, such a thing as what a subject represents in virtue of having a memory. Whether or not my own position in the car is represented by my observer memory of the accident, for example, is a question about the intentional features of my memory. Now, the inference that I have made while considering the scenario in which I was sitting neither behind the driver’s seat nor behind the front passenger’s seat is the following. I have pointed out a phenomenal feature of my observer memory, namely, that my memory involves a certain perspective. (I only visualise the left side of the passenger who is sitting behind the driver in virtue of having my observer memory.) And, from that observation, I have inferred that my memory has a particular intentional feature. Specifically, I have inferred that my memory represents my own spatial location in the car. One might be concerned about the grounds for such an inference.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The relation between the phenomenal and intentional features of memories may be conceived in one of three possible ways. We might think that the intentional features of memories are more fundamental in that the phenomenal features of memories are determined, or fixed, by their intentional features. This position would be congenial with ‘representationalism’ about phenomenology more generally.[[16]](#footnote-16) Alternatively, we might think that the phenomenal features of memories are more fundamental in that the intentional features of memories are determined, or fixed, by their phenomenal features. This position would be congenial with the broader view that consciousness is the ground of all intentional content.[[17]](#footnote-17) Finally, we might think that there is no dependence between the intentional and phenomenal features of memories running in either direction. This position would be a particular instance of what is sometimes referred to as ‘separatism’; the view that the intentional and phenomenal features of mental states are independent from each other.[[18]](#footnote-18)

If the intentional features of memories are more fundamental than their phenomenal features, then the inference which was carried out above is warranted. Once we notice that my observer memory has a certain phenomenal feature (namely, its perspective), it makes sense to ask what aspect of its content is responsible for it. If the phenomenal features of memories are more fundamental than their intentional features, then the inference which was carried out above is warranted as well. Once we notice that my observer memory has a certain phenomenal feature, it makes sense to ask what aspect of its content that phenomenal feature is responsible for. However, if separatism is correct, then the inference at issue is not warranted. For that reason, the discussion of the scenario in which I was sitting neither behind the driver’s seat nor behind the front passenger’s seat assumes that separatism is false. This does not seem to be an unreasonable assumption, though. It has been pointed out in the literature that, on the face of it, phenomenology and intentionality do seem to be connected to each other: Phenomenologically conscious experiences often inform us about the state of the world. And, conversely, intentional states are often phenomenologically conscious. This connection would turn out to be deeply mysterious if separatism were true.[[19]](#footnote-19) Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that, while there is no consensus on what the direction of the dependence relation between intentional and phenomenal features of mental states is, there does seem to be a growing consensus that, in some form, such a dependence relation exists and, for that reason, separatism is false.

What does this mean for our discussion of the scenario in which I was sitting neither behind the driver’s seat nor behind the front passenger’s seat when I have my observer memory of the accident? It means that, given that I visualise the passenger behind the driver's seat from a certain perspective, my memory represents a past fact about myself, that is, the fact that I was sitting to the left of the remembered passenger. Now, this aspect of what my memory represents may be responsible for what it is like for me to visualise the passenger sitting behind the driver from the perspective of the person who is sitting behind the front passenger’s seat. Alternatively, what it is like for me to visualise the passenger from that perspective may be responsible for the fact that my memory represents that I was sitting to the left of the passenger. Either way, the important point is that this particular aspect of what my observer memory represents is not accurate. After all, we have been assuming that, in the scenario that we are considering, I was sitting neither behind the driver’s seat nor behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident. This is why, in this scenario, the observer memory that we have been entertaining would not constitute a counter-example to the IEM view either.

What about the scenario in which I was, in fact, sitting behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident, and I visualise the person sitting behind the driver’s seat from that perspective when I remember the accident? It is tempting to think that, in this scenario, the case sketched above does show that memory judgments are vulnerable to misidentification errors. We have been assuming that there was someone sitting behind the driver’s seat at the time of the accident. For the sake of simplicty, let us also assume that my current mental image originates in my past perception of that passenger. Then, I am correctly visualising that there was someone sitting behind the driver’s seat. I am visualising that person from a certain perspective and, in virtue of this fact, I am representing my own position in the car relative to that of the person behind the driver’s seat. Furthermore, in this case, I am representing my own position in the car correctly. After all, the person behind the driver was, in fact, located to my right. But I believe, wrongly, that I am the person who I visualise as having been sitting behind the driver’s seat. Thus, when I judge that I was sitting behind the driver’s seat on the basis of my mental image of the scene, it turns out that I am making a false judgment. Have we not reached, then, a counter-example to the view that memory judgments are IEM if we construe the traffic accident case along these lines?

The traffic accident case presents us with an interesting type of mental state when we formulate it thus. Notice that the mental image that I have when I visualise the person sitting behind the driver’s seat from the perspective of the person sitting behind the front passenger’s seat no longer qualifies as an observer memory. Once we asume that I was in fact sitting behind the front passenger’s seat, the perspective from which I now visualise the scene turns out to be the perspective that I occupied while I was travelling in the car at the time of the accident. Thus, if the mental image that I have in this case does constitute a counter-example to the IEM view, it is not in virtue of enjoying any property which is characteristic of observer memories. Whether the mental image that I have in this case constitutes such a counter-example, though, depends on whether it qualifies as a memory in the first place. After all, the view that memory judgments are IEM only concerns those judgments that we make on the basis of our memories.

The issue of whether the mental image that I have in the traffic accident case, when we asume that I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident, qualifies as a memory hinges on one’s views about the metaphysics of memory. There is, for example, a popular view about the metaphysics of memory according to which the issue of whether a mental image qualifies as a memory or not depends on its origin. The causal theory of memory remains the most influential version of this view. According to the classical formulation of the causal theory of memory, for any subject S and proposition p, S remembers that p just in case S is representing that p, S represented that p in the past, and the fact that S represented that p in the past has caused S to represent that p in the present.[[20]](#footnote-20) On the causal theory of memory, the mental image that I have in the traffic accident case, when we asume that I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident, does qualify as a memory. For that mental image originates in my past perception of the passenger sitting behind the driver’s seat.

The causal theory of memory, however, has been criticised on various grounds.[[21]](#footnote-21) And one of the objections raised against the causal theory of memory is relevant to the issue of whether the mental image that I have in the traffic accident case, when we asume that I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident, qualifies as a memory. The relevant objection is that the causal theory of memory is exclusively backward-looking. It puts forward conditions for a mental image to qualify as a memory which only concern the aetiology of the mental image concerned. And, for that reason, it is incomplete. The causal theory overlooks other conditions that mental images must satisfy to qualify as memories; conditions which concern the relation between memory and belief.[[22]](#footnote-22) One might argue that one of the conditions that a mental image representing some scene must satisfy for it to qualify as a memory of the scene is that the mental image must dispose us to believe that the scene took place in the past. This is, after all, one of the ways in which, typically, memories are different from episodes of imagination (which do not incline us to believe that the represented scenes took place in the past).[[23]](#footnote-23)

Notice, however, that if this further condition is required for a mental image to qualify as a memory, then the mental image that I have in the traffic accident case, when we asume that I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident, does not qualify as a memory. After all, in virtue of having that mental image, I have no inclination to believe that the passenger behind the driver was, in the past, sitting to my right. (Clearly I must have no such inclination since, otherwise, I would not be making, now, the judgment that it was me who was sitting behind the driver's seat on the basis of that mental image.) And yet, the fact that, in the past, the passenger behind the driver was sitting to my right is, as argued above, one of the facts represented by my mental image.

Now, a full investigation of the metaphysics of memory would take us far beyond the scope of this paper.[[24]](#footnote-24) However, it seems that there are some reasons for being sceptical about the idea that the mental image that I have in the traffic accident case, when we asume that I was sitting behind the front passenger’s seat at the time of the accident, is a memory. Where does this leave us? The outcome of our discussion in this section is that, contrary to what it may have seemed at first glance, the possibility of having observer memories does not threaten the IEM view. It does not threaten it because either observer memories do not yield false memory judgments, or they are not themselves fully accurate, or they do not qualify as genuine memories. In the process of figuring out whether the phenomenon of observer memory posed a threat to the IEM view, however, we have learnt an interesting lesson regarding what is involved in visually representing an object from a certain perspective. The traffic accident case, construed along the lines of the second scenario above, has taught us that part of what it is for a subject to visually represent an object from a certain perspective is for the subject to represent that they themselves are in a certain spatial position relative to that of the object. This feature of perspectival representation illustrates one way in which a subject may be present in the content of their own mental states; an idea that we will explore in further detail while explaining the source of IEM in memory judgments.

1. **The perceived self**

Let us take stock. In section 3, we have considered one possible challenge to the idea that memory judgments are IEM based on the phenomenon of observer memory. We have seen that the challenge is ultimately unsuccessful, but we have also drawn an interesting moral from the discussion of it. Our discussion of observer memory has brought to light one particular instance in which a subject is present in the content of one of their mental states, namely, when the subject has a visual experience of a fact and, in virtue of having such an experience, represents the fact from a certain perspective. It seems reasonable, then, to approach the phenomenon of IEM in memory by exploring the idea that the self may be present in the contents of their own mental states; mental states such as perceptual experiences and memories. In fact, my contention will be that the key to the presence of the self in the contents of memory is to be found in the intentionality of perception. In this section, I will concentrate on the issue of whether a subject is present in the contents of their own perceptual experiences or not.[[25]](#footnote-25) In the next section, we will turn to the relation between the intentionality of perception and that of memory.

A hypothesis about the intentional objects of perceptual experiences should respect and, ideally, account for three features of such experiences. Two of these features concern the, so to speak, input side of perception, whereas the third feature has to do with the output side of it.

Consider, first of all, a fact about perception that our discussion of observer memory highlighted in section 3. This is the fact that perception is perspectival. If one seems to perceive some scene, then that scene is presented to one from a perspective, or point of view. This phenomenological aspect of one’s perceptual experiences depends on the spatial position that one occupies with regards to the objects which are involved in the perceived scene and, thus, it changes as one changes one’s spatial relation with regards to those objects. Right now, for example, I seem to see a wall and a window to my right, and I am aware of the smell of coffee coming from the cup in front of me. Buf I turn 180 degrees, then I will seem to see a wall and a window to my left, and I will be aware of the smell of coffee coming from behind me.

Secondly, a perceptual experience does not present a scene to one in such a way that one feels separated from that scene, or as if one was a spectator of it. In virtue of having a perceptual experience, one feels that one is part of the scene that the experience is making manifest to one. The relevant contrast here is with the experience of looking, for example, at a monitor or a cinema screen. In such an experience, one does feel that a scene is being manifest to one. The objects of that scene, and their features, are before one’s mind in virtue of having the experience at issue. But one will not thereby feel as if one is present in the relevant scene. In perceptual experience, by contrast, there is a felt immediacy which puts one inside of the scene that the experience is making manifest to one; among the objects in that scene. If I look around me and I see, for example, the wall and the window in my room, and the cup of coffee on my desk, then these objects are presented to me as being part of my surroundings. They are presented to me, in other words, as parts of a scene in which I am also present. I will refer to this phenomenological feature of perceptual experiences as their ‘immediacy’.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Thirdly, perception directly feeds into action. A subject who has a perceptual experience will be poised to perform certain actions just in virtue of the fact that they have that experience. Thus, if one apparently sees a large object approaching at a high speed, then one will step out of its way. Likewise, if one seems to see the object flying at one’s face, then one will duck; and so on. Perception is immediately salient to action in the sense that one does not need to form any particular belief about one’s spatial position in order to start moving. Admittedly, unless one has a background of beliefs and desires, such as the belief that there is no reason to distrust one’s vision and the desire not to get hit or run over, one might not be poised to move when one perceptually experiences the approaching object. Nevertheless, it does not seem that any specific belief regading one’s spatial location is required in order to initiate one’s movement.

What must be true of the contents of perceptual experiences for them to have these three interesting features? The main proposal in this section is that these three features of perceptual experiences point us towards a certain view about the intentionality of perception. We may call it the ‘extrinsic’ view of perception. According to the extrinsic view of perception, for any proposition q and subject S, if S has a perceptual experience that they would express by saying that they perceive that q, then there is an extrinsic property R such that R is a property of S, and the intentional object of S’s perceptual experience is S’s being related through R to the fact that q.[[27]](#footnote-27) Thus, if I have a perceptual experience that I would express by saying that I see a small cup of coffee on my hand, my experience makes me aware of the fact that the cup on my hand is small by making me aware of the difference between my own size and that of the cup. Likewise, if the coffee then spills on my hand, and I have a perceptual experience that I would express by saying that the coffee from the cup is hot, my experience makes me aware of the temperature of that liquid by making me aware of the difference between the temperature on the relevant region of my skin and the temperature of the portion of the liquid in contact with it. The basic thought in the extrinsic view of perception, then, is that the intentional object of a perceptual experience is always the subject of the experience having a certain extrinsic property. In perception, we are aware of objective facts; facts such as the cup having a particular size or the coffee having a particular temperature. These facts are objective in that they obtain independently of our existence and our perceiving them. However, we are only aware of those facts by being aware of the relations in which we, the perceivers, stand to them.

If the extrinsic view of perception is correct, then it seems natural for perception to be perspectival and immediate, and for it to feed directly into action.[[28]](#footnote-28) Let us take each of these features of perceptual experience in order.

Firstly, if perceptual experiences always make one aware of a fact by making one aware of an extrinsic property of one’s own which involves that fact, then it makes sense that facts are always perceived from one’s perspective. The reason for this is that the perceptual awareness of a fact from one’s perspective just is the awareness of the relations between one’s own properties (properties such as one’s spatial position, size or temperature) and those of the object involved in the relevant fact. The thought here is not only that there is a correlation between one’s perceptual awareness of a fact from a certain perspective and the representation of certain extrinsic properties of one’s own. More strongly, the thought is that the representation of extrinsic properties of one’s own is all there is to perceiving a fact ‘from one’s point of view’. Hence, the reason why the perspectivity of our perceptual experiences varies as we change some of our relations to the objects involved in the facts that we claim to perceive is simply that perceiving those facts from our perspective and perceiving those relations is one and the same thing.

Secondly, if it is correct that, when one has a perceptual experience, one is always aware of the fact that one is holding some relation to some object, then it also makes sense that perceptual experiences have an immediate character. Suppose that, when I see the wall and the window in my room, for example, and the coffee cup on my desk, what I am being aware of is, among other things, the fact that I stand in certain spatial relations with respect to that wall, that window, that cup of coffee and that desk. It does not seem surprising, then, that, in virtue of having those perceptual experiences, I feel as if I am part of the scene which contains those objects. After all, part of what I am perceiving is, precisely, the fact that I am located among those objects. It is to be expected, then, that I would feel as if I am present in the scene which contains those objects when I have the relevant perceptual experiences.

Thirdly, if it is the case that, when one perceives a fact, one is aware of some of the relations which hold between one’s properties and those of the objects involved in the relevant fact, then it also makes sense that perceptual experiences are immediately salient to action. Recall the scenario in which one seems to see a large object approaching at a high speed, and the scenario in which one seems to see an object flying at one’s face. If the extrinsic view is correct, then, if I am in either of the two scenarios, what I am aware of is the relation between my own spatial position and that of the perceived object. After all, I seem to see an object flying *at me*, or an object approaching *me*. This means that my own spatial location relative to that of the object is directly presented to me in perception. It is not surprising, then, that I do not need to form any particular belief about my own location in order to duck, or step away. If the extrinsic view is correct, then, when I start moving, I am just trusting perception, or taking at face value what I seem to see.

There seem to be some considerations, then, which lend support to the idea that, in perception, one is aware of objective scenes in the world by being aware of the fact that one bears certain relations to objects which are part of those scenes. In that sense, one is present in the content of one’s perceptual experiences. At this point, however, a question about the nature of perceptual content may arise.[[29]](#footnote-29) One may want to know how we should construe perceptual contents in order to accommodate the idea that one is present in the content of one's perceptual experiences. It seems that the extrinsic view of perception can be developed in at least three different directions, depending on one's views on the nature of perceptual content.

One view about the content of perceptual experiences is that those experiences have ‘Russellian’ contents. In its simplest formulation, the Russellian view is the view that the content of a perceptual experience is an ordered pair composed, on the one hand, of the very object which appears to the subject to have some property in virtue of having the relevant perceptual experience, and, on the other hand, of the very property that the object appears to have.[[30]](#footnote-30) What does the extrinsic view of perception look like if perceptual contents are Russellian? Within this framework, the extrinsic view becomes the view that the content of a perceptual experience is a certain ordered pair composed of an object and a property. The first component of this pair is the subject of the experience. The second component is an extrinsic property; the property of being related in some way to the object that is presented to the subject in virtue of having the experience. Suppose, for example, that a subject S has a visual experience E and, in virtue of having E, it appears to S that, let us say, the cup of coffee on their hand is small. The view, then, is that the content of S's visual experience E is the pair <S, being considerably bigger than the cup>.

A second view about the content of perceptual experiences is that those experiences have ‘Fregean’ contents. The Fregean view is the view that the content of a perceptual experience is an ordered pair composed, not by an object and a property, but by modes of presentation of them. The relevant pair is composed, on the one hand, by the mode of presentation under which an object is presented to the subject in virtue of having the relevant experience, and, on the other hand, by the mode of presentation under which a property appears to the subject to be instantiated in that object in virtue of having the experience.[[31]](#footnote-31) What does the extrinsic view of perception look like if perceptual contents are Fregean? Within this framework, the extrinsic view becomes the view that the content of a perceptual experience is an ordered pair composed of two modes of presentation. The first component of this pair is a mode of presentation of the subject of the experience.[[32]](#footnote-32) The second component is a mode of presentation of an extrinsic property; the property of being related in some way to the object that is presented to the subject in virtue of having the experience. In the cup of coffee example, for instance, the view is that the content of S's visual experience E is composed, on the one hand, by a mode of presentation of S and, on the other hand, by a mode of presentation of the property of being considerably bigger than the cup.

A third view about the content of perceptual experiences is that those experiences have ‘possible-worlds’ contents. The view is that the content of a perceptual experience is a set of possible worlds. Specifically, it is the set of possible worlds in which the object which is presented to the subject in virtue of having the experience has the property which appears to the subject to be instantiated in that object. What does the extrinsic view of perception look like if perceptual contents are sets of possible worlds? Within this framework, the extrinsic view becomes the view that the content of a perceptual experience is a set of possible worlds. It is the set of possible worlds in which the subject of the experience has the property of being related in some way to the object that is presented to the subject in virtue of having the experience. In the cup of coffee example, for instance, the view is that the content of S's visual experience E is the set {W: In W, S is considerably bigger than the cup}.

The precise details of the extrinsic view of perception will differ, therefore, depending on whether we take perceptual contents to be Russellian, Fregean, or possible-world contents. However, for the purposes of our discussion of memory and IEM, we do not need to adopt a position on this issue. After all, the extrinsic view of perception was motivated by the observation that perceptual experiences are perspectival, by the observation that they are immediate, and by the observation that they directly feed into action. And these three observations seem to be neutral on the exact framework that we choose to adopt in order to specify perceptual contents. Whether perceptual contents are Russellian, Fregean, or possible-world contents, the outcome of this section remains that there is a sense in which one is always an intentional object of one’s perceptual experiences: What one perceives, when it appears to one that one is perceiving an objective scene, is always the fact that one is instantiating a certain extrinsic property, namely, a relation in which one stands to an object in that scene. With this outcome in mind, let us now turn to the issue of what accounts for the fact that memory judgments are IEM.

1. **Perception as the source of IEM in memory**

Let us begin by highlighting a certain point about the relation between the contents of memory and the contents of perception. Consider, more specifically, the relation between the content of a memory, and the content of the perceptual experience in which the memory originates. It seems that if a memory of some scene is correct, then the content of that memory must represent the scene in a certain way, namely, the way in which the perceptual experience in which the memory originates represented the scene in the past. Suppose that, this morning, I walked my dog at the local park and I looked at a red flower there. Imagine, furthermore, that I now have a a memory which originates in the perceptual experience that, this morning, I had when I looked at the red flower in the park. It seems that, regardless of whether, this morning, my perceptual experience was veridical or not, the memory experience which I am having now needs to be faithful to the content of that perceptual experience in order for it to be correct. If this morning I correctly perceived the flower as being red, for example, and my memory now presents it to me as having been white, then, intuitively enough, my memory is false. But, just as intuitively, if this morning I misperceived the flower as being white, and my memory now presents it to me as having been red, then it also seems that my memory is false (even though, by assumption, the flower was in fact red). The content of a memory seems to be constrained, in that sense, by the content of the perceptual experience in which the memory originates. Let us refer to this constraint as the ‘past perception’ constraint.

The combination of the extrinsic view of perception and the past perception constraint on memory yields an interesting result as far as the IEM view is concerned. If one is indeed present in the content of one’s perceptual experiences, and what one remembers when one has a correct memory is, at least in part, what was present in the content of the past perceptual experience in which the memory originates, then it seems that what one remembers, when one has a correct memory, is partly oneself. The outcome, in other words, is that one is always present in the contents of one’s memories.

The line of reasoning which takes us from this outcome to the IEM view goes as follows. If one is present in the content of one’s memories, then it is hard to see how one could, on the one hand, remember a past property of one's own correctly and, on the other hand, be wrong when one judges, on the basis of the relevant memory, that the person who had the remembered property was oneself. If one is present in the content of one’s memories, then, when one remembers a past property of one's own, one actually remembers having the property. This means that if one’s memory is correct, then there is a certain fact that obtained in the past, namely, the fact that one had the remembered property. But if this fact did obtain, then one cannot be wrong when one judges, on the basis of one’s memory, that one had the remembered property in the past. To illustrate this line of reasoning, let us revisit the example introduced at the beginning of this section.

Suppose that, this morning, I walked my dog at the local park and I saw a red flower there. Imagine that, hours later, I have a fully accurate memory which originates in that perceptual experience. Suppose that, on the basis of my memory of this morning’s walk, I now form the judgment that there was a red flower in front of me at the park. Let us consider whether I could commit a misidentification error when I judge, on the basis of that memory, that there was a red flower in front of me at the park. Recall that, in order for such an error to take place, there must be a subject S such that:

1. My memory represents S as having been in front of the flower.
2. My memory is fully accurate.
3. I mistakenly think that I am identical with S.
4. My judgment that there was a flower in front of me at the park is false as a result of (iii).

It seems reasonably straightforward that if I am present in the content of my memory of the flower in the way discussed above, then it is not possible for conditions (i-ii) to be satisfied on the one hand, and for condition (iii) to be satisfied on the other hand. If condition (i) is satisfied, then my memory represents a subject as having been in front of the flower. If condition (ii) is satisfied, then my memory is fully accurate. If my memory is accurate, then, given the past perception constraint, the subject who my memory represents as having been in front of the flower must be the subject who was represented as being in front of the flower by the perceptual experience in which my memory originates. But if the extrinsic view of perception is correct, then the subject represented by the original perceptual experience is myself. So I will not be making a mistake if I think that I am identical with the subject who is being remembered as having been in front of the flower. And yet, this mistake is precisely what the satisfaction of condition (iii) requires. It therefore seems that, in the end, it is the intentionality of perception which grounds the phenomenon of IEM in memory.

1. **Conclusion**

If the defence of the IEM view above is right, then the IEM phenomenon highlights a certain fact about memory. It higlights the fact that, in memory, we are conscious of ourselves as having been the bearers of extrinsic properties which were perceived in the past; properties such as occupying a certain spatial position or having a particular size relative to that of another object. For if the account of why memory judgments are IEM offered above is correct, then we always remember being the person whose extrinsic properties were represented by some past perceptual experiences. Why is this a significant fact about memory?

Consider our ‘first-person conception’ of ourselves. This is the conception of ourselves that we form through our use of faculties such as introspection, proprioception and memory; faculties the deliverances of which are only available to ourselves. If the reason why memory judgments are IEM is that we always remember being the subjects whose extrinsic properties were perceived in the past, then our first-person conception of ourselves does not only include the fact that we are thinking things, or bearers of mental properties. And our first-person conception of ourselves does not only include the fact that we are the bearers of physical properties such as being extended in space either.[[33]](#footnote-33) Our first-person conception of ourselves also includes the fact that we are the bearers of temporal properties. Our first-person conception of ourselves, in other words, is the conception of an object which is extended in time as well as in space. Ultimately, that is the significance of the immunity to error through misidentification phenomenon in memory.

**REFERENCES**

Bernecker, S. (2010) *Memory: A Philosophical Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brewer, B. (2007) 'How to account for illusion', in F. Mcpherson and A. Haddock (eds.), *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 168-180.

Burge, T. (1991) 'Vision and intentional content', in E. LePore and R. Van Gulick (eds.), *John Searle and his Critics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 195-214.

Campbell, J. (2010) 'Demonstrative reference, the relational view of experience, and the proximality principle', in R. Jeshion (ed.), *New essays on singular thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 193-212.

Chalmers, D. (Forthcoming) ‘The virtual and the real’, in *Disputatio*.

Chalmers, D. (2004), ‘The Representational Character of Experience’, in B. Leiter (ed.), The Future for Philosophy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 153-182.

Debus, D. (2010) ‘Accounting for epistemic relevance. A new problem for the causal theory

of memory’, *American Philosophical Quarter*ly 47: 17-29.

Dretske, F. *Naturalizing the Mind*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Evans, G. (1982) *The Varieties of Reference*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Gibson, J. J. (1979) *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Horgan, T. & Tienson, J. (2002) 'The intentionality of phenomenology and the phenomenology of intentionality', in D. Chalmers (ed.), Philosophy of mind: Classical and contemporary readings. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 520-541.

Martin, M. (2004) 'The limits of self-awareness', *Philosophical Studies* 120: 37-89.

Martin, C.B. and Deutscher, M. (1966) ‘Remembering’, *Philosophical Review* 75: 161–196.

Michaelian, K. (2016) *Mental time travel: Episodic memory and our knowledge of the personal past*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Nigro, G., & Neisser, U. (1983) ‘Point of view in personal memories’, *Cognitive Psychology* 15: 467-482.

Peacocke, C. (1983) *Sense and content*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Porter, S. and Birt, A. R. (2001) ‘Is traumatic memory special? A comparison of traumatic memory characteristics with memory for other emotional life experiences’, *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 15: 101-117.

Pryor, J. (1999) ‘Immunity to error through misidentification’, *Philosophical Topics* 26: 271-304.

Reid, T. (1997) *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, D. Brookes (ed.). University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Searle, J. (1990) 'Consciousness, explanatory inversion and cognitive science', *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 13: 585-642.

Shoemaker, S. (1996) ‘Self-knowledge and “Inner Sense”. Lecture I: The Object Perception

model’, in *The first-person perspective and other papers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 201-224.

Shoemaker, S. (1987) ‘Introspection and the self’, *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 10: 101-120.

Shoemaker, S. (1970) ‘Persons and their pasts’, *American Philosophical Quarterly* 7: 269-285.

Shoemaker, S. (1968) ‘Self-reference and self-awareness’, *Journal of Philosophy* 65: 555-567.

Shoemaker, S. (1963) *Self-knowledge and self identity*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Sutton, J. (2010) ‘Observer perspective and acentred memory: some puzles about point of view in personal memory’, *Philosophical Studies* 148: 27-37.

Talarico, J.M., LaBar, K.S., and Rubin, D.C. (2004) ‘Emotional intensity predicts

autobiographical memory experience’, *Memory & Cognition* 32: 1118-1132.

Thau, M. (2002) *Consciousness and Cognition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tulving, E. (1972) ‘Episodic and semantic memory’, in E. Tulving and W. Donaldson (eds.), *Organization of memory*. New York: Academic Press, 381-403.

Tye, M. (1995) *Ten Problems of Consciousness: A Representational Theory of the Phenomenal Mind*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

1. The focus of this paper will be on episodic memory (as opposed to semantic memory). For that reason, I will use the expressions ‘memory’, ‘episodic memory’ and ‘memory experience’ indistinctly. On the difference between episodic and semantic memory, see (Tulving 1972). Furthermore, I will use ‘memory’ and ‘remembering’ non-factively. Thus, on the use of these expressions that I will adopt here, it is possible to remember falsely, and to have a false memory. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In what follows, I will use ‘IEM’ to abbreviate both the noun ‘immunity to error through misidentification’ and the adjective ‘immune to error through misidentification’. Hopefully this will cause no confusion. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The scope of the negative part of the paper will therefore be quite modest. The aim will not be to address all possible challenges to the IEM view, but only the challenge involving observer memory. This challenge is original, and it is illuminating with regards to the positive part of the paper. Accordingly, I will not discuss, for example, objections to the IEM view based on the notion of ‘quasi-memory’ here. For a discussion of quasi-memory and IEM, see (Deleted 1). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. In (1970, 269-270). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. In (1970, 270). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. There are other varieties IEM which are not specifically concerned with truth. Thus, Shoemaker has also characterised the notion of IEM in terms of knowledge (1968, 557), and in terms of rationality (1996, 210). In addition, there may be other interesting notions of IEM involving epistemic justification to be found in Shoemaker’s work. James Pryor, for example, distinguishes two such notions in (1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. In what follows, for the sake of brevity I will be referring to both actions (such as shouting that Johnson should be impeached) and experiences (such as seeing John) as ‘properties’. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The distinction between ‘de facto’ and ‘logical’ IEM is introduced by Shoemaker in (1970). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This is true of logical IEMτ, but not of de facto IEMτ: If one’s memories always originate, in the actual world, in properties that one had in the past, then memory judgments will be de facto IEMτ. But this result will be neutral on whether, in memory, one is only conscious of the fact that certain properties were instantiated in the past or, more strongly, one is conscious of who, in the past, was the bearer of those properties. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Gareth Evans’s discussion of self-identification in his (1982, 205-267), for example, seems to be part of this sort of project. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Sydney Shoemaker discusses the possibility of using identification criteria of this sort in chapter 4 of (1963) as well as in (1987, 111). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For the purposes of our discussion in this paper, I will be assuming that scenes are best construed as facts, or states of affairs, though nothing in the discussion that follows should hinge on that assumption. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. For seminal work on this distinction, see (Nigro and Neisser 1983). Further research on the distinction between field and observer memories has suggested that a subject is more likely to have a field memory of some fact when the remembered fact has a strong emotional significance for them (Talarico, LaBar, and Rubin 2004). It seems that facts surrounding traumatic events, for example, tend to be remembered from the field perspective (Porter and Birt 2001). For a discussion of the philosophical significance of observer memory, see (Sutton 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. An anonymous referee has raised the objection that there is no need for self-identification in observer memory because, when one has an observer memory, there is no open question as to who is being visualised as being part of the relevant episode. It is certainly true that, most of the time, when one has an observer memory, one believes that the visualised episode happened to oneself. One may believe this for a number of reasons: One may be trying to remember an episode in one’s own life, for example. In that case, it is the nature of the recollective project in which one is engaged that makes one think that one is visualising an episode that happened to oneself. Alternatively, many details of the visualised episode may cohere well with beliefs that one possesses regarding one’s past. In that case, it is colateral information about one’s past that makes one think that one is visualising an episode that happened to oneself. Thus, it is true that, when one has an observer memory, one usually believes that the person being visualised is oneself. In those (admittedly frequent) cases, there is no need for one to identify oneself in the visualised episode. The question of who is being visualised is not open because the question of whom the visualised episode happened to has already been settled. But notice that the IEM view is a modal claim. For that reason, in order for observer memory to provide us with a prima facie counter-example to the IEM view, we just need to focus on a possible case in which one has an observer memory and, when one visualises a subject (who is, in fact, oneself), the question of who is being visualised remains open for one. It remains open because the question of whom the visualised episode happened to has not been settled yet. Cases of this kind do seem to be possible. I may have, out of the blue, an observer memory of being on a boat, for example, while being unsure as to whether I have ever travelled on a boat or not. In such cases, it seems plausible to claim, as the opponent of the IEM view does, that one needs to identify oneself by using, as clues, some intrinsic properties of oneself which can be perceived from the third-person point of view; properties which concern the apperance of the person being visualised. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. I am frateful to an anonymous referee for bringing this to my attention. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. On representationalism, see (Dretske 1995) and (Tye 1995), for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. On this view, see (Searle 1990). On the more qualified view that there is a particular type of intentionality which is grounded on consciousness, see (Horgan and Tienson 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The label ‘separatism’ originates in (Horgan and Tienson 2002, 520). On separatism, see (Peacocke 1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. On this point, see (Chalmers 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The classical version of the causal theory is due to Charles Martin and Max Deutscher in their (1966). Martin and Deutscher’s formulation of the theory applies to memory for physical objects, to memory for events, and to memory for mental states such as sensations or emotions (1966, 166). For the sake of this discussion, I will assume that the theory is also a theory of propositional memory. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. For criticisms to the causal theory of memory, see (Michaelian 2016). For a defence of a modified version of it, see (Bernecker 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See (Debus 2010) for one version of this objection. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The idea that the connection between a memory and the belief that its content took place in the past is constitutive of memory can be found, for example, in (Reid 1997, 27). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. For a discussion of the metaphysics of memory, and a defence of a view which accommodates the objection to the causal theory discussed above, see (Deleted 2). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. For the sake of brevity, I will focus on the paradigmatic case of visual experience. The view about the intentionality of perception to be offered below, however, should generalise to other perceptual modalities. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The idea that perceptual experience involves a sense of immediacy is not new. David Chalmers, for example, compares the experience of virtual reality with our experience of our perceived environment partly by reference to a sense of ‘presence’, that is, the sense of being present at the relevant environment, in (Forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The view is similar to James Gibson’s ‘ecological optics’ in (1979). To be precise, the view offered here is that if a subject has a perceptual experience that they would express by saying that they are perceiving a certain scene, then the intentional object of their experience is their being related in some way to an object which is part of that scene. For the sake of convenience, however, I will sometimes talk of the properties which, according to the extrinsic view, are the intentional objects of our perceptual experiences as relations to scenes, or facts, and I will sometimes talk of those properties as relations to objects which are parts of those scenes. Hopefully this will cause no confusion. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Notice that the extrinsic view of perception is different from the 'relational' view of perception defended, for example, in (Brewer 2007), (Campbell 2010) and (Martin 2004). The relational view of perception is the view that perceptual states are relations to objects and properties of the perceived environment (Campbell 2010, 202), whereas the extrinsic view of perception is the view that perceptual states represent those relations. To illustrate the contrast, suppose that there is in fact no small cup of coffee on my hand. Then, according to the relational view of perception, I do not perceive such a cup at all whereas, according to the extrinsic view of perception, I perceive it incorrectly. Notice that perceptual experiences are perspectival, they are immediate, and they directly feeds into action whether they are correct or not. Thus, if the extrinsic view of perception can in fact account for these three features of perceptual experience, then it seems that this aspect of the extrinsic view will constitute a reason to prefer it over the relational view of perception. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. I am grateful to an anonymous referee for raising this question. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Why ‘in its simplest formulation’? The need to account for the content of perceptual experiences in hallucination scenarios may require existentially quantified contents instead. For discussion, see (Chalmers 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. One motivation for introducing modes of presentation is to accommodate cases in which two subjects may be perceiving the same object having the same property, but from different perspectives. See, for example, (Burge 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The main challenge for the Fregean view is to specify what modes of presentation are exactly. For this challenge, see (Thau 2002). In the context of putting forward the extrinsic view of perception, this challenge is especially pressing. For the Fregean advocate of the extrinsic view is committed to the claim that, in perception, there is such a thing as a mode of presentation of oneself. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Descartes is often portrayed as having endorsed the former view while reflecting on the nature of introspection. Gareth Evans, by contrast, seems to endorse the latter view while reflecting on the nature of proprioception in (1982, 224). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)